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VILLAGE DISCOURSES

ON

IMPORTANT SUBJECTS :

PARTICULARLY ADAPTED FOR DOMESTIC

WORSHIP.

BY THE LATE

REVEREND JOHN CENNICK.

London :

PRINTED FOR SHERWOOD, NEELY, & JONES,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

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1819.



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## PART III.

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### DISCOURSE XIII.

#### THE TWO COVENANTS.

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HEB. vii. 7.

*If the First Covenant had been faultless, then should no Place have been sought for the Second.*

**N**O one who reads the scripture can be ignorant that there is frequent mention made of two Covenants, or Testaments, namely, the Old and the New. The First Covenant was made in the wilderness, at the time of God's bringing up the Israelites out of Egypt, and is the law or Covenant of works. The Second Covenant is that made in Christ Jesus, and is the gospel, or Covenant of grace, or, as it is at other times called, the Covenant of promise.

The apostles and servants of God in all latter ages have called this Covenant of grace the New Covenant, or the Second Covenant, though it was indeed the First, and revealed to Abraham, and confirmed to him and his seed four hundred and thirty years before the law came into the world; and the Covenant of the law, or what is properly the Covenant of works, came in between the time of God's blessing Abraham and the coming of the Messiah. The reason, then, why the Covenant of works is called the first, is, because it was the first that was manifested and written, and under which all seem

to be born, and by which they hope to be helped and saved; but this hope dies away as soon as the preaching of the pure gospel comes, and so soon as the Holy Ghost opens the law, and shews how indeed it is just and good, but because of the sinfulness of our nature, cannot justify, but condemns all under it, and is therefore called weak and unprofitable, since it shews sin, but cannot pardon it; it makes the debt clear, and is as a just bond and bill, bringing in the soul guilty, but does not help to pay the debt, or justify the ungodly. The end of it was to make sin known, to put bounds to the torrent of transgressions, and check the rebellious sinner with its thunders, and, like a school-master, keep under the soul till it comes to age; i. e. arrives to faith in Christ, and so long serves to teach us two things, first, That all the world is guilty before God, and must not think his ways are unequal, or that injustice is in him, in passing judgment and condemnation upon all in Adam, or use such a proverb any more, which once the reasoning and dissatisfied Israelites used, namely, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge," meaning, that Adam had sinned, and they were punished for his faults. In the law, therefore, God Almighty condescends to shew how little right they have to murmur on this head, and makes his just dealings clear as the light, in entering thus, as it were, into a covenant with all his creatures. He gives a holy law, and orders every one to be strictly obedient to all its precepts, with the promise of life and many blessings if they obey him, and curses "every one that continueth not in all things of the book of the law." These were the conditions of this Covenant or Testament. "If thou keep all my statutes and judgments to do them, I will bless thee; but if thou despise my law that I have

have commanded, thou shalt be accursed, or die without mercy."

Here every child can see the ways of the Lord are equal, and not without cause all are condemned, and every one's mouth must be stopped, and complain and repine no more at the curse passed upon all, for all have sinned, and so brought the malediction and curse of the law upon their heads justly.

The second thing we learn in the law is, that we cannot be justified by it; but the more we look into it, and the more we read it, the more we are convinced we are cut off from mercy thereby, and so the sincere soul dies to the law; and though before it was like a husband to them, they now look on it as a dead husband, and what can help them no farther: *And this happens ere the soul is free to be married to Christ, or even seeks out to him for mercy and justification. Thus by the law we are dead to the law, and this school-master has taught us, we cannot by the deeds of the law, or by our obedience or works be justified, seeing we have broken that covenant, and rendered our duty and obedience imperfect, and fallen under the curse; "for he that keeps the whole law, and offends but in one point, is guilty of the whole?"*

Thus is the law a school-master until Christ, and when we seek righteousness there, the law answers us, *It is not in me.*

It is above all things most safe to understand the doctrine of the law, lest we be tempted in hearing the gospel to say that God gave it in vain, or being ignorant of its deep extent and meaning, endeavour to patch up a righteousness of our own from an observance of the law, and so live and die without seeking a better righteousness, and without knowing "the Covenant of promise, and eternal life, and better



better blessings of the New Testament, in the blood of Jesus Christ." There was never more need of a caution against this danger than now, for out of a false zeal and pretended respect to the law of God, some have magnified it above our Saviour, and made it still the rule and tenor of all their preaching, whereby their hearers have been led blindfold, and unable to discern between works and faith, the law and grace, Moses and Christ, and blended both shamefully together, and made both one and the same covenant of God, and by resting on their duties and performances under the law, without being aware of their being under the curse, hazard- ing their souls' well-being for ever, and have come into the danger of being found children of the bond- woman, who, like servants, must not abide in God's house always, but be cast out, while such as " were made free from the law by the body of Christ, and were received into the adoption of sons," shall be heirs for ever in the kingdom, and shall go no more out.

The Covenant of grace, or the New Testament, is of quite another nature than the law: for in this God the whole Godhead enters into a Covenant with the Son our Saviour, who, out of mere pity and love to sinners in their helpless and condemned condition, undertook for them, and became their Surety and Saviour. He knew well they were fallen, and lost, and gone captive after the enemy, who led them at his will. He foresaw what it would cost him to redeem them out of this estate, what pain and torment he must undergo, if he would sustain and bear their just chastisement and wrath, and how taste death for every man, if he would recover them and save their souls alive. He knew beside what trouble he should have to new- build the world, which was accursed on their ac-  
count,

count, and with what toil he should renew and create afresh all mankind, and wash them from their sins and evils, and bear all their sickness, death, judgments with every weight, pressure, grief, and burden, away; but all could not abate or change his fixed and everlasting love to the world; he willingly consented to be their Saviour, by paying their debt, suffering their curse, and making himself a free-will offering in their stead; for this he was to have "the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession:" Besides, the Father would preserve him, of the tribes of Jacob, a hundred and forty and four thousand, who should be, as it were, his first-fruits; and who should surely be his. At the same time "all things were made over to him in the height above, and in the deep beneath;" for his hire and wages he should be the Lord of all, whether living or dead, as well as have the sole supremacy in heaven, earth, hell, and over all flesh and every spirit in worlds visible and invisible, and have the authority and right to save as many as he would, and give eternal life to whom he pleased. This satisfied our blessed Surety, and the covenant was made of "God in Christ before the foundation of the world," when as yet no mountain or high hill was formed, and the present multitude of men and other creatures were not created, but only "He who calls the things that are not as though they were," knew how he would make man, and foresaw the fall by means of the subtlety of the enemy, and resolved to save them; thus from the beginning of the world he was the Lamb slain, and our Saviour. This covenant was witnessed and sworn to above, and was sealed by the Lord's own blood in due time, and put in force and perfected when he said in his last moments, "It is finished." From that hour it takes date, and all other dispensations,

sations, covenants, bonds, laws, and engagements vanish away, and this of right should only be preached and published in the name of Jesus over the earth, till he comes.

I have in few words spoke of this glorious agreement above, which was made in the council of the Holy Trinity, and which, when known among the angels and sons of God, made all sing together and shout for joy. Let us now see how we stand in respect of this covenant, and by what means we are intitled to this act of grace and mercy.

We are saved freely, and therefore we do not possess our pardon and assurance of eternal life through our works or merits, but by faith in Christ. God becomes our Father, and we commence "his children, his sons, and daughters. We have nothing to pay, and he frankly forgives us all. He is merciful to our unrighteousness, and our sins and our iniquities he will remember no more. He justifies us from all our sins, though we be ungodly," and have no personal right to his justification, but he is merciful and just in doing so; merciful, in that he willingly pardons and loves us; just, in that Christ has died and suffered in our stead. He has borne our curse; he has endured our shame, sustained our hell and punishment, and imputes our faith in him for righteousness, or makes over and reckons his obedience, works, duties, sufferings, and dying to us; and as he stood like a sinner, and was numbered with transgressors before God, and was bruised for the sin he never committed, so we stand perfect and complete in him, being cloathed in his righteousness, which is imputed to us, though we did not deserve it, but were unworthy of any thing better than hell, and to be lost for ever.

This doctrine is every where taught in the gospel, and whoever believes it in the bottom of his heart,

heart, shall know, "he believes to righteousness," and shall feel and prove in his believing heart, that he is interested in the covenant of grace, and has a right to all the blessings and privileges of the sons of God contained therein. The Holy Spirit is sent down from heaven to be the witness of this, who so powerfully acts in the name of Jesus, and with such real and solid happiness and energy, that it is equally the same blessed thing to a believer, as if Christ personally gave him his blood, and said, "Drink, for this is the cup of the New Testament in my blood which was shed for you, for the remission of your sins."

Therefore above all things faith is requisite in us, and without which we can neither please God, overcome the world, or be justified from sin and the law. It is through faith in Jesus we get that righteousness and perfect holiness in Christ, which we never else could have attained to by working; and by this faith we are brought into the possession of our inheritance in Christ, as a child of age comes to his estate, and enters into all his father bequeathed to him at his death. *And as an heir does not possess any thing till his father's decease, and not till then is his father's testament or will of force, though signed, witnessed, and sealed: so neither could the glorious things of the kingdom be inherited by us till the death of Christ, through faith in whom we arrive to age, and may seize and enjoy, as our eternal inheritance, his salvation, love, pardon, righteousness, grace, glory, and divine happiness here and for ever.*

Hence it is so often repeated and taught in the scriptures, "The just shall live by faith; We are justified by faith; By faith ye are saved;" and all this is done to overturn that principle the pride of our hearts has taught us, and which we have got so deeply

deeply rooted in our minds through hearing legal preaching, or doctrines of morality and self-righteousness, that we must be saved by our own good works.

Experience teaches us how hard it is to bring off people from the looking to the Old Covenant, and how nothing less than the Holy Ghost can so glorify Jesus and convince of his righteousness, as to bring a soul to rest there, and make it determine "to mention his righteousness and his only, and know nothing but him and him crucified."

The ministers of the gospel cannot be too careful to humble the pride of men, and bring down their haughtiness, and set at nought all our goodness and righteousness, which at best is but like filthy rags; nor can they be too bold and positive in asserting, "that we are saved freely, and not of works but by grace, through faith, and not by the law;" for the time is come when the law must have its glory done away, and vanish and wax old, and Christ the Lord alone must be exalted, and the gospel preached to every creature.

It is a mistake that some religious people make, in insisting so much about preaching and keeping the law, because of which I will speak freely of this matter.

The law is the covenant of works, which I have shewn before, and was made for the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt, and had learned to reason heathenishly about God's dealing inequitably in remembering the sin of the fathers upon the children; and therefore to stop their mouths, to convince them of sin, as well as for other divine reasons, he entered into a covenant with his people, of which his faithful Moses was the Mediator, and which was sealed with the blood of bulls and goats, and ordained to continue till the seed, Christ, should come.

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This law and covenant was then magnified and made honourable, and a regular priesthood appointed to read, teach, and publish this law throughout all the tribes. The tables of this law were laid up in an ark by order of the Lord, and to this all the Jews went up and visited, and heard it read some hundred years. It was delivered also upon mount Sinai, in Arabia, with thunder and lightnings, and with the sound of a trumpet and ministration of angels, and with so much awfulness and terror, that all that heard it fled at the voice of him that spake, and Moses himself confessed, "I do exceedingly fear and quake." All this served to make the authority of it of more weight and importance. But though the law was divine, and a transcript of the mind of God, and was preached with blessing, and the neglecters and despisers of it punished with plagues and heavy judgments, yet God had not designed it to be of long duration; but as it was added to the covenant of mercy and grace revealed to Abraham, because of transgression, so its author graciously designed, when the Lamb should take away the sin of the world and finish transgression, to remove it as if it had not entered, and so let the covenant of grace again shine and appear to all men in the gospel of Christ.

Jeremiah lived under the law, and was obedient to it like other men of God; but he foresaw, when the Deliverer should come, a wonderful alteration would ensue; therefore he says, "The days come, saith the Lord, that they shall say no more the ark of the covenant of the Lord, neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall that be done," or magnified any more, Jer. iii. 16.

In his time to have spoken such words must have endangered his life; for, doubtless, all who heard him

him thought, as the latter Jews did when they heard Paul and Stephen say we could not be saved by our works, "this man speaketh blasphemous words against the law;" and this must have been one reason why he and all the prophets were so slighted and persecuted in their day, because they spoke of changing the covenant, the law, the priesthood, &c. and saving the world by a better sacrifice, and by a better covenant; for the zealous Jews at no time could hear of this, especially as they knew God had spoken all the words of the law, and commanded it to all their generations for ever. But even in this dark dispensation, when the people were shut up under the law to the faith which was afterwards revealed, there were many who saw they could not be saved by that covenant, and who could find how far short they fell of the righteousness of the law; and these, without doubt, rejoiced to hear of a covenant that could give life and justify from sin, and such sought and enquired diligently about the salvation, and having seen it afar off, believed, and died in faith, so escaping the curse of the law, and getting clear of those heavy bonds and yokes "which they nor their fathers were able to bear."

In like manner David mentions the invalidity and insufficiency of the sacrifices, that could not atone for the breaches of the first covenant, and prays the Lord to wash him, knowing that else he could not be purged by the blood of bulks.

Again he saw the everlasting covenant, and knew God had made it with him, wherefore he died in peace: for else, he acknowledged that no man by the law could be justified in God's sight.

Also Jeremiah comforts such as mourned and sighed under the law, by saying; "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt," Jer. xxxi. 31. Some other prophets also had hinted at giving the Lord for a "covenant to the people;" and Ezekiel spoke more than once of the covenant of grace, and saying his people freely. See Ezek. xvi. to the end.

Thus it went till Jesus Christ died, and rent the veil in twain, unsealing the mystery, and bringing light and eternal life to light by the gospel; and now without the law sin is learned in his death, and the glad news of salvation by him alone is declared to every creature. Such as now contend for the preaching of the covenant of works or the doctrine of the law, are ignorant of the gospel, and, like Apollos, they need one to teach them the way of God more perfectly. The death of Christ and his sufferings preach deeper and with better effect than all laws and commandments, and he who is not reclaimed by the gospel will never be won by the law. If the knowledge of sin came by the law, much more can we know how evil sin is since it cost Jesus his life, and could not be purged away but by the dying of the Son of God; but far, yea far more is found in the New Covenant than in the Old, for that promised life, but this eternal life; that failed because of the weakness of them that were under it, and so could justify none; but the blood of Jesu's covenant brings grace and truth, pardon of sins, full acquittance of all past debts, power to live godly and righteously in the world, and seals us to be his for evermore.

At our entering into the blessings of this covenant we are instantly freed from the law and its threatenings; no condemnation can reach us, because "we are not under the law but under grace." Yea had  
we



we before our faith in Christ made a league with death and a covenant with hell, it should not stand, Satan must give up, Death must deliver back, and the fetters of sin, which are like brass and iron, must be dissolved, and become like tow that had touched the fire, and we should be free indeed.

But here it would not be amiss to observe, that though the children of God, and such as are in the new covenant, and not under the law, nor in danger of perishing, yet have they no license to sin; nor can a faithful soul be ever persuaded of that delusive doctrine, that there is no sin to a believer; they can sin, but no human tongue can describe what pain and inward remorse such must feel, who again grieve the Lamb willingly, and venture to defile their raiment. "If thy children sin I will visit their offences with a rod, and their sin with scourges, saith the Lord." But should a soul, conscious of his continual weakness, poverty, and faults, feel a thought amiss, or see he has done wrong, or spoken or behaved ill, he cannot rest till our Saviour has taken it away; nor may we be afraid to suspect their estate, who, with all their clear and orthodox opinions of grace, live in sin, or are drunkards, unclean, unchaste, irreligious, covetous, worldly-minded, proud, boasters, lovers of pleasure, passionate, and intemperate, for they are not born of God, and are still of the world. At the same time, the abuse wherewith some have abused the gospel of free grace must not stumble us, or make us legal in our doctrine, manners, or ideas, nor must we darken the covenant by making any condition of our being accepted but what God has made. We are accepted for Jesus Christ's sake, and saved as freely as a brand taken out of the fire by one who thought it a pity it should be burned; and should we ascribe the least part of our peace, pardon,

pardon, or righteousness, to any other thing than his blood and merits, we rob the Lord, and turn spiritual thieves.

But then some think we destroy and make void the law. No: it is not made void, it stands good and condemns wicked men, and all such hypocrites who urge the necessity of observing it, and yet break it, and who, out of a fond opinion of their own righteousness, slight the righteousness of our Lord Christ. The law was made for the disobedient, and over such it continues to stand as a swift witness, but it never was made to make men righteous; "for the law made nothing perfect, and if righteousness came by the law, Christ is dead in vain."

The strict sect of the Pharisees, in our Saviour's time, were of this mind; they supposed the end of the law was to make men righteous, and therefore with great art and study found ways so to expound the words of the commandments, that many could live, according to their exposition, blameless under the law; for they taught, If they had no images, bowed down to none of the idols of the nations, but worshipped only the God of Abraham, they were clear in the first commands; so if they did not name the Shembamphorash, or the unutterable name of God, whereby he was made known to Moses, they were clear in taking his name in vain.

Also, if they did not go farther than such a distance on the Sabbath day, nor touched servile work, they were innocent in this respect.

If they acknowledged all gifts from their parents, and were thankful, they were free.

If they did not kill any one, nor were accessory to the death of any, they were safe.

If they had not gone in to another's wife and defiled the marriage bed, they were not in danger; and after this manner they taught, and made and increased their sect amazingly, so that the chief priests, and almost all the religious and serious men in the church, were of the Pharisees. These were strict observers of the letter of the law, were circumcised the eighth day, attended the festivals and fast-days duly, gave much alms, made long prayers in the streets, synagogues, and markets, compassed sea and land to make a proselyte, and this was their righteousness. In the Christian world there are still many of the sect, and who, though they have not arrived to the pitch of these strict Jews, nor attained to the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, prate about their goodness, and thank God they are not so bad as other men; they have done many works, are often busied in mending their patch-work righteousness, and daubing over the wall which is momentarily falling, with untempered mortar; their prayers, self-denial, and obedience, is all their righteousness; take that away, and, like Laban, they might complain, "You have taken away my gods, and what have I got more?"

When our Saviour came into the world, instead of praising the rigid company of Pharisees, or extolling the merit of their holy order, he speaks heavily against them, "Woe be to you, ye scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" And why was our Saviour so hard? Why did he continually thunder against them, and in all his parables so expose them, and assure his disciples, "that unless their righteousness exceeded the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, they could in no case enter the kingdom of heaven?" It was therefore, because they had perverted the meaning and intent of the law, they had taught in-  
stead

stead the commandments and traditions of men, and so made, as it were, the law of God of no effect; for that law which should have convinced of sin, and laid all under the curse, and so obliged them to see and feel the want of a Saviour, that they had made to serve other ends, and persuaded the people life could be obtained thereby, and so contented and satisfied the worshippers under that covenant, with their obedience and observances of the law. This our Saviour calls whitening the wall, painting the tomb, washing the outside of the dish and platter, because all the righteousness, godliness, goodness, holiness, and whatever else under such names have been the work of men, is no other, since it is all form, it is all outward; it is put on, and does not change the evil nature, or alter the mind, or convert the heart. It may please men, and be esteemed and admired by the world, but must be an abomination in the sight of God, who tries the hearts and reins, and knows the same old, rotten, and filthy heart, the same bad and impure nature, still lives under all, and the whole of such a righteousness is in his eyes a cloak, a covering, but not the wedding garment; it is not the white robe, the righteousness of the saints; their robe is the salvation of God, and their garment the righteousness of Christ, and without which the best attainments, the most admired goodness and holiness is no better than the righteousness of scribes, pharisees, and hypocrites, and will be found of the same piece in the day when God enters into judgment with all flesh, and shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

That our Saviour might make his law shine in its ancient clearness, and serve whereto it was ordained, he invalidates all the false glosses and expoundings of the pharisees, and shews how he is guilty who seeks, and receives honour of men; that whoso serves sin and calls God Father, taketh his name in vain,

and belongs to his father the devil; that he that looks on another with lust has committed adultery already in his heart; that he that hateth his brother is -a murderer; and thus brings the most innocent under the curse, and levels to the ground all self-admiring, and our own righteousness, and, as St. Paul affirms, concludes all under sin, and in unbelief, and for their lives forbids men to build up what Christ has destroyed. If any do it they risque body and soul for ever; if their pride will not stoop to Jesus, but value their thoughts more than his, and will still dare to think, "I am not like this publican, I am better than he, I will not be saved freely, I believe I have some righteousness;" such will he behold afar off and send empty away; but where the soul is upright, honest, and sincere, they will not be so cheated; let men judge of them better if they will, but they themselves know what motions of sin are in their members, and that though the wall be whited, it is daubed and built with untempered mortar; though the tomb be garnished, it is inwardly a stinking and polluted place; and though the outside of the dish be clean, within are stirrings of pride, lust, revenge, envy, covetousness, and the love of the creature more than the love of the Creator. Souls sensible of this have no hope from the law, their mouths are stopped, and they plead no more for their righteousness, but are in quest and search after a better foundation, an everlasting righteousness, and this the Lord and his blood shall be to them.

There are others, who still think the law and covenant of works should yet be observed; because our Saviour has said, "One jot or tittle of the law should not fail till all was fulfilled;" but such must have a mean opinion of Jesus Christ and his obedience, who do not believe he has fulfilled and paid all, in his obedience under the law, answered all  
its

its demands, and suffered all its curses and condemnation, and this is our righteousness. I wish only some who love to plead for the law; and to make it honourable, as they say, do not come into that case St. Paul mentions in his epistles, who are teachers of the law, and do not know what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

The eternal mind of God was to save lost man freely, and this was promised to Adam, and established to Abraham, long before the law came by Moses, and as St. Paul reasons with the Galatians, "It is impossible for the law that came afterwards to make the covenant of promise of no effect." No man may disannul or make void a man's covenant, much less could any thing make null or void a covenant confirmed with the oath of God, and decreed as eternal as the heavens; and let men be offended or pleased, so it is, and shall be, that whoso hears Moses, reads, and likes to have doctrines of duties, works, and terms of acceptance preached to him, the veil is yet upon his heart untaken away, and he does not see the glories of the New Testament. What! O what would such do should God enter into judgment with them and try them by the law? They have not kept that covenant, what hope then have they? they would be without hope, they would be condemned. O let such betimes apply to the Mediator of the better Testament, and which is founded upon better promises, and experience what it is to be saved by his death from the law, sin, and everlasting misery, and they will be happy, and not till then.

Though I have in the beginning of this discourse spoken of the difference between the two covenants, yet I shall add a few words more before I conclude. The prophecy of Jeremiah, which is quoted in the eighth of the Hebrews, about the changing of the

covenant, says, "the new covenant shall not be according to the first."

Now the first was perfected upon mount Sinai, the second upon mount Calvary. The first was all of works, the second all of grace. The first was all, "Thou shalt do, Thou shalt not do;" but the second was all of what God would do for us, "I will be your God, and you shall be my people: I will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters: I will be merciful to your sins, and remember your iniquities no more." The first was written on tables of stone; the second on the heart and mind, that is, in the very nature, and is no other than making our heart and mind a copy of the law of God. The first was taught by the priests to the people, by a father to his children, by a man to his brother and to his neighbour; the second is taught by the Lord alone, "Neither shall they teach every man his brother, nor every man his neighbour, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." The first covenant was for a time; the second for eternity. The promises in the first were temporal, the promises in the latter spiritual. The old covenant was good on God's part, but on our part uncertain and broken; the new covenant was good on all sides, and as the conditions of it are perfectly fulfilled in our Saviour, so is it sure, with all its blessings, to all the seed for evermore, and is a covenant that shall not be broken, an everlasting covenant. That was sealed with the blood of beasts, and in the hands of the man Moses, but this was sealed with God's own blood, and in the hands of the man Christ Jesus. With the first God finds fault, in that none could thereby be saved; but with the second he is well pleased, because thereby a  
company

company innumerable enter into the holiest of all, and are saved for ever.

All who were under the first testament, however strict and faithful, could obtain no grace farther than to be servants, and were in danger of being put away, like the bondmaid Hagar and her son; but all in the New Testament are sons, and, like Isaac, to abide in the house of God alway.

Thus then it is not like the first covenant, to our great advantage and joy: for, instead of thunders, threatenings, and judgments, it is full of blessings, sweet and precious promises, glad tidings, and great comforts; instead of cursing to hell, it brings to heaven; and instead of a bill so much owest thou unto the Lord, it brings the full receipt, God has forgiven thee all trespasses; instead of a revengeful Lord, we have a loving husband; instead of commanding us what to do, it shews what great things our dear Saviour *has done* for us; and from the most unhappy and miserable, it makes us the happiest creatures in the world, and ascertains to us the blessedness of the world to come.

Happy are they who, in reading the scriptures, discern the privilege of this new covenant, and who in a good conscience, and with a pure and unfeigned faith, possess them in their hearts. These read indeed the thunders of mount Sinai, and hear the threatenings of a fiery law, but they are hid in the wounds of the Lamb, and need fear no evil: They understand what the law saith to all sinners, and know how guilty and deserving of all the curses and condemnation they have been; but the blood of Jesus has saved and washed them; and as men run the file through the bills which are paid, so these behold the Lord God and the Lamb nailing all the ordinances which their sins had made to be against them, with his own body to the tree. The iron nail,



nail, like a file, goes through all, and tears and rends the old covenant to pieces, so that one can read nothing more than "the Lord thy God" in the whole. His blood blots out every curse, and silences every accuser, so that without fear they can enter into the judgment, and stand bold as a lion: The mighty Counsellor has directed them how to escape; the Advocate with the Father has pleaded and gained their cause; the Judge of all has acquitted them, and justified them from all things from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses."

May the Lord, who dwelleth in light inaccessible, enlighten all of you in this important matter, and help the poor sinner to enter into this new covenant through faith in his blood, and teach the soul who has tired himself under the law, to stoop and learn of him righteousness, and to find freely in him grace and everlasting redemption, that they may praise him for his love, wisdom, and great salvation for ever. Amen.

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### A N H Y M N.

1 **A** Sinner to the Lord I come,  
 Worthy that thou should'st me consume,  
 But O! one thing I plead:  
 The ev'ry mite to thee I ow'd,  
 Christ Jesus, with his own heart's blood,  
 In pity for me paid.

2 I know if thou should'st bring me near,  
 To answer at thy lawful bar,  
 And my own self defend,  
 If Jesus did his grace withdraw,  
 I know, O Lord, thy fiery law  
 My soul to hell would send.

3 But

3 But should'st thou me to judgment call,  
Tho' Moses fac'd me there, and all  
My many sins appear'd;  
I would not fear, but boldly stand,  
If Jesus open'd his pierc'd hand,  
I know I should be spared.

4 My full receipt should there be shew'd,  
Written with iron pens in blood,  
On Jesu's hands and side :  
I am safe, I'd cry, O Law and Sin,  
Ye cannot bring me guilty in,  
For Christ was crucify'd.

5 My bonds and bills he on the tree  
Has nail'd, and so acquitted me  
From pain, and guilt, and shame ;  
He saw I nothing had to pay,  
So freely wash'd my sin away :  
All glory to his name !

## DISCOURSE XIV.

THE BENEFITS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

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HEB. xii. 22, 23, 24.

*Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new-covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

**W**HEN the author of this epistle had said much of the law, and the heavy dispensation of Moses, and shewed how it made nothing perfect, nor was remission of sins to be expected under that covenant, but all was calculated and imposed on the children of Israel for a time, till the Saviour should come and establish a better testament, and founded upon better promises, and had not only set forth the unprofitableness of it, in that it could not purge the conscience, nor justify such as served under it, but had also observed how the awful manner in which it was delivered to the church in the wilderness, was with thunders and lightnings, with blackness, darkness, and a tempest, also with the sound of a trumpet, sounding louder and louder, and with a voice out of the tempest, and with an earthquake, and a strict

strict charge that no soul might approach to the mountain, from whence it was delivered, and whereon the Lord descended with twenty thousand angels, and even if a beast should touch the mount it must be stoned, or thrust through with a dart, and which so affected the meek servant of God, Moses, that he quaked exceedingly and was afraid ; he then adds, But ye are not come to such a mountain, ye are not called to hear the fiery law, nor summoned to appear before God in so terrible majesty, but he says, "Ye are come to the mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, &c." he shews through the whole, what a happy difference there is between the two dispensations, that the believers in Christ, and such as hear the gospel are now brought into the nearest fellowship with the saints and family of God, and made to be near of kin to the spirits of just men, and have the glorious privileges of being written in heaven, and made free citizens of the new Jerusalem, and reckoned with the first-born sons and daughters of God, together with the enjoyment of an acquaintance with the Mediator and his Father ; and all this he mentions as the present benefits of faith, and to which all come on their belief in Christ.

All the blessings rehearsed in this part of the scripture have by some been thought such as pertained to the life to come, and possessed only in heaven when our christian race is ended ; but whoso considers the apostle's manner of writing, compared with other parts of the gospel, will easily see he speaks of things to which now the children of God come, and which are the real privileges of every believer, and his part of the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

Few, who lived from the time of Moses to Christ, enjoyed this grace, or ventured to enter in behind the  
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the veil, but now the veil is rent, a way is laid open into the inner courts, and a highway prepared into the holy place, and into the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus ; so that now the winter and storms are gone, and the shadows fled away, and nothing is heard but the voice of the Beloved, inviting sinners into his house, and calling souls to come to the feast of fat things, which he has prepared before all people, and to enjoy all the mercies and favours purchased by his death, which is the commonwealth of Israel.

Believers are now no more kept at a distance from God ; no longer bound to be all their life-time in bondage, through the fear of death ; no longer obliged to walk in darkness, or kept in pain, through the thunders and curses of the law, and the pursuing of the avenger of blood ; but may see their interest clear in the salvation, may approach and speak with the Lord as a man speaks with his friend ; may experience the power of the blood of sprinkling, and each may know he is a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. It is of this the text treats, and must be read in the church, as a part of the will and testament of Jesus, in which is specified the rights of his people, and the liberties and freedoms unto which he has broke a way for them by his flesh, and by death put his will in force, so that now all that is mentioned in this place, are the common rights of every believer in the world, and of which I shall treat freely.

Ye are come to the mount Sion : now the mount Sion was the spot on which the temple stood, and was the shadow of that in the upper world, and where the true temple is. To this we who believe come, and are founded upon this rock, and enter the gates of this temple, when we get into the  
wounds

wounds of our Saviour. He himself is the temple, even the Lord God, and the Lamb, and his nail-prints and pierced side, are the everlasting doors by which the true worshippers enter, and by this door, by this new and living way, whoever enters in shall be saved. We are henceforward reckoned inhabitants of the rock, children of Zion, and such as have a right to follow the Lamb there, or whithersoever he goeth; and though we are not yet arrived in person among the virgins, who are actually there, nor have leave to quit the world below, and lay down our staves, and put off our sandals, and dwell there intirely, and be seen here no more, yet are we there in spirit, and belong certainly thereto. We have, as it were, taken up our freedom, and are Christ's freemen; and as St. Paul says, "citizens with the saints and with the household of God," and no more strangers and foreigners there. "Ye are come to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." This city John says, is the church, and shall come down with the Lamb in the last day, like a bride adorned and ready for the bridegroom. Among this number we are admitted, and are become living stones in this building; and though we are not yet removed, and put into our right place, to go no more out, yet are we built upon Jesus, the head corner-stone, and a part of the house of God. We belong to the Jerusalem above, as much as if we were there, nor can that church be perfect and complete, till we are with them in body and sou. This heavenly Jerusalem has many of her living stones not yet gathered out of the earth, many of her members are still in the world, and are grounded and fixed upon her rock, the rock of ages, and become one with him; so that we are numbered with the stones of this city, in the eyes of our Saviour, and we know it, and the living God, whose

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tabernacle is with men, dwells in us, and makes us his habitation and holy temple.

We are come also to an innumerable company of angels. When Jacob went out, God's hosts, his Mahanaim, went out with him; and when Elisha was on the mountain with his servant, and persecuted by the king's army, a multitude of angels were their guards, the whole hill was filled with chariots of fire, and horses of fire. To this day the heavenly hosts minister to the heirs of salvation, and encamp round about us, day and night; an innumerable company attend the church militant, and no army of angels, no legion of seraphims do think it beneath them to wait round about our beds, or watch our way, since they have seen how dear we are in the eyes of their Maker. They saw the tears he shed, the streams of blood he spilt for us; they saw his griefs, his agonies, and were the eye-witnesses of all his sufferings on our account. They heard his intercession, his strong cries and tears in our behalf, and must count it a favour and honour to nurse or minister to souls, bought so dearly, and loved with so great a love. If they were allowed to appear visibly to us, and to converse with us, their salutation would be daily like Gabriel's to the virgin, "hail! ye highly favoured!" for they know how highly esteemed we are by the Son of God our Saviour. But though so many of these ministers are with us constantly, it is good that we do not speak with them and see them, since it would be easy for us to put them in the stead of our Saviour, and be less eager to enjoy himself. He speaks with us, and is always near us, and can manifest his love, and make it surer to us, than if an angel had told us of it. An angel could only speak to the ear, but he to the heart, and is better to us than all the angels in heaven; but yet a time shall come when the danger

ger of idolatry shall be over, and then we shall see the innumerable company, who now are our attendants. They shall one day carry us to Abraham's bosom, and sing us into our Father's house. They shall soon see us upon the throne with our husband, and be our fellows for evermore, and the virgins that shall bear us company.

We are come to the general assembly, and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven. That is to say, to the one fold, to the one church of God, to the elect and bride of Jesus, to the catholick, or general assembly of the faithful; we are added to the goodly company of the prophets, to the noble army of martyrs, and in the family with the apostles of the Lamb, and all his disciples and friends, gathered out of all nations and lands, and which are properly his first-born; that is, his heirs, such as have his Father for their Father, and his God for their God, and whom he will not be ashamed to call brethren. In the last day, in the harvest, when the angel shall preach the everlasting gospel to all that dwell upon the earth, and when a nation shall be born at once, and whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved; then shall these who have believed in Christ now, and are his first-fruits in the earth, have the honour to be the first-born among many brethren. As in the days of the law there was the feast of the first-fruits, when all the first ripe grapes, olive-berries, ears of corn, flowers, &c. were gathered and presented to the Lord, so also was there a feast of harvests, when all was brought in safe out of the field. Now the Lord takes one out of a city, and two out of a family, and bringeth them to Zion; he gathers in the first ripe fruits out of every land, and makes him little households in the earth like a flock, and like an handful of corn, and these are his first-

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born,



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born, his chosen, the heirs and joint-heirs with their elder brother Jesus; but there shall be also a "harvest-day, when the nations shall flow to him, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong," and have an innumerable host for his inheritance, and when his seed shall be like the stars of heaven for multitude, and which no man can number, but even through eternity, those who in this day of grace came to the Lord, and partook of the communion of the saints, shall be for ever blessed in being the first-born.

These are written in heaven, and in their happiness our Saviour would have his disciples rejoice more than in having the devils and evil spirits subject to them, and being able to work miracles and do wonderful works. He says, "Rejoice not in this, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven." It was not their gifts that made them children of God, or proved to them the certainty of their salvation: but the spirit of God, who bore witness with their spirits, that they were written down in the Lamb's book of life. This is now our joy who believe in Jesus, we are persuaded our names are graven on our Saviour's hands. He remembers the anguish his body and soul endured, when the iron pens stamped our names there, and this endears us to him and him to us. Let our names be here cast out as evil; let them be noted down with hereticks, and fools, and madmen; let our friends, our dear and nearest relations, be ashamed to mention our names; let them be a by-word, and proverb of reproach, for our Saviour's and the gospel's sake; let our enemies mock them, and the drunkard and persecutors slander and reproach our names in their songs, and make sport with them; yet will we rejoice and be glad, for they are precious in our Saviour's sight, and honoured more than if written on the breast of Aaron, or borne on the breast-plate of the

the high priest; for the nails that tore the hands of the holy child Jesus, engraved with the engraving of a signet our names there: what the church once so heartily prayed for, "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm," we have obtained; and now our high priest, the Son of God, carries us graven upon his heart, and written upon the palms of his hands. Our names are written in heaven, nor will our loving Lord and Master blot them out of his book of life, but confess them before his Father, and in the presence of the holy angels.

We are come to God the Judge of all. We come guilty criminals, self-condemned, and judged worthy of eternal misery, but we are justified; the Judge of all the earth has acquitted us, and now there is no condemnation for us. Who can lay any thing to our charge! "It is God that justifies us, who can condemn us? It is Christ that died for us," and was judged and sentenced to death in our stead, that we might not be judged of the Lord. There was a time when an assize was held in our own breasts, when our sins and guilty conscience cried out against us, and we felt the sentence of death in ourselves; the Lord set before us in array and order, all what we had done amiss, and wherein we had dealt wickedly; and it was as if his sword was drawn to cut us off, and send us accursed from his presence. O how did our hearts tremble! and every lonely walk and field, every closet and secret chamber, were witnesses to our sighs and tears. We did not dare look up to heaven, but like the publican smote on our breasts, and prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Have pity upon the chief of sinners! What a sight and sense of sin had we! Our spirits sunk within us, and our hearts ached and failed with dread and fear. We stood like poor malefactors before their judge, and guilty as robbers, thieves and murderers,

and waited, not knowing if we should not be utterly rejected and banished from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when in this sad estate Jesus undertook for us, he led us to the fountain of his blood, and bid us look upon him and be saved. In his hands we saw our receipts, and in his body beheld all our sins and offences; in the red-sea of his blood he washed us, and his bleeding wounds healed us, and on his account, and for his sufferings' sake, we are forgiven and pardoned. In this the Judge of all the earth has done right, for Jesus had merited our pardon, paid our debts, cancelled our bonds, broke the engagements, dissolved the old covenant, blotted out the hand-writing that was against us, and nailed it to his cross, and for us suffered the heavy curse and wrath, and endured our chastisement, death and hell. Now can we approach the Judge of all boldly, and call him *My Father*, and for this grace thank him, who once stood with his hands tied, and in bonds, at the bar of Pontius Pilate. He has burst our bands asunder, and cast away our cords, "he has preached deliverance to the captives," and said, "Loose them, and let them go." O Jesus! Glory be to thee!

We are come to the spirits of just men made perfect, and are complete in our Saviour. We are without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, because his blood has washed away our guilt, and the comeliness which he has put upon us, has made us perfect before him. We stand before God happy and blessed in his righteousness, and his holiness makes us all glorious within, our cloathing is of that wrought gold. We taste and enjoy, in part, that divine and spiritual happiness those possess above, and are safe in their safety, and sealed to the same redemption, only we are like children toiling in the field; or yet upon our journey, and they have entered  
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the sabbath, and are arrived at the haven where they would be; they are sitting down at the supper of the Lamb, and eating bread, and drinking new wine in the kingdom; but we are one man's sons, we are children of the same father, saved and adopted into the same house and family, and shall surely be one day with them as they are with their Lord.

We are come to Jesus; we have found the Christ, we have got the Saviour, the Mediator of the new covenant; he who made peace by the offering up of himself, and who has been our friend, interceded and prayed for us, and who has made with us a new covenant, having abolished the old, and taken it out of the way, because it was against us; he is become our Saviour, our Brother, our Refuge, and has reconciled us to God, and destroyed the enmity which reigned in our hearts, and kept us at a distance from our dear Creator. We have applied in our wretched condition to this loving Mediator, and he has pitied us, stood by us, and obtained eternal life for us. We know the Lamb, we are happily acquainted with the Mediator, we have ventured into his presence, and trusted in his name, and have found him gracious and merciful, long-suffering and of great goodness.

We are come to the blood of sprinkling, which speaks better things than that of Abel. When Cain slew him, his blood justly cried from the ground to heaven for vengeance, but Jesu's blood speaks better things, though we have been his murderers. His blood speaks pardon for us in the throne above, and peace in the earth beneath. When men offered the blood of calves and lambs under the old law, the persons for whom the sacrifices were made were not the better, their consciences remained unpurged, but the blood of Jesus speaks, it reaches the inmost heart, and speaks peace, and love and mercy

mercy. It quiets the conscience, and assures us of our being accepted in heaven. It is a witness that our sins are done away. Let the old accuser of the brethren accuse us as he did Job, and let the former sins cry against us; let the beam out of the timber, and the stone out of the walls of the houses where we have committed sin, be witness against us; yea, let the broken law and your own conscience cry against us, yet this blood of Jesus out-cries all, and silences the voice of the enemy and the avenger. This blood has already been our bath, and has washed us from all our idols, and from all our filthiness, and speaks for us with almighty prevalency before the Throne, and with unspeakable sweetness it speaks within, "Thy sins are forgiven." "My peace I give unto thee." Some have foolishly thought coming to the blood of Jesus was a little matter, and the first step in christianity, and have soared and aimed at somewhat greater; but whoever have come indeed to this blood and known Jesus Christ crucified, he cannot think of higher matters, but resolves to know this alone. This the apostle mentions last, as being the highest and greatest attainment of a christian. This blood cleanseth from all sin, that none can be holier than the soul washed therein. This blood of sprinkling is the antetype of that on the Israelites door-posts; that preserved them from the destroying angel for a night, but this preserves from all destroyers, and frightens back ten thousand devils. This is better than the blood which the high-priests of the law sprinkled toward heaven seven times, with which they besmeared the people, their own cloaths, and the vessels of the temple, for that made nothing clean, and was only a shadow of this blood which cleanseth the heart from an evil conscience, and seals to the day of redemption.

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This is the river of the fountain of life, whoever drinks of it shall live for ever. This is the only brook by the way, which can make him that drinks of it lift up his head. It is the wine that makes glad the heart of God and man. It is the only antidote against the poison of sin, the only thing that can quench the raging passions of lust and pride, the only river that can extinguish the wrath and flames of hell. And we are come to this blood of sprinkling, we have found this well of salvation, and here will we dwell. May this wash us daily and momentarily! May this revive and comfort us, when we are heavy and afflicted! May this refresh us when we are weary, and besprinkle all our words, thoughts, and works, and make our whole behaviour acceptable in the sight of God! May this be seen upon our foreheads living and dying, and ward off the destroyer! May this keep and preserve us clean and white in body and soul, and in all times of danger, or when we do wrong, may this speak for us alone better things than the blood of Abel! May it purge away all gloominess, guilt, darkness, and confusion from our hearts, and momentarily speak peace to us! Let as many as have found this precious blood of the Lamb, this almighty blood of God our Saviour, continue in faith, and abide near the wounds and cross of Christ Jesus, and they shall prove all this happiness, and learn from a blessed experience to prize and esteem the blood of sprinkling here, and to praise it everlastingly in the church triumphant hereafter, singing and saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive honour and glory, and blessing, for he has loved us, and washed us from our sins, and made us kings and priests to God by his blood, to him be thanksgiving and salvation for ever!" Amen.

AN

## AN HYMN.

1. **T**HE name of Christ, how sweet it sounds!  
 How sweet the mention of his wounds!  
 For thee, my soul, how dear and good,  
 Is the bare naming of his blood!
2. What makes it precious thus to me  
 Is, since the Lamb hung on the tree,  
 His pangs and torments made me well,  
 Who else had gone to endless hell.
3. The law, my conscience, and the fiend,  
 Were witnesses how I had sinn'd;  
 I stood accus'd, in debt and poor,  
 When Jesus paid off all my score.
4. Nor this alone, but at his death,  
 His ALL he would to me bequeath;  
 I now am made his pleasant son,  
 And heir to his eternal throne.
5. His dying words are graven deep  
 Upon my heart, awake or sleep,  
 This is the blood I shed for thee,  
 Drink of this cup, and pardon'd be.
6. Now ends the ancient covenant,  
 The wrath, the debt, and fear, and want;  
 A testament is now of force,  
 Revoking ev'ry former curse.
7. By this I 'scape eternal doom,  
 And fearless nigh to God I come;  
 My Father, to him I may say,  
 And know he hears whene'er I pray.
8. I join

8. I join the number who are his,  
And share their joy, and love, and bliss  
I'm his, and He, the man divine,  
With all his merits now is mine.
9. My dear Testator will I bless,  
And wearing his pure righteousness,  
I boldly shall his judgment meet,  
And worship at his bleeding feet.
10. No death or judgment hence I dread,  
The precious blood my Saviour shed,  
The blood of sprinkling speaks for me,  
I'm safe! O Jesus praise to thee!



## DISCOURSE XV.

### THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

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MATT. xvi. 13. 15.

*Jesus asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? Whom do ye say that I am?*

**T**HE chief reason why our Saviour is so slighted, and why his words are of so little weight with the greatest part of mankind, is, because they do not know who he is. And even among those who are called by his name, and read his scriptures daily, there are not many who heartily believe in him.

From hence it is that some, when they speak seriously, or talk of religious matters, chuse as little as possible to name Jesus Christ, or his merits and redemption, but rather mention God Almighty, our Maker, the Divine Being, &c. and the more is the pity. It is often looked upon as ridiculous to speak of our Saviour as the true and very God; and such as venture to do it, must expect to be scorned and jeered, and laugh'd at for it, and will surely be as speckled birds, and as fools in all company. And thus for want of true faith in him, ministers, people, and whole countries, by little and little, leave the primitive doctrine of Christ, and get into a sort of refined heathenism; and this, I fear, is too much our case in these realms, where  
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once the churches looked upon the Redeemer as their only Lord,\* and watered this doctrine with the blood of some hundreds of martyrs; and upon which our English church solemnly professes to be built in all her Articles and Homilies.

In opposing superstition and the unreasonable and unscriptural principles of a degenerate church, some have unawares denied the faith, and rushed into infidelity, and a modest sort of atheism. To prevent my Christian brethren from this, I will endeavour, if possible, to be a means; and therefore have chosen this text, which are the words of our Saviour to his disciples, and which I will speak of in order.

Our Saviour knew what was in man, and needed not that any one should teach him; but, to prove his disciples, he once asked them, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" They answered, "Some say thou art Elias; others say thou art Jeremias; and some think thou art John the Baptist, or one of the old prophets risen from the dead." How confused were many at that time, and how few thought right! But it seems much the same even now, for see how all men differ in their judgments about him. The Turks say, he was a just person, a prophet of God, but no more. The Jews are divided; the most part look upon him as a deceiver, and the very destroyer of their religion and country, and do not like to hear of him; while a few, less rash, think better of him; but none will bear to hear that he is the Lord Jehovah; in them is that scripture fulfilled, "He came to his own, and his own received him not," John i. 11. Among the nominal, or so called, Christians, men who confess the truth of the New Testament,

\* See the hymn after the Communion.

how many opinions are there? Some look upon the Son of man as a prophet and apostle of God, the last and greatest of all the seers, or one of the highest of the principalities, whom God has honoured and appointed to be the founder of our religion and pattern of Christianity; which religious order he stored with divine and wholesome laws, perfected its precepts, lived in it a holy life, as a pattern and example; and, at last, after he had been a preacher of the best doctrines and solid morality, died a martyr for his religion. There are others who think him still more, and conclude, that "no man could do the miracles that he did, except God was with him;" and these can easily consent that he is the Son of God, and no mere man, but nevertheless will have a God, whom they call the Father, greater than he, and above him, and are far from meaning Jesus, when they read or speak of God Almighty; neither do they worship or pray to him as the Lord of heaven and earth, Jehovah.

From whence proceed these different principles of Christ? Why from hence, being ignorant of the scriptures and the power of God. If they had known the scriptures, they would answer cheerfully when asked, "What do ye think of Christ? He is the Lord, the Lord from heaven, the I AM; him, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the God of our fathers, the Lord God Almighty;" for thus the scriptures preach him every where. And had their hearts ever been enlightened by the Father; had they ever been taught of the Holy Ghost, or felt the power of God upon their own souls, they would confess with Thomas, "Thou art my Lord and my God!" or, with St. Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" And, in another place, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" Luke. v. 8.

Thus

Thus it is then that men are prone to err and judge according to their own weak reason, that neither the best confessions of faith, creeds, articles, homilies, liturgies, nor even the scripture itself, without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, can make them think rightly, or believe worthily, of the Son of man, our Lord.

What will be most proper to be considered in this discourse will be,

First, the divinity of Jesus Christ, and his eternal being and supremacy before all worlds, of all which he is the Maker, Lord, and Upholder.

Secondly, The doctrine of his humanity, or that mystery of grace, his holy incarnation; and for what end he was made man, and suffered death.

Thirdly, The hearty confession of a truly christian man.

I shall confine myself to speak only as the oracles of God, and to say none other, in defence and proof of these things, than what Moses, the prophets, the psalms, and witnesses of Jesus have before spoken. The church, which is the pillar and ground of truth, has always received the testimony of the scriptures; and we know, "if any man hear not these, then neither would he be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Where some have dared to question their veracity and truth, and ventured imprudently to jest or trifle with the words of God against their own conscience; such I leave to the Judge of all the earth, who in that day shall judge the dead out of the things written in the book; and on purpose I will speak only to those who receive the scriptures as the true sayings of God.

I believe no one can read the Bible, and count Christ's divinity a new doctrine; for then he must

have eyes and not see, and ears and not hear, since all the prophets have witnessed of him, and put it out of doubt, that he is the same that appeared to the fathers, the holy One of Israel, the true God and eternal life; and this will be plain from what follows.

It is said in the xviiiith chapter of Genesis, the Lord appeared to Abraham, that Abraham saw him, that he pleaded with him, that the Lord went his way from communing with him, &c. In the xxvith chapter it is said again, the Lord appeared to Isaac: and in the xxxiid chapter, he met Jacob, wrestled with him, gave him a new name, &c. And Jacob said; "I have seen God face to face;" and from hence he was called, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, i. e. the God who appeared to them, whom they served, and who blessed them.

In like manner he appeared to Moses, not only when he was hid in the rock, and the glory of God passed before him, and he saw the back parts of Jehovah, but it is also said, "he saw a similitude of God more than other prophets, and spake with him face to face, as a man speaketh with his friend," Exod. xxxiii. 11. Numb. xii. 8. So Manoah and his wife saw God, Judges xiii. 22. So Joshua saw the Lord and worshipped him as the Lord of hosts, Joshua v. 14. Micaiah says, "I saw the Lord," 1 Kings xxii. 19. Isaiah says the same, "I also saw the Lord," Isaiah vi. 1. And Daniel says, "I beheld the Ancient of Days," Dan. vii. 9. After all which our Saviour affirms, "No man hath seen the Father," John vi. 46. "Him whom ye say is your God, no man hath seen at any time," John i. 18. 1 John iv. 12. But then who was it that appeared? Whom did Moses and the prophets see? It was Jesus Christ: All saw him and spake



perish, but thou remainest ; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed, but thou art *the same*, and thy years shall not fail," Heb. 1. 8—12. Isaiah, when he saw his glory afar off, knew he would one day tabernacle with men ; and had foretold his name shall be Immanuel, Isa. vii. 14. ; or, as St. Paul hath it, God manifest in the flesh, 1 Tim. iii. 16. So Micah, speaking of God's birth in the world, says concerning his eternal existence, " his goings-forth have been of old, even from everlasting," Micah v. 2.

But why need I to use so many arguments, or bring more proofs to make it clear, that this doctrine of the Son of man's Godhead is according to the scriptures, since " his name is above every name that is named in heaven?" Phil. ii. 9. and since all the angels of God, or all the Elohim, or gods, worship before him : and the whole first chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews was written to prove the same thing, namely, that Jesus is no created being, no angel, in the common sense, no inferior deity, but the maker and supporter of all worlds and creatures, the very essence and express image and person of God, whom all creatures and angels serve, and before whom all the Gods fall down and worship.

That he is more than all prophets and sons of God, is evident also from Heb. iii. 3. " This Man is counted worthy of more honour than Moses, inasmuch as he who has builded the house, has more honour than the house, because he built the house, which house we are ; and is before all things, and author of all, whether angels, principalities, thrones, or men, visible or invisible ; and is heir and inheritor of all, supporting them by the word of his power ; God over all blessed for ever," Heb. i. 2, 3. John i. 3. Rom. ix. 5. xi. 36. But,

But, to say no more, if he be not God, verily and truly how can we blame the Jews for going about to stone him? or how can we say, "with wicked hands they have crucified and slain him?" Since their reasons for it were, "Because of blasphemy, in that he, being a man, made himself God," John x. 33. and because he said, "Before Abraham was, I AM," John viii. 58. And this was their accusation before Pilate, "He ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God," John xix. 7. My dear brethren, there is no medium; either he is God, or a blasphemer. If he be God, then give him his honour, and serve him as God; and if not, then do not be any longer called by his name; openly join the Turks and Jews, and cry out, "Away with him from the earth! We will not have this Man to reign over us!"

So sure were the cloud of his witnesses, and the noble army of martyrs, of the eternal divinity of their Master, that they would know no other, preached no other, but agreed to publish through the earth the doctrine they had received of their Head. "All men must honour the Son, even as the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father," John v. 23. "He that is not in the doctrine of the Son, he is without God, he is an Atheist," 2 John 9. Among the faithful assertors of this true doctrine, St. Paul is particular; he tells the Ephesians, "at that time that ye were without Christ, ye were without God in the world," Eph. ii. 12. And again, "In him dwelleth the whole fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. ii. 9. But all this we have immediately from the Lord and Bishop of our souls himself: for when Philip wanted once to see the Father, of whom he had heard Jesus say so much, and thought then he should be fully satisfied, our Saviour said to him,  
"Philip,



\* Philip, have I been so long with you, and you have not known me? He that seeth me, seeth the Father: I am in the Father, and the Father in me," John xiv. 9, 10.

The whole book of the Revelations teacheth us, that Jesus is he, "which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty: He who is God and the Almighty in the midst of the throne: He before whom all sing and worship upon their faces, casting down their crowns to the ground at his feet, because he has been slain: He who is the King of kings and Lord of lords: He who shall judge the world, and is the First and the Last;" and who is, as St. Peter and Paul declare him, "the Lord of all," Acts x. 36.

I pass by, on purpose, many places of this kind, because if I should bring all the proofs which could be brought, to shew who the Son of man is, I must then bring all the Bible, for all testify of him; all confess him the Lord, beside martyrs and confessors without number, who all sung their hymns, according to Pliny, to one Jesus, whom they (i. e. Christians) honoured and worshipped as God; and thist the venerable council of Nice confirmed, and all the churches of Christ in the east and west, and in every age, both received and preached this doctrine: for upon this Rock is the whole universal or catholic church built, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. These scriptures, however, may be enough to prove, that Jesus is indeed the everlasting Lord God, who made heaven and earth, the One God spoken of by all the prophets, the supreme Maker and Ruler of all worlds, and who, with all his greatness and Majesty, is Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Now I come, secondly, to speak of the humanity of the Most High, and for what end God humbled himself to put on our nature; and this is well expressed

pressed in the words of the Nicene creed: "For us men, and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, and was made man:" or, in St. John's gospel, after he had asserted the Word or Logos was God, and without him was not any thing made that is made, he says, "and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," John i. 14. And the same apostle even determines hereby who are of God; namely, those who confess him in the flesh, and forbids to believe or receive any other doctrine, because he says it is of antichrist, and of the false prophet, to deny him in the flesh, 1 John iv. 2. Since then this is so material a matter, let us give the more earnest heed to it, for no mystery of grace or power is greater or more sacred than this, "God manifest in the flesh." As surely as Jesus is very and essentially God, equal to the Father, and the Holy Ghost, in the blessed Trinity, so also is he very and true man, flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, and became like us in all things, sin only excepted. This was needful, for else he could not have suffered or died; and, in this respect, he who was God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, humbled himself, and was in form of a servant, and differed nothing from a servant, though he was Lord of all: and in this state it was true the Father was greater than he, and every angel higher than he, "since for the suffering of death he was made a little lower than the angels," Heb. ii. 9.

Here then come and worship, and adore, and be astonished, all who hear me! to see him who made you, and is the very image and brightness of the Father, made a man, and appearing in the likeness of sinful flesh. See him before whom the seraphims covered their faces in their wings, now the Son of man and the offspring of David. He humbles himself and appears in our nature and image, when we had

had lost and forfeited his. He lays by all the glory of a son, and is a servant under the law, that we, who were servants, might receive the glory and honour to become sons of God. Here, then, see how he loved us. He did not stoop to be an angel or wear the form of a seraphim, though that had been amazing humility, but stooped yet far lower, and became man! Why this was necessary, and why God would vouchsafe so to abase himself, was, That as by man came sin, so by man might sin be taken away: "that as by one man's disobedience all became sinners, so by the obedience of one Man all might become righteous." Redemption was his divine aim through the whole; and therefore, when he saw sin enter into the world, and beheld the dreadful effects of it upon every creature, and knew how the curse, and death, and hell, would ruin justly all mankind, he pitied us, or, as it is expressed in Ezekiel, "saw us in our blood, and had compassion on us." He knew he had not made us to destroy us; nor could delight in the death of a sinner, or even bear to see us lost without help. No, far be such thoughts from our hearts; he loved us with everlasting love, and resolved to be our Saviour. His heart yearned over us, and was touched with our miseries and sad estate; and though he knew beforehand what it would cost him to save us with equity, and to bring us out of the hands of the enemy with righteousness, yet he determined, cost what it would, to save us. He foresaw what he must endure in our stead, what horror and distress he must sustain in making an atonement for us; considered how our punishment would make him sweat blood, and endure the pangs of hell and death, yet he was bent upon our delivery, and saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied.

This was then the great end of our Lord Jehovah's incarnation, that he might be capable of dying

dying for his church and suffering in our stead, and so clear and absolve and justify us before his throne, and reconcile us to his Father and our Father, and make up our breach. Here at once he makes all his angels see how he loved us; and to make a perfect and infinite amends and satisfaction, he decrees to offer himself, and bear all our sins in his own body upon the tree. He knew no creature could undertake this work; nor indeed would he trust any one with the souls who were so precious in his sight, or hazard their perishing eternally through the default of him to whom he should trust the redemption. He only was worthy in heaven and earth, and under the earth, to be the Saviour; and therefore when the appointed time came, the day of God's vengeance, he came down ready into the world to meet the storm, and drink up the curse in his own flesh and blood. Therefore he uses that similitude in the gospel, "I would have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings." We know how the careful hen behaves when the sky lowers and threatens a storm; she spreads out her wings over her chickens, and sits contented in the shower and tempest to shelter and screen them; and often it has been seen that a hen has really died and perished over her young, when the storm of heavy hail or rain has been great. But now forget where you are, and let me lead you to mount Calvary, and I will show you the antetype of all this, and greater love: there Jesus, the God of all flesh and Shepherd of the sheep, when he saw the wrath like a black cloud lower; or, as he says in the Psalms, "when the waterspouts of God threatened," he made ready, put on our nature, and stretched out his arms upon the cross (as the hen stretches out her wings),  
and

and calls to all his guilty children, "Come unto me: turn ye to the strong-hold, till the wrath be overpast;" and there does he die in the distressing stormy wind and tempest: the billows went over his head; the sword of the Lord awakened upon him, and the deep waters entered his soul; but there he hung amidst all, that he might be a hiding-place to his people, a refuge and a sanctuary to his guilty flock; and did not grudge to die, treading as it were the wine-press of the wrath of God, so he might thereby but spare the souls, and gather them to him as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings: and this is true, whoever flies to him, or escapes to that shelter, shall be safe; they shall find a rest for their souls. This was his aim in becoming a man, his design in tabernacling among us, that to him shall all flesh come; and that whosoever would come to him, should find everlasting life. This many thousand souls find true daily; and experience in their hearts assuredly that they are safe in him, and no man shall pluck them out of his hands. O blessed Refuge! O happy refugees! Would to God that all who hear me this day had found him their strong hold, their place to flee to in time of trouble, and knew his everlasting arms were over them to shelter and bless them, and underneath to keep them lest they should fall! Would to God all that are here did hereby perceive the love of God, that he laid down his life for us! Would to God that all overseers, ministers, and shepherds, in the service of the chief Priest, would but hence learn how God loved the world, and would not spare any pains, or cares, or labour, night or day, to help and feed the church which God purchased with his own blood, but let all men see, by their diligence and concern

cern for the salvation of men, that they believe in their hearts what they read and confess with their lips concerning the love of Christ and this his merciful and glorious redemption. Whoever have known him, have known him God Almighty; and of this their inmost heart is persuaded by the Holy Ghost; and whoever have got his redemption, are out of doubt that their sins have been washed away, and their raiment made white in the blood of the Lamb. It is such who worship him as their true Lord and Saviour; and such only can properly answer to this question, "Whom do you say that I am?" These, without hesitation, without much time to reflect, and without all doubt, know and can answer, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God! Thou art the Lord! Thou art my Lord and my God!"

This brings me to the third thing proposed. Since this is the confession of a true christian man, to answer to that question of the Lord Christ, "Whom do you say that I am? Whom dost thou say that I the Son of man am?" Here the believer is not at a loss; he believes Jesus Christ is his God and Maker, and has saved him by dying for him in his flesh, else he believes nothing at all, and is not worthy to be called by his name; and even his calling him Lord, Lord, is taking his name in vain. But as I said, a believer, a true christian, a child of God, a disciple or follower of Christ, is one who has not satisfied or contented himself with the name of a christian, or with hearing the gospel of salvation, or with performing pious deeds or good works, &c. alone, but has obtained of the Holy Ghost living faith in the godhead and blood of our Saviour, and knows and feels that all his sins and

offences are pardoned and done away, and he is justified justly by Christ's death, who gave himself in his stead, and suffered and underwent his curse to save and redeem him. This he firmly depends upon and is comforted, and lives a happy and good life, to the honour of the holy name which is named upon him. Nor is such an one afraid or ashamed to acknowledge Jesus before men; nor will that God, in whom he believes, be ashamed of him before the angels, when he shall come, at the latter day, in the glory of his Father: but here, in an adulterous generation, where men do not love him nor live to please him: here, where Satan's seat is, and where many despise the foolishness of the preaching of the cross, he continues a witness of the Lamb, and when asked, "Whom do you say that Jesus is?" can make this happy answer, I believe he is the God of the whole earth, my Saviour and my Redeemer.

I believe that Jesus Christ, who was born in Bethlehem of the virgin Mary, who suffered under Pontius Pilate without the gates of Jerusalem, is verily, truly, and eternally God, the same person all the scriptures mention and treat of, and whom all true believers in all ages have known and worshipped as the holy One of Israel, the God of all mankind.

I believe God, the whole Godhead by him, made heaven and earth and all the worlds, things visible and invisible; that he made me body and soul, and saw me from his throne in my sinful state, and loved and pitied me, and in due time was a man for my sake; and by his obedience and meritorious life and death has now fully atoned for all my misdeeds and sins, and made me thereby just in the sight of God and the whole  
whole

whole blessed Trinity. I believe this Jesus Christ is my God, my Lord, my righteousness, my holiness, my redemption, the only wisdom which can do me good, my Saviour in time and in eternity; and I will hereon venture my body and soul for ever and ever.

I believe also and confess, that though I have been unworthy of his mercy, and no more deserved his favour, that yet, out of his free grace, his Holy Spirit has awakened and called me out of all my sins, and made to be concerned about my eternal state, and athirst for mercy and righteousness; that then it pleased the Son of God, my Saviour, to reveal his love in my heart, and to manifest himself to me, so that now I know I am his and he is mine. He loves me and I him; and whether I live or die I am his, who hath both lived and died, and rose and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and of the living.

I believe, when I depart out of this world, I shall go to him in peace; and, when my pilgrimage and warfare is ended, I shall find a rest with him upon his throne; and, without tasting death, his angels shall carry me to his bosom, and I shall enter by the gates into the paradise of God, and follow him upon mount Zion with the church of the first-born, and with the spirits of just men made perfect; with whom I shall sit down in white raiment in the temple of God, and go no more out.

I believe that a day shall come when all people shall see the same Jesus that was crucified, coming in the clouds; and then every tongue shall confess his divinity, and every knee bow before him, who then shall appear in his Father's glory with all his saints and angels; and shall himself judge the world in righteousness, and save whom he will. In that day it shall be out of doubt who the Son of man is;



for heaven and earth and hell shall know he is the only Potentate, the God of gods and Lord of lords; and all those, that would not have him to reign over them, shall flee before him. Then I believe he will confess me, and not be ashamed of me; and on this I depend with all my heart. To him, with his Father and my Father, and to the Holy Ghost, one God blessed for ever, be salvation and praise, henceforth world without end. Amen.

## DISCOURSE XVI.

### THE SOWER.

MARK iv. 9.

*He that hath ears to hear let him hear.*

**T**H**ES**E words were spoken by our Saviour with particular emphasis, after he had ended the Parable of the Sower, and because of his speaking thus the disciples prayed with him when he was alone to unfold and explain what the parable meant, as well as that manner of speaking, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear," for hitherto they were unacquainted with both. Our Saviour then told them, that he must use similitudes, according to the prophecy, and speak in parables to such as were without, or unconverted, and not brought into the fold; but blesses their eyes, because, he saith, they see, and their ears for they hear; and meekly vouchsafed to open the whole before them, and to teach them, that although a man may have outward eyes, yet as long as he is not enlightened from above, he is blind and does not see; and though he have ears and is not taught of the Father in his heart, he does not hear; therefore he said, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." He whose ears my Father hath opened to the Gospel of salvation, who is awakened, and wants to understand the mysteries of the king-

dom, let him hear; to him is this message, to him are sent the words of this salvation.

Perhaps it would not be amiss for me to speak a little more of this matter, and give some reasons why our Lord Christ in the days of his flesh chose to speak in similitudes, and to deliver his doctrine in parables; and why, after his resurrection, the apostles did quite otherwise, and spoke so plainly the gospel, without using the Jewish figures or shadows, or the dark speeches or parables.

The reasons may be reduced to these two; First, because (till the death of Christ, who was the true Lamb, and that offering which was so long looked for to take away the iniquity of the land in one day) the Mosaical or Jewish dispensation did not cease; and as the whole of that dispensation was a sort of parable, a shadow of good things to come, and not the very substance, and as the prophets had used similitudes, and God had spoke to them very commonly in that way, which every one may see who reads the scripture; so Jesus, the head of all their goodly company, continued to speak in the same way, till the veil should be rent in twain in his flesh, and a way be opened thereby into the holy of holies by his blood. Hence it is that our Saviour seemed to speak plainly of his kingdom and salvation so seldom, and then only to his children and disciples, as it is written, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but to others it is not given," Matt. xiii. 11. This went so far, that it should have seemed as if he only preached to the elect of Israel, and spoke therefore in such a manner as if none should understand him but those whom his Father drew to him and enlightened. This appears more likely when we find our Saviour so charge his disciples, not to go to the Gentiles, nor enter the villages  
even

even of the Samaritans, though they were of the family of Abraham. This made so many expressions of our Saviour seem as if he only had regard to such as the Father had given him before all worlds, and endeavour, as it were, to hide the gospel from the rest: and on to a too hasty conclusion of this sort many have been rash, and maintained very hot and lamentable disputes about election, of which, no doubt, they will one day be ashamed, having not understood the mystery of God; how he secretly proposed not only to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel, but to give our Saviour for a light to the Gentiles, and his salvation to the ends of the earth, Isa. xlix. 6. However, so much must be allowed, that our Saviour's discourse at Nazareth, his charge to his disciples, his saying, "No man cometh to me except my Father draw him," as well as his last prayer in the xviiith of St. John's gospel, prove his peculiar care of those who came to him out of Israel; but then he adds, "When I am lifted up, then I will draw all men after me: I can quicken whom I will; and accordingly we see how he commands the same disciples, whom he had before forbid to go to the Samaritans or Gentiles, now to preach the gospel to every creature, and promises, I will stand by you, I will be with you to the end of the world. But, as I said before, till by his death he had made the world his own again, he spake in parables after the Jewish manner, and left it over to his Father to give ears to hear, and a heart to understand, and pronounces those blessed who did hear and understand him.

The other reason for his doing this, was, that whoever would understand him might come and ask him privately; and hereby we may learn, that whatever appears dark to us in the scripture, or hidden,

or like a parable, in the doctrine of our Saviour, will always remain so, unless he by his Holy Spirit clear it to us; he must anoint our eyes with his eye-salve, if we would see; he must touch our ears, and say *Epphatha*, i. e. be opened, if we would hear and live. May his parable have that effect upon us, that we may daily enquire of him the true meaning, and so be taught of God and be wise in his sight, that he may say to us, "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear," what kings and righteous men and prophets have desired to see and have not seen; even the days of the Son of man and his salvation clearly, that you see; and what they wished to hear of the plain and pure gospel of his free grace and redemption, but did not hear, that ye hear. Nor may any helpful to us, or what concerns our eternal happiness, be sealed up or hid from us; rather may we have ears to hear, and a heart to understand, that we may be converted and be saved, and escape every evil in time and eternity!

I come now to speak of the parable itself, with the meaning of it, as our Saviour has been pleased to explain it to his disciples.

He saith, "A sower went out to sow his seed, and some fell by the way-side," that is, upon the road, upon the path whereon people go, and which is hard and unbroken, and this was partly trodden down and destroyed by such as went that way, and the rest the fowls of the air, that in such cases sit watching upon the neighbouring trees and hedges, devoured as soon as the sower was gone. A second parcel of seed fell upon stony ground, or as St. Luke describes it, upon a rock, where it had not much deepness of earth, nor moisture; and this, though it sprung up, when the sun arose and shone hot upon it, because it had no depth for its root,  
nor

nor moisture, withered away. A third part fell among thorns, that is, in the hedges and among the weeds and briars; and this either rotted and came to nothing, or else what sprung up was soon choaked with the thorns that came up with it, that it bore no fruit. The fourth part fell upon the good ground, namely, upon the land tilled and ploughed for that purpose; here no travellers' feet trod it down, it was soon harrowed in by the husbandman, so that the fowls could not devour it; the hardness and stony nature was removed, the ground manured and made good, so that it could take deep root downward and bear fruit upward, and not easily be blown up with high winds, nor scorched up with the sun; there were no thorns nor weeds to choak it, "but it brought forth some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold."

I reverence always and adore our Saviour, whenever I read or hear his parables; for though he was the God of wisdom, and knew all the sciences and arts from everlasting, yet in his preaching a peasant can understand and comprehend as well as the most learned philosopher. When he would liken the kingdom of God, or compare it to earthly things, his likenesses are plain and easy, suited to the meanest capacity; and though the learned and understanding part of mankind have formerly done it, and may yet dare to dispise his manner of preaching, his parables, and mean comparisons, yet shall it appear the wisdom of God, in that day, when he shall shew "how he has chosen the weak things, and base, and things that are despised, to bring to naught the pride of man and the haughtiness of the world, and reveal to babes and foolish what is hid even from the wise and prudent."

How many of you that hear me have read this scripture, as well as others of the like nature, and  
thought

thought no farther about it? How have you had ears, but would not hear what the Lord would hereby say to you? Now I pray you to give attention, and O may God so open the ears of all your hearts that you may henceforth hear and live!

The sower is properly the Son of Man; he is the chief Minister, the first and principal Labourer and Husbandman in all God's vineyard; but in some respects every minister of Jesus Christ is a sower, and so strews the good seed out of the treasure of his heart, in all places wheresoever he comes.

"The seed is the word of God," which Jesus himself first gave and preached in the world, and with which now his ministers are commissioned, who are sowers of the seed of eternal life.

"The ground is the heart," whereon the seed is sown.

"Those who receive the seed by the way-side," are the careless and light-minded, who hear the gospel, and are as unconcerned as if they heard some idle tale: Their ears are open to every merry story, to all curious accounts, to every foolish song, but deaf to the words of the Saviour, "as the deaf adder, which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely." These are they whose hearts were never broken, or concerned about eternal life, and least the preaching of the gospel, the love of Christ, or the promises in his word should have any effect upon them, the devils watch, like the fowls of the air, least if in reading the scripture, or under some discourse, they should appear at all affected, to steal away the very remembrance of it, and get perhaps some pleasant company to divert or laugh away their devout thoughts; some play, or dress, or romance must amuse them; some diversion or pleasure must raise their

their spirits, or drinking or feasting overcharge their hearts, and drown all the least stirrings of grace, and so the preacher sows and preaches in vain, and they receive it by the way-side in vain. O think to yourselves, Am not I the man? Have not I so heard and received the seed all my life time? And has not the devil always found means to make all the gospel to me nothing, and blinded and hardened my heart to all the loving intreaties of the Lamb of God, and hid, as it were, his blood and gospel from me? O pray our Saviour to drive away the fowls, and command the nest of every unclean and hateful bird to keep off, that you may once hear in faith the words of God, and be saved.

But no doubt there are many here who will not reckon themselves among this sort: You, perhaps, have had a respect for the Bible, have been educated religiously, and gone strictly to church or meeting, done a great deal of good, &c. and after all may have been of that sort who receive the seed upon a rock, and upon stony ground. Those that fall under this blame are such as hear the word with joy; they may be so affected that they may think "never man spake like this Man;" they may go and call others, be very industrious to bring many to hear the gospel, and would not miss the hearing the word of God upon any account. They are such as frequent all religious places and company, read all pious books, receive the sacrament, and be diligent in many good works, but have still a heart of adamant, a heart like the nether mill-stone: They have never known what it was to melt before the blood and dying of Jesus, nor to be like wax before the fire of his burnt-offering. Our Saviour saith, the word in such springs up directly, but when the sun is up, in a time of heat, they wither away, because they have no depth, nor moisture; by this he means, they have no root  
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in themselves, they have no inward experience of the love of God, nor have any more than a superficial joy, a flame like the foolish virgins' lamps, that soon goes out for lack of oil, and when affliction, or temptation, or persecution arises, because of the word, by and by they are offended: They like the doctrine of Christ, and seem to begin well, but by and by one of their old companions mocks them, or their masters, benefactors, and parents threaten them, people of fashion are ashamed of them, and ten thousand things war with them on account of their being disposed for eternal life, and so they by little and little are offended; and since their hearts have never been softened and made tender by the blood and sufferings of Christ, at last all their good desires languish and wither, and in a short time they are again in the world as deceived as ever. O! hear this, my dear brethren, and call an assize in your own breast, judge yourselves in this weighty matter, and ask your own heart, Am I not one of these? People who are hereby meant are in many dangers; first, from a hard heart; secondly, from being ashamed of our Saviour; and, thirdly, from a fear of man.

By a hard heart I mean what is described in Eze-kiel, as a heart of stone. A man may be found in all the doctrines of the scripture in his head; he may have been very strict in what men call duty; he may have a glorious name in the world, and be looked upon as half a saint, be a great disputant for religion, and after all have a heart like a flint-stone, and like a rock, so that all the preaching of the cross, all the love of our Saviour, has to this day had no effect upon it: They have hitherto patched up a religion of their own making, and are really and truly dead as a stone to the merits of Jesus Christ, quite cold to his loving heart, and without the least inward acquaintance with him. Should you feel  
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and think, this is my case, so it is with my heart, then behold there is a remedy.

“ In Jesu’s blood a healing pow’r doth dwell,  
“ Enough to melt the hardest heart in hell.”

He only is the good husbandman, and can turn the wilderness into the garden of God, the flint-stone into a springing well. He only knows how to melt and soften the most stupid and hardened state, and turn the heart of stone into a heart of flesh. Turn ye to him, and learn what Job saith, “ It is God that maketh my heart soft;” or the spouse in Solomon’s song, “ My soul melted while my Beloved spake,” Cant. v. 6. He that spake to the rock in the wilderness, when the waters gushed out, he alone can make you right, dissolve the ice and coldness in your hearts, “ and make the rocks flow at his presence.” Be your hearts never so stupid, hard, and stubborn, be your hearts never so cold or frozen, one drop of the blood he shed will make it happy and tender, and kindle such a flame of divine love there, as “ many waters cannot quench, nor the floods drown.” Come ye then, come ye to these waters, and you shall be eternally saved, and out of all danger on this account.

But there is yet another danger, and that is, being ashamed of Christ and his gospel. This has gone far with some poor people, they could not follow Jesus out of the camp, bearing his reproach, but rather than be mocked, or laughed at, or counted a fool, they have by and by been seduced from following the Lamb. Our Saviour has said positively, “ Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he comes with his Father’s glory, and with the holy angels.”

You know how far it went with Peter in this respect; he had continued several years a close disciple and follower of our Saviour, till that night when Jesus was arraigned, and then he was really ashamed, and was got warming himself by the fire. He had no business either in the place or in the company, and this became the sad occasion of his fall; for when a silly maid made her game, and called him a disciple of Christ, he denied it, and at last swore he did not know him. How far it would have gone with him I do not know, if Jesus had not turned and looked upon him, and then "he went out and wept bitterly;" nor did he ever rest till Jesus rose from the dead and pardoned him.

As long as the doctrines and gospel of our Saviour pass unmolested in the world, in a town, or country, it is easy to go among his people; but when it becomes scandalous, when men raise ten thousand lies and slanders upon it and its professors, when none but fools, low-lived people, and mad persons, are said to be its abettors, then many are offended, and they are really ashamed of their Lord Christ. But methinks I hear some say, O no; God forbid that I should be ashamed of Christ. I hope one may go to heaven without making one's self ridiculous, without all this to do. I am not ashamed of the word of God, but only I have no mind to be a fool. Sure if I keep to my place of worship, and do my duty in a creditable way, I shall be accepted.—Whoever you are, that so reason, take care; I am afraid if the carpenter's Son was now in the flesh among us, and went about with a few poor fishermen and women, you would despise his meanness; should you hear his plain simple discourses, which all men derided, you would be ashamed, and walk no more with him. If you are upright, then do not care if heaven and earth laugh you to scorn; be content to be slighted, abused, scorned,

scorned, and count it an honour to suffer shame for his name's sake. Stay a little while, and you will see who will have reason to be ashamed; not the souls who have followed the Lamb, who have put on his righteousness, and obtained of him the Spirit of adoption, these shall not be ashamed; but those shall be ashamed who have not his white raiment, who were once too wise, too prudent, too proud to be his disciples. The Lord grant you may escape this danger, that ye may be worthy to stand before the Son of man.

There is yet another danger which those people are in, and that is, when persecution ariseth because of the word. Some despise the shame, and in a philosophical spirit disregard it, but when the persecution comes, when the parents will disown the children, the master turn away his servants, the trader refuse to buy or sell with you; when threatenings, ill words, blows, dismembering, and danger of losing a good deal comes, those who before withstood other opposition, now yield, and Satan gains his point. The blessed awakening ceases, the love of the word of God is stifled, and the soul turns to the world, and chuses its portion in this life. Would to God such people would think of "what advantage would it be to them to gain all the world and lose their own souls?" Or how could they bear to hear our Saviour say to them in that day, "Ye loved the world, your riches, your company, better than me;" or be put in mind, "Remember, when a little storm arose on my account, ye forsook me and fled." May this also not happen to us? May this, O God, be far from us all! But here, before I conclude this part of my discourse, let me ask, Why is it that souls can be swayed by such things? How is it a person, who is disposed to be saved, can be turned out of the way and be offended? It is really  
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because their hearts were never made tender by the blood of Jesus, they wanted a thorough awakening there. Had they ever once seen how God purchased them with his own blood, how he valued and loved them, even so as to die for them: had his love ever melted their hearts, or had they any depth of love to him and his merits; had they ever felt deeply his sword, like a plough-share, break up the fallow ground, and pierce into the bottom of their corrupt and spoiled nature, so that they were deeply sensible of their want, their great need of our Saviour's wounds and sufferings to make them whole, they would not, they could not have been turned from him by any means; all shame and opposition, all losses and threatenings would be welcome to them, and the sword, and fire, and prison, or whatever hell or wicked men could devise, would be very little, so they might but get or win Jesus Christ. O pray ye, that our compassionate Saviour may break the rock of your hearts in pieces, and give you a new heart and a new spirit, and save you from receiving any longer the seed upon stony ground.

“Those that receive the seed among thorns,” our Saviour says, “are such as hear the word, but the deceitfulness of riches, the cares of this world, and pleasures of this life, mingle with it and choke it, so that it bears no fruit, but is lost.”

How many are there in the world who easily perceive how dangerous a careless and giddy mind is; how bad a condition their's is also, where the heart is like a rock, and where shame and persecution have so great sway and influence, but never dream of their own cares, pleasures, or love of money; whereas, dear me! these are in equal danger with them.

I will speak first to you, ye over and above careful people; you who can rise early and late take rest to get the common bread, and provide treasure upon earth;

earth; ye cumbered Marthas, who are always busy and industrious, but forget "the one thing needful, the good part which shall not be taken away."

To what purpose are ye so full of cares and thoughts? Why do ye eat the bread of carefulness, and neglect the true Bread that came down from heaven, and that raiment which should make you all glorious within, clean and white, ready for the marriage of the Lamb?

Ye know the persons who made their excuses for not coming to the supper of the King's son, were of your sort; "one had bought oxen, and must prove them; another had purchased land, and must see it; another was engaged in his farm, another busy in his trade and merchandise, and yet another was married, had a wife and children to provide for, and so prayed to be excused;" but hear only the answer of the King, when the servants returned and told him, he said, "Not one of them shall taste of my supper." Let me advise you a little; Henceforth be industrious and diligent, but only do not forget that you are servants, and not masters. Look upon all you have as if it was not your's, but your Master Christ's. Let losses or disappointments happen, place it to his account, and take you thought about the living Bread, that is, Christ's flesh, and the living Water, that is, his blood. Make it sure to you that you have a part in these, and that Jesus has prepared a place in his Father's house, and you shall be happy. Ye who have been like Martha, be now like Mary, and sit down at Jesus's feet, and "hearken and learn of him; and you shall find rest to your busy and careful souls." It is not your having a family to provide for, a farm, a trade, your being a dealer, a master, or a servant, a husband or wife, a child or parent, that can hinder you to be saved, if your heart be but right.

But as the garden brings up weeds, as it were, of itself, which would choke what is sown therein, if it be not kept weeded, so are our hearts; there is sin enough to render all the good seed sown there in vain, unless Jesus's eyes of fire try our hearts, and burn up all the useless and worldly cares, and those sins which else choke his word and make it unfruitful.

I will speak also to you who are cheated with the deceitfulness of riches, who perhaps never once in your life thought there was any danger in being rich, but have wished for it with all your hearts. Our Saviour has wisely called it the deceitfulness of riches, because such it really is, and no other. The poor cheat themselves in hoping to become rich, and those who have this world deceive themselves, and imagine themselves wealthy, and having much, and have not yet got the least spark of the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. They do not know that they have any part in the kingdom of God; or in the gold tried in the fire, which is the righteousness and merits of Christ Jesus. O such, with all they have, are poor and miserable. What good did all the rich man's barns, full of corn and plenty, and his bags and chests of gold do him, when God called him, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee?" Or of what use was it to Belshazzar that he could feast with all his nobles, and eat and drink out of bowls of silver and gold, when the same night a hand-writing upon the wall tells him, "His kingdom is given away from him, and he is weighed in the balances, and found wanting. Or of what comfort was it to Dives, that just before he had been clothed in scarlet, and purple, and fine linen, and fared sumptuously or delicately every day, and now must lift up his eyes in the torment of hell, and want a drop of water to cool his tongue? They were deceived with the deceitfulness of riches,  
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and forgot how hard it was for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. But whoever among you have hitherto been mistaken, hear me a little: Are you poor now? then learn to be content, and seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and you shall be rich. Mind it not, though here you may be a vessel of dishonour, like Lazarus, only let our dear Saviour be your sure portion; lay up treasure in heaven, get your part ascertained in his merits and atonement, and indeed you shall be rich; you shall have a kingdom that cannot be removed, and be yourselves upon the throne of God, kings and priests to the Lamb for ever. Are you rich: Have you much of this world? Then be faithful stewards, and cast your bread upon the waters, that you may find it again; and let it be your chief, your only study, to ensure your interest in Christ, and lay hold on eternal life. Do not look upon yourselves as better than others, nor value a possession which in one hour may leave you destitute as a beggar: be rich in faith, in love, and good works; in all other respects be poor, and as one that needs the precious blood of the Lamb, and his salvation and pardon daily and hourly; so lie at his gate, like Lazarus, full of sores, and desire to be fed with the crumbs which fall from his table; and resolve to continue a poor despised disciple of your despised Master, and come follow him, and you shall be rich, "you shall have treasure in heaven, raiment and jewels which no moth or rust can corrupt, and gold, which no thief can break through and steal;" and when you must go hence, and be no more seen, though you can carry nothing with you of all your goods or temporal blessings, you shall be received by "the King of kings, and Lord of Lords," into the New Jerusalem, and go no more out. O may our merciful Lord and Saviour, in this sense, make us rich, for his name sake!



I must yet speak to one sort of people more, whose hearts have received the word of God among thorns; and these are those who are led away with the pleasures of this life. I fear many who hear me are of this poor deceived number. Many have lived ten, twenty, thirty years in the world, and perhaps their whole lives, and never knew that what they call their innocent mirth, lawful recreations, and harmless pleasures, have been the very thorns which have choked the word. But let me reason with you also a little, for else I should be inexcusable. I know what the pleasures of this life are; they are what St. Paul calls "the pleasures of sin for a season," and such as Moses left in the court of Pharaoh for Christ's sake. They are like Job's friends, miserable comforters indeed. In vain does one dress when his poor soul is naked, and ashamed before God; in vain he decks his body, when his spirit is without the righteousness of faith, and the beauty and comeliness which our Saviour puts on a soul, when he washes it and adorns it for the eternal bride-chamber; however he may amuse himself thus a little, his naked estate and vile heart must sometimes appear before him, and make him trembling think, Who knows but this painted and decorated wretch may ere long be summoned into eternity? And this deforms and sullies all his gaiety and finery. In vain another runs to the play-house, or visits some place of diversion and pastime; a guilty mind and conscience must sometimes speak, and turn all their best sweets to gall and wormwood. In vain a third keeps company, and with unlawful and wanton looks, airs, and words, stirs up the lustful fire; it shall be like a vulture at the heart. A dread unspeakable succeeds close at the heels of such delights; a horror like the shadow of death, and secret remorse and stings, plague the breast where such fires burn,  
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and all are like the book John ate, however sweet it is in the mouth, in the belly shall it be very bitter. In vain a fourth feasts, and drinks new wine and strong drink, or sings away his days, or with riding, walking, hunting, or play, thinks to make himself happy; the wisest of all men tried all these things, and got all the delights of the sons of men, and at last confessed, what we all know to be true, "In the midst of laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness;" and a wiser man than Solomon hath said, "Wo be to them that laugh now, for they shall mourn and weep." But why is it that souls are so bewitched and allured? Why are the greatest part of mankind so deceived? The old serpent that deceives all them that dwell on the earth has persuaded them, that else they shall always be mopes, and melancholy in the world; nor have they understood that "the ways of Wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace." Ye foolish people, if ye did but know how really fine, and like a bride prepared for the bridegroom, a soul is who has put on the Lord Jesus, ye would slight heartily all other finery for evermore. Come and be embraced one moment by the Friend of sinners, and receive his pardon, and nothing would so affect you for ever, nothing so please you as the tragedy of the Son of David; his tears and heaviness should always keep you chearful, and his bitterness of soul, when he felt the sting of death, would be your hourly happiness and joy.

Ye wanton and lustful men and women, come ye to Gethsemane, and see those cold drops of sweat which fell down to the ground like blood, from the Holy One; this shall root out, and extinguish, and wash away for ever all the impure flames which have so racked your mind, and exposed you to the most horrible dread on this side eternity. Our Sa-  
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viour pities you, and is ready to save you from all your sins. There is no lust, no unholy and wild fire, no cursed inbred lechery, and whorish and unclean thought or wish which his blood and death-sweat cannot utterly abolish and drown. If you knew in what safety they dwell, with what peace they go forward, and how calm and undisturbed they are who are saved and made chaste, and washed white in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, you would not once more look back, or desire again to be entangled in the old sins; no, you would bless the Lamb day and night who had delivered you and saved you from so great misery and danger. Ye drunkards and rioters, ye lovers of feasting and banqueting, come ye to the marriage-feast of the Lamb. Jesus invites you, to drink freely of the fountain of life, and to eat of the hidden manna. Ye who are fond of music, come and hearken to our Saviour, for his voice is sweet; all the music of the angels is nothing else but the echo of his love and forgiveness. Do you love a concert, come up and you shall see ten thousand harping upon their harps before the Lamb that was slain, and millions of trumpets blowing to the honour of his name. Do ye esteem songs? O get your lips touched with a coal from off the altar, and you shall join in the song of Moses and the Lamb upon mount Sion. If that mouth, which was once struck by the soldiers, kiss you and seal your pardon, the songs of the drunkards will no more be pleasing, nor the shouts of such as make merry; you will feel a joy which they understand not, and your lips shall utter a song which shall please your Beloved, and be the language of a heart that has overcome and obtained mercy in God our Saviour. You shall be happy witnesses that our Redeemer's service is perfect freedom, and that his children are the only happy people in  
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in the world: No secret misgivings check their joys, nor fears of an unexpected summons to another world; no shuddering at the approach of judgment, nor stings of a guilty conscience, interrupt their bliss, or hinder their real peace. No, they have our Saviour with them, they foretaste the pleasures of his right hand, and are happy, quite happy in his everlasting arms, and in his wounds, like doves in the clefts of the rock. O that all here were thus blessed, and had the Lord for their God, and in him were thus blessed and saved.

I come now, in the last place, to speak of such as receive the seed in good ground; and these are such as hear the gospel and receive it in an honest and good heart, in a heart sincerely desirous to be saved and made right in our Saviour's sight. These hear the promises, and with all diligence, tears, and prayers, expect and look for the fulfilling of them; and who cannot rest till they have found redemption in the blood of Christ, his righteousness and salvation, and have his holy Spirit apply his bruises to their pained hearts, to ease them with the full assurance of their part in the book of life, and of their place being prepared in heaven. As ground tilled and opened receives in the seed, and it springs up and bears fruit, so such people have their hearts truly awakened and opened, to receive the seed of eternal life. No waiting enemy steals away the words of our Saviour; like Mary, they ponder them in their hearts, and keep them as the most precious treasure, and shall bring that blessing down upon them, "Because thou hast kept my word, I will keep thee in the day that shall try all them that dwell upon the earth; thou shalt not die, thou shalt not taste of death." No unbrokenness and hardness hinders our Saviour to see of his travail in them and be satisfied: No shame of the cross, no  
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fear of men, nor cares of the world, nor deceitfulness of riches, nor pleasures of this life hinder them to bring forth fruit to the glory of the good Husbandman. They love our Saviour with all their heart; they are honest, and would not deceive themselves; but, till they had found our Saviour, and were sealed by him to everlasting life, never would be easy; and now he that smote them with the sword of his mouth has healed them; now they have obtained the privilege or power to become sons of God; they are saved, they have found the merits and righteousness of our dear Saviour; they are assured of his favour, they are written in his book, and wait the time of their dissolution with patience, or, as our Saviour says, "bring forth fruit with patience:" their fruit is all good works, but especially praise and love to that Lamb, the good Sower, who first loved them and prepared them for himself. These are they who have ears and hear the voice of their Beloved, the voice of the good Shepherd, the Son of man, and have eternal life through his name: "They have eyes and see his salvation, they have honest and good hearts, and understand and are converted." May our Lord God and Saviour make you of this happy number! Amen.

DISCOURSE

## DISCOURSE XVII.

THE LOST SHEEP, PIECE OF SILVER, AND  
PRODIGAL SON.

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LUKE. XV. 2.

*This Man receiveth Sinners.*

**I**N this chapter we have an account, that, during Jesus's ministration and preaching, all the publicans and sinners drew near to hear him, which so offended the religious Jews, that they murmured and shewed their displeasure, because he suffered such a rabble to follow him, and more, because, instead of exclaiming against these ungodly people, whose wicked lives and sins were known to all, and instead of thundering out the curses of the law to them, or shewing his just anger to such offenders, he spoke mildly to them, and graciously received them all.

This caused them to give him that character to defame him among the pious and more devout sort, "Behold the Friend of publicans and sinners;" and again, "This man receiveth and eateth with them."

I suppose this served to prejudice many of the righteous Scribes and Pharisees against him, because they had always shunned the persons he was familiar with, and had esteemed them as bastards and not sons of Abraham, and who were under the curse, children of Belial, and excommunicate; they knew no righteousness but that of works, and which consisted in observing the law, and being strictly obedient to all

the precepts of Moses, as the Rabbins explained them; and to these they had added many of the traditions of the fathers, in relation to their often praying, making of proselytes, washing the hands before meat, and when they come from the market, &c. beside a multitude of ceremonies, in observing which they placed much holiness, and condemned vehemently such as were not so scrupulous and rigid, because without it they hardly believed a man could be safe. They had carried the matter so far, that the end of the law was not answered, but, as our Saviour says, "was made of none effect through their traditions;" for they made their first blunder in supposing at all, that righteousness came by the law, and that the dispensation of Moses was calculated of God to make men righteous, whereas the sole intent of the law was, to convince every man that should hear it, that he was a sinner, and under the curse justly; it was ordained to stop the mouth of every man who would fancy he was blameless and had a good heart, and to make all the world guilty before God. In this respect it paved the way for the everlasting righteousness brought in by Christ Jesus, because it condemns and curses every one who has not continued in all things and in every point and tittle of the law to do it; and since no soul can escape so rigorous a condemnation, but all are guilty and have sinned more or less, and may have no hope from the law, nor can be justified thereby, the soul who would willingly be saved, and who is conscious of his sin, and of his being under the curse of the law justly, who sees that it aims and strikes at the heart, condemns the least thought and desire, and requires a "worshipping the Lord with all the heart, with all the mind, and with all the strength," I say, when this is known, and which is clearly the end of the law, the soul sinks down before God, and cries out, "What shall I do to

to be saved? Whither shall I go for mercy?" and thus sees and feels the need of a Saviour, and of redemption from under the law, and of a better righteousness than our own. Hence it is that the Holy Ghost sent prophets and scribes instructed out of the kingdom of heaven, to teach such men to "look to him (the Messiah) and be saved." They taught, "He shall be called The Lord our Righteousness. In his days shall Israel be saved. They shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. He shall finish iniquity and make an end of sin, obtain reconciliation and bring in everlasting righteousness. To him shall all flesh come. To him shall the gathering of the people be. He shall save Israel from all his sins." This served to enlighten such as cried to him in their trouble, and who sat in the shadow of death, and comforted them with hopes of the Redeemer, for whom the sincere Jews looked and waited, wishing to see his day till he came. But in the Jewish church there were men who had otherwise interpreted the law, and preached that it could make the observers of it righteous; and this sort prevailed exceedingly, so that the chief of the priests and the learned men were of this mind, and these were called the Pharisees. St. Paul, and many of our Saviour's disciples, were of this sect before they knew him, but none could be in his company and not observe, how in all his doctrines, parables, and discourses, he sharply condemns the righteousness of the Pharisees, and says, "they have their reward," and that, "except we get a better righteousness than theirs, we can in no case enter the kingdom of heaven," calling all that they boasted of, "a whitening of the wall, painting and garnishing sepulchres, and washing the outside of cups and dishes," i. e. it was an outward and affected righteousness, it was good in the sight of men, and adorned and made white the person who had it before

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the world, but it did not go deep, it did not wash the inner man of the heart, it did not cleanse the spoiled and bad nature, nor make the soul "all-glorious within." This only is effected by an immediate work of grace, through the inspiration of the Spirit and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. This is a divine work, and without which all righteousness is filthy rags. This is sure and certain, if there could have been a law given which could have made men righteous, then righteousness had come by the law of Moses; but it was impossible, considering our fall and inbred sin, to have been made righteous by any law or works, or in any way but by that means which our tender and merciful Father, God, contrived before the world began, and that was by means of the blood and wounds of his Son Jesus, and by his obedience to the death of the cross.

It was men ignorant of this great design of the God of Abraham, and who had received the false opinion that was common in those times, of there being more righteous than others, and of being saved by works, that stumbled at seeing Jesus receive sinners, and which made them slight and blaspheme him on that account; but it is to be observed, that to vindicate his conduct, and to unfold before the world the counsel of God and his mind to save sinners, he delivers three parables, in which the love of the blessed Trinity to lost man is described and exhibited in an uncommon manner, and of which I purpose to speak particularly to day. Would to God all that hear me might be happily convinced, the self-righteous, that they have hitherto mistook, and now come and buy of Jesus's raiment, and be clothed indeed, and be made righteous in his sight, whose eyes try the hearts and reins; and the profane and careless, that they may leave all their old ways, and fly to Jesus, and be saved, for "this man receiveth sinners."

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There are many thousands who (as I myself have done) make the same mistakes the Pharisees did, and place true religion in a strict life, in obeying the letter of the law, to which they add traditions and commands of men, such as praying so many times a day, fasting so often in the week, going so much to church, performing such a task of duties, &c. and with all together they make a righteousness, and when they have served it up, and made them aprons, like Adam, of these, they will not suffer the thought, that they are yet naked, but value themselves upon account of their goodness, and despise others, and think, "God, I thank thee that I am not so bad as other men." It is for their sakes, as well as to draw poor deluded slaves of sin to him, that Jesus delivered himself in this gracious manner. O may he speak and write his mind in this great matter on every heart!

There are some things chiefly observable in these parables, and which must not be passed over unheeded: In the first parable, which is of the Shepherd and the Lost Sheep, the love and care of the Son of God is displayed; in the second, which speaks of the woman and her piece of money, the diligence and love of the Holy Spirit is shewn; and in the third, which is of the returning child to his parent, the love and joy of the Father is expressed over a repenting sinner. All are to set forth the riches of the grace of God to mankind, and to prove, to our unspeakable joy and comfort, that "this Man receiveth sinners," and rejoiceth over them that come to him, as a shepherd over a sheep that had strayed away, and which he has now found; and as a woman is glad to find a piece of money, that she had lost, and as a father rejoiceth to receive his child again who had left him and was as if dead.

The holy Jesus, when he preached this discourse, was surrounded with sinners; all were come to hear him,

him, the ragged thieves, the wanton harlots, the stupid drunkards, who had wasted their estates and health in a debauched and intemperate life, the usurers, the swearers, and sabbath-breakers, crowd attentive round the Most Holy. Afar off and at a distance stand the murmuring Scribes and the righteous and prudent people, who would have liked to hear him, if such a dirty, nasty rabble were not his followers, and if but the great, the genteel and rich would go too, or if the rulers and learned but approved of him, and if he did not countenance and encourage that wicked multitude so much, or if he would but preach a little more against their sinful ways, and commend a little more a courteous and benevolent spirit, and preach about good works and charity to his hearers, and tell ignorant people their duty.

I suppose they beheld him with scorn, and disdained to be one of that man's disciples. As Michal, the daughter of Saul and wife of David, looked out at her window and saw her royal husband dressed in an ephod, and come dancing through the streets among a company of maidens before the ark, and despised him, saying, with a sneer, "How glorious did the king of Israel look to day!" so did these men, who murmured because Jesus received sinners; they despised him for it with all their hearts, and were offended. They were too good to join with those who found mercy at his hands; they were too wise to imagine they needed repentance as much as they, or that they were upon a level in God's eyes with the worst of all; they were too prudent to be ever seen with him, and so went away offended.

O ask your hearts, my dear friends, Have not you been of this proud self-righteous mind? Have not you such a high spirit? Look upon the Redeemer with all the publicans and sinners hearing him, and think, if you should not have been ashamed to be  
among

among them? However it has been, now blush at his feet, and pray him to forgive you your false prudence, your self-righteousness, and pride, and sit down at his feet poor in spirit, and hear the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

He begins, "What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which he hath lost until he find it? and, when he hath found it, he layeth it upon his shoulders rejoicing; and when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost: I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance."

This parable our Saviour seems to address to the murmuring Pharisees, but in the hearing of the sinners, that both might be edified; the one learn humility, and see how equal the Saviour's ways are; and the other, who had wandered, learn how glad their Shepherd is at their return, and so come back to him and be saved.

Jesus is the man who, of all his vast unmeasured flock, never lost one poor sheep. All the heavens and every world, visible and invisible, with all their hosts, are his; this world, compared to the creation, is only like a drop of the bucket, or like a grain of sand in the balance, or like one sheep in comparison of an hundred. If a man should let a drop fall from the bucket, he would not think of it; and if a man had an hundred sheep, and should lose one which should be chased away by a wolf, or borne away by a lion or a bear, he might easily let it go, and think, it is better to lose it than I risque my life in search of it, or lose many days' time and spend much labour and pain in the pursuit of it, especially as he had

had yet so many left; but our good Shepherd thought otherwise; the greatness of his kingdom, the innumerable worlds which were his, and all the inhabitants of the heavens, the angels and spirits which are beyond all number, could not make him think little of the loss of this poor world; when Satan, like a lion, entered the fold, and led astray, like a sheep, Adam and his wretched posterity; our Shepherd saw it from on high, nor would let it pass easily; it lay from eternity upon his heart, and in due time he became their Saviour. An hireling might have let the wandering sheep perish, and only thought of the ninety and nine who were yet in the pastures; but a good husbandman would rise up early and travel far, would leave his flocks in the fields, and seek carefully that which he had lost; he would search every hill and every valley, enquire through every plain, and spare no pains till he had met with it; and should he find it torn by dogs, dirty with driving through the bogs and deep places, he would not therefore leave it, but would bind up the wounds, wash off the filth, and lay it upon his shoulders, and come home joyfully; he would tell his friends and neighbours of his success, and not reflect upon all his sore labour in seeking it, since he had now got it again safely. This is the heart of our dear Saviour; he put on the form and office of a shepherd, left all his angels, all heavenly worlds and blessed spirits, and came a thirty-years journey into this world to seek his lost sheep. Often the "sun burnt him by day, and the frosts consumed him by night;" often he sat down weary, and travelled through the wilderness weeping as he went, and when he found his sheep, it was in the hand of the enemy, in the mouth and jaws of the devouring lion; the dragon had seized it, and was ready to make an end of it; to redeem it, it cost him that severe conflict in the garden, when he wrestled  
till

till his sweat was like great drops of blood falling down to the ground; nor did he leave it, but continued in the combat till his back was sore and bloody with scourging, his head torn with the thorns and briars of the wilderness, and till his hands and feet were cut through and loaded with bonds and chains. In this condition he was when his sore hands caught the prey out of the destroyer's teeth, and with his rent and bruised feet he trod down the dragon and the lion upon the mount of Calvary, and "laid down his life for his sheep." This is that dear Saviour, who, when a soul repents and comes to him, takes it upon his shoulders; there he bears their burdens and sorrows, and carries it in his bosom, and in his loving arms, and when he has washed the polluted sinner in his precious blood, and forgiven him, when he has healed him of those wounds which caused him such smart and misery, and given him his peace, then he lets all his saints and angels know, "I have found the sheep which I had lost; rejoice with me, for the lamb that went astray is returned to the shepherd and bishop of his soul. The little one that had wandered away from me, and for whom I have travailed and been in pain, he that caused all my grief and labour, that child that you once saw in mine enemy's hands, and who warred against me, he that trampled under foot my words, and would not receive my reproofs so long, is come back to me." This causes a new joy among the angels, and this begins properly when a sinner is come to our Saviour by faith, and receives the knowledge of his salvation; it is repeated when he lands safely above, and shall be again renewed when Jesus shall divide among the people as a shepherd between his flocks, and when he shall be found at the right-hand with the sheep, and thenceforward shall that joy be continued through all eternity.

Also

Also as a man rejoices more over a lost sheep when he has recovered it safe and sound, than over all the others which went not astray, so has our Saviour more joy over a poor soul which had left him, and over the world which was lost but is now found through his redemption, than over all those spirits who keep their first estate, and more than over all the angels who have not sinned, and so not needed repentance; and far, far more, than over all those self-righteous people who glory in their strict lives from their youth up, and dream that they need no repentance. O that those who hear me would to-day rise up and leave all, and follow their true Pastor! What joy would you cause in heaven, and in the breasts of the angels of God! and what joy would our Saviour have to see so many wandering sheep return home to him! It was for your sakes chiefly this parable was spoken. My guilty brethren and sisters, be encouraged thereby to return to him who made you, and whose sheep (though spoiled and strayed) you are, and you shall be received by him with joy everlasting. Let your hearts answer, "Lo! I come to do thy will, my God!"

The second parable is after this manner: "What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one, does not light a candle and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it, and when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost: Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

In this parable our Saviour teaches the care and diligence of the Spirit to seek and win back souls to the Lamb. Under the similitude of a woman, is the Holy Ghost described in other places of the scripture; sometimes as a mother, a nurse, a comforter,

forter, and that in the prophets as well as in the New Testament ; for instance, " As a mother comforteth her son, so will I comfort thee." When Solomon spake afar off of the Holy Spirit's new bearing the church of God out of the side of the second Adam, he says, " Under the apple-tree (so was Christ crucified called, because he excelled all the sons of men, as the apple-trees did the trees, and which gave meat to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, and shadow and rest to the weary and fatigued) thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee." Again, " My beloved is the only one of her mother." Our Saviour confirms this in saying, " Ye must be born again of the Holy Ghost." Also in another parable he speaks of the Holy Spirit when he says, " The kingdom of heaven is like a woman who took leaven and put it into three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." It is the office and work of the Holy Ghost to minister to the saints in the name of Jesus : he comes in his name, and dwells with them ; he takes of the things of Christ and shews it to them ; he glorifies him in them ; and above all, it is the place of the Spirit to take the leaven of Christ's body and blood, and hide it in the three measures of meal, that is, in our body, soul, and spirit ; and like as leaven works and operates thro' the meal till all is fit for use, so is the blood of Jesus conveyed to a believer, which continues to operate through body, soul, and spirit, till all the old nature is purged away, and we are fit for our heavenly Father's use ; or, as St. Ignatius says, ' till we become pure bread for our Beloved.' This is sweetly expressed in a well-known prayer, " Grant us, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and so to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean through his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood,



blood, and that he may evermore dwell in us, and we in him."

The Holy Ghost loves us even as Jesus loves, and is one with our Saviour in our salvation. He looks upon us dearer than pieces of silver, and more valuable than fine gold. As a good mother of the house seeks when a piece of money is dropt, and ceases not her cares and search till she has found it, and then rejoices with her friends, so the Holy Ghost lights a candle in the heart, illuminates the mind that was asleep, and "the foolish heart that was darkened." He causes a ray of divine light to shine within, brings a beam from the flaming eyes of Jesus into the close recesses of the soul; he exposes all the hidden sins, the nasty corners, the dangerous places in which the soul, like a piece of silver, is lost; he sweeps away all the outward sins, the rubbish of gaiety, pleasures, and lusts; he cleanses the outward man, and will not let it suffice till the poor lost piece of our Saviour's treasure is found and counted among his jewels. In this labour is the Lord the Spirit employed, often many years, and with indefatigable patience he strives with souls till he has prevailed and brought them to Jesus, and then "is there joy in the presence of the angels of God." He does not grudge all the years in which he called the soul, and "waited to be gracious;" he forgives the sin of quenching the light, and loving and choosing to walk in darkness, the resisting his divine and maternal motions, and preferring earthly things to heavenly, and inspires all the angels with joy at the conversion of the soul, whom he esteems treasure, and the very reward of Jesus, the hire and wages of our Saviour, his riches and jewels. O may we all be of the happy number, when he shall count them up, and they

they shall be to him for a crown and a diadem, and an eternal glory.

The third parable is of the Father and his Prodigal Son, and is the most lively picture of the heart of God our Father toward his younger rebellious sons, the children of men.

It was man that was so foolish to leave his father's house, and go out and spend his portion of grace in riotous and careless living in the world; ever since the fall of Adam we have done thus; we have lived in a far country, in an estate afar off from the Lord, and there we have wasted our substance. As in the parable the son is said to "spend all in riotous living," so does every man: one trifles away his precious time in play, another heaps up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather and enjoy them; and others, who put on a more sober appearance, live still at a distance from their heavenly Father, and perhaps content themselves, like the prodigal son, "with the husks which swine do eat," with the things of this life, or with the false religion which consists only in name and shew, and is not really the knowledge of Christ and his love in the heart. The departure of the son at first of his own choice, sets forth our free-will, which is to wander perpetually, and teaches, that our fall was of ourselves. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." But our Saviour describes the son at ease, and pleased with his luxury and wantonness among harlots, till "there arose a famine in the land, and he began to be in want." This is when the eyes of a sinner are opened, and he sees to what all his sins have brought him, into what misery he is plunged and sunk: There is a mighty famine in the world in which he lives, "not of bread, or of water, but of the word of God and of the bread of life." He sighs that he has been so foolish to leave the Lord his Father's

house, and begins to be in want ; he wants forgiveness, he begins to want a Saviour, he is restless and uneasy, all his sins afflict and trouble him, he wants peace in his heart, he begins to want a rest for his soul ; and this beginning of want increases till he hungers and thirsts for righteousness and is filled. He went and joined himself to a citizen of the country, who sent him to feed swine, and he would fain have filled himself with the husks, the grains, which the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him." Thus our Lord describes their state, who, when a little awakened to a sense of their misery and want, get into company, and join themselves to the men of this world, strive to divert away their uneasiness, and get out of the reach of his voice who daily whispers, Thou art poor and miserable, come unto me. By his feeding of the swine, we may understand all time-serving, all cringing to the lying and false world, and stooping to be the vassal and drudge of the devil and the servant of sin. What are the Epicureans, the sensualists, but slaves ? What is the nobleman more than the peasant, who is captive to wine and women ? What the general and admiral, with all their bravery, when conquered by pride and lust, and bond-servants of their passions ? What are the highest and greatest more than the beggar, the soldier or common sailor, when they creep and bow to the world only for gain, pleasures, or honour ? They are servants of swine, and as the prodigal would fain have filled himself with the husks which they eat, so do they, and so have we all done. How have we strove to satisfy our poor souls with their diversions, and make ourselves happy and easy in their way but could not ? All our endeavours were mercifully blasted, and we rendered wretched more and more above measure.

It

It was in this state he recollected his father's house; poverty drove him to think of going back: He thought, How many servants hath my father who have bread enough, and I perish with hunger! What though I have rebelled, and brought all this misery upon me, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me, I pray thee, thine hired servant." This is just the condition, and these the thoughts of a true penitent. He thinks, O how happy are the children of God! How happy his servants the holy angels! O that I had but the lowest place among them! O that I might but have leave to call God my Father! The Holy Ghost makes use of this opportunity, and when Jesus has sought him out, and the spirit has enlightened him thus far, he shews what a loving Father he has, who spared not his dear Son for him, and the poor sinner trembles and cries, is afraid to ask mercy, and dares not stay in the state he is in; he resolves at last to venture to him, and, like Esther, thinks, "If I perish, I will perish at the feet of the king."

"And he arose and went." He did not only propose it, but did it. There are many who often speak and think of it, but never go, they stay and perish afar off; but lo! he comes, "and his father saw him a great way off, and had compassion on him, and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him." O mark every word, my dear friends, and be astonished at the way in which our Saviour describes his reception; he does not say the son ran to the father; he was weary, faint, and ashamed, and could not, nor did he see his father first, but his father him, and then neither did he send a servant to order him to depart, and let him know he would not see him or own him; he did not upbraid him

with his vile and scandalous behaviour, with his disgraceful life, and just want and beggary, but "ran to meet him." It seems as if he had been looking out for him, and often with wishful eyes watching the way he went, to see if his poor child would once return; and now he meets him, "falls upon his neck, and kisses him." With what emphasis and affection does our Saviour express the whole? He was fit to describe his father's tender heart; he knew it, and he only; and thus he does to our great comfort.

When a poor self-condemned sinner sets his face toward Zion, and comes trembling back, however vile in his own eyes, God the Father beholds him with joy. He has "long looked down on the children of men, to see if there were any that would turn," and though the poor soul does not at first discern the Lord, yet the Lord sees him afar off in his sad and lamentable state, he views him "weary and heavy laden," he understands his heaviness, his forlorn and destitute condition, surveys his poverty and wants, "and has compassion on him, he pities him as a father pities his son, he runs, he makes haste to help him." As a father meets his only child whom he had bewailed for dead, or given over for lost, and falls upon his neck and kisses him, so our Father receives his poor children, he embraces them and kisses them upon heart and soul, he makes his love felt, and kindles such a love in his children's breasts as can never be extinguished or forgotten.

The son began to say, "Father, I have sinned, and am not worthy to be thy son," but had not time to ask a servant's place, for his father prevented him by saying to his servants, "Bring the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring upon his finger, and shoes upon his feet, and kill the fatted calf,

calf, and let us eat and be merry, for this my son was dead and is alive again, was lost, but is now found."

The wretch that beggared himself with harlots, and did not deserve the worst garment, must have the best robe; and he that had squandered away so much gold that he never deserved to see the least of it more, now must be adorned with a ring, and his feet must be shod, and a banquet, a feast prepared, that all the house might share in the joy of the father.

Thus and thus shall it be done to you, my dear brethren, who return for mercy to your Father, the best robe, that is, the righteousness of Christ, shall be brought to cover you, and to make you "all-glorious within," this shall be your beautiful garment and white robe. He shall put the ring upon your finger; you shall be favoured, like Thomas, to put your finger into the nail-prints of Jesus, and be convinced he is your Lord and your God, that shall seal you to the day of redemption, and you shall know what that means, "his hands are like rings of beryl;" your feet shall be shod with the sandals of peace, that you may go on your way rejoicing. The great marriage-supper, the feast of the sons of God above, is preparing for you, and all is to welcome you home. But come, and all the angels, the prophets, the martyrs, and apostles of the Lamb shall hear your Father confess you. The moment you give him your heart, the moment when he shall kiss and forgive you, God, your dear Father God, shall say before his children and servants, "This my son was dead but is alive again, this your brother was lost, but is now found."

Thus does our Saviour preach to the publicans and sinners; and what parable or what discourse in all the bible so sets forth the free grace and love of

the whole Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost? Let it affect you, my dear friends; remember they are the words of Jesus Christ, and are spoken to you, and let it force you to go after him, and compel you to come into his church and be saved. He is the same good and gracious Lord as when he spake these words, and suffered the sinners to hear him; his aim is the same, it is to save sinners, and to win them to him; his mind is the same, he would have it yet be preached, that "this man receiveth sinners," and all who preach it shall find his words true and faithful, and he will prosper them in their despised but glorious office.

In the latter part of this last parable our Saviour describes another brother, who at hearing the joy of his father's house because of the returning of the prodigal, instead of being glad with them, murmured and was angry with his father, and would not go in, but pleaded his obedient behaviour, and complained that he had never so much as received a kid to make merry with his friends; but when this man was come, who had spent his substance with harlots, the fatted calf was killed, and all the house filled with music and dancing; and he was offended, and would not enter the house till his father came out and entreated him. There is no envy or emulation among the angels and sons of God in heaven, because a sinner is converted; but among some of his people upon earth it may be found, and some who have seen the happiness of souls snatched as it were out of the burning, and made glad in the Lord's salvation, have been moved with self-righteous risings: they can think, I am sure I have lived a very strict and obedient life, and never run to that excess of sin with these, and yet I never experienced this joy and transport, nor have I felt this love and happiness they speak of; and such murmur.

They

They have in the heart somewhat of the same which our Saviour mentions in another parable, wherein some, who laboured through the heat and burden of the day murmured against the good man of the house, because he had given others, who had only been called into the vineyard in the last hour of the day, the same with them, and had even paid the last first; but our Saviour makes his dealings just, by saying, "Cannot I do what I will with my own?" And in this same parable he makes the father reason with the other brother, till his self-righteousness dies away, and he is convinced of the meetness and justice of his father's dealings with his younger son, and then he comes in. Thus our Saviour would have his self-righteous children learn, that he is a Sovereign, and can do what he will with his mercy and grace, and that there is often more trouble to get one of these into the house, than the publicans and sinners. It was this spirit that ruined the Jews: it made those offended to whom Jesus addresses the latter part of this parable; it hinders many to be saved who stand cavilling and quarrelling with free grace, till they blaspheme and stumble at the stumbling-stone. It makes it difficult to bring home even an awakened soul who unhappily is fallen into this spirit. It is hard for such to go to heaven. But one thing I must observe, the father entreated even his offended and murmuring son to come in; may he do so with all of his mind! may he convince them of his just and true ways, and make them glad to be saved freely themselves, and glad that their dear Saviour will receive sinners! All our own righteousness is caused by ignorance of our state and nature. When Jesus opens the eyes of the most innocent, he is thoroughly convinced he has no real good in him, and is humbly thankful "that this man receiveth sinners." He is not stumbled at the many



many places where the scripture preaches the justification of the ungodly, of being saved freely, or by faith alone, but he thinks and sings,

How glad am I that thou so loving art,  
That thou canst bless my base and worthless heart,  
And canst freely bear with my whole behaviour,  
O wert thou not exactly such a Saviour,  
What should I do!

May we all experience the care of our Good Shepherd, the faithfulness of the Holy Ghost, and the tender love of the Father to our own eternal welfare, and to the honour of the Lamb; to whom with his Father, and the Holy Ghost, be praise for evermore. Amen.

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### AN HYMN.

1. I LORD, the prodigal have been,  
My substance I have spent in sin;  
I now my youthful follies see,  
And, naked, mourn my misery.
2. My innocence, my spotless dress,  
I've lost, and all my righteousness;  
Reduc'd and made a stranger here,  
Nothing but filthy rags I wear.
3. With men I oft have sought to join,  
Would fain have eaten husks with swine;  
But O! their joys wont do for me,  
'Tis empty all, and vanity.
4. For

4. For heavenly bread I pant, I pant!  
I know I now begin to want:  
None gives my hungry soul to eat,  
None pities my forlorn estate.
5. My Father's servants happy are,  
While I the sinner perish here:  
They have enough, nor scarceness know,  
Nor guess what sorrow I go through.
6. I'll rise, and, wretched as I am,  
I'll cry to him for whom I came;  
Longer my Father shall not be  
A stranger to my misery.
7. Behold a sinner, Lord! I'll say,  
Thy son, who lately went astray;  
Mis'ry and sin is all I plead,  
And want of grace and heav'nly bread.
8. See me, though far from thee, and run  
To meet thy poor returning son:  
And while I tell my wretched case,  
Fall on my neck, and me embrace.
9. Bring the best robe, thy righteousness,  
And let my feet be shod with peace:  
Seal with a ring my trembling hand,  
And bring me to my native land.
10. Let all thy children now above,  
Rejoice at thy redeeming love;  
O tell them, This my son's forgiv'n,  
And ransom'd to inherit heav'n.

11. Grant

11. Grant this, my Father, and my tongue  
Shall mingle with the blessed throng  
With theirs my harp shall sweetly sound,  
I once was lost, but now am found!
12. I dead in sin remain'd, till God  
Redeem'd my soul from death by blood,  
When he for all my guilt was slain;  
And now I am alive again,

**DISCOURSE**

## DISCOURSE XVIII.

THE SYROPHŒNICIAN: OR, A PATTERN  
OF INVINCIBLE FAITH.

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MATT. XV. 28.

*O woman! great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as  
thou wilt.*

**T**HESE gracious words of our Saviour were spoken to a poor woman, a gentile of Canaan, who having found him preaching near Tyre and Sidon; desired him to heal her daughter, who was possessed of an evil spirit; and after some time, when she had met with several repulses from the disciples, and some trials from our Saviour himself, and yet continued her intreaties, Jesus answered her in these words, and sent her away rejoicing.

I look upon the whole history as a most instructing and profitable part of the scripture, and as a pattern of invincible faith; and I think all relations and accounts of this sort are delivered down to us with this view and intent, that we may be stirred up and encouraged thereby to inherit by faith the promises of God, after their example who are gone before, and through their mercy obtain mercy. O may that God, whose mercies endure for ever, make it a blessing to us this day, when it becomes the matter of our consideration, and teach us so to believe in him, that he may also once say to every  
every

every one of us, "Great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt!"

The Evangelist begins the relation of this transaction thus, "Behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." ver. 22.

There is something very moving and worthy of note in all her prayer, and even in the manner in which she uttered it: She cried. Perhaps she saw the multitude round about him, and could not get near, which was the case of many, and yet was so eager to be helped, so needy and distressed, that she could not wait till the congregation was dismissed, and therefore cried out to him. Here one may learn, that when a soul wants the divine help, and is in distress, their best and most simple way is, to cry unto "him who is able to save," namely, Jesus Christ, who saith, "Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden—and I will give you rest for your souls," Matth. xi. 28. It is a bad sign when men can postpone and put off the time of their salvation, with faintly and coldly saying, I hope the Lord will have mercy upon me before I die. Such is not the language of one poor in spirit, nor of the soul that wants a Saviour, for then the captive exile hastens to be delivered, or as David expresses it, "My soul longeth, yea even fainteth; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God," Psalm lxxxiv. 1. And again, "As the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God," Psalm xlii. 1. So in another place he says, "One deep calleth to another:" (that is, the deep of our misery to the deep of his mercy) "Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice!" This is the case with awakened souls; they want deliverance.  
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They hunger and thirst after righteousness, and cannot rest till Jesus hath given them rest. Thus St. Paul, when he was first convinced of his sad estate, and felt (notwithstanding all the righteousness of which he before boasted) that he was a poor miserable sinner, neither ate nor drank for three days, but continued crying out, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" Acts ix. 5. Nor did he cease crying till he had obtained redemption in the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of his sins. The same is said of Bartimeus the beggar. He cried for mercy, when he heard Jesus passed by: and when the people forbad him to pray so, he cried so much the more a great deal: and then ye know what followed; Jesus stood still, commanded him to be brought to him, granted his request and blessed him. As long as the poor blind man cried, Jesus could not go forward. His heart is so tenderly affected towards poor sinners, that he cannot leave the poor when he crieth, the needy, and him that has no helper; but properly and strictly is the friend of sinners.

We have many instances in the scripture of his immediately helping such as applied to him with tears and cries, such as the poor leper, Mary Magdalene, Peter, &c. and by these we are taught to cry to the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world; for let who will oppose, he is the person that hears prayer. "On his name whosoever calls shall be saved," Rom. x. 13. compare Acts iv. 12.

Thus, then, the woman cried to him (the words of the prayer were) "Have mercy upon me, O Lord!" First, the inspired writers tell us she was a heathen, a Gentile, and then describe her as calling to Jesus the Lord. How can this be? It is unlikely she had read the prophets, or expected a

Messiah whose name should be Immanuel; and had she believed this, she could no longer have been reckoned among the Gentiles, but rather among the proselytes.

But the truth is, she, no doubt, had heard what a prophet, mighty in word and deed, was risen in Israel. How he healed the sick, raised the dead, cured the lepers, dispossessed demons, and helped all who were possessed of the devil, &c. And like as in all ages, God blesses the preaching of Jesus Christ, with the witness of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men, so then did the Lord certainly bless the report of Jesus to the poor woman by the same Spirit, and taught her who this Prophet was, wherefore she calls him Lord. "No man can call Jesus the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." And this must be allowed, that it is an eternal blessing to a soul to know Jesus, or else, how can it pray to him, or believe in him? It would not be right to call upon him, or worship him, or expect to be saved by him, if he was not God over all blessed for ever. "If thou knewest who it is that speaketh with thee," said our Saviour to the woman of Samaria, "thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water," John iv. 10. Thus the foundation of our praying to Jesus, and calling upon his name, is the believing that he is truly and eternally Lord and God. This was the ancient way of praying, and what has never failed. "In his name shall they glory; in his name shall they put their trust. They shall call upon his name and be saved. Prayer shall be made daily to him. To him shall all flesh come. Every knee shall bow to him, and every tongue confess that he is the Lord."

The subject of the woman's petition was mercy. "Have mercy upon me, O Lord!" The knowledge

knowledge of our great want of mercy, has brought many thousands to the kingdom of heaven. A sense of their poor lost estate, their corrupt and spoiled heart, their degenerate nature, the guilt of sin, and a mispent life; the fear of death, the dreadful looking for of judgment, the restless condition and uneasy state of soul, makes them long with insatiable longing for mercy. No words suit so well with a soul thus truly awakened as these, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord!" And it is to me a good sign, where a sinner cannot rest until he has obtained mercy.

But, I confess, it does not seem to be such a sense of sin which I have been speaking of, which made this woman call upon the name of our Saviour. It seems as if she had been a poor woman (perhaps a widow) who had one daughter, and she was grievously vexed, or possessed of a devil; and hearing what wonders Jesus had wrought in healing the disease, she also comes to him and begs for her child. It was downright trouble that brought her to Christ. Perhaps she had no sense of her spiritual wants, but thought if her little daughter was but well, that was all she wanted to make her life happy. Therefore the purport of her prayer was, Lord! I am a poor woman whose daughter is possessed; on her account I have no comfort. My dear child, that should have been a joy to me in my old years and disconsolate condition, is rather a burden, and my life is bitter to me, on this account; have mercy upon me, and cure her. Thou hast had mercy upon very many all round about, my neighbours tell me of thy wonders and cures, "Thou Son of David, help me!" This last part of her prayer, wherein she calls our Saviour the Son of David, seems to imply so much: O Lord, who hast humbled thy-



thyself to be man, and to feel the infirmities of our nature, that thou mightest sympathize with souls in distress and pity them, think only what an uncomfortable life I have, and pity me. Indeed her case was pitiable, and she was an object of compassion, but for all that Jesus answered her not a word. This is the only place in all the Bible where a poor soul in distress came, or cried to the Lord, and he answered not a word. It is so unlike our Saviour's behaviour, that at first sight we must be amazed and surprized above measure till we have seen the end of the Lord's silence, which was the effect of his tender mercy. For had our Saviour said to her, Go thy way, thy daughter is made whole, perhaps she had returned to the house thankful and glad, but asked nothing farther of him, and might indeed have been outwardly helped, but perished for ever in her sins; and therefore our Saviour intended somewhat better for her according to his usual grace, since his outward miracles were often attended with the gift of eternal life and forgiveness of sins; as in the case of the man sick of the palsy, and many others. I had observed before, that all she wanted of our Saviour, seemed nothing more than her daughter's deliverance and recovery, and therefore Jesus answered her not a word. I wonder she did not cease praying, and go home heavy and discouraged: I dare say, if many of us had been treated so, we had certainly thought there is no help for us in our God. But then learn hence, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Be not weary if immediately ye do not receive from him what ye ask; often we do not know what we ask; we do not feel truly our want of salvation; we do not thirst for him, and are not as if we were ready to perish without him; for

for he is a present help in the time of trouble, and is certainly nigh to all that call upon him. When a soul but begins to feel his wants, it is no wonder if our Saviour does not immediately answer. He knows it is best for us and safest, when we experience and feel how deeply our hearts are spoiled and corrupted, that nothing but God can save us: and when it comes so far with an awakened conscience, he is not far from the kingdom of God: he shall find, that though our Redeemer may have seemed to hide away his face for a little moment in displeasure, yet with everlasting kindness he will remember him, and end the days of his mourning, and wipe the tears from his eyes. If any therefore think, This is my case; I cry, but none hears; I am afraid Jesus will not answer me a word. Let me intreat such not to indulge unbelief: our Saviour has no pleasure in your smart or pain, but it is wholesome and good for you; you will learn thereby the need you have of a Saviour, and know a little of that estate and torment from whence his painful death and sufferings have saved you to eternity. Learn then of the woman in the text, to follow Jesus with faith, and cry after him.

But now she meets with another discouragement, "his disciples came and besought him to put her away; for they said she crieth after us." By this we may see she kept on crying, and was resolved not to go away till she had got her answer. So it was with Jacob when he wrestled with the Lord in the plains: he said, "I will not let thee go till thou hast blessed me," and accordingly prevailed and got the blessing. So it is with all those who take the kingdom of heaven by violence; and those that are thus violent, those that cannot and will not rest without salvation, shall surely find it. Woe be to them

them who slightly heal their wounds; who cry peace when there is no peace; who content themselves because men call them good people, or because they go to church or meeting often, and attend the duties of their religion, and come no farther. These are they of whom our Saviour says, "Thou hast a name to live, but thou art dead." I wish this may not be the case of many who appear to have no great concern farther than to enjoy their health, to be prospered in the world, and to live easy, and whose hearts never knew the want of God's redemption. O that such people knew once their danger, they would imitate this woman, they would go out and cry after him, and not rest till he had shewn them mercy!

I had observed that the disciples were for sending her away; and I know some think they meant, Lord, give her what she wants, and send her away? But I rather believe they were offended; and thought she is a heathen, and as they did not know Jesus was come to be their Saviour, but thought the family of Israel only was elected out of all nations, and the rest reprobated, therefore they besought him to send her away; and I do not doubt would have been pleased if their Master had said to her, Get thee hence to the gods of the land, and let them help thee; thou hast despised the God of Israel, he also has despised thee. Thou hast no right to the blessing of Jacob, depart from me. But Jesus could not do so; he loved both Jews and Gentiles, and was not willing either should perish, but have eternal life.

However, it was enough to damp all her hopes of mercy, when his own disciples besought him to send her away; but her great thirst for mercy made her press on yet, till Jesus himself made her an answer. My dear friends, I mean ye who  
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are apt to be discouraged, learn hence, that though the children of God, the disciples and followers of Christ, should seem to be against you and slight you, that therefore, and alone on that account, you should not faint; their master is more merciful than they; and even those are saved by him, who are often despised by their own mother's children: Be of good comfort then till he answers: and resolve to lie at his feet, and if you perish, perish there.

*“ Who down at Jesu's feet resolves to lie,  
Jesus has sworn that soul shall never die.”*

And now Jesus answered, but to the woman it must have been a cutting and painful answer, “ I am not sent, says he, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” I dare say every joint trembled in her. Methinks I see the poor heart look quite dejected and troubled, not knowing what to reply for very grief; but the scripture says, she fell down before him. I should have thought indeed, that she would have turned away displeased, or angry, or in despair, for she must have took it for an absolute answer: and had she reasoned much about the matter, she would have been confirmed in it, that his not answering a word, and the beseeching of his disciples that he would send her away, were plain proofs that he did not love her, and had no mind to shew her mercy; but the Holy Ghost had done much in her heart; for though she could think, I am not of Israel, I am one of the daughters of the uncircumcised, and might have made some melancholy reflections on that head, yet it all served to awaken her the more, to see her soul's estate; for she, no doubt, thought, if it be true that he is the Lord, who is come to save his people from  
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from their sins, if he is the Messiah, for whose mercy all the tribes are waiting, and he is sent to none but the lost sheep of the house of Israel; then what will become of me? And thenceforward we hear her no more name her daughter, but she falls down and worships him, saying, "Lord! help me!" As if she had said, Lord, what then shall I do? If thou art only sent to Israel, then I am afraid I shall perish for ever! O Lord help me! But she might think more properly thus, though I am a lost sheep, and though I am not of the house of Israel, he can make me an Israelite indeed, and therefore in the most humble manner, she fell down at his feet and worshipped him. This is a plain and evident proof she believed him to be the Lord; and besides, she believed he could help her, and therefore it was a short but a comprehensive and pretty prayer, "Lord, help me!" As if she would have said, Lord, I came hither on account of my daughter, but I have found I want thee more than her, help me! make me a child of God, a true Israelite. Have mercy upon me!

But our Saviour answers again strangely, "It is not fit to take the children's bread and give it to the dogs." This was the manner in which the Jews treated the Gentiles, and perhaps looked upon them as dogs in the worst sense, namely, such as were not to be reckoned among the flock of the good Shepherd, but such as were without, and who might not and could not enter the fold. But this sounded hard from the mouth of the Saviour of the world, yet we find it had its good end and effect; for the woman did not fall into a rage, and ask in an angry manner, why does he call me dog? If I am the child of a rejected and forsaken people, how can I help it? If it has been my hard lot to be born of uncircumcised parents, and to be educated an heathen, why does he blame

blame me? Can I alter the decree of the Creator, or change my state or nature? No, this was not her reply: If she had not been too deeply convinced of her sin, and wanted so earnestly a Saviour, she might have reasoned thus; but she knew no dogs had ever lived so unclean and had a life as she had done; she knew she was worse than a dog, and, as David confessed, "I am even like a beast before thee," so she owns, "It is truth, Lord!" As if she had said, I am a vile, nasty, polluted and defiled sinner; but dogs lick up the crumbs which fall from their Master's table; let me only enjoy the least of thy mercies, what thy own people Israel slight and disesteem: O give me but the crumbs which fall, as it were, from their table! And again she said, "Lord, help me." Now Jesus could stand out no longer; he said to her, "O woman! great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt!" It was as if he had said, Ask any thing, and it shall be done; thy daughter shall be made whole: thy sins be forgiven thee: thou shalt be henceforth of the flock and family of the true Israel; thy name shall be written in heaven; thy place shall be for ever there: "Great is thy faith! be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

It is said she worshipped him before, but now I suppose, she adored with double respect and reverence, and was ready, like Magdalen, to wash his feet with her tears. I dare say she could not tell how to express herself with joy; for so it always is when one has found salvation.

It would not be amiss to observe again, that trouble first brought her to the Lord. Had she met with no uncommon trial in the world, she had probably gone on like others, without ever thinking who or what the Redeemer was! or, it may be, have despised him with the multitude and perished. Before the end was therefore known, it appeared to be a heavy

heavy judgment that had befallen her, that her daughter, and perhaps her only child, was so visited; but though it might have given her no small concern and pain, she can now say with the sweet singer of Israel, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; for before I was afflicted I went wrong, but now I have kept thy word." She is not the only one whom crosses, troubles and disappointments in the world have served as a means to bring them to Jesus Christ. Many have thus been surrounded on every side, and their way hedged up, as it were, with thorns, that they might cry to God in their trouble, and be delivered out of all their distress. It is sometimes necessary that the Lord should serve us as he served Job, and let Satan touch all that we have, that we may learn to have our treasure in heaven, and lay hold on eternal life. Many have lost all that they have had, been forsaken of friends, destitute, persecuted, slighted and despised, inured to disappointments and afflictions, so that their lives have been often bitter. They have been poor and diseased like Lazarus, but, after all, were carried by angels into Abraham's bosom, who else might have perished had they been beloved and prospered in the world; and after a gay and sensual life ended, after all their honour, glory, fulness, and their easy time was come to a period, and they ready to be dissolved, might possibly have heard, like Dives, "Remember in thy life-time thou hadst thy good things!" O may this never be the case of one who hears me this day! May our dear and wise Lord lay upon us what he will, and disappoint and cross us as he pleases. May we rather live the most troubled and grievous life, and enjoy peace with him in our hearts, and have the assurance of our part in the world to come, than be ever so free and uninterrupted in all riches, honours, and pleasures, and  
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lose eternal happiness. Look upon the woman of Canaan, she was once a poor unhappy creature, a woman like Hannah, of a sorrowful spirit, and acquainted with grief. She was once in tears and prayers at the feet of our Saviour, when every thing seemed to make against her. But where is she now? Yonder, she adores before the same feet of God her Saviour in eternal life! She now thanks him for all that happened to her; she now sees his tender mercies through all he suffered to come upon her, and worships before that gracious and good Lamb of God, who came to seek and save that which was lost, and to be a friend of the friendless, the husband of the widow, and a refuge and sanctuary for all ready to perish and oppressed of the devil.

Be not then confused and unhappy about it, ye dear people, if you should meet with many trials, if it should appear as if you were singled out to endure hardships or distress, still speak to our Saviour and say, "Have mercy upon me!" If a sense of your sin bows you down and dejects you, still pray, "Have mercy upon me!" If you can't say many words, if you can't speak much, remember it was the case of the woman before us: Her prayer was very short, but it reached the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. It was only, "Lord, help me!" but it prevailed, because it came out of the heart. Our Saviour is not cheated with long prayers, nor must we think, like the heathen, that we are heard for our much speaking. Our God looks upon the heart; and all the churches shall know he judges according to the heart, and not according to our words: Lift up therefore the heart to the Lord; let your tears and sighs speak the unutterable language of your breast. Do not want to say much, nor study fine words, and dead and dry forms to bring before him, it is like offering the lame and blind upon his altar; appear a poor sinner,



sinner, just as thou art ; come a poor diseased soul to be healed, a sick soul to be cured, a trembling and afflicted creature that wants a rest for thy soul, and he will receive thee. If at first thou dost not seem to succeed, do not let thy faith fail, it is his custom to try the children of men. Thus Joseph tried his brethren, and seemed to answer roughly, till their tears and sighs overcame him, and he could not contain any longer, and then he ordered all the Egyptians to withdraw, and burst out into tears himself, and fell upon their necks and kissed them, saying, "I am Joseph," and then all their sorrows and troubles ended in joy and comfort. So our Saviour dealt with the two disciples travelling to Emmaus; at first he blamed them for their incredulity, and being slow of heart to believe; but in a very little while shewed them his hands, and then were the disciples glad: So he used this woman, as if he had no mind to help her, but see only what she found after so many repulses; her faith bore her up; she believed him to be the Lord; she knew he could help her; she knew none else could do it, and was resolved not to leave him. Do thou likewise, till he falls upon thy neck and says, I am Jesus; till he shews thee his hands and thy new name graven there; till he says, "O Man! O Woman! Great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Before I conclude this discourse I must observe, that her faith was what pleased our dear Saviour so much; and for this, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Enoch, David, Gideon, Sampson, and all the Saints are praised in the Scriptures; and we meet with many places of this sort, "Thy faith hath saved thee," Luke vii. 50. "Thy faith hath made thee whole," Luke viii. 48. "If thou believest, thou shalt see the Glory of God," John xi. 40.

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These and many of the same nature and strain, confirm to us that blessed doctrine that we are justified and saved through faith, and not by means of our works or deserving. Whenever men suppose our duties, obedience, merits, or good works, are the cause of our salvation, they reject the Head Stone in the corner, and without a foundation build the house upon the sand. The sole cause, reason, and author of our salvation is Jesus Christ. He himself saves us, and by faith we receive in him all we want in time and in eternity. Is our faith little in him? We shall receive little, yea little else beside death and hell; and feel to our hurt that we have despised the blood of the covenant, and thought little of God's salvation. Is our faith great in him? We shall receive much at his hands. "Great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

We cannot believe too highly of Jesus: We cannot think him more gracious or loving than he is: There is more in him than we can ask or think: He is Almighty God, who has left all in heaven, and in the bosom of his Father, and came down with no other view or design but to redeem lost souls out of the slavery and service of Satan, and to open a way for them by his own blood, into the holiest place of all, even heaven itself, whither he is now entered to prepare a place for us. There was no other remedy, he knew nothing we could do was sufficient to atone for our sins, or make up the breach, therefore he said, "Lo! I come," and has now in his own body made satisfaction to divine justice: He has obtained the right of eternal redemption, and can give it to whom he will. If thou art not of the seed or selected ones of Israel, yet he can save thee. There is not a single soul out of the reach of his mercy. He is Lord of all: He is Lord of the living and of the dead. His hand

is not cramped or shortened that it cannot save, or his ear heavy that it cannot hear; and when it has gone so far, that to all human appearance there is no hope, all things are possible with him; venture then and pray to him, be your case what it will, Lord, help me! Fix your eyes upon his cross. Trust only and entirely, body and soul, upon that crucified God, and worship before his feet, which once burned with anguish, and were red like brass in the furnace; to him say, "Have mercy upon me!" He has felt your need, and knows how to shew mercy. When no eye pitied us in our fallen estate, or had compassion on us, he saw us in our blood, cast out to the loathing of our persons, and polluted, and had mercy on us. His heart was touched at our fall and loss, and undertook to be our Saviour. Let nothing then take away your confidence in his great and boundless mercy; but let what will try you, yet believe in him, and you shall see the end of the Lord's dealings shall be, to be gracious, merciful, long-suffering and of great goodness. Let your faith in him only be great, and it shall be done to you even as you will. You shall find the same loving Redeemer, who dealt thus bountifully with an outcast woman of the Gentiles, still rich in mercy to all them that call upon him in faith.

Let us pray the Holy Ghost to grant us such a deep, and continual sense of our great poverty and need of redemption, and the Redeemer, that till our last moments that may be our inmost heart's prayer, "Have pity upon me! Have mercy upon me! Lord, help me!" And may our compassionate high-priest, indeed, have mercy upon us and help us now in this present life, as long as we are strangers and pilgrims in the world; in our last hour, when our strength fails us, and we must go into eternity; and also in the day of judgment, when heaven and earth shall flee

flee before him, and he shall sit upon the Throne of his Glory and judge all nations! Yea then, Lord, especially help us and have mercy upon us, for thy name's sake. In that day, let thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in thee.

## DISCOURSE XIX.

### THE SHADOWS OF CHRIST.

COL. ii. 17.

*Which things are a shadow, but the body is of Christ,*

**I**N most of St. Paul's epistles he labours to prove that all the scriptures testify of Christ. That he is the Lord and God so often spoken of therein; and that the whole law, the sacrifices, the sprinkling of blood, the priest, the vestments, the festivals, the new moons, the Sabbaths, the ark, the temple, and whatever was contained in the first covenant, were not the substance, but only figures of the true, namely, Jesus Christ, in whom is found all fulness.

In like manner, before the law, God spake to the fathers in similitudes, and under types and shadows manifested his redemption to them, and but to a very few was the salvation shewn plainly, and without a veil.

In former ages, therefore, compared with these days of the Son of man, Christ was preached but darkly, and the good people of those times were shut up under the law to the faith which was afterwards revealed, and taught plainly in our Saviour, and by all his apostles and disciples.

I suppose much of God's dealings with Adam, Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is therefore handed down, through so many ages, as shadows

dows of his gracious dealings to us in Christ; and especially the offerings (which were most early of all others, and used two thousand years before Moses) kept up in the minds of the people, the idea of being saved by the death of another, and made clean by blood. This the ordinances and dispensation of the law only explained a little more, and pointed out clearer the Antitype Jesus. This is plain from the Scripture; for when Moses was in the mount with God, he saw how the serpent's head should be bruised, and sin and death abolished; and therefore, when he was ordered to make the worldly tabernacle, and regulate the sacrifices, priesthood, and divine service, he was charged to do it after the pattern which was shewn him; and thence it is, that to force a strict observance of the rites and ceremonies then in use, Moses delivers the ordinances and statutes, saying, Thus and thus shall it be done; and adds, "All these words the Lord commanded Moses." This served to enlighten a little such as walked under that cloudy dispensation, and those who searched diligently among the prophets, and who ventured behind the veil, found out that God would provide a lamb, and make his soul an offering for sin, and by his stripes heal the heart of his people, and in his blood, like a fountain, wash away the sins and uncleanness of the world, and therefore boldly testified of him, and taught the people of the coming of a priest who should abide for ever, and who was mighty to save. They mentioned the bringing in of a law and new covenant, that could give life and salvation, and which should be everlasting; and the shedding of blood, which could make an atonement for the soul. By this means many died in faith, having only seen the Saviour afar off, having wished to see the days that we

see, but did not see them ; and to hear the words that we hear, but did not hear them.

However many, professing christianity now, are ashamed of it, yet it is most sure and certain, that the Lord, so often named and mentioned in the Bible, the Jehovah, the God of the prophets and fathers, the Maker of heaven and earth, the One God, the Holy one of Israel, is no other than the same Person, who having often appeared to the patriarchs, and to the church in the wilderness, as a great King, as an Angel, as a cherub, in fire, in a cloud, &c. in these last days appeared in the form of a servant, and was called Jesus Christ ; and though men will venture to think low and meanly of him, and suppose some being or name greater or higher than he, they must one day bow the knee to him with shame, and know, that there is no name above his name in heaven and earth, or under the earth, nor in this world, nor in that which is to come. He is truly low, in respect of his humanity, for in that he humbled himself, but is nevertheless truly and everlastingly " God over all blessed for ever. Amen."

Some of the first shadows of Christ appear even directly after the fall ; for as soon as Adam and Eve had sinned, and were sensible of it, they endeavoured to hide themselves behind the trees, and made aprons of fig-leaves to cover their nakedness. It was indeed a poor robe, and what the least wind could have blown away, and the least finger have torn, but such is all the righteousness of our making ; it may serve to please ourselves, and such short-sighted people as are in the same state with us, but the smallest blast of the Lord's mouth would make it all flee away like a cobweb, or chaff, or smoke out of the chimney, and we should be left naked and bare. Therefore when God forgave Adam,

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Adam, and comforted him with the promise of healing the breach by the Seed of the woman, he no doubt taught him to offer sacrifices, and so preached to his family and children, that by means of death and shedding of blood the sinner should be saved; and then the Lord made them coats of the skins of the beasts, and clothed them. It is not said, he taught them how to make their coats, but made them himself; signifying that no covering we can make ourselves will hide our shame from him, or be right in his sight: He must do it himself; he must cloath us with his righteousness as with a raiment, and woe be to them that cover not themselves with the covering of his Spirit. We are so far from being capable of covering our sin, or making ourselves righteous, that we even cannot help to do it. As it was said of the altar, "Thou shalt make it of whole stones, thou shalt not lift up a tool upon it, if thou lift up thy tool upon it thou hast polluted it;" so may it be said in this respect, thou must have it wholly of him, a perfect righteousness, long and down to the foot, quite complete, and fit to hide all iniquity, and having no room to add any of our own to it. To think of obtaining part of this to make ours entire, would be to take the new cloth to mend the old garment, which may not be. As the fleece of the victim offered in sacrifice was Adam's coat, so Christ being stripped naked, and offered up on the altar of the Cross, takes his true fleece, his righteousness, of which he seemed divested when he was made sin for us, and numbered with transgressors, and this he gives and imputes to cover their nakedness for whom he was made a sacrifice. "Buy of me," he saith, "raiment, and ye shall be clothed, and the shame of your nakedness shall not appear."

Thus Noah's ark was a shadow of Christ; for when the fountains of the great deep were broken up,



up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and every living creature died in the storm and flood, a sanctuary was prepared for such as believed, where they were safe; and when a dove ventured out of the ark, she could find no rest for the sole of her foot till Noah took her in again: So in the midst of a world, where Satan's seat is, where dangers are on every side, where, by and by, hell from beneath shall open her mouth, and the wrath of God fall and burn up all the world, and put the nations of the earth in the greatest distress, Jesus is an Ark of refuge; whoever gets in there shall be safe; let the storm come when it will, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against them; his wounds are the open way by which we escape, and a soul once entered in by him, shall be secure in eternity. Have any been so foolish to leave him and go again into the world? I know they can have no rest for the sole of their foot; they may wander to and fro, like the dove, but must return to the ark, and our heavenly Noah will put forth his hand and take them in, till the storm be over-past.

The sparing of Isaac, and offering a lamb in the stead upon mount Moriah, was also a shadow of Christ's dying as a Lamb in our stead. Abraham had prepared the altar, the wood, and the knife, and Isaac was bound and laid thereon, and his father's hand was stretched out to sacrifice him, when an angel interposed, and shewed him a ram caught in the thicket, which he took and offered up in his room, and Isaac was unbound and saved alive. By this the Holy Ghost sets forth our state; the altar was prepared, as it were; our sins were like fuel ready to have burned us up, and would have brought on the wrath of God like a river of flaming brimstone to kindle it; the sword was lifted and held out, we, sinners, bound down by Satan with the

the chains of our own sins, when Jesus, like a lamb caught in the thicket, cried, Forgive them, my Father, and unbound and forgave us, stretched out his hands upon the altar, and was fastened thereon with nails, when the sword awaked upon him, and he expired loaded with our sins, and in our stead died, so making an atonement.

When Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire, a cave in Zoar was found for Lot and his children, and this also was a shadow of Christ: For when guilty souls are warned to flee from wrath to come, when they leave the world, which John calls spiritual Sodom and Egypt, and under a sense of their own sin tremble, and do not know where to escape, the Holy Spirit shews them the wounds of Jesus; his arms extended and held out, like the wings of a hen, are a happy shelter in such a time of need. That smitten and cleft body of his is then like the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land, a hiding place in the stormy wind and tempest." "Is it not a little one?" says Lot of Zoar, "and my soul shall live." So we who believe in Jesus sing with understanding,

Ye gaping bloody wounds, to me  
How dear are ye and sweet?  
In you I've found for evermore  
A small but safe retreat.

The manner in which Isaac blessed his son Jacob must also be observed as typical; for he intended to have blessed Esau, and sent him out to fetch venison, that he might once more eat of his son's labour, and impart his blessing to him before he died: In the mean time Rebecca, the mother of Jacob, got ready meat for her husband, and made her son Jacob carry it to him in the name of Esau,

and lest he should handle him (for Esau was an hairy man) she put the skin of the kid which she had killed about his hands and about his neck, and sent him to his father, who though he was old, and his eyes so dim that he could not see, yet when Jacob spoke, he questioned his voice, and though he felt his hands, and knew they felt like Esau's hands, yet he was not reconciled to his voice, because, saith he, "it is the voice of Jacob," till as he stood near his father, he smelt the raiment of his elder son upon him, and that overcame the good old man! O! he cried, "it is Esau, the smell of my son's raiment is as the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed," and then he blessed his son in the name of his father's God, with all the blessings he could wish his son, yea, and he adds, "he shall be blessed."

Thus when Jerusalem, our mother, invites us by the gospel to venture into the presence of our heavenly Father, and get his blessing, a poor sinner may easily be afraid, like Jacob, lest he should meet with a curse and not a blessing; for he may think, my Father knows my voice would be the voice of Jacob, the voice of a lost and ruined sinner, whose best sighs and tears, and prayers have so much sin mingled in them, that in justice I might expect wrath rather than a blessing at his hands. This is true, but do as Jacob, put on thy elder brother's raiment, put on the righteousness of Christ, and thou shalt be blessed with all the blessings in heaven above, and in the earth beneath, yea, and thou shalt be blessed. With all Jacob could have done, he had certainly failed, had he not put on Esau's raiment, for this was the only means of his prevailing. Do all thou canst, imitate the voice of a saint, speak like an angel, and put on the most strict, holy, and devout form, and God will behold thee afar off. Thou wilt be treated as a hypocrite, and be  
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be scattered in the imagination of thy own heart, but put on the Lord Jesus; just as he stood in thy sins before the judges, so stand thou in his righteousness, and God shall call thee fair; his blood and obedience makes such a happy alteration, that whoever puts on this raiment, and are invested with this robe, may stand bold before the throne, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, and all the blessings God the Father has, all the blessings God the Holy Ghost bestows, and all the blessings God the Son purchased for them, shall come upon them in time and in eternity.

The Paschal lamb was still a brighter emblem of Christ our Passover, and more lively pointed out the deliverance through his blood.

This was an ordinance appointed the last night the children of Israel were in Egypt, and at the same time that the first-born were slain. They were ordered to take a lamb of the first year, without blemish or spot, and to roast the flesh, and eat it with bitter herbs, leaning upon their staves, and to sprinkle the blood of it upon their door-posts, which was to be a sign to the destroying angel as he passed by at midnight, to spare that house. They were to eat it with bitter herbs, to remember their cruel bondage in Egypt; and to lean on their staves, to put them in mind they were strangers, and on a journey. Accordingly at midnight the angel passed through the land, and slew the eldest person in every house, but only where the blood was upon the door, there all was safe and preserved.

When Jesus saw our affliction under the iron yoke of Satan, and pitied the lost world, and was come down to save it, he became our passover. He was of the first year, that is, innocent, and pure as a virgin, born of a virgin. "He was without blemish and without spot, no iniquity was found in him,  
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nor was any guile in his mouth." Such a lamb God prepared, and that night when he opened the way for our deliverance, he was roasted, as it were, and scorched up with burning anguish and the fiery wrath of God, so that "his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth, and his moisture was like the drought in summer," while his feet looked red with heat and pain, and like brass, burning in the furnace. In this condition he died, and poured out his blood upon the ground; and this was done on that very day wherein the Jews from year to year killed their paschal lambs.

All who would escape in the day of judgment, keep his passover; for the destroying angels, each with his destroying weapon in his hand, now watch only for the word, and in one night they would smite according to their charge, small and great, old and young, maids, women, and little children; but for the present they forbear, as well as those who have power over the winds, that they may not hurt the earth or any green tree, till Jesus has marked his people, and sprinkled the blood of the true Passover. We here eat his flesh by true faith, to the saving of our souls; it becomes meat indeed, and is the fore-taste of the marriage-supper of the Lamb; but we eat it with bitter herbs, namely, we meet with many bitter trials and troubles in this spiritual Egypt from the world, the devil, and those round about us: We eat it leaning on our staves; for though we may be happy and at peace about our soul's future estate, yet we may not forget that we are not at home; the times of refreshing we have here in this life from the presence of the Lord, are only like a traveller baiting at an inn; he forgets not he is upon a journey, and hastens on; so we have our eye upon the continuing city, the New Jerusalem, and are here pilgrims and foreigners, and therefore



you have seen to-day, ye shall see no more for ever !  
All are drowned in the deep of this sea, and shall be remembered no more.

Again, The rock which God struck when the waters gushed out, was another shadow of Christ. The children of Israel had now crossed the deep, as through a wilderness, and were now come into a barren and dry land where was no water. The people and their little ones, their cattle, and what they had with them, were ready to die with thirst, and in this distress they cried to the Lord, and he bid Moses speak to the rock in the sight of the congregation, and smite it with his rod, and as he struck it, the waters flowed out of the flinty stone as out of a springing well ; nor did this happen alone, but the rock followed them, and afforded them plenty of water till they came into a better land. Just so in the midst of this howling wilderness where is no living water, and where else we must have perished, there the Lord Christ was the Rock, and it pleased God to smite him and put him to grief. His wounds were the smitten places whence flowed the rivers of the water of life ; “ Of this whosoever drinketh shall live for ever,” and this Rock follows his children till they enter the true Canaan, and drink it new in the kingdom of God.

In like manner the manna was a shadow of Christ. When they wanted bread the Lord rained it down upon them daily, only on the sabbath, and then it ceased. Our Saviour is the “ true Bread which came from heaven and gives life to the world.” His flesh is the hidden manna, which carnal men know nothing of, but the Holy Spirit gives it those who are seeking the city which has foundations. This is that we pray for in the Lord’s prayer, “ Give us this day our daily bread,” or, as it is properly called, our supersubstantial bread. Those who eat the manna  
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in the wilderness are dead, with many of them God was not pleased, wherefore "he sware, they shall not enter my rest;" but whoso eats of this bread shall never die, he shall find it like the bread Elijah eat, in the strength of which he went that long journey to Horeb. So whoso is partaker of the flesh of Christ he shall renew his strength therewith, and endure to the end of his journey and be saved, for it is meat indeed. The Israelites had it rained down daily, to teach them their daily dependance upon their dear Jehovah; so we who believe feed daily upon Christ crucified, and without him we cannot do a day. The language of a faithful heart is, "Give us this day our daily bread." They might not keep of it till the morrow, for then it bred worms and stank, to teach us we may not live upon past experience, but continue to live upon him who has been gracious, and will be so to the end. The manna was small, to teach us not to despise the least glimpse of mercy, and the day of small things, the crumbs that fall from his table. It was sweet, like wafers made with honey, to shew, how precious and sweet Jesus is to a perishing soul. No bread is so sweet to a starving man, as the torn and broken body of Christ, to one hungering after righteousness; it is sweeter than honey or the honey-comb. On the sabbath it rained not down, to teach us, in one eternal sabbath we shall need the manna no more so rained down upon us, we shall then see his face, and sit down with him at his table, and go no more out.

The brazen serpent which Moses lifted up was another shadow of Christ. The congregation in their journey came into a land where were fiery serpents innumerable, and they were destroyed of serpents till God contrived this remedy. Moses made an image of the thing that had bitten and stung the people, and raised it high in the camp, that all the most distant



distant of the people could see it, and it came to pass when they were stung, if they despised the cure and means of healing they died without mercy, but whoever looked to the serpent was healed. So was the Son of man lifted up: He knew we were in the land of this wilderness, where sins were like fiery serpents and innumerable, and the poison he foresaw would corrupt and ruin for ever body and soul, therefore was he made in the likeness of that which tormented and stung our consciences, namely, sin, as it is written, "He was made sin for us," and thus hung the Holy One of God upon the cross, twisting and twining like a wounded serpent, that all stung and hurt by sin might look to him and be saved. Whoever despises the simple and mean cure, and will sooner trust what he has procured by art, study and pains on his own works and righteousness, rather than the free mercy vouchsafed by looking and believing in him slain for us, such an one dies without mercy; his blood is upon his own head. Our Saviour was exhibited to him, but he would not be healed; but where a poor distressed and pained sinner feels the sting of the serpent, which is sin, and wants ease with all his heart, and sighs for salvation, such an one the Holy Ghost directs to look upon Jesus, and behold his sufferings and tears, to look into his wounds and stripes, and see his sorrow which has been more than any sorrow, and here he gets healing. The pain of sin dies away, the anguish ceases, and the tortures and pangs of a dying Jesus put an eternal end to his own. "Look unto him and be saved all ye ends of the earth!"

The ark was a shadow of Christ; it was overlaid with gold, and contained the tables of the covenant, the rod of Aaron that budded and bore fruit, the golden censer, the pot of manna, the Urim and Thummim, and the glory of God; but all was covered

vered over with a plain coarse covering of goat's hair and badger's skin, so that it would have been easy to have passed it, and not thought so great treasure and such mysteries were laid up there. So also is Christ. In him was all fulness. He is our covenant. "I will give thee, saith God, for a covenant to the people." All the law and the tables of the Old Covenant were not the substance, but a faint shadow of that which God made in Christ, and by which we are his people, and he is our God, and this is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and makes us free from the law of sin and death. He is the Golden Censer, in which all our prayers and praises are offered up, and become like sweet odours before the throne, for these odours are the prayers of the saints. He is our true Manna, as I have said. He is that Rod which budded and bore the fruit of the Tree of life. He is the Urim and Thummim, the Light and Perfection, the White Stone of which we learn the mind of the Most High, and whereon are graven our new names.

The altar, the candlestick, the shew-bread, were shadows of him. "We have an altar, saith St. Paul, to which they have no right who serve the tabernacle." As formerly, the altar sanctified the gift, so all that we offer would be abominable and offensive in the eyes of him who can see our iniquity, if the Altar Christ did not sanctify it.

There's nought we can offer which he esteems good,  
Unless it ascends in the smoke of the blood.

But whatever we pray or ask is heard on Jesus's account, and for his sake alone. There the poor sinner offers his sighs and tears, and there the happy soul, the king and priest of God, offers his songs of joy, his blessings and praises, and is accepted.

The candlestick was one, but had seven branches which gave light to the whole sanctuary; so Jesus in the church, with his seven eyes and seven Spirits of God, lightens the temple of God, and the whole church in heaven and earth. He is the Shew-Bread, which none might eat but the priests alone, none but those who are anointed of the Holy Ghost to minister before God, and are priests clothed in white raiment, washed in the blood of the Lamb, may eat of this bread.

The sacrifices were of all others the most lively shadows of Christ. Every morning a lamb was offered, that was for the sins of the night, and every evening another, and that was for the sins of the day; this was called the daily sacrifice, or morning and evening oblation. Thus day and night a lamb lay bleeding upon God's altar, and the smoke of his burning came up without ceasing before the Lord. Thus Jesus having offered up himself, the "true Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world," ascended to the golden altar in the heavens, where day and night he appears in the presence of God for us, as a Lamb that has been slain, atoning for the sins of every day, and making intercession for his poor people. On the feast day of expiation he was shadowed by a goat, which always represented the wicked, and when the goat on that day was brought into the tabernacle, the high-priest laid his hand on its head, charging thereon all his sins and the sins of the congregation of Israel, so did the other priests, and then while they condemned it to be slain, they took a second goat by the horns and brought it out, and one led it into the wilderness bearing away the iniquity of the congregation of Israel, into a land uninhabited; mean while the other goat, with a calf or bullock, was made a sin-offering, while all the Levites blew their trumpets,  
and

and all the people shouted for joy, because now they saw their sin carried away in the scape goat, and atoned for in the sacrifice. This was fully accomplished in the day when Christ was sacrificed, for then first the high-priest charged him with all sins and crimes, the chief priests and elders did the same, to which all the people consented; and after the high-priest had said, "It is better that one die and the whole nation perish not," they dragged out the victim black with our guilt and sin, for God laid upon him the iniquity of us all, and he made his death with the wicked; and as he died making an everlasting and perfect atonement for all sin, his Spirit, like the scape goat, entered the state of the dead, as into a wilderness, and carried away all the iniquity of the land in one day. This was the day that the Lord had made, the day of expiation and making an end of sin; and while he destroyed and cancelled transgression, all the priests of God round the throne blew their trumpets, and sung the new song, "Salvation to the Lamb," while all below shouted with barbarous, and all above with divine joy.

The high-priest that officiated yearly among the Jews, and was particular on this day, was also a shadow of our good High-Priest; for he was chosen out from among his brethren, that, being a man like them, he might be merciful and compassionate: Also he was to wash his clothes, to put on his head a golden crown or mitre, with the name of JEHOVAH written thereon, for that he represented God. He was also clad in a white linen ephod which reached down to his knees, over which he had a robe wrought with gold, scarlet, and blue, and on his breast the names of the twelve tribes; and thus dressed he took of the ashes of the heifer, and the blood of bulls and goats, and seven times sprinkled  
towards

towards heaven, and then having sprinkled all the vessels of the ministry, he sprinkled himself, and then entered in behind the veil into the holy of holies, where he made prayers for the whole church, and at his return he sprinkled all the people with blood, saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has enjoined to you," and this was a sort of sign of absolution.

This also was accomplished in our High-Priest; for first he washed his clothes in a bloody sweat; he wore the white ephod, which was the shadow of righteousness, only with this difference, that he wore it down to the foot, to signify the complete righteousness which he brought in; whereas the righteousness of the law was figured by an ephod which reached only to the knee, to signify the imperfection thereof; for the law was weak and could make nothing perfect. His torn, mangled, and rent body resembled the embroidered robe, and upon his breast he truly bears all his people's names, they are graven on the precious stone of his heart. He only wears indeed the name of JEHOVAH on his crown. He is the LORD, the High-Priest over the whole house of God; yet he was made man, and chosen out of the people a merciful and compassionate High-Priest, having experienced, and undergone, and proved the force and weight of all temptations, sins, and afflictions, that he may pity and help us when we are tempted. And like as the Jewish priest sprinkled the blood seven times toward heaven in making the atonement, so did Jesus, in his scourging; in being crowned with thorns four times, in his hands and feet, and lastly in the opening of his side, and thus has fulfilled all that was written concerning him; in his own body, and "with his own blood he entered the holy place, where he makes intercession for us," while his Spirit ministers

ministers in his name, and brings the deep sense of our being vile dust and ashes to our hearts, (and this was meant by sprinkling ashes on the people) and then reveals the blood of Jesus, saying, "This is the blood of the New Testament which was shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins;" and this is done at that happy moment when a soul obtains pardon, and is justified by looking and believing in Christ.

The new moon festival was a shadow of Christ; for when the new moon appeared, then the people rejoiced, that now their nights would be changed into day, and all would be light; so Jesus becomes our Sun by day and our Moon by night, and our light shall go no more down. This comes to pass when he rises in the heart, and dissipates and chases away the darkness and night of unbelief and heaviness, and we become enlightened by the Day-Spring from on high. We thenceforth no more walk in the night and stumble, but see our way and know whither we go. Our eyes are open, and we see the Sun of righteousness is risen upon us, with healing in his wings: The Lord will be our light and our everlasting brightness.

The sabbath also was a shadow of Christ; for when that commenced, all labour, work, and fatigue ceased, and they rested; so Jesus saith, "Come unto me and I will give you rest for your souls." We then enter the preparation of the eternal sabbath, and cease from all self-workings and stirrings of nature, which have caused such pain and misery to our hearts, and at last it has been but labouring in the fire, and beating the air, and like the disciples who toiled all night and caught nothing. "We have been in pain, we have travailed, saith the prophet, and brought forth wind," so is it with an awakened soul till he has seen the Redeemer

Redeemer in his sufferings and labours. His obedience, and toil, and servitude, satisfy the hungry, and afford a rest to the weary and heavy laden. The moment we look to him in faith, or come to him, we are at home, as it were, we have arrived at our port, we have done with fruitless labours, and strive no more to wash the Ethiopian white, or cleanse the leopard from his spots: We have found at once a cure in the blood of Jesus, that penetrates and pierces to the very root of indwelling sin, drives the old dragon from his seat, and makes the fainting soul free from the bondage of sin and death, and he obtains a sabbath, the antepast of that which shall have no end, and this we have only in Jesus. "We that believe enter into his rest, and his rest is glorious."

The temple was yet another shadow of our Saviour. Thither all the tribes went up to worship God. That was the house that God had chosen wherein his name should be. His presence dwelt there. It was often called his holy habitation, his throne. All prayer must be made there, or looking toward the temple, all sacrifices offered there, and there only was the mercy-seat, and holy of holies: but all this was only in shadow, for the "Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands," as saith the prophet; but in Jesus is the true temple. More than once our Saviour, speaking of his body, called it the Temple; and this was the house which the Lord had pitched, and not man, where he would dwell. All the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him. The name of God is upon him, he is verily the Lord and true God. Here is the very mercy-seat, where all find mercy! Here is the open door, namely, in the veil of his flesh, into the holiest place of all. Here all prayer must be made, and looking to this house,  
turning

turning to this Lamb and Saviour for help, is the only means of obtaining a hearing. "If any have sinned and cannot come, if the enemy have carried them away captive into a strange land, and they cannot worship or pray to thee in this house, but shall turn and make their prayer looking towards this house (said Solomon in his prayer at dedicating the temple) then do thou hear from heaven and forgive." Thus we find Daniel opening his window in the captivity, "and looking toward the holy temple at Jerusalem," when he prayed; and the angel tells him, from the first day he sought the Lord, he was heard. Just so, if a soul has sinned, and Satan has led him captive at his will, into a state far distant from the Lord, so that if he would give all the world he cannot come, he fails and is afraid and ashamed to venture, let him turn and look toward the temple, let him look at Jesus, and see his wounds, and arms, and heart all open to receive him, let him pray with his face toward the crucified Jesus, and he shall feel what reality is in him, he shall know, "He is gracious and merciful, and his compassions fail not."

John says, "I saw no temple in heaven, for the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple." This is that of which Solomon's was only a picture and figure that is destroyed, and all the worshippers scattered, but this has foundations, and shall be the house of God for ever; whoso enters in hither shall go no more out.

The six cities of refuge and the sanctuary were also other shadows of Christ. His torn head, his back where the plowers plowed and made deep furrows, his hands and feet, are the six cities of refuge, his wounded side is the sanctuary. If you are convinced of your sinful state, are in danger of the wrath of God, and afraid lest the avenger of  
**blood**



blood should pursue you, O fly to these cities, there is room enough to harbour the whole world; fly like doves before the storm into the clefts of this rock, and you shall find the best refuge. You have not many miles to journey, you have no long pilgrimage to undertake; you need not travel to Jerusalem, or Medina, or Loretto; Jesus is near to you, his hands are spread out to embrace returning prodigals, they are the horns of the altar, the only refuge of poor guilty sinners.

When Joab fled for sanctuary and took hold on the horns of the altar, he was dragged thence and slain; but no man can pluck you out of Jesus Christ's hands. Whoever have escaped thither are in safety as long as the sun and moon endureth. The remembrance of their sin and past ill life may make them blush for shame, and force tears from their eyes, but no avenger of blood, no Satan, no law, no judgment can drag a soul thence; they shall dwell safely under his shadow, and none shall make them afraid.

In the same manner, Adam, Noah, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, David, &c. in other respects, have been shadows of our Immanuel. As by Adam came death, sin, the curse, and misery upon all born out of his loins, so by Christ came the restoration, righteousness, blessing, happiness, and eternal life; upon all born again of him, and who have received a new birth out of his side, through the Spirit, the water, and the blood.

As Noah prepared the Ark and saved his family, so Jesus has prepared also an ark for the saving his family, and is himself that great salvation.

Like as Isaac also would marry his wife out of a far country, and sent for her with camels, a guard of young men, and fine raiment, jewels, and riches to adorn her, and provision by the way;

way; so Jesus sends down into the world, to invite us to be the bride, the Lamb's wife: he sends many angels to guard and bring us home; his righteousness and merits are the wedding-garment and jewels which make us shine in the marriage-chamber, and his body and blood is our provision in the way.

Moses was a Saviour, and led out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt, and from the house of bondage; but Christ was a better Saviour, who saves his people from their sins, and releases them out of the hands of all tyrants, death, hell, and the grave, and will be their Saviour in eternity.

Because of Moses's weakness at the waters he died, and might not enter the good land; he brought them into the wilderness, and there left them; and then Joshua, which is the same name with Jesus, took them and brought them into the land of Canaan over Jordan. Hereby God signified, that the law brings people out, as it were, into a wilderness, and there shews them their sin and cursed estate, and leaves them; there we should have been left for ever, if our true Joshua had not vouchsafed to lead us over Jordan into the good land above; for what the law could not do through the weakness of our flesh, that Jesus does, and not only convinces the soul of sin, but brings grace and truth, reality and substance with him, and at once looses the captive from the condemnation of the law, cancels the bond, and is our Surety and Saviour.

Above all the rest David was his shadow, and that in so eminent a manner, that Christ is often called David in the scripture.

David was a shepherd, and when a lion and a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, he

ventured his life for the lamb, and slew the lion and the bear, and brought back the sheep he had lost. Our good Shepherd saw when the devil like a roaring lion seized his sheep, and though all the heavens were his with all their hosts, and the world, with its numerous inhabitants, were to him, in comparison, like a drop of the bucket, yet for that worthless little drop, that poor sheep, he ventured and lost his life to save it: he made war with the lion and the dragon, and overcame by his blood, and brought back the sheep upon his shoulders, which he had lost. David was also a king, a priest, and a prophet: Jesus is the King of kings, and Prince of the kings of the earth; he is the King of Israel, the Prince of peace, whose kingdom shall have no end. David, indeed, was not of the family of Aaron, nor the first-born of his mother, but was called of God to minister in a white ephod, and to burn sacrifices before the Lord; so Jesus was no Levite, but made a priest by him that sware and will not repent, saying, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech." He only was chosen out of all in heaven and earth to offer the great oblation, and he alone was found worthy to make intercession for the people, and to atone for sin. He also was the "Prophet mighty in word and in deed," and the chief Doctor and Teacher in all his Father's house. His doctrines, his prophecies alone the Holy Ghost uses to awaken, help, and save the lost world. His words are spirit and life. But the time forbids me to add more, for all other blessed men, all the mysteries of the law, all offerings, festivals, sacraments, washings, and laws are shadows of him. He is our Righteousness, Holiness, Wisdom, Redemption, our Head, our Shepherd, our Master, our Elder, our Light, our Truth, our Resurrection, our Sun, our Guide, our  
Way

Way to heaven, our Door into the sheepfold, our Saviour, our Maker, our Preserver, Mediator, Advocate, Peace, Rest, and eternal Life; he is our Foundation, our Doctrine, our Glory, our Lord God, and All!

He was once preached in visions, in shadows, and darkly by the law, but now plainly and without a veil; now as the crucified Lamb, as the only One that can save, and cannot be set forth too openly, too distinctly and clearly; for the night is past, and the true light shineth; the winter is over, and the shadows fly away, and he, our Lord Jesus, is set forth as a propitiation for the remission of sins, and is and must be preached alone, by all his ministers, as the "only Saviour, the First and Last, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, without whom we can do nothing." He is our eternal God and Creator, who for our sakes was incarnate and made a man, and is now our Father, Husband, and Brother, our All in all.

Whatever is sacred, or mysterious, or dear, in respect of him, must be esteemed little and invaluable; they are all shadows, but the substance and body is Christ. To whom be glory for ever and ever.

May you all possess him in your hearts! Amen.

## DISCOURSE XX.

### THE FALL AND REDEMPTION.

I Cor. xv. 47.

*The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second man is the Lord from heaven.*

**I**N this chapter the doctrines of the fall by the first, and the restoration by the second Adam, is treated of in a particular manner, and with divine authority and clearness.

The design of the apostle seems to have been the proving a general resurrection, against such who among the Sadducees, and other captious people, denied it. He sets forth Adam as having by his disobedience introduced death into the world, and Christ as bringing in life, and destroying death. "By one came death, he says, and by one came the resurrection of the dead;" and boldly asserts, that Christ has so undertaken the cause, that death, sin, the curse, and whatever came in by original sin, shall be done away and destroyed in him, who will reign till he has subdued all things to himself, and swallowed up death in victory, and brought out of their graves again those who have been turned into corruption, and make all alive, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame and contempt.

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My purpose is not now to speak of the resurrection altogether, though that is one of the principles of Christianity, and very comfortable; but of the fall by Adam, and of its sad effects in the world, and of the redemption and restoration by Christ Jesus, and the blessed consequences of his dying, in all who believe.

After God had finished the world, and made it very good, on the sixth day he created, out of the dust of the ground, man in his own image; for, as himself was Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so was his creature his copy and transcript, viz. body, soul, and spirit; for "God breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul." He was made a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and worship, for to him was the world put in subjection, all beasts and birds, and whatsoever walketh in the paths of the seas; all came to him to receive names, and what name he called them that was their name. The earth brought forth abundantly, every tree whose fruit was good for food, and every green herb for his use. All was a blessed garden, and a sort of lower Paradise.

In this happy and angelical situation was Adam when his Creator saw it best for him not to be alone, and therefore caused him to fall into a deep sleep: during which he opened his side, and took a rib or part of him away, and of this he made a woman, whom Adam knew as soon as he awoke, for he said, "Now this is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh;" and though it seems God had called their names Adam, for they were one, yet he called her Chevah, or Eve, because he looked upon her as the mother of all living.

They had not lived long in their innocent and high estate before sin spoiled and ruined all, which

happened thus: Satan, who before had been an angel, and very likely one of the greatest among the principalities in heaven, the first-born son of the morning, for his pride, of which he was the author, in attempting to be like the Most High, was cast down, and his angels with him, into the lower regions; and as it was otherwise out of his power and above his reach to revenge himself on the Lord, he plotted the hurt and ruin of the new world, in which he observed the Creator took such pleasure: this he knew he could never effect but by bringing sin into it, and with this he succeeded. Now, amidst all the liberty granted to Adam, and notwithstanding all his dignity, sovereignty, and dominion, upon the throne God was greater than he; and that he might know it, and live as became a child of God, one only tree was forbidden to be tasted, upon forfeiture of his sonship and divine life. "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Satan took the advantage of this prohibition, and spoke with Eve in the form of a serpent, which was the wisest, if not the most lovely, of all the creatures, about this tree, which is called by the Holy Ghost, "The Tree of Knowledge," because, upon the eating of it, their eyes were opened to their sad misfortune, to know evil. At their first conference they continued child-like, obedient, and simple, but were at last persuaded, at least, to look on it, and see how lovely it appeared, for "it was pleasant to the eye, and good for food;" and as often as they refused to touch it, Satan reasoned with them, and told them, "if they did eat, they would not die;" but God knew that at their eating they would be, like himself, wise, and knowing good and evil, and be like gods, wherefore he had forbidden it. Here, questioning the word of God through Satan's lying,  
and

and saying, "Ye shall not surely die," unbelief stole in, and a desire to taste the fruit of which God had said, "Ye shall not eat," and then, first the woman, and after that the man eat, and at once lost their glory and dignity, and by obeying him, became servants of the devil, and sunk into his condemnation. Fear and shame were the immediate effects of their sin, the Holy Spirit also departed, and a curse came upon all the world, and upon every creature, which before God had made in subjection to Adam.

Evil was now in the earth, which just before was very good; venom and poison rushed into some, fury and fierceness into others, and mischief, and somewhat very bad, into all the creatures that had life: The trees and herbs degenerated, and the ground brought forth thorns and noisome weeds. Adam was no more obeyed, his sovereignty ceased, and death, pain, and sickness, and the innumerable plagues and calamities crowded in with it, and hell followed: Satan usurped the throne of man, and was God of this world from thenceforth, leading all captive at his will, calling every child of Adam his home-born slave, and triumphing in the destruction of the six days labour of Jehovah.

Thus fell the first man Adam, who was of the earth, and thus fell all mankind with him, and were a prey to the dragon, the serpent, that deceived and enslaved the whole world.

Doubtless God Almighty foresaw all this that happened before ever he laid the foundation of the earth, or said, "Let there be light;" but then he would not alter his design, but went on with his creation; resolved to take the opportunity of the fall to make known to heaven and earth and hell his everlasting love; an infinite value for the children  
of



of men, and decreed from everlasting to be their Saviour.

He watched the whole subtle work of the enemy, and saw the entering-in and course of sin, and to comfort poor wretched Adam and Eve, who had destroyed themselves, and "sold themselves for nought," he said, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." This doctrine more and more clearly taught and revealed by the Holy Ghost to the fathers, was their consolation also, and the hope of Israel, till the Redeemer, the Desire of all nations, came.

"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent his Son made of a woman, and this was the second man Adam, the Lord from heaven." Eve was the first in the transgression, and therefore was he only made of the weaker flesh of a woman, but in the form and fashion of a man, differing from us only in this, that he was without sin in his conception, birth, and life.

When he appeared in the world, it was in the person of Adam, as one who undertook to set the whole ruined state of mankind to rights, and take upon himself the blame, curse, and punishment of all, and redeem and save his people with justice and equity, and carry away whatever evil came in by the first man.

All the casualties, sicknesses, infirmities, pains, griefs, weaknesses, and whatever else were the consequences of the curse, weighed him down from his infancy, and made him a man of sorrows. His obedience to the law was the payment of our debt; and wherein we failed, and should have fallen short, and never attained to righteousness; but the curse he took away, by bearing it truly, and indeed, as it came upon us. The curse of the serpent was, "Thou shalt be cursed above all cattle, and above every  
beast

of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." This, as far as it related to the beasts and creeping things, he bore when in his distress; he fell down upon his face to the earth, to the dust, and there lay upon his belly twisting and twining like a smitten serpent, or like a worm and no man, washing the dust of the ground with blood. Sin had made its inroad in a garden, and in the garden of Gethsemane he tore it up by the roots, with strong cries and tears.

The curse of the woman was, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception, in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thine husband, and he shall rule over thee."

This our Saviour took upon himself, when in the weakness of the flesh of a woman (of which he spake in his anguish to his disciples, saying, "the flesh is weak") laid his hands upon his loins, and travailed, and brought his church to the birth in the agonies of hell; for then were his sorrows greatly multiplied, and he was more affrighted and weaker than any woman, because his hour was come. And he that should have been head and ruler, was servant and slave of all.

The curse of the man was, "In sorrow shalt thou eat of the fruit of the ground, and of the herb of the field, all the days of thy life; in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread, till thou return again to the ground, for out of it thou wast taken. Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return."

This curse he endured also in the strictest sense, for he eat of the fruit of the ground and of the herb of the field with sorrow all the days of his life. "He (above all mankind) was a man of sorrows and acquainted

acquainted with grief." In the sweat of his brow did he eat bread, for he laboured at his trade, was continually travelling on foot and toiling by sea, till a bloody sweat streamed over his brows, and stained and dyed his garments red; and this continued upon him till he was laid in the ground, or buried, according to the word of God.

The latter part of the sentence, namely, "Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return," I hardly dare term a part of the curse, since it would have been more cursed and heavy if this had not been added. We should not have waited for the last day in the same fallen and spoiled bodies, nor could the earth have supported us. After we had arrived at some hundred years of age, our lives would have been a burden to us, and to all round about us; and this might probably have been the reason why, after the fall, Adam was hindered to eat of the fruit of the tree of life, lest he should be thereby made immortal, or could have lived for ever in that helpless and most lamentable estate: Therefore it seems a part of the Divine Goodness, to suffer all to return back again to the dust from whence we were taken, that in the day when he should create all things new, he might raise us up in his own likeness, to die no more. With this consideration, the thoughts of sleeping and resting our wearied-out bodies in the grave is sweet, and we can ask chearfully, "O grave, where is thy victory?"

But I will return to speak of the curse, where-with the ground was cursed, which brought forth, and was the mother of all creatures, animal and vegetable.

And the Lord said to Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake, thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." From the moment this was

was said, the whole creation groaned and travailed together in pain, with all the creatures; the cry of all continually came up before God.

This curse was visibly taken away and transferred upon the head of the second Adam, when the soldiers platted the thorns, &c. and put them upon his head, and a reed in his hand, because that also seemed a part of the curse, that fruitful ground became barren and brought forth reeds and rushes. Then might it have been said with all propriety, when he came forth wearing the crown of thorns, "Behold the Man! behold the second man Adam, who taketh away the curse of the world." It is remarkable that the devil entered into the serpent to betray the first man into sin, and so also the devil entered into Judas to betray the second man Christ Jesus into the punishment. The first man's eyes were seduced to look upon the tree, and this became a snare to him, and stirred up the desire to taste. The second man's eyes also were led to see the wrath due upon that account, and it made him tremble and weep bitterly at the approach of that cup, which he was not only to taste but drink up with all the dregs thereof. As soon as Adam had sinned, his eyes were opened to know good and evil. As soon as Jesus had taken the sin upon him, his eyes were shut and blindfolded.

The first man sold himself for naught, for a little fruit, as it were, and the second was sold only for thirty pieces of silver; this was the price at which they of the children of Israel valued the Lord. The first upon his sin lost his sonship, and was a slave and vassal of Satan. The second, though he was a son and heir of all, was lower than a servant, and obedient even to the wicked, in all he suffered, and Satan seemed to lead him in triumph in bonds and chains.

Adam

Adam was stripped of all his righteousness and innocence, that he was glad of a few leaves sewed together to cover his naked body. Jesus also was stripped naked, and made a spectacle to angels and men, and endured the shame, having no covering but blood, spittle, and dust.

The first man lost the beauty and image of God, the last had his face marred more than any man's, and his form more than the sons of men.

The first was doomed to sorrow, and his wife also subjected to increase sorrow all her days. Come only to the manger, and see his poor and sorrowful birth: To the wilderness, and see his sorrows there in the forty days temptation: To Nazareth and Jerusalem, and behold his sorrowful life: To his last supper, to the garden, to the courts of Annas and Caiaphas, to the hall of Herod and Pontius Pilate; but especially come to the mountain called Golgotha, and "behold and see if there was any sorrow like unto his sorrow, wherewith the Lord afflicted him in the day of his fierce anger." It had been said in the law, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," or, he is cursed that is hanged; but no reason, that I remember, is assigned by the Holy Ghost, why dying upon a tree should be more accursed than dying on the ground; though we may innocently assert this as a solid reason, because sin began its reign there, and took occasion from thence to hurt and overflow the whole world.

Our Lord therefore, who came "to destroy the works of the devil," and who had step by step undone all Adam had done amiss, and repaired as he went all the breaches, got all the sin of the world upon himself, as it is written, "Not our sins only, but the sins of the whole world, On him was laid the iniquities of us all." He likewise got

got all the curse and its direful effects, all the chastisement due in the strict justice of God, and then brought all upon a tree again, and was a curse for us. In this manner, wounded and chastened, body and soul, hung the second Adam, till he had paid the last mite, and destroyed and nailed with him to the tree all that displeased his eternal Father and Godhead, excepting death, and then with his bruised heels, in his last struggle, "he trod upon the lion and the adder, the serpent and the dragon he trampled under his feet," and with all his might he bowed himself forward, and threw down and buried in the abyss of his love and mercy, all sin, and devoured and slew death, spoiling and binding him that had the power of it, that is, the devil.

Thus was the world saved by the "seed of the woman," and as by one man came sin, by one man came salvation, and God could say a second time, well pleased, "and behold all was very good."

This is the sacred theory and doctrine of the fall and restoration, as it is revealed in the scriptures of truth. But to be happy possessors of the latter is the end of all, and for this end have we been redeemed, that "as by one man's disobedience we were made sinners, so by one man's obedience we may be made righteous."

Also, that as by one man's offence judgment was passed to condemnation, so by the grace and gift of one man, which abounds over many offences, is justification come upon the condemned unto salvation.

And, though by one man's sin death has reigned over all, even over such as had not broken a command, nor sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, yet much more shall the righteous-

ness of one man reign to eternal life, over all those who are partakers of this grace by Christ Jesus.

Considering the state to which souls redeemed are recovered by our Saviour, we shall find nothing has been lost, and Satan will have got little by it with all his envy and malice; for had we kept our first estate, perhaps after spending some happy years in walking with God, we had been translated to him, but might have still continued "a little lower than the angels:" But now none of the angels are so favoured as the children of men, for to which of the angels did he say, "Thou art my sister, my spouse?" Or which of the principalities or seraphim did he promise, "Thou shalt sit down with me upon my throne, as I overcame and am set down on the Father's throne?" If we are his bride, the Lamb's wife, if we are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, if his Father is our Father, the highest angels must look upon us with respect, and take pleasure to attend on, and be servants of, souls whom their dear Maker has ransomed at so great a price. They all now know, and have learned, by means of the fall, how he loved his people, for they saw his pains and sufferings, and were witnesses to all the fatigue he went through to save us, when he humbled himself, to their eternal astonishment, to become man.

It is true, we have not been so happy in this world as if no sin had entered, but he will make it up to us in worlds to come, he will restore double to us, in bringing us into a state far better and nearer himself than that Adam was in, in Paradise; so that Satan shall see he has struck at us in vain, and we ourselves shall see for evermore that grace and mercy superabounded the fall, and the blessings we get in the redemption by Christ, shall be infinitely more than what we lost or suffered by the offence of Adam. This consideration made the  
ancients

ancients venture to say, 'O happy sin! O happy fall!' But with all our hearts we can say, 'O happy Saviour! O happy salvation!'

Again, As we have been lost in Adam, and scattered in the dark and cloudy day, so in Christ shall the souls that were lost be found, and "to him shall the gathering together of the people be."

And, again, "As we have borne the image of the earthly Adam, so shall we be renewed and bear the image of the heavenly."

And lastly, "As in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all rise and be made alive," and this is the resurrection of the dead.

Of these I design to speak; and first, of the two men, namely, Adam and Christ; the author of the fall, and the author of the redemption.

Now the first man was of the earth, and formed out of the clay or dust of the ground, and should not appear of divine extraction, though his spirit was God's offspring; yet was "he lower than the angels," but the lord and head of all beasts, birds, serpents, fishes, and reptiles, and whatever was created in the world. The "second man is the Lord, the Jehovah from heaven," who, to manifest the exceeding riches of his grace, and so save his lost creatures, humbled himself, and put on the same weak and fallen flesh and blood and nature which they had: he for the suffering of death, which otherwise would have been impossible, came from heaven, and was lower than the angels; nor entered again his glory, nor was received back into his heavens till he recovered the world, and saved it "out of the hands of him that was stronger than we."

The mediatorial office, as it is called, the which he yet retains, and will retain, "till he has subdued all things to himself;" and therefore as the



Son of man, as the seed of the woman, he reigns and has a kingdom, which must increase till the "last enemy is destroyed, and God shall be all in all." In this respect he acts still, but dies no more, nor is accursed, and may suffer no more. The first man Adam was a living soul, that is, he had not only a soul or spirit as beasts and all living creatures have, but he had the life divine, he lived as God and the holy angels lived, and this life he lost, or died to God in the day of his sin. In this dead state all mankind are born, and without the true life, all his children have been conceived in sin, and have been imperfect, and not the image of God. A natural man is dead while he lives; so our Saviour and his apostles have taught. Now the "last Adam was a quickening spirit." He was the Lord; the same Lord and God who had some thousand years before breathed into Adam the life when he became a living soul: he came therefore to give life to the world, and that they might have it more abundantly than Adam, for he had life, but could possibly lose it, as it fell out; but Christ gives "eternal life, and this life we have in him." "He is our life," and we shall have it more abundantly, even for ever and ever.

Hence we may observe with divine pleasure, that after he had redeemed the world and was risen again, he breathed a second time upon his disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Thus again they received the life of God, and became living souls, to die and be lost no more.

The next thing proper to be mentioned is, "How by one man's disobedience we were made sinners, and by one man's obedience we are made righteous."

One who denies the doctrine of original sin must be wicked and a hypocrite; wicked, because he denies

nies the tenor of all the scriptures; a hypocrite, because he knows lust, pride, anger, covetousness, and many other sinful dispositions are in his nature, and have grown up with him. It is written in the Psalms, "When God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, they were all gone out of the way, they were altogether corrupt and become filthy or abominable, there was none righteous, there was none that could do good, no not one. He had made man upright, but he had found out many inventions. The thoughts of their heart were evil continually. They were transgressors from the womb, conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity. By one man's disobedience they were made sinners." It was impossible for Adam to beget children otherwise than in his own likeness, in the same nature and with the same corrupt mind. If a fountain is bitter, the streams cannot be sweet; if the tree be degenerate and wild, it cannot yield good fruit. Can a fig-tree bear olive-berries, or a vine, figs? Such as is the stock, such are the branches; and as all were created in Adam, in him all died, and sin hath reigned to death in all. But lest, through the cunning of the grand deceiver, men might be brought to reason about the matter, and tempted to charge God with folly, or unrighteous judgment, in passing condemnation upon all on account of the sin of one; as Israel once did when they used that proverb, "the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge;" and so concluded, the ways of the Lord were not equal: I say, on this account, as well as with other divine views, God gave the law, and so stops every mouth, and makes all the world guilty before him. For when it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things of the law to do them," then must every

sinner be dumb, and especially when the Holy Spirit preaches and opens the law to his self-righteous heart, as in St. James's epistle, "He that offendeth in one point is guilty of the whole," and he can thenceforward make no reply, but loath and abhor himself in dust and ashes, and see deeply the need of one man's obedience to make him righteous.

Whoever stumbles at the doctrine of original sin, he necessarily is offended with the doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness; but where the first is felt and known in the heart, there the doctrine of the Lord our righteousness is the most glad news and the gospel of peace.

Our Saviour was therefore obedient under the law, and fulfilled all righteousness, that his obedience might as surely make us righteous, as the disobedience of Adam had made us sinners; for Christ took our cursed and sad place, was made sin for us and reckoned as a transgressor, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. His sufferings and chastisement have quieted the angry justly offended spirit of the law, and to those who believe in Jesus, and can trust in his shelter, their faith is reckoned the same as righteousness, and receives of him their righteousness, their obedience and merits, so that they who are in the faith can say, "Surely in the Lord have I righteousness." The inheritance is then secured, the breach made up, and the soul satisfied about standing before God. Also as deeply, distinctly and feelingly as we were convinced of sin and our wicked nature, so deeply, distinctly, and feelingly does the Holy Ghost convince us of righteousness, to the comfort of our souls, and the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the same manner as judgment was passed to condemnation by one offence, so is it averted by  
means

means of the unjust condemning of our Saviour, and through his grace or free gift all our many offences are forgiven, and "we are justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law," and cleared and set free from all demands of justice. "Who can condemn us, it is Christ that justifieth? Yea, there is no condemnation to such as are in Christ Jesus." They are acquitted, and the hand-writing that was against us, and which was contained in the law, is blotted out in the blood of Jesus, and nailed with his body to the tree. Nor are men thus saved left in a liberty to live afterwards as they please, God forbid! The same blood that blotted out their curse, cancelled their bond, and paid their debt, also washes the heart, and abolishes "the old man with his deeds, that henceforth we may live to him who lived and died and rose again, that he might be the Lord of the dead and of the living."

But farther: If sin was of that dreadful nature, that, by one man's act of disobedience death could reign and make such havock over all adults who have sinned, and infants who had broken no law and yet live in pain, and feel what pangs, and sickness, and death mean, so much more must the righteousness of the man Christ who is the Lord from heaven, and whose sufferings and obedience, or, as it is called, his active and passive righteousness, reign to the subduing, pardoning, covering, and utterly abolishing of sin and its effects, out of body and soul! and this it does and shall do in all his seed, i. e. in all believers, till there is no more curse nor sin, nor evil, nor sorrow, nor sighing, but all tears shall be wiped away, and all things made new.

So in the driving out of Adam, his children have been scattered and lost like sheep in every land;  
but

but as Christ has willingly left his Paradise, and is become a Shepherd to seek and to save such as were lost, we who are returned, through mercy, to this Shepherd and Bishop of souls, shall lose nothing finally, in that we shall be kept by him in his sure fold here, and in due order be round about the throne with him in eternal life: and in that day, when, like a shepherd, he shall divide between his flocks, we shall follow him and be at his right hand in everlasting safety.

We have now borne the image of the earthly Adam, we have followed him in his disobedience and unfaithfulness, we have felt, to our sorrow, his sinful and corrupt nature, and ate bread in sorrow also: we have groaned under the bondage and servitude of the enemy, and are sinners, but we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Adam. As was he earthy, so were all his posterity earthy, and loved the earth and things of sense: We have wallowed in the mire, and strove to fill ourselves with the husks which swine do eat: we have had an earthy nature, earthy desires and views, and lost entirely the divine image; but we shall be born again in Christ, and created anew in him, with another heart and a new spirit; and this is also a transcript of the first birth. Eve was properly the first who was born, as it is written, "the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man." God caused a deep sleep to seize Adam, and then was born and built up out of his side his help-mate, whom he knew and confessed as bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. Thus is the new-birth, or second birth, the second man Adam, who felt the pangs and anguish of a travailing woman, fell into a deep sleep upon the cross, and when his side was opened, blood and water came out, and became the only true laver of regeneration. Here the

the Spirit of the Son which he breathed out, washes and new-forms all the children of God, and the Holy Ghost, in this divine mystery, operates chiefly, and is a mother to us, for we are born again of the Holy Ghost, and so one said who spoke by the Spirit afar off, "Under the apple-tree (i. e. the cross whereon Christ died, and was among the sons as the apple among the trees of the wood) thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee." Our nursing mother is the church, the new Jerusalem, who is the mother of us all; but we were not born or made children of God by her labour, or by any pangs and travail of her. It was the second Adam's pangs brought us to the birth, and the Holy Ghost alone brought us forth. Therefore said the prophet to the church, "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into joy, thou that didst not travail, thou virgin-daughter of Sion, for thou hast more children than the married wife, saith the Lord." This is not a fancy or pleasing idea, but a thing real; the spirit or ghost of Jesus breathed out, we receive. It is, "the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The blood he shed washes us, and his water is the very true baptismal stream in which "we, who were children of wrath, are made children of grace," and shall be confessed by our Saviour at his appearing, as Adam confessed his wife, as it is written, "We are members of his body, his flesh, and his bone." People thus born again, receive again the image of God, and as they wore once the image of the earthly Adam, they wear now the image of the heavenly: they have his mind, his love and gentleness, his loveliness and meekness, his faithfulness and the fruits of his Spirit are in them; and indeed they are like him, they are christians born out of Christ,

Christ, and shall be counted to the Lord for a generation: he can say, "Behold me and the children thou hast given to be with me."

But I have only spoke hitherto of the restoration; as far as it concerns soul and spirit; for though our bodies are washed with the pure water, and made clean temples of the Holy Ghost, yet our bodies are not changed or renewed now, but will be sown vile bodies and return to the dust, for out of that they were taken, but they shall rise again; for "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." The resurrection is general, and both just and unjust shall rise again, only every man in his own order; first Christ who is the head rose, and "is become the first fruits of them that slept;" afterwards, in the first resurrection, shall they that are Christ's rise; then the leaven of Christ's body, which the Holy Ghost, like a woman, hid in the three measures of meal, that is to say, in the body, soul and spirit, shall have leavened the whole lump, and our bodies shall be like the glorious body of our Saviour. Blessed shall be all they who have a part in this first resurrection, for the dead in Christ shall rise first, the second death shall have no power over them. These our Saviour will raise up in the last day and bring with him. It does not appear that they will be awaked or raised by the sound of the last trumpet, but it is as if they should all sleep in their beds till the voice of the Son of God should call them, and then rise and meet him in the air, and come with songs of everlasting joy!

Then shall the rest of the dead live, but must tremble to stand before the Son of man. They must be ashamed, because they slighted his redemption and the day of the Lord's jubilee. They continued of the earth earthy, and were not born again of the heavenly Adam. The state of such must be  
fearful

fearful and very miserable, for these must see all their misdeeds and secret sins come into judgment, and hear a sentence which is very terrible. It is as much as if God the Saviour should say, Ye have chosen the slavery of the devil, and would not be saved out of his condemnation: "Ye would not come to me that ye might have life;" ye loved the world better than me; my blood of the New Testament ye trod under your feet, and despised my spirit, who was able to have healed you and gathered you under the shelter of my salvation, "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not," ye would not be healed. "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

With the children of God it will be quite otherwise: they were lost but are found; they were dead, but are alive again, body and soul, to live for ever and ever with God their Saviour, and die no more. Then will he get his due honour and thanks and blessings from his people: then will he be beloved and admired of his saints, and they shall be satisfied with his likeness, and abide and stay with their dear Lord and Saviour, and return no more out, but adore him for his love, his humiliation, and death for ever.

May we all be of this happy number! Amen.

**END OF VOL. I.**

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Heb. iv. 16.

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## PART IV.

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### DISCOURSE XXI.

THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

---

JOHN iv. 10.

*Jesus said, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.*

**T**HIS verse is taken out of the notable conversation of our Saviour with a woman of Samaria. He was sitting by the side of a well when she came to draw water; and as it was his office in the world, and the intent and design of his becoming man, to seek and to save such as were lost, he began to open to this woman his mind, and first asked her for a little water: The woman, seeing that he was a Jew, wondered at such condescension; for we are told "the Jews dealt not with the Samaritans," and asked him, how it came to pass that one of his religion could stoop to ask water of a Samaritan? And this gave our Saviour the opportunity to tell her; "If thou knewest who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Had the woman had ears to hear, this would have been the best news that ever she had heard; and indeed I look upon this place as one of the most encouraging

parts of all the word of God to a sinner, and worthy to be attended to with the utmost seriousness and with all our hearts.

I design to make some observations on the whole history of this conversation of our Saviour with the woman, and speak of the words which I have singled out for the text in its place.

We are told, that when our Saviour was disposed to leave Judea, and return to Galilee, "he must needs go through Samaria," not because there was no other way, or because he could not have conveyed himself into Galilee by means of his divinity or otherwise, but love and mercy obliged him to go that way. He knew there was a poor wicked woman living in Sychar, who was a slave to her whoredoms and her lusts, and in the high road to perish, and therefore he would go that way, that he might call her to the faith, as well as many of her fellow-citizens and neighbours, and be their Saviour. Thus the Shepherd seeks out his wandering flock, and saves and brings back such as are lost.

When our Saviour had sent away his disciples to provide meat for their journey, and had reached Jacob's well, he sat down weary there, about the middle of the day, having yet, perhaps, tasted nothing. How particular is the scripture! it says, "he was wearied with his journey," when he sat down; to teach us, that he has experienced our weakness: And now every poor wayfaring man on the road, every peasant, every workman, may think when they are fatigued and tired with their journey or work, that our Saviour has been tired this way. He knows how to pity me, since he has felt weariness, and knows what fasting and hunger is. It should comfort the traveller and tradesman, the farmer and labourer, to remember, once Jesus sat weary down on the well, and put them upon thinking,

ing, O thou dear Master of thy people, thou Lord of all, thou hast felt my weariness and weakness, have mercy upon me, and let it obtain a rest for my soul in the kingdom of God, when the days of the years of my pilgrimage are ended.

O forget not, that once the good Shepherd of Israel walked about the world, and his limbs and feet were often tired and weary when he came down to seek and save you, like sheep that he had lost. He travelled on foot and was fatigued, that you might be carried home in his bosom; he was a pilgrim in his own world, to purchase for us, "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

While he was resting himself, the woman came with the water-pot to fetch water from the well; and now Jesus said to her, "Give me to drink;" the woman wondered at his request, because he was a Jew; but doubtless the angels of heaven wondered more, to see the Creator ask a little water of a creature. This was indeed great humiliation, and should make us loath all pride and highness, all resentment and haughtiness for ever.

Here a poor suffering man, a person who is reduced to want and penury, may also be comforted, since God his Saviour once was poor in the world, and asked an enemy for a little water. Thus we read, he was at another time so hungry, that he would have been glad of a few figs to stay his hunger, when he sought them at a fig-tree but found none.

We cannot be poorer, meaner, more hungry and thirsty, or more reduced, than he stooped to be, whose poverty shall make us rich in this world, and that which is to come.

The Samaritans and Jews had no dealings together, because of their differences in religious matters, and that made the woman wonder most, because a Jew

would speak to her. She little thought that the Lord of Jews and Greeks was sitting before her, who both loved those in Jewry and those in Samaria, and was come to make both one fold under one Shepherd. Here we may learn how ill and weak it is to suffer our prejudices to run so high as to reject any one because his religious sentiments differ from ours. If our Saviour had not more patience with us than we have with one another, or did not love us better than we love one another, we should none of us be saved at last; but he pities and bears with us in our mistakes and failings, and judges not according to our insight into points of doctrine, or manner and form of worship. "His eyes try the heart and the reins," and where he is beloved, there all is well.

The Jews believed the temple of Jerusalem was the right place of worship, and therefore cried, "The temple of the Lord! the temple of the Lord!" The Samaritans thought the mountain of Samaria, where Jacob worshipped, was the right place, and would not receive the prophets because they worshipped in Jerusalem, and only adhered to the five first books of Moses, and their boast was, "The mountain of the Lord! the mountain of the Lord of hosts!" This made such a division between them, that they of Samaria hated the Jews; and the Jews, when they could give no worse name, called men Samaritans. Here we may see what mischief bigotry and zeal for one's own church or party can make in a land, whereas often the real difference is not material, nor can be, where both sides heartily believe in Jesu's divinity, and are partakers of his Holy Spirit in their hearts; and however we may think otherwise, we shall find in that day souls with the Lord, "redeemed out of every nation, kindred and people, and tongue, who have all washed their robes

robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and therefore shall they stand before the throne and go no more out." If none could be saved but such as are allowed to be right by all sorts, then none could be saved at all. Let us then have patience with one another in religious matters, and know that whoever persecutes, or is bitter, is wrong; let who will be right; and such a spirit, whether for or against our party, must not be encouraged, for it cannot be of Christ,—When the children of Israel, at their great festivals, went up to worship at Jerusalem, they went up in their tribes and families apart, and perhaps mingled not till they entered the temple, and then all joined in one solemn rejoicing and prayer. All had their eyes to one offering, adored one God, and were properly one stock; so now the different companies of christians go up apart, and all retain their little peculiarities; but when the whole shall enter the New Jerusalem, I mean all out of every congregation and tribe, who have believed in Jesus and are saved, they shall blush that the best have been so ignorant and mistaken, and agree for ever and ever to worship and give glory to the Lamb that was slain, and his one great offering, his merits and love, shall be the subject of our one song when time is no more. Now let us, who have found mercy, remember, we are one man's sons, we have one Father, one Saviour, one faith, one baptism, one sincere view, namely, to love and live only to him, and let us see that we fall not out by the way.

We may learn yet one thing more from the woman of Samaria's wondering that Jesus, a Jew, would speak to her, and that is, if she could wonder when she only looked on him as a man, how much ought we, who know he is the "high and lofty One who dwelleth in the high and holy place," and yet condescends to speak with sinners, and this he does even



now ; What he says to her he says to us, " If thou knewest who it is that speaketh with thee, thou wouldest ask of him, and he would give thee living water." Had she indeed known her Lord and Saviour was there, or guessed that the Stranger with whom she was speaking was no other than the same God who aforesometimes so met her father Jacob, and blessed him, she would not have been long before she had prostrated herself at his feet with tears, and obtained of him water from the well of life ; she would have asked of him, and he would have given it to her : but she did not know who he was ; she thought, as many in our time do, that he was only a man, and not God blessed for ever ; for else both she and they would make all their prayers to him, till all had found in him eternal life : Therefore, because she understood him not, she reasoned what water he spoke of : she said again, " Thou hast nothing to draw with, the well is deep, from whence hast thou this living water ? I hope thou dost not think thyself greater than our father Jacob that gave us this well, and drank of it himself, his children and cattle." Here we may see what she thought of Christ, and these her mean thoughts were the only cause of her being so far from receiving eternal life at his hands. Our Saviour perceived her ignorance and stupidity, and yet willing to save her, said, " Whoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again ; but whoso drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst : but the water that I shall give him shall be in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life." One should have thought, however dull and unawakened she was before, she could have understood that he spoke of somewhat divine and heavenly ; but she was still the same, and thought perhaps he had some water which had the peculiar quality to stay the thirst, and therefore

fore asked it of him, but did not receive it, because she asked amiss, and neither did her heart thirst or feel the want of his redemption; but she wanted the water only to save her the trouble of coming so often to the well to draw; and when she had said this, our Saviour altered his manner of speaking, and bid her "go and fetch her husband." He was not angry at her great stupidity in spiritual things, nor was displeased because she was such a stranger to the scriptures, wherein is so frequent mention of living water; but he pitied her, and indeed she needed pity, "for the god of this world had blinded her eyes," and stopped her ears; nor did our Saviour thus behave for her sake alone; but to teach us, the servants of the Lord must not strive, but be meek, and gentle, and patiently labour and watch for souls, "as the husbandman waiteth for the early and latter rain;" so neither when he was about to convince her of her sad condition (for she was then living in uncleanness and whoredoms) did he begin roughly, or thunder against her the curses of the law, but meekly said, "Go call thy husband and come hither;" the woman answered, "I have no husband;" Jesus said, "thou hast said well, for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband, in that saidst thou truly." In this tender manner he brought her under convictions, and told her of her sinful and unchaste life, and forces her, as it were, to feel he was no common person; for she, struck with the answer of our Saviour, said directly "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet;" and as it is likely she had often wished to see one who could satisfy her which was the right place of worship, she now proposes it to him, and then he assured her, that although the Samaritans were to blame, and that the "salvation should come out of the Jews," yet he told her, "neither in Sa-

maria,

maria, nor at the temple, but in every place where such as worship the Father in spirit and truth are, that is the right place, and such the Father seeks to worship him." Hence we are taught, that it is not our form or mode of worship, nor is the place wherein we are met, or the words or order used therein, the main thing in pleasing God, but the inward and true worship of the heart; "he requireth truth in the inward parts." A good form is commendable, but to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, and be really devoted to him, and to have our bodies his chaste and clean temples, and to know him there, through the Holy Spirit, is more than all other things, and far weightier in his sight.

The woman, though a little enlightened, was still ignorant who she had with her, and therefore said; "I know Messias which is called the Christ cometh; when he does come he will tell us all things." Now our Saviour's hour, and the time of her conversion was come; for he said to her, "I that speak unto thee am he." I dare say, that moment God the Holy Spirit opened her eyes and her heart, and she saw and believed on him. Doubtless she was overcome with joy and love, without remembering she was a woman, or thinking what people would say, she left her water-pot, she forgot what she came to the well for, and went and told the men of her city, "Come see the man that told me all that ever I did; Come see the Christ." Thus, when any have found our Saviour in their hearts, they want to call, if possible, all the world to him, and even for this they would be content to undertake any labour, and go through any difficulty, and think themselves happy if only they can bring one more to be acquainted with Jesus.

We do not hear that the woman asked any more questions about the living water, or blundered any more.

more about the person of Christ. Her heart now felt what it meant; she was a witness that a soul that has drunk of it shall thirst no more; it led her so far, as to forget a little while her lawful business, that she might bring others to the Fountain of life, and let them also see him and be saved. I suppose, when she went into the city, she told her people, Rejoice with me, for I have found the Lord; I have found the King of Israel, the Christ, who should save his people from their sins; especially methinks I see her telling the man with whom she had lived in adultery, O come with me, and as we have been fellow servants of sin, let us share pardon together: I have met the Messiah that told me all that ever I did, and laid all my sinful life open before me; he mentioned my guilt and sin with thee, and bid me call thee to him: come then, he has pardoned and washed me, he will do the same for thee. I am sure the same living water which gave her eternal life, washed away her sins, and quenched her lusts for ever. She could no more live as she had done, but now was invited to be the spouse and bride of the Lamb. To this day it is the same: for as soon as any have found mercy, they can no longer love sin, but they bid an everlasting farewell to all: The very thoughts of their mis-spent life, and of the pain Jesus has endured to expiate the guilt of it, the remembrance of his grief and tortures, makes them loath their pleasures, their company, and all their lying vanities. Oh, they think, we have done with you for ever; you pierced our dear master through; you have mingled him the direful cup of wormwood and gall; you have heaped many sorrows on his heart and put him to grief; you have set him at nought, reviled, and crucified our Beloved, and robbed us many days and years of real happiness; but now  
we

we are saved, and delivered, and will go back no more.

As soon as the woman came and told her people the glad tidings, many more came through her means, and when they had heard Jesus they also believed, and he stayed with them two days preaching his gospel among them. Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy word, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that he is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Happy men! Happy souls! who can say this, We know the Christ the Saviour of the world. This is life eternal: This is the greatest blessing we can enjoy in this world. O that all here could say with them, We know the Christ! We know the Saviour of the world!

But the time forbids me to add more to these observations, I will go on to speak of the text, for what was spoken to the woman of Samaria is spoken to us and to our children, and we as well as she are eternally concerned. No doubt you must think the woman and her fellow-citizens happy to have had the Lord so nigh to them, and to feel his eternal life, like a well, flowing up in their hearts; but then you may be happy along with them; the Lord will be as nigh to you, if you ask him, he will give you the living water.

The words naturally divide themselves into four parts, which I shall speak of as they are set down.

First, Our Saviour says, "If thou knewest the gift of God, then thou wouldest ask of him." He means the gift of eternal life, and therefore calls it a gift, lest she or we might be tempted to suppose it was bought, or deserved or merited by any thing we can give. It is elsewhere called the free gift; and the kingdom, the salvation, the grace, and mercy of God must so be preached in opposition to all the

false notions in the world of being received and pardoned, or obtaining heaven by our obedience, service, or good works. God gave his only begotten Son. Jesus gave himself for us. He gives the living water. He gives it freely, and sells it without money or without price, and all whoever come to heaven or obtain salvation, must be witnesses that it was given to them. This is necessary to be known of all men, because some have sought to enter the straight gate, and have not been able; wherefore? because they sought it as it were by their works, and did not know the gift of God. But they who know it is free grace and a free gift, and are enlightened to see their own unworthiness and unprofitableness, such, like poor vile beggars, come to Jesus, who is the door of mercy, and the very gate of heaven, and there they beg and are relieved. Our Saviour will have us feel and know we have done nothing but what would merit eternal judgment, lest after he had vouchsafed us mercy we should think, by a sober life, by meritorious deeds to have deserved it, and so we be found spiritual thieves and robbers, who have robbed the Son of God of his due praise and honor. It is well, therefore, that the holy Spirit gives us thoroughly to see ourselves, and makes us groan under the weight of our misdeeds, and excites in us a thirst for mercy, that to all eternity we may glorify the Lamb, who in our distressed and lost state gave us peace, and loved us freely.

But the second part of the text is, "If thou knewest who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest then ask that gift of him, and he would give it thee."

Many souls perish for want of knowing who Jesus is: They regard him only as a prophet, or as one of the highest, or the greatest of the martyrs; or perhaps an angel, or one somewhat beneath, or less than the Lord;

Lord; and this is the most dangerous error in the world. Believe of him what you will, if you do not believe that he is the true God, and Lord, you will never be the better for him. It is this alone makes his humiliation and sufferings so weighty and desirable, and brings the soul to trust in him. What is his obedience more than the obedience of Noah, Job, or Daniel, if he be not God? Or what is his blood more than the blood of the martyrs, or the blood of bulls and goats, if he be not the Jehovah, the everlasting Son of the everlasting Father? If one jot or tittle of all the bible be true, then is he who talked with the woman of Samaria, and who sat down wearied with his journey upon Jacob's well, at Sychar, the Lord from heaven, the very and essential God. When this is once known, with what boldness can one venture upon his death, and with what confidence trust his blood, and adore and stand astonished at that love wherewith he loved us; at that love which so humbled him even to the death of the cross, that he might save us from death eternal, who were vile dust and ashes. This doctrine is as true as amazing and strange: the Creator and Lord of all did leave the bosom of his Father, and was made lower than the angels for the suffering of death. So great was his love to sinners, that he left heaven to seek and win them back to himself; so great his pity, that rather than see them suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, he chose to be a burnt offering, and bleed and die in our room and stead; therefore, said he to the woman, "If thou knewest who speaketh with thee, thou wouldest ask him," &c. O! had she known what an Almighty God sat by her, she would not have behaved so coldly, she would have sunk down before him, and said, with greater wonder than when she thought a Jew would vouchsafe to speak with her, "How is it that the Lord  
my

my God deigns to speak with me?" She must have broke out like her father Jacob, "How dreadful is this place! God is here, and I knew it not!" Or said, "Lord, what am I, or what is my father's house, that thou shouldest shew such mercy to thine handmaid!" Or had she known what a dear Saviour he was, how much he loved sinners, how tender and merciful, she would have prayed him, O Lord Jesus, dost thou ask water of me? Lo, heaven and earth are thine, and of thine own I will give thee joyfully; but I beseech thee give me better water; let me drink of that river which flows out of the throne, and makes glad the city of God, and he would certainly have given it to her; he would have said as he did once to another poor woman, "Be it to thee even as thou wilt;" for, for that purpose was he come, and therefore "must needs go through Samaria."

I may say the same to all you who hear me preach, if you knew who Jesus is, you would ask him, and he would help you. If you knew he was the Lord God Almighty; you would think then, why do I tarry any longer? what though my sins are red like scarlet, he can make them like wool, and though they are like crimson, he can make them like snow. What horrid guilt, what cursed nature cannot he wash and make clean! If all the sins of the world were laid upon one soul, a single drop of his sweat, one precious drop of his blood, could make him in a moment fairer than an angel of God. Nor is he able or mighty to save only, but he is willing. His mercy is as great as his majesty. When a certain leper in the days of his flesh prayed him, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" he answered, "I will, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed:" and this he did for our sakes, that we may venture to come to the throne of grace boldly, and obtain mercy in



the time of need. If the worst people in the streets, the most polluted strumpet or hardened rebel knew who Jesus is, if they knew he was their loving and gracious Lord, they would turn to him and be saved. If the doubting and melancholy, whose hearts are continually oppressed and troubled with fears and jealousies, did but know him, they would soon be happy; but no man, no human creature can believe him so loving and almighty as he is. We learn what we know of it through the teaching of the Holy Ghost. Before I leave this part of the text, I must observe, that though many innocently wish to have lived in his time, that they could have been with him, and so have asked and got from him eternal life and salvation: they need not so wish, for he is as verily and indeed as near to us as he was to the woman of Samaria. Unbelief hinders us to see, as it did her for a time; nor need we go a step to find him: he is present with us when we lie down, and when we rise up; when we go out; and when we come in; and many thousand times has called and invited us to drink freely of the water of life: it is a mistake that one must be in the church, or on our knees, or busied in some religious duty always, if we would find the Lord; for this woman was doing the business of her house, and going to draw water for her use, when Jesus made himself known to her. You also may be industrious and busy as you please, only, while your hands are employed in the earthly things, let your hearts be lifted up to the Lord. Speak with him as if he stood before you, and you shall find him nigh to you, and not a God afar off.

I come now to speak of the third part of the text, and that is, "Thou wouldest have asked him." i. e. If thou knewest who I am, then thou wouldest pray to me, thou wouldest apply to me, and I would

would give thee thy desire. There are some men in the world who think it is not right to pray to our Saviour, but to God by his means, as they term it; and this is because they do not know him; they do not think who Jesus is, and therefore are afraid to pay him divine honour and worship as the true God: but, as I said before, whether they be learned or unlearned, rich or poor, the reason of their scruples is, because they are ignorant of the scriptures and the power of God, and as long as they do not know who Jesus is, they worship, as our Saviour told the woman, "they know not what." All prayers have been made to Jesus throughout the scriptures, therefore nothing is more common than to meet with expressions of this kind, "Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me." He properly hears prayers, and is the person to whom all flesh must come, and every knee bow. He gives eternal life, and accepts the prayers of the needy. It is a blessed doctrine and true, "Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus shall be saved. There is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved. There is salvation in none other." It is his own doctrine, "If thou knewest who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." And again, "Come to me and I will refresh you." Ask me, and I will do it for you. Let others, who cannot trust our dear Saviour, nor believe him to be their true Lord, pray to an unknown God, but ye brethren, be ye christians indeed, and ask of the God by whose name you are called, and you shall find, "he heareth the poor when he crieth, the needy, and him that hath no helper." I do not doubt but many of you that are here, though you have read and heard this part of the scripture often, have never yet asked of Jesus for the living water, nor perhaps to this day

known what it means; for had you known and asked it of him with your whole heart, you would have found it in you springing up unto eternal life; he would have given it to you. Ask it now, and henceforth speak to the Saviour of this thing, that you may drink and live for ever, and not lose so precious and divine a gift for want of asking.

I come now to speak of the last words in the text, namely, "And he would have given thee living water." None ever came to him as perishing and undone, but he was their Saviour; or as weary and heavy laden, but he gave them rest; or as thirsty and in want of his blood, but he gave them freely; and for this end did he open his wounds, that the rivers might flow upon him that was thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. For this reason was he, the fountain of living waters, stricken of God, that his blood and water, his sweat and tears might become salvation to the world, and a well of life.

The Holy Ghost is properly meant by the living water in the text; for when Jesus stood and cried in the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," it is said, "this he spake of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." It is the Holy Ghost that manifests Christ to our hearts. It is he that takes of the things of Christ, and shews them to us, and by this means the blood of the Lamb flows up in our hearts, and he is to us what the rock which Moses struck was to the Israelites; like as that yielded them streams in the desert, and in the land of the wilderness, where there was no water, so this is in us as a well flowing up to eternal life. All the merits of Christ, his tears and bloody sweat, are by him conveyed to us, and we drink of this brook by the way, and lift up our

our heads. He it is that will never leave nor forsake us, till he has led us safely to our own good land above; but day and night refreshes us with this water, or rather with this wine, "till we drink it new in the kingdom of God."

This Holy Spirit our Saviour gives to us all that believe in his name, and without him we cannot be happy here, nor hereafter.

Come, then, all ye who hear me to-day, come ye to the waters; Jesus and his Spirit invites you. Draw near to that God and Lamb, and ask him, and he will give you to drink abundantly, nor let him rest till you have found it, to his eternal glory, springing up in you to everlasting life. Amen.

AN HYMN.

1 **A** ROCK the Hebrew army track'd,  
Thro' which (as water streams they lack'd,  
And shadow in the heat)  
They were with shade and streams supply'd;  
This rock was Christ, the shade his side,  
The streams his bloody sweat.

2 **When high the stormy billows rise,**  
**When clouds prevent the clearer skies,**  
**My soul finds here a rest;**  
**A hiding place till all is o'er,**  
**Five caves are made secure and sure,**  
**Where happy I am blest.**

- 3 So when I thirst, or faint I grow,  
 From these five caves five rivers flow  
 Of water and of wine;  
 Of this I taste, and 'tis so good,  
 I strait have help, it drinks like blood,  
 And stays this soul of mine.
- 4 Within this Rock my soul describes  
 A thousand sacred rarities,  
 The cleft where Moses was,  
 When he the Father's glory view'd,  
 The back-part of the unseen God,  
 As thro' transparent glass.
- 5 On this eternal Rock is grav'n  
 The names of all who go to heav'n;  
 Here one may see his name  
 So deep inlaid with sweat and blood,  
 That whoso sees it cries, 'twas hew'd  
 By my beloved Lamb.
- 6 Who curious is, and wants to be  
 A witness of these truths like me,  
 Let him the Lamb believe;  
 And trust his soul upon the blood  
 That trickled from the Son of God,  
 When late he ceas'd to live.

## DISCOURSE XXII.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY.

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HEB. V. 12.

*You have need that one teach you which be the principles of the oracles of God.*

**W**HOSOEVER is acquainted with this epistle to the Hebrews will easily observe, that all said there of Jesus Christ's eternal Godhead, of his being the creator, the upholder, and heir of all things, and his being above all angels, heavens, prophets, &c. is to magnify the doctrine of his atonement, which is throughout treated of in such a manner as is not beside in any part of the Bible.

The author makes all the priests, laws, sacrifices, the temple, and even the sacerdotal vestments and ceremonies to be shadows only of the Redeemer and his offering himself up like a lamb, by which he makes perfect all them that are sanctified. Hence it is that he esteems all the other doctrines only as the first principles of Christianity, and little in comparison of this which he calls perfection; because this made perfect the salvation, and finished iniquity, made an end of sin, brought in everlasting righteousness, blotted out the curse and its cause, opened the gate of heaven, reconciled the world to God, destroyed death, spoiled him that had the power of it, that is the devil, and obtained eternal redemption for

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for us; so that properly, above all other doctrines, this deserves to be termed the doctrine of perfection, as it is many times called by the apostle in this epistle, but particularly when he says, "therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, namely, the laying the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptism, of laying on of hands, of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment, let us go on unto perfection;" from which time he goes on to speak of the new covenant in the blood of Christ, of his priesthood and sacrifice, when he offered up his own body once for all, by which, he saith, "we are sanctified and perfected." Also, in the course of his doctrines, he shews how little effect the daily sacrifices, sprinkling of the blood of bulls and goats, &c. had on those who attended on such a worship, seeing they did not make them perfect; for, he says, "If perfection was by that priesthood, then there would have been no need of another priest to come after the order of Melchisedech;" but he concludes, "the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did," and that Christ crucified is the true doctrine of perfection.

We must not, however, despise the first principles of Christ; they are sacred truths, and lead and point to his atonement, as the steps led up to the temple. Of these, as they are mentioned in this epistle, I will speak in a particular manner, and begin with the doctrine of repentance from dead works.

All works done without a living faith in Christ must be reckoned dead, for they are so in the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Chiefly all the works of the flesh are dead, namely, idolatries, blasphemies, swearing, idle jesting, and songs of the drunkard, lies, uncleanness, whoredoms, murders,

ders, thefts, banquetings, pleasures, covetousness, anger, revenge, envy, railing, injustice, cruelty, &c. These are all dead works, and are the fruits of dead men who have never been quickened by Christ Jesus. These have sprung out of a dead and unbelieving nature; and those who do such things, all lovers of the world, and the things of the world, are dead to God while they live.

This is easily consented to by the serious and more devout part of mankind, and since they avoid the danger of running into these, think themselves safe; and especially if, on the other side, they are exercised in works of piety, fasting, alms, prayer, reading the scriptures, going to church, &c. but herein is also danger; for till we are made alive by the Holy Spirit, and adopted into God's family, we also are dead, and our works dead works, and must be repented of as well as our known sins. Whoever is not born again, is at best but a servant in God's house, and "a servant abideth not in the house always, but a son abideth always; let him value his work as much as he pleases, and let it be highly esteemed among men, yet where they have not been done out of a heart wherein the love of God is shed abroad by the Holy Ghost, they are not good works, and are only set up in the room of Christ; and because of this, they are in the sight of God an abomination. There are many serious and sober people in the world who are quite ignorant of the righteousness of God revealed by faith, and who cannot trust the blood and obedience, and tender mercy of Jesus Christ, and therefore try to make a righteousness of their own works, and comfort themselves that they are better than others, setting up this for the cause of their acceptance above, and so run into gross idolatry, and depend and trust the works of their hands, "which is the abomination which makes desolate," standing in the stead of Christ, where



where it ought not. All this is building upon sand, and what must fall before the throne in the day of trial; they are dead works, and not built upon the Rock. However such people may think well of their lives and works now, yet when our Saviour shines upon them and enlightens their eyes to see and judge righteous judgment, they will find so much pride, wandering, ostentation, selfishness, and sin mingled in their holiest deeds, that they will be ashamed of all they have done, and loath and abhor themselves for esteeming the best work or most commendable action they ever did better than dross or dung, and repent heartily of their pride and self-conceit.

The Prince of this world has found means to deceive in every thing, and in nothing more than in the doctrine of repentance; for generally no more is meant by it by people of our time, than leaving gross sins, and changing a wild and wicked behaviour into a life of sobriety and religion. There are indeed a few who carry the matter farther, and allow of no sound conversion unless the sinner has been first awakened and alarmed with the terrors and thunders of the law, under which he cries out and is affrighted exceedingly, so that he does not only leave off his sin, but trembles day and night for fear of God's judgment; and this is called by divines legal repentance, and often wears off entirely, as in the case of Esau, Pharaoh, and others, who for a while were very penitent, but afterwards grew worse than ever. In this manner drunkards, whoremongers, rioters, and sensualists of all kinds, repent. When they have gone further than ordinary in sin, or fallen worse than usual, for awhile they cannot speak for tears, are ashamed to lift up their heads; they make vows to be better, and tremble, like Balsham when the angel met him with his sword drawn in his hand; but, in  
a day

a day or two, they turn again, "as a dog to his vomit, and as a sow that was washed to wallow in the mire;" and this last state is worse than the first. Or perhaps they satisfy themselves in abstaining from outward sins, without coming to Christ crucified, and obtaining pardon and a new heart from him, and so nothing farther is the fruit but a moral life; and still, though they have a name to live, like the church of Sardis in the Revelations, they are dead, and without the Son of God in the world, and so without life. True and gospel repentance goes far more abundantly, and is, like faith, a divine work of our Saviour, who was exalted to give repentance to his people. A penitent man is one to whom our Saviour has called as he did to Saul, and arrested him as it were with, "Why persecutest thou me?" Such stand astonished before God, and can neither eat, drink, nor sleep in peace; they have obtained such a sight of sin in their own natural heart, body and soul, and in all they have ever done that their spirits sink and fail; and with a thirst and longing for mercy unspeakable, they turn and look towards him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him. Nor can they take pleasure any more in the world, or in their former company or delights; the Lord has mingled wormwood and gall with every thing, and now they would give the world to be assured that Christ has forgiven them: they are in Peter's case after our Saviour looked upon him, their very inmost heart and soul is melted, they weep and sigh continually, and have no rest till they have got a rest for their souls.

If you would know what repentance is current before the searcher of hearts, it is that which is learned at the foot of the cross, and begins at the death of Christ. No one has a right sense of sin but by looking to Jesus, or rather by Jesus's looking upon

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upon him; there he sees what sin is, and that it could not be purged away but by the blood of God: there is known what a displeasing and hateful thing it must have been, that it so oppressed and weighed down with intolerable pain and anguish the only begotten of the Father. When the Holy Spirit leads a sinner to behold the Lamb, and shews him how his sins tore and grieved him, how it afflicted and bruised his soul, and made him travail like a woman in her pangs, he forsakes for ever all his sin, sinks down and begs for pardon; he loves the Saviour, he is overcome and sick of love! he mourns and languishes for his salvation and righteousness, and attains it, to his heart's joy, for ever. This is a repentance from dead works, a true evangelical repentance, not to be repented of.

A second principle of Christianity is faith towards God. This also has been mimicked by the deceiver, and men have learned to say "I believe," who do not know what they mean. This has been the reason why consenting to a divine truth, such as the mystery of the Trinity, the divinity and miracles of Christ, &c. has been called faith, whereas all professors of orthodox Christianity have this, who nevertheless may be strangers to that faith once delivered to the saints. This faith, which is called here "faith towards God," and in other places "faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," is a certain work of the Holy Ghost in the heart, whereby the possessors of it lay hold on redemption, and appropriate the Lamb and his merits and righteousness to themselves. It is the very evidence, witness, and possessing of our Saviour who is unseen, and brings with it blessedness, peace, life, and the kingdom of God.

According to the scriptures, a man cannot be a believer without being born of God and having eternal

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eternal life in him. Nor is any thing in the New Testament more clear, or oftener asserted, than that "whosoever believeth in Jesus Christ, shall be saved;" and this experience proves true; for none have perished finally who believed; they, already, have a heaven upon earth; it is the very means whereby they escape the curse of the law, are saved from wrath to come, and live and die happy. As dear children so do they believe the scriptures, depend firmly upon the promises, are obedient to their heavenly Father, and, without wanting to define the mystery, or to have it explained to their understanding, they believe Jesus is God from everlasting, and the same with his Father and the Holy Ghost; they believe his chaste and miraculous conception and birth; his doctrines, and death instead of his people, and that in our weak flesh and blood, he who was Jehovah very and true God, did suffer, bleed, die, rise again and ascend into heaven, where he is bodily, and with his own blood, in presence of all the spirits of just men made perfect, and in the sight of all the holy angels.

But they believe more; and herein they differ from such as profess the truth, or have the form of godliness, and speak sound words, but are without the power; for they know our Saviour, they have peace with him, they have got absolution and pardon from him, they have his righteousness, they have his Spirit, they have the foretaste and earnest of their everlasting inheritance. This they enjoy by believing, and as surely as if they lived by sight; I mean as surely as if Jesus walked about with them, talked with them, as if they lay down in his arms, as if they saw him. Faith is the soul's senses; it sees Jesus, hears him, tastes how good he is, follows him by the savour or smell of his good ointments, feels his

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his love, and to all intents and purposes they are saved. There need not be said much about it, "for whoso believeth, hath the witness in himself;" and though he has not seen Christ, he is blessed in believing in him.

This is the faith once delivered to the saints; this is the one faith, which the prophets and fathers had, who before-hand saw the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, and were themselves partakers afar off in his salvation; for having had his righteousness imputed to them, they walked with God, received the "witness that they pleased God, they died in faith, and God was not ashamed to be called their God." By this faith Isaiah, Hezekiah, Joshua, David, &c. knew their sins were forgiven, they were assured the Lord was their salvation, and "that he had made with them an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure."

By this faith the apostles and disciples, contemporary with our Saviour, were persuaded of his divinity, notwithstanding they were witnesses of his weakness, shame, and death. They received the Holy Ghost hereby, knew their names were written in heaven, obtained grace to persevere, and though they saw their Lord no more after his ascension, "they believed in him, and rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory." By this faith the primitive christians and martyrs endured all torments, sufferings, and deaths: they saw him that was invisible; they knew he dwelt in them, they found his salvation, and felt his love and eternal life. In this faith all the many millions of believing souls, who have departed out of the world since Christ in peace and comfort, were enabled to meet their last hours with courage; they had experienced his grace; they found him near to them; they

they saw his merits and wounds, and were healed thereby; they felt he had taken away the sting of death, and were confident he was their Saviour, and had loved them and would love them to the end; so they believed and so proved with exceeding great joy. Such a faith as this is worthy of its blessed author Jesus, by which "he manifests himself to us his children as he does not unto the world," and for which we shall love and adore him to all eternity. This is the faith of God's elect. This is the faith whereby we overcome the world, and what is meant in the text "by faith towards God and our Lord Jesus Christ."

Now I come to speak of baptism, which also is another of the first Principles of Christianity. There are many sorts of baptisms, and neither John or the disciples of Christ were the first who introduced it; for even under the law baptisms were frequent. When a priest entered his office, he was first baptized. The beasts also in the sacrifices were baptized or washed. Solomon had appointed the brazen sea and the laver for this purpose: all cups; bowls and vessels were thus washed, and these all were shadows of the true baptism. St. Paul does not scruple to say, that the Israelites were baptized in the cloud and the sea unto Moses. The like St. Peter says of Noah and his family in the ark, &c. John's baptism was a peculiar sort, for he baptized all in Jordan that came to him and confessed their sins, and this was termed the baptism of repentance; but he constantly confessed it was not the true baptism: for, said he, "one cometh after me mightier than I, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Our Saviour submitted to this baptism of John, which proved nevertheless it was from heaven and of divine institution;

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tution; and thus he submitted to every ordinance of the law, and to this short dispensation which came in between, that he might fulfil all righteousness. Multitudes were obedient to John's baptism, for all Judea and Jerusalem, and round about Jordan, were baptized of him; but Jesus's disciples also baptized, and it seems had more come to their baptism than John, though Jesus himself did not baptize with water. This sort of baptism, as well as the preaching of the disciples, which was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," was much the same with John's, and lasted till the night wherein Jesus was betrayed, and then he instituted a new kind of washing or baptizing; and this was when he took water and washed his disciples' feet; and however little it may seem to many that this was done, it was certainly weighty in his eyes; for when Peter would have been excepted, out of a sort of humility, the Lord told him, except I wash thee, thou hast no part in me:" this done, he said to them, "Now are ye clean;" and even ordered them to keep up the same thing among one another, though he told them, "What I have done to you now, ye do not know, but hereafter ye shall know." The primitive christians kept up this sort of baptism or foot-washing among them; and even some congregations and little churches of Christ renew it now with a religious order, care and simplicity, as well as other ordinances of their Master, with his blessing and presence.

Our Saviour mentions yet another baptism where- with he was to be baptized, and was straitened till it was accomplished. This happened to him the same night in which the former was instituted; and was a baptism of water and blood, when the fiery wrath drank up his spirits, and put him into such a distressing ferment that his sweat fell down from him

him like great drops of blood, and made his raiment look as if he had dipped it in wine; with this we are to be baptized; and this, like fire, shall eat up the rust of sin, and burn up all our filth, and devour all other fires, and whatever else has not been right in our Redeemer's sight. But this must be spoke of in its place, namely, when I speak of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The day of our Saviour's ascension he ordained his baptism in these words: "Go and make me disciples in all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo! I am with you always to the end of the world."

I think there is no room to dispute that he ordained water, since after his departure Phillip went down into the water and baptized the Eunuch, and Peter used water when he baptized Cornelius and his house; but then it must not be esteemed merely a John Baptist's baptism, or only a water baptism; (the primitive church held such accursed who affirmed this) but the authority in which it is administered must give it great weight, and make it important to us. Lest the world or rash lightminded men might think the apostles and ministers of Christ baptized disciples to themselves, or as John had done, or lest it might be esteemed human or only a bare ceremony, Jesus sent them to administer it in the name of the blessed trinity: they were his plenipotentiaries and ambassadors, who had their authority from the King of kings, and might act in his name and in his Father's name, and in the name of the Holy Ghost. This solemnity has no precedent in the scripture, and much less has any such been used in performing ceremonies or shadows; nor indeed was there a need for it; but, to

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put it beyond the reach of doubt, our Saviour promised they should not celebrate this divine mystery without him, "Lo! I am with you to the end of the world." There was such a dependence upon this promise of our Saviour among his first ministers, that they made no doubt of having him present in the administration of baptism; and they not only found it so by happy experience, but preached it as a sure doctrine to all who became concerned about their salvation, or asked, "What shall we do to be saved? Believe and be baptized, and you shall be saved;" and this was also first taught them by their chief Apostle and Bishop on the same day in which he was taken up, as I have before observed. St. Peter assures the awakened souls of this, saying, "Repent, and be baptized; and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost." Ananias does the same to Saul when he had found him in that low and poor state in Damascus, "Arise, saith he, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." The same was done by Saul, when he was converted, to some men in Ephesus, whom he asked if they had found the Lord? "Have ye," said he, "received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" They answered, "No, we have not heard of it." He asked again, "Then how were ye baptized?" They said, "John baptized us;" and he immediately taught them, that John's baptism was indeed with water unto repentance; that they should believe on him which should come after, namely, on Christ Jesus, and these in number about twelve, were baptized again unto Christ, and received the Holy Ghost. Besides these, there are abundance of instances in the scriptures of the presence of Jesus visibly and sensibly felt in baptism: his Spirit has quickened in that hour those buried with him in baptism; and his blood and pure water has washed away their sins at the very time of the washing in his name.

name. The accounts of the conversion of the Eunuch, of the jailor at Philippi, and others, are proofs of this truth, and may not be slighted. But here are two things to be observed, first, that the baptism of Christ was to be given to such who believed, and therefore he said, "First teach them, make them my disciples, then baptize them:" so when the Eunuch desired Philip to baptize him, he told him, "if he believed, he might be baptized:" and, on his confessing his belief in Jesus that he was God, Philip went down into the water with him and baptized him; and wherever persons received baptism in faith, they have found it done to them accordingly; they have been baptized into Christ's death, and dead and buried with him to the world, and risen again to life eternal with him, and received of him the adoption of sons and the new name.

Secondly, we may observe, all are not sent to baptize; some run and say, "The Lord saith," when "as I live, saith the Lord, I have not spoken, I have not sent them." St. Paul himself confesses, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach." I think therefore, whoever baptizes should be convinced of his commission from the High-priest, that he might act in faith with cheerfulness and authority, and depending on the promise of our Saviour's presence with him, lest he should bring the holy ordinance into contempt, and make it at last merely ceremonial. That has been too much the case in great part of the christian world, and the light manner in which baptism has been treated, both by the ministers, and also by such as received it, has stumbled some religious and pious minds, and they have at first slighted the sacrament of baptism, as it is now called; and at last spoken against any thing of that kind, and only looked to the end, or spiritual part of it: however such are to be blamed, yet  
I will

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I will not say they are wholly in fault; for let a person only seriously weigh how light a matter the doctrine of baptism is to many of those who contend for it, and how, after all their strenuous arguments for it, they at last believe it a mere ceremony, a shadow, a sign, and nothing real, but deny as stiffly the gift of the Holy Ghost, the washing from sin in this life, &c. and then judge how little difference there is in fact between them that use it, and those that use it not.

But the case is much otherwise, when one believes the promise of God: there Jesus and his spirit, with blood and water, do invisibly what is done visibly by the minister, who only acts like an ambassador of a prince; he uses his master's name and knows what he does, and what "he binds upon earth is bound in heaven, and what he looses upon earth is loosed in heaven;" what he washes in the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that the same God washes; and whom he buries with Christ, in water, in the name of Jesus, is done by Jesus, and shall be found so in the day of judgment.

But so much also is true: a minister sent to baptize, and called of God as was Aaron to the ministry of Christ, may baptize, and the person baptized may lose the blessing of baptism, and remain unsaved, carnal and unconverted. This was the case between St. Philip and Simon Magus: for, after his baptism, Peter tells him, "I perceive thou art yet in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity," and adds, "thy money perish with thee." In such cases faith has been wanting in those who were baptized, and I do not know if the promises can be proved to be made otherwise than to him that believes. Therefore I blame all who press the submitting to ordinances without understanding what they

they want, or what our Saviour would have, but lay the whole stress upon doing the thing; whereas that was not the mind or intent of our Lord God and Saviour: he who looked upon circumcision in the flesh as no circumcision, where it was not done in the spirit, the same looks upon baptism as no baptism where the baptism of the Holy Spirit is slighted, and the washing from sin neither wanted, nor sought, nor expected at all. The same might be said of praying without the heart, of which God complains in Isaiah, or going to church and mingling with the children of God, without being really joined to the first-born, and having obtained the adoption, or singing words without the Spirit and the understanding, or hearing preaching with the ears closed like the deaf adder, and dead to the voice of the Son of God within.

The modes of baptism have been different; some have been baptized in rivers; others in houses; some churches have used a pouring-out of water in the name of the Lord upon the catechumens or candidates for baptism: others again only sprinkled them, using the words our Saviour had appointed: so again some have baptized only on the forehead, others on the head, others on the breast; and some only once, others, and that from the most ancient customs, three times, and this was called the Trine aspersion, viz. once at the naming of the Father, once at the naming of the Son, and once at the naming of the Holy Ghost. We may not despise any of these forms, because the aim to please our Saviour and do his will may be pure and right in his sight, and we may safely conclude he did not therefore appoint the exact mode of baptism, lest we should have been tempted to have rested in the performance of the true and scriptural form, and neglected the chief thing,

thing which is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and without which all the rest is but of little effect.

The primitive christians made very much of the doctrine of baptism, and saw how evidently God wrought thereby, and revealed himself to such as were baptized in his name. Hence they were so careful whom they admitted to baptism, and the care and diligence with which this matter was carried on, and the due respect and reverence shewn out of the heart to the ordinance of our Saviour, was an inexpressible blessing to the first ages of the church; would to God it had still been retained in a right spirit, and then that sacrament had not been so common or so profaned as we see it daily is. But however happy the first christians were in this respect, they certainly carried the matter too far in a few centuries, and began to doubt if even a child, dying without baptism, could enter heaven; and this in latter ages became a doctrine in the western churches, who, without any foundation in the scripture, now assert they cannot be saved. It is plain that many hundreds if not thousands of believers, both men and women, have suffered martyrdom for Christ who never were baptized: these, they say, were baptized in their blood, as well as the children Herod slew, &c. but this is a forced conclusion and would not stand good always, since some have been strangled, burnt, &c. but the truth is, they were saved in believing, as all are.

But to return. There are others who insist that the candidates for baptism should be immersed or plunged into the water, and this no doubt was the ancient way, and best resembles the burial of the body and soul into the death of Christ, and is retained yet by several congregations in the world, and in particular approved of and commanded by  
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our English church;\* but as the form in this respect has not been expressly set down in the Bible, we should do wrong to break the peace of the church of Christ, in contending too violently for a matter not essential to salvation.

The most essential things relating to the form seem to be the water, and the baptizing in the name of the blessed Trinity; and yet even in the apostles' time we find many were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; and we cannot say that the disciples used any other words or name when they baptized or preached it as necessary; and since the whole fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Jesus, I judge a person baptized in his name is truly, and according to the scriptures, rightly baptized; and if we think otherwise, we must question St. Paul's baptism, those at Ephesus, and those baptized by St. Peter; for who can be ignorant that so they taught, "be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," and so acted, since frequently we read, "they were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ?"

Besides all I have said of the different forms of baptizing, I may yet add, that in the same manner other circumstantial things in the act of administering this divine ordinance have varied too; for though the apostles observed no such custom, yet many very early baptized only from Easter to Whitsuntide, unless in cases of great necessity; some dressed the baptismal candidates in white, others warmed the water in which they were baptized, others used oil, salt, &c. mingled with the water, and in the times of superstition many of these were made necessary parts of baptism; whereas indeed they were introduced by men in different ages of the church, some out of conscience, and some as typical of things

\* See the rubric in the office of baptism.

unseen.

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unseen. Such as were for baptizing only from Easter to Pentecost, did it because from the time the Lord rose and breathed on his disciples, to the time of that general effusion of the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit had been given. Such as dressed the candidates in white raiment, did it to denote they were washed and made white in the laver of regeneration, and were now clothed with the white linen of Christ's righteousness. Again, such as warmed the water, did it to signify the warm blood and water that came out of our Saviour's side, which was always esteemed the fountain of the sacrament. The anointing with oil was to show their being appointed kings and priests to God, &c. But however innocently all these things might have been designed originally, where any dependence or stress is laid upon them, they are better abrogated, and the plain, simple and apostolical way is the best.

There is yet much said in the same manner of the above, in behalf of the different modes of baptizing. Such as defended the use of sprinkling, or aspersing, pouring of water, &c. use the words of Ezekiel, "I will sprinkle clean water upon them and they shall be clean:" and, in Isaiah, "I will pour water upon them; I will pour floods upon the dry ground;" so in Joel, "I will pour out of my Spirit." Such as baptize upon the head, look on it as the antitype of the old anointing, and have esteemed it as a crown and glory to the receivers of it. Such as baptize on the forehead, do it because it is the seal of discipleship, and we are said to be marked on the forehead with the mark of the Lamb, whose badge and mark this should signify. Such as baptize on the breast, can also urge that place as most proper, being the very seat of the heart, and so comprehends much, since all is received

ceived and enjoyed in the heart. As I said before, so I say here, that it is a pity any of these lesser matters should be disputed with heat, since they are not the substance, and may be conscientiously used by all the different sorts of professors of Christianity to the glory of the Lord Christ.

But there is yet a weighty matter to be considered, and that is the baptism of infants and children, of which we have no direct precedent or example in the scripture, and which practice is so severely censured and reproached by many religious people. I know the chief arguments brought in defence of this are, that as circumcision inaugurated and ingrafted into the Jewish church, so does baptism into the church of Christ; and therefore as infants were ordered to receive that sacrament, which St. Paul calls "a seal of the righteousness of faith," so can infants now receive baptism, since they are children of faith or children of believers, and were not begotten or born in the impurity of unbelief, but in the holiness of faith. Besides this, the promises being made to us and our children, and our Saviour's saying, "Let the little children come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God;" besides the accounts we have in the scripture of whole families being baptized, as the household of Stephanus and others, in which it may be reasonably supposed there were children as well as adults. But the best that can be said of all is, that without doubt children are capable of receiving the blessing of Christ, and when parents bring them to him, in faith, to receive his blessing, they must not be forbid.

It would be sinful to ask, What benefit can a new-born babe receive, who neither hears nor understands the gospel, nor has a will or power either to believe or disbelieve the doctrine of Christ? For



this would be really to think like the disciples, who therefore forbid the people to bring their children to Christ, and for which Jesus was displeased, and assured them, they could receive the kingdom of God; and that so passive and like clay, as a little child is, so must every one become who would enter into his kingdom. Jeremiah was sanctified in the belly, John in his mother's womb, and could leap for joy, when Mary and Elizabeth saluted each other, being filled with the Holy Ghost. The question therefore must not be, Are infants able to receive grace and the Holy Spirit? for that is a true doctrine, and clear and confirmed in the scriptures; and if Jesus saw their faith who let down the paralytic through the roof before him, and forgave the man, made him his son, and healed him, he can see their faith now who bring their children to be washed by him, and do the same gracious acts as he certainly does, and will by no means disappoint those who have believed in him: "It shall be done to them according to their faith;" and Jesus will be with them to the end of the world who minister in his name and faith, and will faithfully preserve and keep all such as have been committed to his care, or dedicated to him and washed in water, according to his holy word. Let such answer for it who lightly and wantonly have either meddled with baptism, or exposed it to contempt in the world; for as it is possible to receive the Lord's supper unworthily, and bring judgments upon our heads, so can men receive and administer unworthily, and to equal hurt the sign of the baptism of the Lord.

What I have occasionally mentioned in this discourse, namely, the inward washing of the heart, and the cleansing our bodies with pure water out of the side of Jesus, is the true and only baptism which

which avails; and though without the outward washing of water a child can be saved, yet without the baptism of the Holy Ghost no man can be saved. We must be baptized with the baptism wherewith our Master was baptized; the same blood and water which overstreamed and covered him in the garden, must sprinkle us from an evil conscience, and wash us body and soul. This is a baptism of fire; this must burn and eat up all the dross and corrupt affections in us; and with this water and blood God gives his Holy Spirit in our hearts, like a fountain springing up into everlasting life: he pours it out upon us, and anoints us his kings and priests: he brings with him the blood of Jesus, and washes us in heart and spirit throughout, so that he can say, Ye are clean. Without this, all boasting of being baptized by the best men, in the best form, and in the most pure church, will stand us in little stead. "If I wash thee not, saith our Saviour, thou hast no part with me." This doctrine then of the baptism of Christ is weighty when administered in faith, and brings with it the seal and sign of the regeneration of the Holy Ghost, and is not a carnal ordinance or device of men, but is from above, and the immediate appointment and order of God our Saviour, and must be reckoned among the first Principles of Christianity.

I come now to speak of the laying on of hands; and this is two-fold, first the laying on of hands to bless in the time of baptism, and this was formerly called confirmation; and secondly, the laying on of hands in sending out ministers into God's husbandry, of both which I shall speak particularly, and first of confirmation.

Our Saviour used this laying on of hands himself, not only in healing some diseased people, but when he took up the children in his arms, he laid his hands

hands upon them and blessed them. He did the same in effect when he lifted his hands over them and blessed them at his ascension. But the apostles used it frequently. Ananias laid his hands upon Saul, and at once he received his sight and the Holy Ghost. St. Peter and John laid their hands on such as had been baptized in Samaria by Philip, and they received the Holy Ghost. Also St. Paul did the same to some in Ephesus, and when he had laid his hands on them, they received the Holy Ghost. This was the custom of the primitive church, and though in form they have not been exactly the same, yet almost all the churches have retained it, and believed that by laying on of hands the blessing of Jesus Christ is given and the Holy Ghost. Some churches lay on hands and confirm the baptized person immediately, and others defer it, till a time of ripen years, and this has been the custom of our national church at this day. There are other churches who lay on hands before baptism, and claim thereby, in the name of the Lord, the soul to be his property and the redeemed of his blood. Some churches receive members into their communion with the laying on of hands, and in the same manner bless the sick, the penitent, and departing souls; and since the scriptures have declared this sort of blessing a principle of Christianity, and have not said how often or at what time it should be done, we cannot with safety condemn this use in the churches of Christ, but what appears most apostolical and according to the scriptures must be esteemed the best, and all the rest may be allowed very good, when done in faith and in the name of Jesus Christ.

The laying on of hands for appointing ministers, &c. in the church is of another sort, and though not always absolutely necessary, yet of divine institution, and is now called ordination. We know, though

though Aaron, Joshua, and others were sent with the laying on of hands, that the same Lord in the Jewish church sent many prophets and ministers who had no such ordination, nor were Levites, or called as Aaron to the priesthood, nor were they the first-born of their mothers, &c. but some were shepherds, herdsmen, gatherers of sycamore fruit, &c. out of different tribes chosen and sent, as the Holy Ghost pleased; and thus it has been since in the christian church, for therein first Jesus sent out his apostles and seventy disciples to be his ministers, but the manner in which he ordained them was properly by his breathing on them, or pouring out his Holy Ghost upon them. Though before either of these things were done at his word, they had gone out, preached, healed the sick, and baptized; but for all this, his sending them was warrant and authority enough. These afterwards used the laying on of hands in appointing the seven deacons at Jerusalem. So St. Paul himself and Barnabas were in like manner sent out by the church at Antioch with fasting, prayer, and the laying on of hands, and this was done at the commandment of the Holy Ghost. Gifts suitable to the office of servants of God have been bestowed in the use of this laying on of hands, for so St. Paul writes to Timothy, "Neglect not that gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." Again he says, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands;" and he desires Timothy first to try such as are preachers, and not lay hands suddenly on any man. This doctrine of the laying on of hands at the sending out of ministers, like the confirmation and baptism, has been differently administered; some have thought, because Paul mentions the

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laying on of his hands, that bishops only have the right to ordain, but others have observed, several laid their hands on the deacons and on Paul and Barnabas, and also the presbytery ordained Timothy, for which reason they had believed the latter more scriptural, and thought the former a sort of usurpation of bishops, and almost all the Reformed and Protestant churches are of this mind; but there are yet others who minister and have not the laying on of hands, and these find out instances enough in the scripture of men that have so done, such as Apollos, and those scattered abroad at the persecution, who went every where teaching and preaching the word. Also St. Paul says, "All might preach," and, like Moses, wished, "All the Lord's people were prophets." A regular ministry, ordained with laying on of the hands of men full of faith and the Holy Ghost, is and must be a great blessing to a christian church, especially where men so ordained are inwardly moved of the Holy Spirit to take upon them that office, and who, not for lucre, or of constraint, or for honour, or with any view but to serve the church and flock which God purchased with his own blood, take the oversight and charge of souls; for without this, the laying on of hands is a good sign, but it profits nothing. At the same time that an orderly and regular minister may be good, and save many heats and confusions in a congregation, yet it would be dangerous to condemn or hinder any who with sincere views preach the gospel, and propagate the faith of Christ to the salvation of souls, though they have not been sent of men, for God sends by whom he will send, and all who are rash in censuring their mission, must take care lest they be found opposing Christ and fighting against him, who by foolish people and mean and base things will save them that believe, and destroy and bring to

to nothing the understanding of the prudent. The meanness of a preacher does no more prove that he is not sent of God, than the apostles being poor fishermen would prove they were impostors; nor their being not regularly brought up and educated for the ministry and ordained thereto, is any more a reason they are deceivers and false teachers, than the disciples were such, because they were not trained up in the school of the prophets, or called as was Aaron. Let therefore all so act and so do, that with a conscience clear and undefiled they may finish their own course of labouring in the church; and if others in different ways preach Christ, let them rejoice and hope the best, since "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased, and many be made wise to eternal life."

I shall now speak of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, for that is yet another principle of Christianity. That the dead, small and great, just and unjust, shall rise again and come to life through the resurrection of Jesus, is fully asserted in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians; and our Saviour himself taught it: "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth." So the Prophets have constantly taught, "those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake;" and therefore is God called the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, because though they are dead, he knows they shall live again and arise with his dead body; and as he foresees things that are not as though they were, "All live to him." If the dead were not to rise, we should not so easily part with our Christian friends, but should sorrow as men without hope, since we should never meet again; but now since Christ is risen, and become the first fruits of them that slept," we know we also shall rise again and come with him  
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at his appearing. It is no harm that we rest our bodies in the grave, for sin has so spoiled and weakened our mortal frame that it cannot bear up or support under many years fatigue and labour, but must rest. It would be no blessing to live after sickness and pains have worn us out, and old age made us incapable of being of any more service in our generation; therefore has our wise and good Lord laid in the grave himself, and sanctified the state of the dead that we might go through the dark valley cheerfully, and lie down rejoicing, knowing we shall only sleep, and at Jesus's call shall again lift up our heads and rise to life eternal. But this can be so only to such as have experienced the first resurrection, or have risen again with Christ Jesus to a new life. Our Saviour is himself the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in him, though he were dead in Adam, and in trespasses and sins, shall live for ever; and whosoever has that new life, and continues to believe, he shall never die; he shall not feel those inward horrors and pangs and gnawings of conscience, nor the wrath of God, nor fury of the devil, nor dread eternal burnings; he shall not taste of the second death; his departure shall only be to him like the sweet sleep of the wayfaring man and traveller, who, having reached, tired and wearied, his own house, rests and sleeps in peace: so shall one who partakes of Jesus's quickening Spirit be blessed and holy, the second death shall have no power over him.

When the Saviour's marriage-day comes, and the trumpets are sounding at midnight, "Go ye out to meet him! Behold the Bridegroom cometh! He comes! He comes on clouds!" They shall rise first. Our Saviour's sweet voice, which causeth those that are asleep to speak, will tenderly awake them. "I will raise them up, he saith, at the last day."

day." He will say to their eternal joy, "Rise up, my love, my dove, and come away!" Then shall they open their eyes and see Jesus face to face; their mortality shall be changed into immortality, and their corruption into incorruption: they shall have slept their sleep out and fully rested, shall rise and follow him whom their souls loved: the bride shall go with the Bridegroom into the wedding; that is, they shall be taken up with him and appear in the air with him; then shall their despised and reproached company have honour in the sight of all mankind: then shall those that have used them ill see them at Christ's right-hand; they shall hear him confess them and call them the blessed children of his Father. All that have hated them shall reflect in that day and say, "These are they whom we had in derision, and as a by-word and proverb of reproach: we fools counted their lives madness and their end to be without honour, but now they are numbered with the saints and have their portion with the children of God; then must they worship at their feet, and know that Jesus has loved them. Thus shall it be with all in the resurrection who have a part in Christ, and whose voice awakened them to believe in him unto life eternal.

But far otherwise will it be with the kindreds of the earth, with all who belong to the world, and have lived and died strangers to our Saviour, they also shall rise, and they also "who have pierced him shall see him, and wail because of him." It must be a heavy time to such, a day of gloominess and darkness, a day wherein the mighty man shall weep bitterly, and all faces look pale. These, though they rise again, are dead; and in as much as they did not like our Saviour, they shall feel what it is to be without him; and as they loved not his living and dying, they shall live to die forever, and the resurrection



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resurrection shall be no blessing to them at all. How can the dead live, or their dust mouldered away and driven far off by winds, devoured by beasts, wasted in the seas, be again brought together? must not be the question of a believer; for to him that saith and it is done, all things are possible, and to form all things at first out of nothing, or to call men dead some thousands of years to life, are equally easy to the Creator. This also is a manifest proof of the godhead and divine supremacy and almighty power of Christ, that by him all shall be made alive; he shall make death and hell deliver up their dead, and the graves and the seas give back all that are therein, when he shall begin his new creation of the earth, and make us his first-fruits, his harvest, which were sown in weakness, but shall be raised in power; and when this vile body shall be rendered an innocent, righteous, and a glorious body, like his own, and thus "will he do according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." But in this place it will be proper to treat of another principle of Christianity; and that is

Of eternal judgment, which is the last mentioned by the apostle, and of which I will speak a few words and conclude this discourse. There is no doubt but that the same almighty and long-suffering God, who is now our Saviour, will one day judge righteous judgment, and set all the many difficult and intricate matters in a clear light. All the hidden things of darkness shall be brought to light, and he will manifest the counsels of every heart. All the oppressors and the oppressed shall then appear before him, and whatever has been done wrong shall be set to rights. He shall deal justly, and decide between him that served God, and him that served him not. Hence is this day called the day of

of decision, the day of judgment, because then every secret thing shall come into judgment, and what has been done in the closet proclaimed upon the house-top. Two things must then be done, the clearing and justifying the souls who believe in Jesus, and the condemning or rather chastening such as have despised the blood of his covenant, and would not come to him that they might have life. The first our Saviour will do before men and angels. Let Satan appear then to accuse the brethren, and seek for their iniquity that he may lay it to their charge, and it shall be hid; our Saviour's wounds have covered it; his grave has buried it; the nails and instruments that tore his flesh, have torn it all to nothing; it shall not be found. Jesus shall then make it appear as the light, and his just dealing as the noon day, that "he saved them with righteousness, and all his converts with equity." He will then shew how he paid their debts, endured their chastisement, and drank up their cup, bore their sorrows and curse, and suffered the full due and reward of their sins; that he healed their breach and made them righteous; and should the law and all that was against them appear and accuse, or make it plain, so much owest thou unto my lord, the wounds in Christ's hands shall answer for us: the iron pen that nailed him to the cross filed all our bills and bonds there, and the receipt wherein God has wrote, "I am well pleased," shall be easy to be read on every bleeding nail-print. Therefore we sing now in confidence of this:

My full receipt shall there be shew'd,  
Written with iron pens in blood,

On Jesu's hands and side:

I'm safe, O hell! O death! and sin!

Ye cannot bring me guilty in,

For Jesus for me dy'd!

For

For ever happy those who in that day have been justified by believing in Jesus, they shall then bless the day that ever they were born; they shall bless especially the day in which they heard of the free justification by Christ Jesus: for the Lord the righteous judge, namely, their own dear Lord and Saviour, shall pass the eternal judgment in their favour. No iniquity shall be seen in them for his name's sake, in which they have trusted; "they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation;" and for his death's sake, in which they have believed, he shall save their souls and bodies for ever alive. As they loved him in the world, so they shall be with him in the worlds to come, and shall see his face, be his bride and wife, his children, his brethren, his favourites, his first-born; and like as in the earth his crucified body was their happiness, and they delighted in looking on him, his reproach and shame and sufferings were dear to them, and they could venture upon him body and soul, and chose him for their Lord God alone, so shall he continue their glory eternally. They shall not be disappointed; they shall follow him whithersoever he goeth, and go no more out of his temple.

It shall not be so with unbelievers, and men who have been fearful and could not trust the Lamb of God, they shall be ashamed at his coming; and all such as have loved their sins more than the Redeemer, who did despite to the Spirit of grace, and who would not be led by him to the Saviour; but, contrary to all his tender calls and loving convictions, rushed forward, trampling upon the blood of the Son of God and slighting it as if it had been a common thing; such will rue and repent that behaviour; so will they who have rather trusted their own works than his obedience, who denied his divinity and Godhead, and all who have resisted his mercy

mercy and would not come to him, nor sought nor enquired for his salvation; when he comes, these unjust and unholy men shall be unjust and unholy still; an eternal judgment must pass upon them, and they be found unworthy to stand before the Son of man. As they would not come under the shelter of his cross and out-stretched arms, which were stretched out as the wings of an hen over her young, when the storm was coming, they must bear the tempest and perish in their sin; they hearkened to the enemy, and must be his servants: "they loved not blessing, therefore it shall be far from them; they delight in cursing, therefore it shall happen to them; and these shall go away into everlasting punishment." May none here be of that unhappy number!

I have now spoken freely of the first principles of Christianity, such at least as the apostle mentions to the Hebrews; and will only observe, that though these are true doctrines, and of great service to such as are children of God, in that they preserve them who have learned them of the Lord from being tossed about with every wind of doctrine, but they hold fast the form of sound words, and are established; yet to have these principles in the head only, and not to know in the heart what true repentance is, faith in our Lord God Jesus, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, &c. all his knowledge and soundness of judgment, shall rather be a hurt to him than a blessing.

My dear brethren, I wish you heartily to weigh all that has been said, and to enter into your closet and shut the door after you, and there hold an assize in your own breast before the Lord; examine yourselves, if you have turned to him unfeignedly and with your whole heart, and repented of your past sins and dead works: If you have indeed left the

world and its lying vanities, and are dead to all its pleasures, honours, and enjoyments, and with bitterness have sought forgiveness at his hands against whom you have sinned wantonly: or if you know what it is to see all self-righteousness a mere Babel, and insufficient to make a soul happy, or clothe its nakedness before God and the angels, and have repented of all your pride in that way, so that you blush at the remembering your former high thoughts of your goodness and sobriety, and are ashamed in your inmost heart at the good opinion you have had of yourselves and of your estate in Christianity, and of the low and mean thoughts of Jesus and his blood and sufferings, and how you have slighted his love, and neglected to make sure your calling and election, your title and interest to his rest and kingdom:—  
Yes, my brethren, enter into judgment with your own souls, and let no one less than the Holy Ghost be your comforter, but sink as poor condemned and guilty criminals before the feet of Jesus Christ, and there pour out your prayers and tears, there open your afflicted and grieved minds, and let him refresh you; let his Spirit teach you to believe to the saving of your souls; let him lay his hands on you and bless you; let him sprinkle you from all your idols and cleanse you from all your filthiness, and make you new and clean hearts, of all which he will be in you the faithful and true witness, that so having repented of dead works, obtained faith in Christ, and been baptized into his death, &c. ye may cheerfully expect the resurrection and judgment to come, and therein stand bold as a lion, or as a bride waiting for the bridegroom; till then, press forward to know more and more of Jesus and his great sacrifice, which is perfection, and in which ye shall stand complete in the day of his coming,  
with

with great joy, and be found to his glory for ever. Amen.

O thou great Bishop and Apostle of our profession, whose doctrines shall be dearer to me than gold, and more precious than fine gold, instruct me rightly in all things which concern my eternal safety. Let me so hear all thy words and sayings as becomes a believer. Let no human wisdom bias me, or lead me aside from crediting implicitly all thy scriptures. Let thy Spirit teach me inwardly the true meaning of all thy doctrines; let him write them upon my heart and mind, and give me to experience thy truth and faithfulness in all thy gracious promises. Grant me true repentance. Make my heart soft and tender and like melted wax, that it may receive every impression of thy love. Let me never be disposed to go back into the world, or conform any more to their manners. O rather transform my heart, and let it be devoted wholly to thee. Make me in love with thee. Give me a living faith in thy death and divinity, and let me live assured of thy favour, and die, or rather depart rejoicing in thy salvation. Have a particular care of me, and so bless and endue me with thy Spirit, that I may be led safely, and dwell alone and only for thee in the world. Give me also a part in the first resurrection, and let not the judgment to come hurt me. Grant this, my good and dear Master and Minister Jesus, for thy name sake, that my soul may bless thee for ever. Amen.

## DISCOURSE XXIII.

### THE SUFFERINGS AND SATISFACTION OF CHRIST.

ISAIAH liii. 11.

*He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.*

**T**HE prophet, out of whose writings I have chosen this text, is remarkable for his profound knowledge of an insight into the salvation which he foresaw, as well as other men of God, who, under the law, searched diligently what the Saviour should be, and what manner of salvation and glory should follow the sufferings of Christ. In this respect he was highly favoured, and spoke as if he had been present and contemporary with our Saviour, and not as one who lived in the days of king Uzziah, and so far off from the days of the Son of man. The title of the evangelical prophet was not bestowed upon him by the fathers for nothing; for a good part of all his prophecy is the pure gospel; and there, as well as in the New Testament, we find all the blessed doctrine of Jesus Christ. "Isaiah saw his glory, and spake of him."

This whole fifty-third chapter is well known in Christendom, and relates to the humanity, sufferings and glory of the Messiah; and as "he was wounded for our sins, and bruised for our transgressions, and by whose stripes we only can be healed," let us  
now

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now attend to this weighty subject, and learn the riches of his grace and everlasting love to us, from the doctrine of his salvation.

In the text there are three things to be considered :

First, To shew who this person is, of whom all these things are spoken.

Secondly, What is meant by the travail of his soul.  
And,

Thirdly, What must we understand by his being satisfied.

We frequently meet with expressions of this kind among the prophets ; thus in Daniel we read, " He shall be cut off, he shall finish iniquity." In others, " He shall redeem Israel ; he shall dip his cloaths in the blood of grapes, and wash his garments in wine. He shall live ; and unto him shall be given of the gold of Arabia. Prayer shall be made ever unto him ; and daily shall he be praised. He shall sprinkle many nations ; he shall be a man of sorrows ;" and in the text, " He shall see of the travail of his soul." All these, and many more, certainly relate to the same person ; and all the scripture, the law, and the prophets, point to him in every place. This is the glorious He, of whom all have testified and spoken ! The Desire of all nations ! The Hope of Jacob ! The Messiah ! The King of Israel ! He, for whom the twelve tribes waited two thousand years, and who was daily expected in his temple to help and save his people. But who is he ? and what is his name ?

He is the Lord from heaven ; his name is Jesus Christ ; or, as Luther sung,

'Tis Jesus Christ indeed ;  
And there's no God beside.

I do not wonder that the Jews had such confused  
F 3 ideas



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ideas of the Deliverer ; for often he was promised as a man, as the seed of the woman, and son of David, and often as the Most High, as the only God and Saviour ; and of no other person can all that is said of the Messiah be true ; but only of that God and Man Christ Jesus, who was before all things, and made heaven and earth with all their hosts ; and shall again roll up the heavens, and create all new ; and who once in the form of a servant, lived and died in this sinful world, to reconcile us to himself by his own blood, and save us for evermore.

Let the sage scan, and pry, and weigh, and after all be in suspense about the matter as he will : Let the naturalist scorn as he please ; and the Jew and Jewish-hearted men blaspheme and mock, it is yet true, Jesus is God. He is the everlasting Lord, the Maker and Saviour of all. This is the foundation and corner-stone of all the prophets, apostles, and martyrs. This is the doctrine of all the scriptures, and of every church of God ! and this shall be universally acknowledged when once more the Son of Man shall appear : “ Then every eye shall see him, and every knee bow to him, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is the Lord.”

In this matter let us follow the cloud of witnesses, and trust Jesus, and confess and believe him, as he indeed is our Lord and our God. It is a good foundation, and other can no man lay. It is a firm rock, where a soul may build safely, and no storm shall make it fall ; “ the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” It is a tried stone. How many millions have tried it, and found it true and sure ! Who have died in assurance, who did not believe in Jesus ? Who have gone joyful and fearless into eternity, who had not him for their God ? Who have denied him, and departed happy ? O none in any age ! No soul that scorns his blood and divinity ;

no

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no creature who has not him for his Lord, shall be blessed in time or in eternity. They shall live in darkness and die in darkness, and are without God in the world.

But now let me come to speak of the second part of the text, and treat of the travail of his soul. This is what raises so many doubts in the infidel, and makes him so often argue, If God could travail—if the Lord could die and be a sufferer.—And because he cannot believe this, or in his carnal understanding comprehend it, he counts the preaching of the cross foolishness; and chuses rather to trust his own morality, than the obedience and precious death of the Lord that bought him. Foolishness it will seem to every soul till taught of God, and then this doctrine raises in the heart the deepest thanksgivings, and reverence, and adoration, and love to our Saviour, and which increases daily till we shall see him; and then we shall cast our crowns at his feet, and prostrate ourselves before his throne, who so loved and valued us, that he once, for our sakes, humbled himself, and was obedient to the death of the cross.

I need not say, that the cause of all the humiliation and sufferings of God's eternal Son, was our fall, and to save us by the sacrifice of himself, for this is every where taught in the Bible, and implied in this doctrine of his becoming a man of sorrows especially; and, if our own hearts have the least feeling or life, we know the cause of all the Redeemer's travail.

The sinful stirrings of my heart  
With blushes fill my face;  
I feel the cause of Jesu's smart,  
And bless him for his grace.

Before

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Before ever our Saviour was incarnate, yea long ere the worlds were made, or the heavens or earth formed, he saw how all things would go with us; and even when in Adam all died, and lost and forfeited his image, and sunk as slaves into the hands of the enemy, his eyes saw it, and his heart had compassion upon us. He knew (humanly speaking) it would have been easier to make a new world and create new souls, than to recover us, now lost and ruined; and in strict justice he might have left us, cursed and spoiled as we were, to feel the vengeance of eternal fire, and begin a new creation for his pleasure; but he loved us too dearly. He valued us far, far too highly to forsake or give us up. No, he knew we were gone from him and in the Devil's arms. He understood our captivity, and well saw what it would cost him to get us back, and save us from perishing to eternity; but it did not avail; all he foresaw he should undergo to ransom us, could not prevail with him to resolve to leave us unhelped. "He saw the travail of his soul," understood what bitter pains he must bear to redeem us, but he was satisfied; he loved us with everlasting love, and so became the Saviour. He determined, cost what it would, to have us; and neither did he grudge all he should pay down for us, all he should endure or suffer in body and soul, so his poor dear people could but thereby be saved; and with this view, with this aim, in the fulness of time, he arose from his throne, took leave of all his glory, forsook all his majesty and ease, and came down from heaven in the sight of all the angels, and was made lower than they all for the suffering of death; and thus God, the most high God, was made a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. It would not be amiss here to speak a little of the nature of the travail of his soul, and consider our Saviour in his sufferings.

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sufferings. But O who is fit to undertake this! who can shew forth his sorrows, or worthily tell of his pain? I am ashamed to open my mouth in this matter, because I believe an angel would fall short in describing it; how much more I who am a worm? However, I will say a little, and pray the Lamb to forgive me that I fail so much in shewing forth his travail. I will pass over his mean birth and poor entertainment when he came into the world, as well as the suspicious manner of his conception, and all the miseries of his infancy and tender years; his painful circumcision, and labours, and travails, till his shewing forth unto Israel in the last few years before he made his soul an offering for sin.

In the time of his temptation when for forty days he did eat nothing, but was left to be tried and tempted as we are, that he might be a merciful and compassionate High Priest to us, we may think a little what he went through, hurried and afflicted by Satan, affrighted by the wild beasts, and pinched with hunger and want. We may not think his divinity kept him from suffering by any of these, but as deeply as any poor man can be tempted, as much as any soul can be assaulted and amazed, so was he, and assisted only by his Godhead to go through all the hurried trials, hunger, want, and distresses, which possibly could befall a fallen creature. We need not doubt, but he has felt all what we can feel, and has gone through the fire and water before us. He knows the strength of every temptation, and the great weakness of flesh; and as he was the seed of the woman alone, so he had not the strength of a man, but was weak and like a woman in her pangs, and poorer and meaner than any one. In those days I do not doubt, but had we been present, we might have seen him wander dejected and discouraged

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discouraged up and down the wilderness, now sitting under some lonely shade weeping bitterly, and sighing with his heart ready to break; and now with very distress wringing his pale hands, or lying upon his face sweating with agony, and crying to his Father. As St. Paul's fasting three days was not voluntary, but occasioned through the pain and uneasiness of his heart, he could have no mind to eat when he did not know what would become of him for ever; and in this deplorable condition David also forgot to eat bread; so I believe our Saviour's fast was out of real trouble and distress. Had he but spoke the word, the angels, who afterwards ministered to him, would, doubtless, have brought him somewhat to refresh him; but so great was his concern, so dreadful his temptations, so bitter his affliction, and the travail of his soul, that he could not eat or drink until the hours of darkness passed over, and the tempter left him.

Besides the merits of Jesus Christ's fasting and temptations, we may learn two comfortable lessons from them; first, when we are tempted, we may apply to him with living hope, since he knows what it is to be distressed; and is able to save to the uttermost; and, secondly, let his answers to Satan be our answers to all sorts of tempters, when they would turn us from the faith, or make us doubt of the truth, or want reasons of us for what we believe; then let us say, "It is written." If the scriptures have no weight with them, we may not hope to overcome with other weapons, or use other arms. Let us keep his word; this kept him; and by this he overcame.

But now forget where you are, and come in faith to Jerusalem, and see Jesus at supper with his disciples. There properly his miseries seized him, and his soul travailed and was in pain. Methinks

I see

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I see his countenance change, and the tears flow down his cheeks. He ordained the supper for a commemoration of his death, and said, "This is my body which is given for you, and this is my blood which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins;" and when he had distributed the bread and cup to all, he said, "Now is the hour come, I shall now be given into the hands of sinners, the hour of the power of darkness now draws on, and he began to be very sorrowful and to be sore amazed." He went out the same dolorous way by the brook Cedron, where David once had gone weeping before; when Shimei followed cursing and pelting him; yes, Jesus went the same track, weeping and trembling, into the garden of Gethsemane; and then, like one in the greatest fright, begged his disciples to stay and watch with him, but all in vain; they were heavy with grief to see him so troubled, and slept as midnight approached; while he cried, "Father, save me from this hour: Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." And thus he prayed three times; and at last he could kneel no more. All God's water-spouts passed over his head, and his terrors set themselves in array before him. All our sins, all uncleannesses, lies, oaths, drunkenness, pride, covetousness, and ten thousand crimes, appeared before him: our curse, death and hell, stared him in the face, and the wrath of God Almighty burned like a fire, the tempest lowered and thundered over his head, so that he fell flat upon his face, and prayed with strong cries and tears, until the sweat with horror, like blood, gushed out, and made all his clothes red, as if he had been treading grapes in a wine-vat. O come and see God, who made us, weltering in his blood on the cold ground! See his faint hands spread out, and his mouth in the dust, begging for mercy for his poor people! See his  
his

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his hair now indeed filled with the dew of the night, his heart aching and beating in his breast, and all his limbs trembling and shaking with terror and amaze! Behold him, ye poor sinners! So he removes the curses of the man, who should eat bread in the sweat of his brow; so he takes away the curse of the woman, who should suffer in her travail. He lays his hands upon his lions, like a woman in labour, and with tears, and sweat, and blood, washes out the curse of the ground, and bears the curse of the brute part of the creation, by laying on his belly, and bearing the punishment of all. "O come, let us worship and fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker!" This is he, for whose pleasure we were made, who now in his agony prays and intercedes for us! How great was our curse, that could make the Holy One of God so tremble and quake at the sight of it; and even force him to beg, "If it be possible, let the cup pass away!" How great our sin, which could not be washed away but by the blood of God Almighty! He prayed; "if it be possible, let this cup pass," to teach us how much it was to be feared; but he knew the decisive hour and moment was come, either he must drink the wrath, or it must fall upon the sinners; there was no way to escape; and rather than we should have the sword awake upon us, or the cup of God's indignation be poured out upon our heads, he said, "Lo! I come to do thy will: not my will, but thine be done." And therefore is this day called in Isaiah "the day of vengeance, the year of redemption."

Until now he had none to comfort him: his friends slept, as we have done, and were like Job's friends, miserable comforters indeed! But now an angel has leave to refresh and strengthen him: Alas! how can that be? Or, with what could the happy spirit revive the overloaded Lamb? He could not comfort him

him, by telling him he should soon be again in heaven: for, amidst all his anguish, if he had pleased to have called for twelve legions of angels to his assistance, they would have appeared, and sung him back to the throne he had before the world began: But it would not have been a comfort to our Saviour, to have sat on the throne, and seen us plunged into hell; or crying out, and gnashing our teeth, under the wrath of God: nor could the angel strengthen our Saviour by telling him of the short duration of his pain, or what glory and ease he should shortly enter, no: Such things can comfort us, but he needeth other comfort: he, for the joy set before him, endured. No doubt the angel raised his wet hands, and kissed his bloody and fainting Master, and said, O my dear Creator! how many unhappy and perishing souls shall this sweat of thine save for ever! How many millions of lost men shall, by this distress of thine, overcome, when they are tempted! How great the number that shall be born to thee by this travail of thy soul; How will they love and thank thee for ever! How shall thy heart rejoice, when by this means thou shalt have prevailed, and brought home to thee all the nations of the earth! This could comfort the Redeemer: he could see of the travail of his soul, and be comforted. Just as a woman in her pangs can be comforted when her friends tell her, Be of good cheer, a man child is born to thee: so could our Saviour, our Creator, be comforted, by seeing of the travail of his soul.

And now he rose from the earth, and came to his disciples with his garments rolled in blood; and now Judas, and a great multitude with him, enter the garden with torches, staves, and lanthorns, to take him. His disciples awaked, and saw the two dreadful sights: Jesus in that affecting form, and the mob coming



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coming, possessed with fury and rage, to take him; while he prayed for them, and told them, "This night shall the Son of man be betrayed." And then he bears the falsehood of Judas, and lets a traitor, a wicked man, a devil, kiss him; while the others load him with bonds and chains, and drag him into the city. One should have thought his bloody and faint looks would have melted them; but all had no effect upon them. I suppose they filled the roads and streets with rejoicings and huzzas, that now they had got him fast in misery and irons. His care, amidst all, was only about his disciples; and therefore he said, "If you seek me, let these go their way." He knew what he meant, and Satan knew also: for, unless the enemy had consented upon that condition to give up his claim and right eternally to the souls, he could not have seized upon Jesus. This being settled, then he gave himself for us into their hands, and was brought from prison to judgment; and before Annas and Caiaphas arraigned and accused of blasphemy and sacrilege, which he meekly bore the charges of, since we had been guilty, and was content to be black with our hurt, and reckoned with transgressors, that by bearing our sins we might go free. All the day after his being apprehended, he was made a gazing stock for angels and men: he was brought before Pontius Pilate the governor of Judea, and then before Herod of Galilee, where all the priests and many people accused him vehemently: some spit in his face, others struck him on the mouth: some blind-folded him, and then again beat him, asking him blasphemously, "Tell us, if thou be a prophet, who smote thee?" Thus his prophetic office was derided; but he answered not. Then Herod gave him to his soldiers, who called together the whole band, to make sport with him; some dressed him in purple; and others, meanwhile, got thorns

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thorns and plaited them so that every thorn might pierce his head and face, and with this they crowned him; and another, for a sceptre, put a reed or cane in his hand; and then they saluted him, and bowed to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Thus they mocked his kingly office; but Jesus opened not his mouth. What a sight was the Son of God! How glorious did the King of Israel look! All his sacred face covered with shame and spittle; his eyes swollen and red with weeping as with wine, and bruised with being blind-folded and pushed from one to another: the blood trickling from the thorn-prints with tears streaming down his face, his beard torn off; for "he gave his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair;" and so they appeared, as Solomon describes it, "like rows of jewels." His hands that had been so often reached out to bless his children, and to heal the sick, now are bound; and when they had scourged him until one could have counted the bones; or, as David says, "they plowed his back;" then they brought him out upon the steps of the pavement, wearing the crown of thorns and purple robe, crying, "Behold the Man!" And one of the evangelists says, a person met him and struck him on the head with a cane. One of the fathers also, who wrote in the primitive church, said, the soldiers lifted up the robe which was thrown over his torn back, and, by Pilate's order, shewed him to the people; intending thereby to stir up pity in them toward him, that, if possible, he might be released: but though the sight could have moved a stone almost, and melted the hardest heart, it had no effect, unless to make them more violent and eager to see him dead.

But let us behold the man: on his head he carries the curse of the ground, thorns and thistles; and on his back he has carried our burdens and sor-

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rows: these stripes, those many wounds are for "the healing of the nations;" and he stands there exposed and shewed forth, that we may "look to him and be saved." Now is he "the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely! Now is he glorious in his apparel!" But all his scourging, his standing like a criminal at the bar of a man; his blows, bruises, threats, scoffs, shame, pain, or barbarous usage, do not make him once complain or repine. We do not hear that he so much as said, O it is too much! But he so loved us, that he bore contentedly all for us; and our ease and peace was more to him than his own. He knew we had deserved all that and more; and therefore, to the astonishment of the princes and priests, and to the surprise of men and angels, he held his peace. After he had suffered all indignity, and pain, and reviling, they stripped off from him the purple garment, and, no doubt, set his wounds afresh to bleeding; and now they put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him. They had preferred a murderer before him, and all together desired Pilate to crucify him. And now "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" Satan plagued his righteous spirit; men had punished, and struck him, and shamed him before Jews and Heathens; and God had now laid upon him the iniquities of us all. Thus, on the solemn feast-day of expiation, it was the custom of the Jews to lead, or rather drag out by the horns, the scape-goat, and bring him into the wilderness, that he might in a shadow carry away the sins of the people into a land uninhabited: so they laid the cross upon Jesus, and dragged him out of the gates of the city, loaded with all our crimes, and the sin of the whole world. What pain must he have borne in his body, when upon his raw and wounded back and shoulders, he was obliged to carry

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carry a cross large enough to hang him on: and we may well think how that pressed into his sore flesh, and made it exceeding painful: besides, the crowds of people, who pressed about him, must have often shook the cross, and made him ready to swoon away; and lest this should be the case, or that he should die before they had got their malice fully satisfied upon him, they offered him wine and myrrh, but he would not drink; and now methinks I see him crawl up mount Calvary. This was the place of the execution of criminals, and where many guilty robbers and murderers had launched into eternity. It was the gate of death and hell; and here Jesus intended to open the gate of heaven. The death of the cross was esteemed cursed above all other deaths in the eyes of the Jews; and they no more supposed a hanged one could be saved, any more than a dog; and herein they shewed their deep spleen, in thrusting him, if possible, not only out of the world, but into hell. Whence this sort of death was reckoned accursed, or called so of God, I know not, unless because our ruin and sin began its reign upon a tree; but now Jesus ends the curse in himself, and willingly is nailed upon the wood, that he may be a curse for us: and become a Saviour even of such as perish in that way.

He was stripped naked, and his clothes given among the soldiers; and now methinks I see them lay the cross on the ground, and throw him down backward upon it. No lamb ever laid so meekly upon the altar as this Lamb of God, when he offered himself for us: see he stretches out his dear hands to receive the nails; and now hark while the executioner drives in the fatal iron! Those hands, that had been laid upon so many children and others to bless them, now stream with blood: this done, then in like manner his sacred feet, which wanted

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rest and were weary with journeys and travelling, instead of rest must have torture and pain, and be fastened with nails; and thus Satan fulfils the scripture, and "bruises his heel." O come, in spirit, and see the Lamb! See how he weeps and bleeds, but opens not his mouth! Well may that which was said of Joseph in the Psalms be applied to him, "the iron entered into his soul;" but this was the way he wrote our names in the book of life. O my soul, canst thou ever think he forgets thee? A woman may forget her sucking child, and slight the fruit of her body which she bare with so much pain, but he can never forget thee: he has graven thee upon the palms of his hands. He will never forget to eternity what he felt when his hands were driven through with nails on the cross, and when his pangs and labour brought thee to the new-birth. When Solomon describes him in his Song, he says, "his hands had rings of beryl;" so it appeared when round the heads of the nails the precious blood gushed out, and made open the wells of salvation.

But now comes on the heaviest time of suffering; they raise the cross upright, and shewed him naked and wounded to all! O what shouts of joy were heard from all the thousands of Israel, when they saw him lifted up! Jews and Gentiles mocked together, and shake their heads, and clap their hands, and hiss at him, while his white and ruddy body was raised up, like an ensign upon a hill. What must he have felt when he hung thus? What a rack was his whole body and soul in? For now that storm, which had been so long gathering, burst upon him from on high: now the sword of the Lord awakened on the man that was his fellow; and he who had kept silence with pain and grief hitherto, now roared for the disquietness of his heart. Men vented all their

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their malice and fury upon him ; nothing but enemies seem to surround him ; he heard their blasphemy on every side with an aching heart. Satan, and all his unhappy multitude, shewed all their rage could prompt them to do, and scorned him now with all their power ; and now his dear eternal Father, and the whole blessed Godhead, seemed to leave him, that he might bear the fierceness of God's anger, and tread the wine-press of his wrath alone. It is true, no human creature can ever guess what he felt when he uttered that horrid cry, "Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani!" It made heaven and earth and hell shake, and struck all with an eternal surprise and wonder : if ever that was literally true, it might well be now, "that in heaven there was silence about the space of half an hour:" namely, while the battle seemed doubtful, when hell and all her powers heaped on him curse upon curse, and terror on terror ; and the weight of all our sins and crimes, secret and known, bowed down his soul ; and the Lord spared not his only Son, but smote him without mercy, for the sheep that were scattered. Satan wished nothing more, than that he should soon be tired out with misery, and call for his angels and retire, and leave the world unredeemed ; nor once thought he so loved them, that he would wade through hell and death, to pluck them as brands out of the burning : but Jesus loved us even unto death, and weathered out the dreadful storm : nor once begged for pity or mercy, until in his last agony, when he had fully drank up the dregs of the cup of trembling and astonishment, and made a perfect and complete atonement and amends for our sin, and endured all our wrath, paid down our full price and ransom ; and then he was justified in spirit, namely, when God the Holy Ghost bare witness in his heart the world was now his own, and all things recovered by the blood of

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of his cross, and the sin and iniquity ended, and the transgression finished, and "the everlasting righteousness brought in," and then came the hour of the joy and gladness of his heart, with his arms stretched out, like Sampson, he took hold on the sin with one hand, and the wrath of God with the other, the two pillars on which all stood, and then with his last cry he said aloud, "It is finished!" and bowed down his head and gave up the ghost; and, in his fall, he threw down all that was against us, all our blame, condemnation and curses, and left it all nailed with his body to the tree. But then the heavenly hosts, who, no doubt, had looked on amazed and wondering hitherto, broke out in the new song, "Now is come salvation! he has obtained eternal redemption! he has cast the accuser of the brethren down! he has bruised the serpent's head!" "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive blessing, and honour, and thanksgiving for ever and ever!"

But let us go back a little, and observe how he poured out his soul. How three hours he waded, as it were, through the depths of hell, and sought his sheep out of the bitterness of death. In this condition Jeremiah spoke of him when he said, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, wherewith the Lord has afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger!" It was then "out of the belly of hell he called unto God his Father;" when "the waves and storms went over his soul, and when the deep waters went nigh to swallow him up." But amidst it all he had pity on his poor mother, and him whom he loved, and spake comfortably to them: nor did all the blasphemous upbraidings of the multitude, nor their barbarous and hard-hearted behaviour make him angry, or provoke him to call fire from heaven to destroy them, or cause hell or tophet

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tophet to swallow them up, but he prayed for them, "My Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." He knew Satan had blinded them: he considered whereof they were made, and remembered they were but dust; and knew well, when hereafter he should save them, and wash them, and shed abroad his love in their hearts, how much they would love him and thank him for his grace; and indeed he knew for such, and for no better, he was enduring his cross. He could promise himself nothing more, for all "the travail of his soul," than that these should be his inheritance, and by his death be saved from death eternal; and this was the aim of the Deliverer: this was the joy set before him, and the mark of his prize. This was never more exemplified than in his pardoning the dying thief; for he was crucified between two such: "He was numbered with transgressors, and made his death with the wicked," who joined to mock and revile him, until he had made intercession for the transgressors, "My Father, forgive them;" and then one relents and prays him, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!" and immediately Jesus answers mercifully, "To-night shalt thou be with me in paradise." Who can help seeing here a miracle of mercy, a monument of free grace? And why did he do this loving act so publickly? Why absolve the dying criminal so openly? but that he might let heaven and earth see "he is Lord of the living and dead, and can give eternal life to whom he will;" that all mercy is his, and "he can do what he will with his own." Let none be offended with this wonder of grace, but love him the more; and let the worst hereby hope, through this man's mercy, to obtain mercy. No doubt he now sings upon the mount Sion with the greatest reverence, and remembers how  
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he was saved from the very brink and edge of the bottomless pit. He now, who had so much forgiven him, loves his Saviour so much the more; and he became the first fruit of the death of Jesus, some of the first part of his reward, wherewith he is satisfied for all his labour and travail. But another thing was remarkable in our Saviour at his death, and that was his thirst. We are sure it was not his natural thirst, of which he spake; for, when they offered him water or vinegar mingled, and put it on a sponge to his lips, he would not drink: he had said before, "I will not drink any more of the fruit of the vine, until I drink it new in the kingdom of my Father!" No, he thirsted once to see the people saved; he longed to have the moment come, "when the kingdom of this world should become his, even the Lord's and his Christ's." And therefore, as the happy time drew nigh that all was finished, he bowed down his head, as if he would take a look once more upon his dear-bought world; or, as if he would say, Now all is over, ye are mine: come near, and let me kiss you. And though he died in labour, though he was wearied out with torture, and his tongue parched with crying, his heart failing, and "his bowels dried up like a potsherd, his eyes weary with looking upward, his feet with anguish red, like brass burning in the furnace," and his soul just fleeting; yet his last cry was loud, that it might be heard through all worlds, and go deep into our ears and hearts, that the redemption and salvation, and all we could want in time and in eternity, was then and there entirely obtained and accomplished; and then his travailing soul departed and rejoiced all the spirits in Paradise, and in all the heavens, who had waited from the death of Abel for the day of redemption.

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He was scarce dead, but a soldier was resolved to know whether he was a man or no, and thrust his spear into his side, and this at once became the sign of the Son of man, and opened the fountain for sin and uncleanness to all the once lost, now ransomed world. All before had been dark for three hours, and the prince of darkness seemed to have taken possession of the whole earth; and besides, it made the time of the Lord's sufferings more gloomy and melancholy, and during the whole a horrible dread overwhelmed him; but now all cleared up and went on in a former order. From this day the King began his reign, which shall have no end; and from hence he draws all men after him. Who do not sit under this Shadow, have no great delight; and who do not know the refuge of this dry Tree, or rather this flourishing Apple-tree, he is yet a stranger to true rest and safety. This is the Hiding-place in the storm. This is the Ensign to which all the nations must flow. This is the only happy sight for a poor sinner. Whoever comes to him crucified, or looks to him, shall not perish; he shall have everlasting life. But I must leave a little the travail of our Redeemer's soul, to speak upon the third part of the text, "he shall be satisfied."

It is said of Jacob, that though "the sun burned him by day, and the frosts consumed him by night;" and though he was twenty years a servant, or rather a slave to Laban; yet for the love he had to Rachael, who was the chief part of his wages, he counted it but a little while, and thought little of all his servitude, i. e. he was satisfied. In this sense Jesus was satisfied. Before ever he became a servant, and began his sorrowing and hard life in the world, he knew what should be the wages of his service. The Father had shewn him before-hand "of the travail of his soul, and he was satisfied." God,

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God, even his own God, had, as it were, said to him, My Son, thou seest how Satan has prevailed over all flesh, and has spoiled thy handy-work; if thou, out of true love, wilt go down and redeem them, "I will make them a willing people, I will draw them to thee. Thou shalt have children born to thee, like the dew of the womb of the morning; as numerous as the drops of rain that water the earth, so shall thy seed be;" yea, if thou wilt bear their sin and curse, and die in their stead, be numbered with transgressors, and taste death for every man, and pour out your soul to death in their behalf, then "will I divide thee a portion with the strong," I will give thee a great company, which no man can number; "the heathen shall be thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth thy possession." A family will I elect and preserve to thee out of all the families of the earth, who shall be saved by thee, and be thy praise to all generations; and besides this, thou shalt quicken whom thou wilt. All shall be thine, the living and the dead: none shall find mercy but at thy hands; nor shall any soul, ready to perish, ask mercy in thy name, whom I will send empty away: every miserable and undone creature that believes and trusts in thy death, or flies to thy blood, I will save, and thou shalt be the Saviour of the world to all eternity; yea, ask any thing, and I will do it; and Jesus was well-pleased, "he was satisfied." He took a view of all the melancholy and dolorous hours he should see, he weighed well what a price he must pay down for our ransom; what bitter and affrighted sufferings he must endure; how he mocked and rejected of his own wicked creatures; and how feel an eclipse of his blessed and eternal divinity; but for the love of his poor people, out of pity and compassion to their estate, and rather than they should

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should be left ruined for ever, he was satisfied to be their Saviour, and willingly and cheerfully entered the war, put on flesh, and endured as a righteous servant. "The sun burned him by day, and the frost consumed him by night." In body and soul, "he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," and endured the days of his servitude faithfully, and counted all but little for the wages he should have for his travail; namely, for the souls who should be his reward, world without end. For these he did not grudge what he went through; but to get these, he despised the shame, and laid down his life willingly; and even now one may venture to affirm, if there was a soul upon earth that could not possibly be saved, unless he would die again, he would rather a second time leave all his joy and glory, and act the tragic scene afresh over again. But we assist herein, in some measure, to satisfy our Saviour. He is not satisfied, while we are miserable. He is not well pleased, while we are without the happy enjoyment of his righteousness and pardon in our hearts; while we are slaves of his enemy, and slight his redemption; or, as St. Paul terms it, "trample under foot his blood;" he must be grieved; but that fulfils his joy, and makes his heart satisfied, when we flow to him: when we will not and cannot be happy without him: when a soul, once unhappy and restless, a vassal, a bond-servant of sin and the devil, has obtained salvation in him, and is delivered from the iron yoke, and sits down blessed and joyful at Jesu's feet, thanking him with unspeakable joy for his cross and sufferings; then can he be said properly to be satisfied, and can say to his angels, "Rejoice with me, for I have found that which I had lost." How far it will go before the Lord's heart shall be fully satisfied, he only knows; but he will certainly draw yet many millions

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lions to him, till his thirst is quite allayed, and his longing after souls is satisfied. Let us ask our hearts in his presence this question: Is he satisfied with me? For all the travail of his soul, has he yet won me, and got me to be his happy reward and wages? Or has not all his labour and pains, and have the influences of the Holy Ghost allured me to him, or am I yet in my sins?

O my dear friends, my brethren, for whom Christ travailed and laboured, give him willingly your hearts. Let him be your Shepherd, and be you his willing sheep. May he lead you to his fold, and rejoice his heart over you, and no more for joy remember the grief he endured when he won you to himself, and paid your price. Do you want to be his? then plead the sufferings wherewith he merited you. Put him in mind of the travail of his soul, and urge before him his availing pangs and sorrows. Be in earnest with him, and cease not your importunity till he has laid his bleeding hands upon you and blessed you. Abide his poor needy and dependant suppliants at the foot of his cross, till his Spirit, which made his last moments joyful and gladsome, assures you he has sealed you among his jewels, and is satisfied with you and in you. Be ye also satisfied in him, and be his joy and he yours to all eternity. Amen.

O Thou blessed Lamb of God, who on my account hast humbled thyself, and been here in the world in the form of a servant, and hast laboured day and night, and at last poured out thy soul to death for me, take me into thy flock, and number me with thy people, the folk who shall be the reward of thy sufferings for ever; look upon me, and remember I am a soul for whom thou hast been slain, and for whom all thy sorrows have been borne.

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O let thy heart be satisfied with me, and rejoice over me as a bridegroom over the bride. Let thy bitter torments and horrors be weighty to me, and teach me rightly to esteem and value thy sufferings and death. Let me find all my happiness in thy wounds and blood as long as I live, and be sure I am thy beloved and redeemed child; and when I come to depart this life, let thy dying pains and agonies sweeten my last moments to me and comfort me: be the God of my life; and let my death be precious in thy sight. Let nothing hinder me to be thine here and for ever. As long as I am a pilgrim and stranger in the world, abide near to me, and let me live to thy praise; and when I must go hence, O go with me, lead me into the strong city, into the new Jerusalem, and present me for thyself before all the angels as one of thy elect souls, who has made his garments white in thy blood, and by means of thy meritorious travail and anguish, is arrived safe, out of much tribulation, to the kingdom of God. Hear me in this one thing, and make me thy sure possession, thy inheritance, and a part of thy wages; and be satisfied with me, and make me satisfied with thee for evermore. Amen.

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A N H Y M N.

1. O Dearest Saviour, whose I am,  
    And whom I serve alone,  
At thy pierc'd feet I blush for shame,  
    And sit, like Mary, down.
2. I raise my eyes and see what smart,  
    What grief I put thee to:  
And yet ('tis strange) it heals my heart,  
    While I thy anguish view.
3. I know

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- 3.** I know my sins prepar'd the wood,  
The nails, and whips, and spear,  
Which tore and slew my Lord and God,  
And drew forth every tear.
  
- 4.** I know that ev'ry stripe he had,  
And ev'ry pang he bore,  
And ev'ry grief, 'till he was dead,  
Was my desert, and more.
  
- 5.** This makes me at his cross design  
To sit, and see, and prize  
That loving Lamb, that God of mine,  
That wond'rous Sacrifice.

# DISCOURSE XXIV.

## THE BEATITUDES.

MARK V. 3, &c.

*Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

**T**HIS is the beginning of our Saviour's sermon upon the mount, and is the more remarkable, because as the Old Testament, or the last of the prophets, ends with a threatening and curse, so our Saviour begins his New-Testament with a blessing, and opens his mouth in the gospel-dispensation with gracious promises. In this discourse he has taught his disciples many weighty lessons; the whole has been justly praised by all his people, and is a transcript of his mind, and the best ecclesiastical rule, ritual, and rubric of his universal church.

He delivered this discourse upon a mountain (for great multitudes followed him), that so all might see and hear him. The Scribes and Pharisees without doubt despised him for this manner of preaching, and especially those who were so fond of the temple that they had hated the Samaritans, and such as worshipped out of it: but hence we learn, that to our Saviour all places are alike, and may be used for the publishing his gospel;



and though houses set apart for his worship and the divine service are good and convenient, yet we must not forget that he dwells not in temples made with hands; but where two or three are met in his name, he is present in the midst. The true temple shall be open and manifest in another world, and this is God and the Lamb himself. We should not place any great matter in the form of setting forth the word of God, since Jesus frequently sat and taught the people. He meant by it the greatest familiarity, and spoke with creatures as a father to his dear children. His being willing to be seen and heard by all, should teach us he is not willing any should be hindered to look upon him and be saved; nor is it of him, when he is not heard to eternal life. The god of this world is the sole author and cause of all that blindness, backwardness, and unwillingness in men to come to Jesus that they might have life.

The time will not allow me to speak of all the blessed doctrines contained in this sermon of our Lord's at this time; I will therefore only speak of those beatitudes or blessings pronounced in the former part of it, and this I purpose to do in a simple and free manner.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." It must not be left unobserved that the poor in spirit, or the spiritually poor people, have the first right to all the blessings of God. This is to me very important.

When St. Luke relates the particulars of this divine discourse he mentions only the poor; but St. Matthew is more clear; for though our Saviour's disciples were poor men, and but few noble or rich called to his church, yet therefore, because the poor or common people heard him gladly

gladly and followed him, are they not blessed; but the poor in spirit, the souls who are poor and worthless in their own eyes, these are they our Saviour blesses. It might not be amiss to observe, that poor and mean people in the world have succeeded better with our Saviour than the rich or wealthy; but perhaps the God of equity has so ordered it, that some who desire it have been vessels of honour in the world, and had their good things here, while others have had their evil things and been vessels of dishonour, but have found the Pearl of great price, and in their low estate, like the virgin Mary, have found the Lord, and that treasure laid up in heaven. Though, as I said before, the outward or bodily poverty have not always had this effect, or been the reason of their being chosen into the kingdom of heaven; but where the wants and afflictions, the poverty and penury of this life have put the soul upon seeking true riches, there, it must be confessed, it was good for them that they have been afflicted. Riches, on the other hand, have proved a hurt and a snare, and hindered many from being saved. Our Saviour says, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of God?" They have much to leave; they find it difficult to submit to the foolishness of the preaching of faith; a sense of honour keeps them ashamed of Jesus and his people; their education teaches them to despise the unpolished simplicity and artless behaviour of the children of God; they know how to reason; they are high, and all their little religious acts are so magnified, that it often seems to them as if they supported the cause of the Lord, and their power defended it, or as if Jesus was beholden to them; and when they put on the form of godliness, they are too apt to lord it over the meaner sort, and people of an inferior

inferior rank ; thus they cheat themselves and miss true happiness : Or, are they profane ? then their riches help them on in their mad course, and pave their way and make it smooth to hell. They take great liberties, they jest and ridicule the scriptures, they mock the faith, dispute atheistically, serve their lusts, pleasures, and the god of this world with all greediness, oppress their subjects, and are quite unconcerned about giving any account of their stewardship till they are called away, and then what good will all their riches do them ? Who of their companions can save them, or of what advantage will it be for them to recollect how great or wealthy they have been in the world, when they have lost their own souls ? Many of these, if they had been poor in the world, perhaps might have had a part in the kingdom of God ; and, on the other hand, I doubt not but that many in heaven might have perished had they been rich or great in the world. The wise Disposer of all things knows what he does ; he has chosen his people should have little of the world, but he has prepared for them a kingdom : we should not therefore once repine, because the blessings of this life seem to be so unequally divided, or because some are so loaded with good things, and we have but food and raiment, or even suffer in that respect. He that sitteth in heaven, ruleth all things well. Let us only get an interest in him, and we shall not envy them who have their corn and wine and oil increased ; we are far richer than they all, and far happier ; for when the earth is burnt up and time is no longer, we have a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and riches which no moth or rust can corrupt or thief break through and steal.

After all that has been said, where a man is a faithful steward of that committed to him, and where

where his heart leaves all that he has and gets hold of Jesus our dear Saviour; his having been rich or noble, will be no hindrance to his salvation; and where a poor man despises our Saviour's grace, and lives careless of his blood and merits, and does not come to him, his poverty will not help him: he may be a beggar, or suffer want, or be very low and poor in the world, and yet have a high, proud, and stubborn heart, and be of that unhappy number that God beholds afar off.

True poverty of spirit is, as St. Austin observes, humility; it is a lowliness of heart which proceeds from a divine conviction of our sinful and bad estate by nature. That man is poor who has no money, clothes, house, or friend, but is in debt greatly; his wife and children are sold to be slaves, and he cast into prison till payment be made. Thus he is poor in spirit who knows he has no good thing dwelling in him, he has no real righteousness, he has a sense of his owing his Lord very much, he has nothing to offer, can promise nothing, can do nothing, feels his guilt, his sinful nature, his enmity, his carelessness, his hardness of heart, and incapacity to help himself. He looks upon himself directly in that state described in the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel, cast out to the loathing of his person in the open field, neither washed, clothed, or pitied, but friendless and undone. No one but he that had experienced a deep awakening by means of the Holy Spirit can judge of such people's case; how mean, how little and worthless they are in their own eyes! how self-condemned and abhorred for all they do, or think, or say! how sincerely they can tell our Saviour, I am poor and needy! This is indeed the state and condition of all men; but they

they do not, they will not know and confess it. Hence arise all the deceits of self-righteousness, and all the fancies of being holy, good, or better than others. Hence they frequently suppose themselves rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, but imagine they have been educated well, done a great deal of good, wronged nobody, kept to church, given alms, and been merciful, charitable to the poor, and made a tolerable proficiency in the knowledge of the scriptures? but such are the Lacedaemonians, the lukewarm people, whom our Saviour will spew out of his mouth, and whose righteousness is like the morning dew. A poor sinner has not such thoughts; he cannot value himself any more; he looks upon himself on a level with the worst and the vilest of men: and that not perhaps because he has been a murderer, an adulterer, or house-breaker; but on account of his filthy and corrupt heart; he finds fault with all that others about him may praise and commend in him; and under such a sense of his fallen and spoiled state, he sits down at Jesu's feet, or begs at his door of mercy; he can plead nothing he has done or merited: he has nothing unspotted or without blemish to lay upon his altar, all that he has is lame and halt and blind, and therefore his only hope, his thirst and daily cry is, *Have mercy on me!* O dear Saviour, pity me!

No angel's tongue can describe how dear and precious Jesus is in such a soul's eyes; they would part with their lives joyfully to know him as their own; had they ten thousand worlds they would not hesitate a moment about it, but would part with them all to feel his love and be assured of his tender mercy: blessed are such poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "I know thy poverty," says our Saviour to such, but thou art high. It was

was his first and chiefest design in the redemption to help such poor people; he looks on them as men ready to perish, souls that owed much but had nothing to pay, and therefore he would stand their friend and make satisfaction for them; he became their surety, stood in their place, paid off the frightful score, and obtained and provided the kingdom of heaven for them. O this is amazing grace? but not more wonderful than true and certain. What joy must a christian soul perceive and feel in his heart, who just now sat down weary or sighing for mercy with a heart ready to break at our Saviour's feet, and yet through a consciousness of sin, could hardly hope to be accepted, when our Saviour whispers within, "Thine is the kingdom of heaven. I have loved thee with everlasting love. I had hid myself a little moment and thou wast troubled;" but now "the winter is past and the storm gone, and the time of singing of birds is come: rise up, my love, my dove, and come away!" O such an one must think with shame, Lord, what am I? and must be abased and bowed down with thankfulness and gratitude for ever, and more and more wonder at this grace and great salvation, and cleave to our Saviour, love and value his death and obedience, and be resolved only to exalt and bless him for ever.

This blessedness always accompanies a person spiritually poor; they are blessed, and shall be blessed: theirs is the kingdom. No sooner is a soul stripped of all self-holiness and dead to the law, i. e. without any hope of help thereby, and, quite poor in mind and heart, ventures to the cross or feet of Jesus, but the Holy Spirit comforts him and lets him know the kingdom of heaven is his; he leads him to possess it, and grants him such  
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a lot of his part therein, strikes him with so deep a sense of our Saviour's free and eternal love to him, and at the same time gives him such a foretaste of this kingdom which is now his, and of which there shall be no end, that the remembrance of this hour, this happy time, shall always be fresh and lively to him for ever; and let what will happen afterwards to him, which can either pain, or grieve, or trouble him, or sink his spirits, this shall still comfort him, that the kingdom of heaven is his; and as long as he abides under the sense of his own poverty, so long shall the same Lord and Saviour refresh and bless him in this manner, till he enters the gates into the fulness of this kingdom at God's right hand in the glory everlasting.

All the blessings in the Old Testament were promised, by the prophets, to the poor: "He helpeth the poor, when he crieth: the needy, and him that has no helper: he lifteth the poor out of the mire: he considereth the poor: I will dwell, saith he, with him that is poor, and trembleth at my word." Expressions of this nature are found in almost every book of the scriptures, and all the meaning of these is comprehended in these gracious words of our Saviour, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Blessed are they who are mean, and little, and worthless in their own eyes, as a bit of dust, as a poor small and contemptible worm, who are convinced of their own nothingness and poverty, to such belongs the kingdom of heaven; for such Christ died; out of pity to such he was extreme poor, that they, through his poverty, might become rich; and by his having nothing and being a servant, they might possess all things; and be kings and priests to God, rich in faith, and with that gold tried in the fire, and having got the treasure

treasure hid in the field, spoken of by our Saviour, they shall be esteemed rich indeed of God, and all the angels in eternity.

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” In that solemn and awful charge given to the destroying angels in the ninth of Eze-kiel, wherein they are commanded to slay utterly old and young, nor suffer their eyes to spare or pity, they are forbid to come near those that mourn. It was also mentioned as a chief part of our Saviour’s office in the world, “He shall comfort those that mourn.” Solomon also had said, it was safer to be in the house of mourning than in the house of mirth. But who are these meant in the text? The mourners of Sion; they are people whose eyes God has opened to see their own hearts; poor people, who feel their sin and want salvation. Some, when they are a little awakened, comfort themselves with thinking they are not very bad, but better than many others; or let their friends comfort them by persuading them the same, or that they are good christians already and in a safe way; they call all spiritual concern a madness, and take all due care to keep people from the danger; yea, if a most abandoned liver, a notorious drunkard or whoremonger, of whom they had before no manner of care, should come under any apprehensions of danger, or should grow uneasy about his future state, such would be ready to help him out of his error, and advise him to be of good cheer, to ride out, or go to the play, or get into some merry company, or change the air, or take physic; and often souls are comforted by this means, and they seem to get out of all their fears or uneasiness directly; for they have had comforters, but such as Job’s were all such; VOL. II. I miserable



miserable comforters indeed! These are they of whom the prophet complains so heavily, "They heal the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, crying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace." But a soul truly convinced of sin cannot and will not be comforted with such things: "they look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him as one mourns for her only son." Nothing less than the Holy Ghost can comfort them. All they want is to know they are forgiven and shall be saved; they want to be assured of their being children of God, and at peace with him through Jesus Christ. These are the mourners spoken of in this place; they feel the want of a Saviour; they cannot be put off with health, riches, company, pleasures, &c. they are too sensible of their guilt and sin, too heavy laden and weary, too sick and disordered and uneasy to be diverted with any thing less than the kisses of the Beloved. As long as he is at a distance they are troubled; till they feel his love shed abroad in their hearts they mourn, and they shall be comforted. Our Saviour will wipe away the tears from their eyes; he will speak peace to their hearts; they cannot do without his presence, and they shall have it for evermore; they will not rest without his consolation, and he will send the Holy Ghost the Comforter to comfort. "I will comfort you, saith he, as a mother comforts her only son;" I will remove thy fears and jealousies, and assure thee of my affection and loving-kindness; I will be thy good Saviour; I will forgive thee, and thy past mis-spent life I will forget, and enter into an everlasting covenant with thee that thou shalt be my child. Thus it happened with Hezekiah, he mourned like a dove, and was alone and comfortless like a swallow upon the house top, and turned to

to the wall, wept and said, " Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me;" and the Lord heard his supplication and saw his tears, he heard his moan and comforted him, assuring him all his sins were cast behind his back. Thus he treated David, Paul, Cornelius, and as many as mourned after him; and thus he does in our days. The mourning of a soul after salvation is nothing else but being sick of love, and languishing for the Holy Spirit to assure him he is beloved by our Saviour; and till he is this way comforted he must mourn, he cannot help it; and if any thing short of the blood and pardon of the Lamb can stop his grief, he is an unhappy person, be he who he will.

There is such a blessedness attainable, such a divine assurance of the love of God to us, and such a certainty of our going to heaven as can refresh and comfort the otherwise inconsolable. All that sincerely seek salvation, and neither want to cheat themselves, or suffer themselves to be cheated by others, shall be comforted with this eternal consolation. Let him only turn to the Man of sorrows, and mourn after him, and he shall be blessed; the Lord himself shall comfort him; and the days of his mourning shall have an eternal end; the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, they shall be comforted.

" Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." A meek person is a tender-hearted person; or as it is expressed in scripture, a contrite one, a bruised or broken-hearted soul. His conscience is softened by looking upon Jesus, he has learned it of him. He no more behaves impudently or strong; he is no more careless or hardened in his natural state: but it is just so with him as it was with St. Peter when our Saviour looked upon him; his eyes and heart melted immediately;

mediately; he cursed and lyed no more, but with bitter tears sought pardon; so he melts before the Lamb of God; a sharp word can pierce through such; every tender conviction fastens upon their heart, and an openness to confess and acknowledge their being to blame is visible in them. They are poor sinners, whose hearts, conscience, and eyes are softened by the blood of Jesus. A sight of his death has stamped an everlasting mark upon their foreheads, and made their inmost soul like melted wax. Their tenderness of conscience, scrupulosity, and fear of doing any thing wrong to grieve our Saviour, often may expose them to the censures of a blind world, wherein they are like fools and babes; and those who mock them, are indeed far more wise in their generation than they. "They shall inherit the earth." They properly inherit this world, for they have, in the presence and enjoyment of our Saviour's love, an hundred-fold more here than all they can lose or suffer on his account, and the world to come shall be theirs also. They are now the only happy people; let the weather be fair or stormy, let their state in life be easy or difficult, let them be sickly or healthy, be beloved or hated, or have much or suffer want, they are well; every morsel they eat is sweet, and as it were dipped in the blood of Jesus; their sufferings are the honour of enduring something from the world for Christ's sake. Their life is the life of the Son of God, their death the death of the righteous and eternal gain. Are they sick? They cannot forget, every pain helps gently to loose the silver cord and break the earthen vessel, that they may fly away and be at rest. Is the weather bad? have they long journeys to go? are they exposed to trials of penury or want? how happy are they, since they shall soon arrive at the haven where they would be! No storm shall

shall threaten them after a few days. Yet a little while and they shall hunger and thirst no more. But when the Lord their Saviour shall make a new heaven and a new earth, they shall inherit it, they shall be inhabitants with him in his new world, and shall follow him whithersoever he goeth.

“Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” The great desire and pressing after righteousness, is here, and in many other places, called hungering and thirsting; since no hungry man so wants bread when he is starving, no man perishing for lack of drink so longs and thirsts for water, as an awakened soul longs for the righteousness of Christ. All mankind are more or less sensible that they must be righteous, and that without holiness no man can see the Lord, but then they generally make a righteousness of their morality, duties, works, and prayers, and this is always the case till the Lord’s eyes try their fig-leaved, self-wrought garment; and as soon as his voice calls and awakes them from their dream, and he opens their eyes to see their nakedness and the insufficiency of all their own doings, and how far short they fall from the righteousness which avails before God, it is no wonder that they feel distress, and begin to be in want of a better righteousness. As soon as the obedience and sufferings of Christ Jesus are preached before such people, the Holy Spirit stirs up in them such a hunger and thirst for him and his merits as is insatiable. They languish and pant for salvation as a dry land for the refreshing rain, and cannot rest till they have obtained their desire, or taken as it were the kingdom of heaven by violence, for the violent take it by force. To be in such a state, in such a hungry and eager condition, athirst for our Saviour’s blood and righteous-

ness, is a blessedness, for they shall be filled; they shall have what they want: they shall know what that means, "he will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground;" he shall be filled; or, as it is said, "he shall satiate the hungry soul with goodness;" or, as the virgin Mary expresses it, "he filleth the hungry with good things." They shall be clothed with the righteousness of our Lord Jesus; it shall be to them a white robe; they shall be secured therein, be justified thereby, be so safe, so healed, so happy and satisfied, that they shall be filled in the strictest sense, and stand complete and perfect before God by this means, and be inwardly cleansed and blessed in their own souls. Let then such as now hunger and thirst for the Lamb and his righteousness be of good comfort, they shall be filled, they shall be satisfied with him, and have enough to all eternity.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." When a soul is converted and pardoned he becomes merciful; he cannot suffer a revengeful thought; he may not be bitter, or cruel; our Saviour will not suffer such a spirit; it is not of him, but of the world and Satan. Of Jesus we learn to be tender-hearted, long-suffering, and of a forgiving nature. It is so in our hearts; and whoso cannot forgive, he is not forgiven. Let it appear or cloak itself in what manner it will, come disguised as it pleases, all revenge, barbarity, severity, and repaying evil, is sinful; but who is merciful and ready to forgive, he shall find his heavenly Father measure the same to him; and in all his mistakes and failings he shall be forgiven, and feel what a merciful Saviour he has to deal with. Hence our Saviour teaches us to pray, "forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us;"

us;" and this also is his doctrine, "If ye forgive not, neither shall ye be forgiven; or as he saith in the parable, "Did not I forgive thee when thou desiredst me? Should not thou also have forgiven thy fellow-servant?"

Let then no sort of resentment have a place in our hearts; it is pride. Let no rancour, sourness, or hard thoughts, find room in our breasts; it is against our Saviour's mind. Let us be glad to forgive, ready to help the poor and needy, and pity all in distress, in prisons, in debt, in affliction, in danger, in pain or sickness, in want and under oppression; and should our enemy hunger, let us rejoice to feed him; and should he thirst, let us give him to drink, and have a merciful heart and behaviour toward all men, especially to religious people and such as believe, so shall we obtain mercy and favour of God in our need; and he will not deal with us after our sins, but after the multitude of his mercies. But if you behave cruel, it shall come home to you again; behave severe, so shall others behave to you; revenge yourselves at a convenient time when it is in your power, and all shall one day, sooner or later, justly be returned upon your own heads, and full measure pressed down and running over shall men heap, hard things and very bitter, and heavy into your bosoms. The true way to be merciful is to learn it of our Saviour; for whoso is acquainted with him and continues in his love, is loving and merciful, so that men can perceive he has been with Jesus. "Be ye then merciful, for your Father in heaven is merciful, and ye shall obtain mercy."

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The pure-hearted people are such as have obtained the true faith in Christ, and whose hearts  
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have been purified through the blood he has sprinkled thereon. None are pure in heart by nature; for, by nature, all our hearts are corrupted and desperately wicked; and thence proceed all evil thoughts, lusts, murders, thefts, blasphemies, &c. which defile the man; but as soon as our Saviour besprinkles us with water, we are made clean; and when he washes us in his blood, we are whiter than snow. The eyes are no more full of adulteries, the ears no more open to filthy speaking, the heart changed and chaste and pure. They are justified, they are sanctified, and not only have made the outside of the cup or platter clean, but the inside is clean also. These are souls who have received the remission of sins, and whose souls and bodies are hallowed by the Holy Spirit, and set apart to be the temple of God. These are they who have their eyes anointed with the eye-salve and they see God; they see Jesus; they have him with them, according to his promise when he went away and said, "The world shall not see me, but ye see me;" and in the Hebrews it is written, "We see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels," i. e. our eyes are opened, we now see God, we view him in his bleeding form by faith and in spirit, and yet so truly and with such heart-satisfaction, as if he stood bodily before us. We know he is at no distance, we behold him, and faith serves us instead of sight, and is better to us than seeing for the present: "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed." Besides all the happiness we have here in this respect, we shall hereafter see his face and be where he is. We shall see that loving God before whom the seraphims cover their faces. We shall see where the thorns and blows hurt and disfigured his visage. We shall see his hands and feet, we shall look upon his side, and delight and feast

feast ourselves with this beatific vision to all eternity: when wicked men, apostates and unbelievers, shall fly from his presence in the great day, and shall hide themselves in rocks and mountains, we shall see him with joy; and all, whose hearts have been purged by his blood from dead works and purified from sin, may say, with Job, "I shall see God, and shall see him for myself and not for another." "Blessed are the pure in heart, they shall see God."

"Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called children of God." It is a satanical spirit to stir up strife, to foment and make mischief, between religious people especially. Who loves divisions, disputings, janglings, and tale-bearing, or is fond of finding faults or uncovering the nakedness of his fellow-servants, he is on the devil's side and joins the accuser of the brethren; such should be marked and shunned, they are the bad leaven in the lump and do much harm; but "blessed are the peace-makers." People who love unity, and are glad to cover and hide any blemish or mistake, and even to think the best and not evil, who will not slander nor hear slander, who will not back-bite, nor suffer it, but who, Jesus like, could die for the brethren, and who love peace and spare no pains tenderly to root out all highness, rash and hasty words and behaviour, and who learn to be mild and gentle, and will do any thing to make men at peace in one house, and to keep up that divine harmony among the children of God which becomes them, for they are one man's sons, they are brethren, and must not fall out by the way. Blessed are they who reconcile those at variance, remove the mistakes and misunderstandings that caused the evil, and who take the place of the mediator and advocate. They resemble Jesus, and are  
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and shall be called children of God and of peace, children of their Father which is in heaven, who hates quarrels and fightings, and scatters such as delight in war.

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Formerly, in the time of the law, the worshippers of God and the religious men and women did not seem to be the butt and mark of Satan’s malice so much as now. The prophets indeed were persecuted, and that because they generally brought heavy tidings to their own people, and were continually striking at the pride, idolatry, and unfaithfulness of the children of Israel, and speaking of a new covenant, a better priesthood, and of the salvation of the Gentiles, and other such things, which were contrary to the great ideas they had of their own religion, and heavy to flesh and blood, especially their plain reproofs for sin and the threatenings with which they frequently were sent; but else the Jewish church from the time of their coming out of Egypt, were honourable and revered by all people, who saw how the Lord their God fought for them, besides the driving out whole nations and slaying kings for their sakes. He put a dread and a fear of them in all countries; they who strove against them perished by judgments; and those who despised them, were glad to be hewers of wood or drawers of water to them. When they were small in number, one could chase a thousand, and five put five thousand to flight; the Lord was a man of war and leader of their hosts; his angels slew their enemies by thousands in a night; the skies showered down hail-stones and fire on those who hated them; the stars in their courses fought against them; and only at times, when they had sinned in departing from the Lord,  
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he suffered them to be led away captive and let their enemies be lords over them; but else they were the city of perfection, the joy of the whole earth. The pomp and glory of their church seemed to bid defiance to all the world, and this lasted till Jesus came. Our Saviour knew it would be quite otherwise after his decease, for he foresaw with what rage the Devil would pursue his poor sheep, when he should come to know what their Shepherd had done by his dying for them; it was therefore our Saviour gave his disciples warning of it, as if he had told them, *Little children, ye must not think my kingdom is of this world, for though hitherto Jerusalem and the family of Israel have so long flourished in the earth like a vine, and all the glory of the Gentiles have flowed to it, yet it has been for a sign and a shadow of that Jerusalem which is above, and of that church which is at present invisible in the world. The prophets, to whom I opened the mystery of my redemption and who were my faithful witnesses, were a poor despised and excluded people for my sake, and the object of the scorn of Satan, and the hatred of their brethren the children of Israel; they have been all persecuted, some they stoned, others were sawn asunder, and all rejected and cast out of the vineyard; so will my children and disciples be henceforth. As I have been hated, so they will hate them; and as, upon my Father's account and for doing his will, they have persecuted me, so for my sake and for my righteousness' sake they will be persecuted who follow me; but esteem such blessed, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. My people above have all come out of great tribulation, and in like manner will Satan try all believers; he will pursue them like a dragon and set the world against them, but let them be of good cheer, I have overcome*

come the world; shortly they shall tread upon the adder, and the lion and the dragon shall they tread under their feet; comfort ye, comfort ye, therefore, my people; and when ye see any troubled on my account, or for the sake of my righteousness, then speak comfortably to them, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "And even ye, blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

This doctrine of our Lord Christ was soon found true: for scarcely the Devil knew the world was redeemed out of his hands, and he had lost all with equity through our Saviour's death and suffering, and that now he had here but a short time, but he began to rage and raise up the kings of the earth, and put the counsellors to consult together against the Lord and his Anointed. All who called on his name were persecuted, and that before the apostles had well begun their great ministry. Hence, when they preached or wrote to the churches, they taught them, that whoever would live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. This doctrine continues unalterably the same. Now, as well as formerly, men who love our Saviour, who mention only his righteousness and are determined only to know him, will for that and no other cause be hated and reviled; men will be so inveterate against them, that they will report all manner of evil against them; men in all religions, of all sorts of tempers, will be their enemies, and separate them from their company, and cast out their names as evil; will go so far as not to buy or sell with them; parents disown their children, children abhor their parents; masters discard and turn away their  
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their servants, threaten and distress such as live under them, and all this, as Luther says, "Not because they are murderers, adulterers, or thieves, but because they love Jesus Christ, and will have no God beside him, or seek or preach or value any righteousness but his, which he wrought out in obedience to the death of the cross." It is not because they are opposers of governments, plotters against the state, idle, wicked, malicious, or hurtful, but because they believe the gospel and promises of Christ, because they exalt the Lord alone, because they are witnesses of his love and mercy, and are not ashamed of his name nor his faith, because his words are weightier than all other arguments, and of more force than all demonstrations whatever beside. If this be the case, they should not be therefore discouraged or dejected, but leap for joy and be exceeding glad, for so persecuted they their Lord and dear Master, and the prophets which were before them. It is an honour and glory to them to share in their Lord's shame, and follow him thus out of the camp bearing his reproach, for they shall follow him in his glory in that day when he shall come with all his angels; and then he shall confess them, and shew such as despised them how much he loved them.

Yes, surely, a day shall come when all the derided followers of the Lamb, and such as for his sake were the scorn of men and the outcasts of the people, shall be glorified in their sight who made them a by-word and a proverb of reproach; they shall see them with their dear Master on the clouds of heaven, and shall be forced to acknowledge, with shame and amazement, "We, fools, counted their lives madness, and their end to be without honour, but see how they are numbered with the saints, and have their portion with the children of God." Then shall they be truly honourable, and all nations shall call them blessed,

**Every blessing pronounced by the mouth of Jesus, and every blessing purchased by his blood, shall come upon them and be theirs for ever.**

**May we also believe, so be converted, and made after our Saviour's heart, that all these blessings may come upon us, in time and to all eternity. Amen,**

# DISCOURSE XXV.

## THE DÆMONIAC.

LUKE viii. 37.

*Return to thine own house, and shew how great things  
God hath done unto thee.*

A MAN who had before been possessed with a legion of devils, was set at liberty by our Saviour, and sitting at his feet clothed and in his right mind, when observing his merciful Deliverer about to enter into a ship, and to depart from that country, intreated him to let him go along with him; but our Saviour, for his own wise and best reasons, would not suffer it then, but said to him, in the words of the text, "Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee;" or, as St. Mark relates it, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee," Mark v. 19.

There was something very singular in this man's disorder, the manner of his cure, and deliverance, as well as in our Lord's not suffering him to go with him, of all which I purpose to consider a little, before I speak directly of the words of the text.

We have no room to doubt of many wonderful possessions besides this and others in the time of our Saviour, in the first ages of the church, in the days of the reformation, and even now in our own time.

Exorcisms were frequently used among the primitive Christians; with fastings and prayers they sought the deliverance of such people, and certainly found the prayers of faith availed much in such cases.

I see no reason why the gift of casting out devils, and dispossessing evil spirits in the name of the Lord Jesus, should not now be given, as well as formerly, unless on account of the incredulity of this sinful and adulterous generation, who atheistically would either mock at the cure, as if it was mere imposture and art, or pretend it was a natural disease and no possession of the devil; or if such immediate cures should be wrought in our times, if the miracle could not be denied with any good ground, they would say it was sorcery, conjuration, and dealing with the devil; for so it went of old, and hindered our Master from doing many mighty works in his own city Nazareth, because of unbelief. By whatever means a soul in the hands of Satan is released, it must be confessed our Saviour is the cause. He only can preach deliverance to the captives, and loose them that Satan hath bound in body or soul. He alone has the right to say, it shall not stand, when a covenant is made with death and a league with hell, Isa. xxviii. 18. At his word, and in his name, a host of devils, and legions of wicked spirits must fly. With a word he can release a soul, let its case be bad and deplorable as it will.

Though some are in a particular manner possessed of the devil, and it is above the reach of any human creature to account for their disorder and behaviour, &c. yet in another sense I esteem all distracted and mad people possessed; and this has been also the mind of many children of God, and learned and pious men, and has some ground in the scripture. We read of a certain father who besought Christ

Christ for his son, who was lunatic, and when the child was brought to him he rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him, Matth. xvii. 14, &c. But all the behaviour of Dæmoniacs or possessed persons, of which we have often long accounts in the gospel, answers to that of lunatics, or mad people, in our times. I will only observe, in a few instances, how nearly they resemble each other; 1st, their being able to break their chains; 2dly, loving to roam in solitary places among tombs; 3dly, going naked? 4thly, not being to be tamed easily; 5thly, casting themselves into the fire and water, cutting themselves, and uttering blasphemies and such words as must come immediately from the devil. And farther, we may observe daily, that however unapt persons have been to do any of these things before, after they have been once turned in their heads, as the expression is, they do it all eagerly, and another spirit rules, and something supernatural shews itself soon; they can endure hunger, cold, and hardships surprisingly, and travel, rage, labour, and speak on without sleeping to a wonder. All this I have said, as my reasons for thinking lunatics possessed people, and I have observed, the generally known causes of madness have not been any humility, meekness of spirit, or even a religious disposition, but rather an extreme love of the creature, or, I would say, lust; also often an intolerable pride in the learned, who will account for every thing, and comprehend like God. Sometimes an excess of anger and fury, or a known and abhorred self-conceitedness, fondness of fine cloaths, of riches, of beauty, or honour, and often a being awakened in a legal manner, and in attempting to make themselves perfect and righteous, and to attain to certain lengths in their own strength and by their own works, is a means of some people's falling in this unhappy

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condition. But here it must be observed, that self-righteousness is at the bottom of all; for who have heard of a poor sinner's coming into such distress, I mean one poor in spirit, who is conscious of his lost estate and incapacity to help himself, but who sinks before our Saviour, under a sense of his own wants and miseries, and yet is well convinced no one can help or ease him beside Jesus, such an one does not rage because he cannot achieve high things, nor grow impatient because he cannot cleanse himself; but he rejoiceth that the Lamb has loved sinners and will receive them; he is glad of the fountain of his blood, and washes there; and though he may have been greatly withstood by the enemy, and has felt the weight of his guilt like a heavy burden, and, like Paul, could neither eat nor drink for want of mercy, this must not be looked upon as madness; (would to God all the world were so mad!) no, this is quite a different condition; no wild fire rages here, no blasphemous speeches come out of the mouth; no, all is the effect of a real hunger and thirst for righteousness, and a longing to be forgiven, and such shall surely obtain their wishes; let them tarry the Lord's leisure, and he shall comfort them; let them wait upon him, and he will help them, and not one of them shall perish.

But though I have said so much, I would not be misunderstood, as though I thought all such possessed or mad persons should be lost. I have far more favourable thoughts, and hope rather these may possibly be some of those who are given over to the devil for the destruction of the flesh, that their spirits might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Perhaps such heavy chastisements may have befallen them here, that they may find mercy hereafter.

I will now proceed to speak of the man in the text, whom I look upon, in his worst estate, as a lively

lively picture and emblem of every carnal and natural man.

When our Saviour landed in the country of the Gadarenes, a man met him who for a long time had been possessed of devils; he wore no cloaths, he dwelt in no house; no bonds or chains could bind him, but he brake all, and abode in the mountains and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones: this is the description of his sad estate, and how nicely does it agree with the spiritual sad estate of a natural man? He wears no cloaths before God, but, as long as he is without Christ's righteousness, as long as he is not made all glorious within, nor covered with the covering of God's Spirit, he is naked; all his sins and secret uncleannesses, all his falls and corrupted nature is open and naked before the Lord and all the angels, and except Jesus and his righteousness cover his sin and hide his iniquity he will find himself in a shameful state, when God's eyes of fire try the secrets of all hearts. May I not also say, he has an unclean spirit? Do not his impurities and lusts rule him? Are not his eyes full of adultery, his lips full of unclean songs and jests? His hands and heart are they not unclean? And may it not be said with all propriety, he has been possessed of devils a long time? For ever since the fall, Satan has had us all, as it were, in his hands and in his possession; but especially is he in his hands whom no laws of God can tame, no commandment nor threatnings bind, no loving intreaties keep within bounds, but he breaks all, and at all events and hazards is a bond-servant of the devil. His will, his desires, his appetite, his affections and lusts, his pride and passions break through, and no man can tame him. He dwells in no house of God, is not in the fold of the good Shepherd, nor does he nor can he love them that are. He lives  
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among the tombs, among the dead; he loves those who are dead in sin, and the dead and dry conversation of the world suits him; he lives in pleasure, and is dead while he lives. He cries and cuts himself; this directly answers to his sinning against all the convictions of the Holy Ghost and his own conscience; he takes a certain pleasure in cutting and tormenting himself, and though the horror and pain which at times he must feel, must extort from him bitter cries, yet madly he rushes forward, "as the horse into the battle," and adds sin to sin and gall to wormwood!

It is as remarkable, that when our Saviour came in sight, "he fell down and besought him not to torment him, but let him alone," and asks, "What have I to do with thee, O Jesus, thou Son of God?" So afraid are people in their lost estate of being saved out of it. They dread our Saviour's deliverance, and are angry to be stopped in their course. They would be glad if Jesus would let them alone, and not trouble them with convictions, nor look upon them as he did on Peter, or speak to their hearts as to Paul, "Why persecutest thou me?" Could they have their wish, their own will, then they would enjoy their health, be very rich and honourable, live long in pleasures, eat, drink, and be merry, and quite forget there is a world to come, an eternal judgment; for when our Saviour at any time mercifully brings these things to mind, or would reason with their hearts, and ask, Why will ye die? they are afraid, and say to him as Felix did to Paul, "Go thy way for this time," or beseech him, like the man in the text, "Jesus torment me not; let me alone thou Son of God." Poor people! who are mad if these are not? They call the children of God mad, and count them beside themselves; but none are so truly beside themselves, as such who rashly venture  
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on, and will not be saved from their sins. On the other hand, those whose lives they count madness, are the only people who are in their right mind; for they have laid up treasures in heaven, they have found the Pearl of great price, and laid hold on eternal life; they have true and real pleasures without the sting with which temporal enjoyments end, and possess a solid and lasting peace, which passeth all understanding.

But I must observe, all this intreating of our Saviour not to torment him, and worshipping him, &c. was not till Jesus had commaunded the unclean spirits to come out. Satan would fain have kept his hold, and that is the reason why every where he makes such a noise and stir where he is likely to lose a soul; and he knows, should the work of our Saviour go on, he must quit his possession and be gone. It seems not one wicked spirit alone had seized this poor man, but many, and therefore he said, "My name is Legion;" but even this is written for our instruction; for there are people who have been divinely called, and Jesus has cast out the strong man armed, viz. Satan, who kept the house and spoiled his goods, abolished the old crimes, and tore to pieces the pride, quenched the lusts, and trampled upon their honour, and cleansed the nest of every unclean and hateful bird, and made the den of thieves an house of prayer. But the careless hearts again have wandered from the Lord, their love grown cold, and the evil spirit that had constantly sought to return to the place whence he came out, at last gets admission, and he brings many others more wicked than himself, and they come and make their abode there, and the last estate of such people is worse than the first, and, as it were, a legion guard them, lest another attempt should be made to rescue them: and perhaps this might have been the case of Mary  
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Magdalene, and very likely of this poor man, who nevertheless found mercy; and the accounts of their salvation are handed down to us, to teach us that though some have made their last state worse than the first, and have become seven times more the children of the devil than they were before, though they have sinned away all grace, and left the fountain of living waters, and though Satan has bound them as with a legion, yet even in this case it is nowhere said, they cannot be saved, for Jesus can yet deliver them. If they had made a covenant with death and a league with hell, he knows how to dissolve the conditions and obligations with the blood of his New Testament. Let not souls who fear they are in such a state be hopeless or despair, "there is yet balm in Gilead, there is still a physician there," one who can break asunder the bars of iron and brass, and bring the prisoners out of captivity, and heal such as are oppressed of the devil; his name is Jesus, and he has the keys of hell and death. No god can deliver after this manner, nor save as he saves. How did the whole legion move at his word? Had all the wicked spirits in the bottomless pit possessed the man, it had been the same thing, at the word of our Saviour all must have yielded, and when he commands, 'Give up, let my people go,' it is done. Let then such souls who lie under any dreadful apprehensions of this sort, apply to him, he will be their Saviour, he will stand their Friend, and they shall know that "he hears the poor when he crieth, the needy, and him that has no helper."

When the devils found they must depart, they begged leave to enter a herd of swine which were feeding near the place, and when they had obtained leave, presently the whole herd, about two thousand, ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and were choaked, to the amazement of all those that followed

followed Jesus, and those who kept the swine. I know there are some people who have even dared to ask, With what right our Saviour could cause such a loss to the owners of the swine, and at once perhaps reduce them to poverty? These might as well ask, atheistically, Why a high wind at sea may overwhelm a ship, and ruin the master? or, Why an earthquake shall swallow up a whole town? or a fire be permitted to make many families desolate in a few hours?

I wonder any called christians would even suffer the thought, since they confess that Jesus is the Lord, and all is his in heaven and earth. It is no injustice in him to take all away from us in a moment, and should he do it, who can ask him, What dost thou? Are not all the beasts of the forest his, and all the cattle upon a thousand hills? Cannot he do what he will with his own? But then, say some, it looks as if he could be pleased in the ruin and distress of his poor creatures. No, by no means; we have no grief which does not touch his heart; He could therefore in the days of his flesh so readily weep and be affected, when he saw Mary and Martha weeping over their brother's grave, or the widow of Nain lamenting over her dead son. Scarce a blind, a lame, or leprous person came in his way but he had compassion on them, and knew, if sin had not been in the world, none of all this could have happened; therefore his heart always pitied, and his hand was always stretched out to save the oppressed, and that often before it was asked, When therefore Satan has leave or permission to do harm in the world, to raise storms, to cause wars and bloodshed, or make families desolate by fire or water, or bring a murrain among beasts, the best way, and most becoming humble and meek children is to think, "his ways are in the deep waters, and his footsteps are  
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are not known:" and wait till the day when he shall make his just dealings as clear as the light, and his righteousness as the noon day. So much may be said, that without doubt it has been the means of bringing many to heaven, that in this world they meet with many losses, crosses, and trials, were poor, and stripped of all things. He is a God of equity; he often takes away temporals to give us eternal happiness. He tries his children often, like Lazarus at Dives's gate, that he may give them their comforts and possessions in a city that has foundations, in a kingdom which cannot be shaken. Doubtless many that are now in heaven adore the Lord that once in the world he put forth his hand and touched all that they had, though they at the time did not know why it was, but were ready to think like Naomi, "Call my name Marah, for the Lord hath dealt bitterly by me;" now they confess with joy, "It was good for me that I have been afflicted." On the other hand, many who have perished, now lament that here they had their portion, and in this life. He gave them their desire, and sent leanness withal into their souls. Of what advantage was it to Dives to be cloathed with scarlet and purple, to drink and feast with his five brethren, and afterwards be cloathed with scarlet flames, and want a drop of water to cool his tongue? Of what real benefit has it been, think ye, that some have so prospered in the world, and come into no misfortune like other folk, neither were plagued like other men, their bull did not fail, nor their cow cast her calf, they had gold like dust, and were obliged to pull down their barns to build greater, when God, in the midst of all their plenty and fulness, calls them to eternity with, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee!" Let it therefore satisfy thee, when any trials or losses befall thee, that he that sits  
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in heaven rules all things well, and trouble not thyself because of the destruction of the herd of swine, thou dost not know but that it was the only way to convince the owners and keepers of them who Jesus was; and though, like Peter, they prayed him to depart from them for the present, perhaps it was only out of a deep sense of their unworthiness to have him upon their land; and very likely thou mayest see them with a better inheritance, in the day when he shall deal in righteousness and mercy to all the nations. I will leave them therefore here, and pursue my design, and speak of the once unhappy but now highly favoured man. He was lately in the possession of many devils, but now in the care of the Saviour and Bridegroom of his soul. He was lately raving up and down the mountains, and restlessly wandering in the wilderness, but now he sits at Jesus's feet, and has found out eternal rest. He was before wild, so that no man could tame him, nor cords nor fetters bind him, but now is he in his right mind. He hears the voice of the Son of man and lives. He chuses the good part which shall never be taken away. This is indeed to be in one's right mind. He a little while ago wore no cloaths, but is now clothed, body and soul, and the shame of his nakedness shall not appear. He was his own tormentor, and cut himself with stones, but now he sits under the shadow of the Sun of Righteousness, who is risen upon him with healing in his wings. He used formerly only to frequent the tombs and gloomy and desolate places, now see he is among the living, and has found everlasting life in the Lord his God. O happy man! happy situation! happy place! happy change! May all the spiritually mad and possessed share like thee the unbounded and free sovereign grace of our dear Redeemer!



But now, when the Lord hath done his Father's business in these parts, and was ready again to go into the ship, the man, on whom he had shewed so much mercy, prayed him to let him go with him, but Jesus suffered him not for the present, but said to him, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord has done for thee, and has had compassion on thee." As if he would have said, Hereafter shalt thou follow me and be with me for ever, but now go and tell of thy deliverance to thy poor relations and friends; thou hast been heretofore a burden and grief to them, they have shared deeply in thine affliction, go and let them partake of thy joys and mercies, tell them what a merciful and compassionate Lord and Saviour thou hast found, and be a preacher of free grace to them, that they may come also after me and be my disciples.

It seems also strange that he who was continually calling men to him, and who let Bartimeus and others whom he had healed follow him, should now make exceptions against this poor man's coming after him, or refusing him that mercy which all were invited to; but this was certainly the reason our Saviour had for not allowing him then; he knew how many friends, relations, and neighbours he had who were not called to the kingdom, and therefore appoints his new convert to be his witness and preacher, that through his mercy others might obtain mercy and be saved. He could go and tell them what an unhappy wretch he once was, how Satan made him his tool and slave, how he had lived without peace, without rest or comfort, and without God in the world, but now could he say, I that was afar off, am brought nigh to God: I that was a stranger to him, am now a fellow-citizen with the saints and with the household of God: I once wandered, and was as a sheep that went astray, but the Shepherd of Israel,  
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the Keeper of Jacob, has sought me and brought me back to the Bishop of my soul. The more I served Satan the more miserable I was; night and day I was unhappy: a legion once possessed me, and the enemy thought to have his desire and fulfil his lust upon me, but I am now saved, I have now obtained deliverance, and am now a monument of God's unmerited and free love. I do not doubt but many also of his friends, who saw and heard him when he did return home, believed and were desirous of being acquainted with Jesus; they saw before them one who a few days before was in the most deplorable condition of all creatures under heaven, now a saint, a saved man, a blessed witness that there is salvation, and one against whom the gates of hell cannot prevail, and so could not help longing to become his disciples, and partake with their friend his great mercy and liberty. I believe, if it was not for this, it would be far better for us and all the children of God, as soon as they are converted, to be taken home to our Saviour directly, out of all danger of grieving him again, or relapsing into coldness or carelessness. But our Saviour's mind is, that we should go home to our friends, and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for us, and how he has had compassion upon us, and not come home to him till we have brought others also with us to see Jesus; thus are we like sheep come from the washing brook, every one bearing twins. In this sense, therefore, even our sons and daughters, our servants and handmaids must prophecy, and tell what the Lord has done for their souls.

If the Redeemer should call home his children as soon as he had pardoned them, he would have then no church upon earth, and the awakened souls would have no fold, no one to comfort them, but like poor orphans would live like the most desolate people

people indeed. We should not then be too eager to beseech our Saviour to follow him home, till he please; it is better to be resigned, and so live, so wait upon him, so speak, so labour, and believe in the world, that at any time when he calls for us we may be ready to go and follow him upon mount Sion, and go no more out. This shall soon be our destiny, we shall quickly go to him and see his face. Let us for the present help our friends and neighbours, and be as salt in the earth. Let us tell them what we have experienced, and how the Lord has had compassion upon us. Let us blaze abroad his fame, and be ready to give every one a reason of the hope that is in us; and relate how we were when in our first estate, how we were by nature children of wrath, giddy and careless, and led captive by the devil at his will; how we were when awakened, how athirst for mercy and forgiveness, how we found grace, and were found out and washed and healed by the Good Shepherd, in whose blood and righteousness we have been cleansed, and covered, and cloathed, and now can sit down at Jesus's feet in our right mind. How our hearts leaped within us for joy when the blessed moment approached wherein we were visited by the Day-spring from on high, and when God our Saviour took away the unclean spirit, and put his Holy Spirit within us. But perhaps many hear me to-day, who, if bid go home and tell their friends what great things the Lord has done for them, could say nothing, having never experienced his pardoning mercy nor seen his salvation. People who perhaps can only tell how God has kept them from want, how he has raised them from sickness, given them friends, kept off their enemies, and provided wonderfully for them in the world, saved them from many dangers, given them to be born and educated in a christian land, and trained them up in the

the best church, in the happiest constitution, given them their right senses, &c. All this is well; but this the Deist, the Turk, the Jew, blesses God for, as much as you; this is not the one thing needful, the main and chief blessing, for that is the revealing Christ in the heart, the releasing and translating the soul out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son, the snatching them out of the world and sin, as brands out of the burning, the overflowing all their vicious and unruly passions, lusts and inclinations, with his death, sweat, and blood, and so washing the inner man in the laver of regeneration, and giving him a new birth, and the witness of the Spirit with their spirit that they are the children of God. O that ye all knew this, and could go home to your friends and tell them this joyful news, I was lost, but am now found; I was once dead, and knew not Jesus; I was a servant and vassal to his enemy, and to the world, and even despised the liberty of the Lord my God, and put his salvation far from me; but the Lord has had compassion upon me, he has done great things for me, and holy is his name; he has now opened my eyes, and I see my part in his merits; he has opened my ears, and I have heard the voice of the Son of God, and live an eternal life. He burst in pieces the chains that made me a prisoner, and delivered me into the glorious liberty of the children of God. I now roam no more for happiness in vain; I now am no more unhappy; I sit down like Mary, and like the man once possessed of the legion, at Christ Jesus's feet, cloathed with his salvation as with a garment, and with his righteousness as with a robe, and am now set to rights and saved, and in a right mind. May the merciful and compassionate Lord of all awaken every one to a true sense of his natural, bad, and wild estate, and save you thus; and till he takes you home to his  
Father's

Father's house to be with him for ever, may you have grace to tell thus his tender mercies to others! And all ministers, may it be given to them in particular that they may do it, till having won many thereby to the kingdom, and turned many to righteousness, they may return home in a good time, and in their last hours, when they shall pray our Saviour to suffer them to follow him, he may say, "Come up hither," and so they be for ever and ever with the Lord. O Lamb of God, grant this to my soul. Amen.

END OF PART IV.

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## PART V.

### DISCOURSE XXVI.

#### DIVES AND LAZARUS.

LUKE XVI. 31.

*If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.*

WITH these words our Saviour concludes the parable of Dives and Lazarus; wherein (after shewing the unhappy state of such as are rich, but without him, and the blessed condition of the poor who are in his favour) he makes Dives to pray out of his torment that Lazarus might go and preach to his five brethren, lest they should also perish; but Abraham, to whom he prayed, answered him, that they had the scriptures, "They have," saith he, "Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." Dives still thinks that if Lazarus went from the dead, and appeared to them in the height of their mirth and banqueting, assuring them that their brother, who had lived like them in pleasure, was now lost, and so warn them to repent, that it would have a better effect than all preaching; but Abraham tells him, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

In this parable our Saviour has greatly honoured the sacred Scriptures, and taught all his people in future ages to think exceedingly reverently of the words of God, besides warning the rich and such as

have this world's goods, lest they have their portion in this life, and teaching common people, and such as are poor and in adversity, that they may set their affections on things above, and have treasure in heaven.

There are many lessons to be learned through the whole; and as all these parables were spoken for the instruction of the sincere followers of Christ, that they may be wise to eternal life, shunning every danger, and escaping the wrath to come, I wish all who are my hearers to-day may give the greater attention while I speak a few words on this parable, and make some observations in the course of reading it.

Our Saviour delivers the parable thus, "There was a certain rich man which was cloathed in purple and fine lincen, and who fared sumptuously every day." This is the description of what the world calls a happy man. He was rich, and so a stranger to want, nakedness, and all the miseries of that kind which poor people are subject to. He did not know what it was to be pinched with hunger, suffer thirst, or cold, or weariness; no oppressing creditors bore hard upon him, nor was he made to serve under the rigour of superiors. He had many servants, a fine house, and perhaps slept on beds of down and ivory. His riches kept him in favour with his friends, and carried him above the envy and contempt of his foes. I doubt not but he had often thanked God that he was rich; and rejoiced that his fortune was so considerable in the world.

"He was cloathed in purple." The Tyrian purple of the ancients was of all colours the most costly, so that none but kings and persons of the first rank in the world wore it. This was his dress, and adorned, I suppose, with embroidery and gold; beside, he had fine lincen, and all that could serve  
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to make him splendid and comfortable. Nor was he only rich, and thus grand and princely in his apparel, but "he fared sumptuously every day." He had not often his table spread with delicacies, but always. Every day the fat of the land, the most precious fruits, the daintiest victuals came before him. Nor was he alone, his five brethren lived the same luxurious and high life; they had doubtless the best company, and plenty of wine, and drank strong drinks out of cups of silver and gold. All round waited their servants, and subjects, and dancing, and music, and merry discourse passed their many days and nights away pleasantly. Had one seen them singing over their bowls of rich wines, or wantonly sporting with harlots, without care, without bounds to their excess and pleasures, high with honour and respect, full of mirth, and loaded with riches, one might have thought, how happy is this rich man in his company! No doubt he had heard the law, for he was a child of Abraham; he had been sometimes present when the prophets were read, but it had no great effect upon him; perhaps he had rode in his chariot certain days, and frequented thus the temple and synagogues out of fashion, or to divert away a spare hour, but his heart was untouched with any thing he heard; perhaps the priests whom he chose to hear, prophesied smooth things, and he liked to have it so. He contemned the mopes in religion, and such as were devoted to sacred things, as half mad men, melancholy, persons of no taste, and enthusiasts, and would not be such a fool to let overmuch religion destroy him.

In short, he seemed at first view to be a vessel of honour, and highly favoured, a man whom heaven had blessed, and to whom God had opened his hand and been doubly liberal. There are thousands who

have wished to be thus happy, and perhaps many of us now present can lay our hand on our heart and say, I am the man.

In the same city, and in the same country with this great man, was "a certain poor person, a beggar named Lazarus, who lay at the rich man's gate full of sores, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table," who had no friends or company, excepting the dogs who came and licked his sores. Behold one as miserable as the other was happy! He seemed to be neglected by all his fellow-creatures, and an out-cast of the God of nature, a vessel of disgrace and dishonour. He had no respectable and wealthy friends, but was left an orphan, and exposed to the piercing afflictions of want and poverty. He had no house, but lay at the gate of Dives; had no bed but the ground; was sick and full of wounds, and had no physician, no comfortable cordial, no plaister, no friend or pitying neighbour. While the one in the house rolled in plenty, he languished with hunger, and all his moans and cries, though only for "the crumbs which fell from the table, were unheard and unregarded. He had no cloaths but rags, so that the cold pinched him without, and hunger and sickness within. Instead of pitying the poor beggar, it seems as if those of the house had set the dogs at him to drive him from the door, who were more merciful than their master, "they licked his sores." This was all the ease and comfort he had; and thus between sickness, hunger, and nakedness he was worn out, and at last died.

All that passed by him must surely have felt a certain chill and horror at the sight of his wretched corpse, and esteemed his end miserable. It is likely his bones were laid in some ditch, or buried among dunghills, and to all outward appearance one should have

have concluded, this man lived and died unhappy to the last degree ; but therein, such as judged after a human way would have been sadly mistaken, that poor man was at peace with God, he had made a blessed use of his affliction, out of the deep of it he had cried to the Lord and was heard ; he had made his part sure in the book of life, and in the favour of the Lord his God. It is true, he had little or none of the good things of this world, his eyes had been often red with weeping, and his poor heart inured to distress and sighing, but he had obtained the love of God, and knew his Redeemer lived ; this comforted him till the angel of death released him, and he died. There was then an end to his penury and needs ; all the tears were wiped away from his eyes, all sorrow left his aching heart ; his sickness sunk his spirits and weighed him down no more ; no more his wounds and sores smarted, nor his hunger pinched his poor carcase ; he heard no more the menaces and threatenings of such as would not relieve him ; no, all was over now and “ the angels carried him to Abraham’s bosom.” While his body was finding a rest in some nasty but quiet spot, the blessed spirits who stood round him as he died, and who waited for the appointed moment, now sung him up to the paradise of God. How sweet was heaven to his weary soul ! how sweet, how transporting the kingdom to him, who had been a beggar and the outcast of all the world ! He could not any more weep at his hard lot, or sigh that he had been so poor ; he rather could adore before the throne that he had been afflicted, and saved from “ trusting to uncertain riches,” and weaned from the world, and that a better portion had been designed for him by his merciful Creator. O how must he bless the wisdom of God, and his unsearchable goodness in saving him, and for

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changing his want to eternal riches, his rags to God's righteousness, his dunghill to a throne, and his poor troublesome life to a life eternal! Instead of dogs to lick his sores, angels attend him and hail him to his thrice-blessed home and harbour, where he shall rest for ever and ever!

But now we will leave him in his glory and return to the rich glutton in his pomp and splendor, "who also died and was buried." All his gold and silver could not purchase him a renewal, or longer term of life; he died, and left all his companions, his costly furniture, his fine raiment, and plentiful table; he died and went into another state, whither his gold could not be carried, "neither could his pomp follow him." There is no mention made of the beggar's funeral, it was too mean and insignificant to notice; if he was not cast out into the open fields to the beasts and birds of prey, it is likely, as I before observed, he was buried with the burial of an ass; but Dives was buried: He, no doubt, was laid in state, and his hearse attended with mourners, and such as were skilful in lamentation, and in solemn magnificence interred in the sepulchres of his fathers; but O! while his brethren and friends were bearing their once rich brother with such splendor to the grave, his soul sunk down to hell, "and in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torments, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." Amazing change! his pleasures are turned to torments, his riches to eternal wants, his scarlet and purple robes to purple and scarlet flames of fire, his bowls of new wine to insatiable thirst, his musick to howlings, his fine house to the bottomless pit, his brethren and merry company to devils and wicked spirits. "He lifted up his eyes," but saw no more grandeur and delicate things; he should have opened them before, and have seen the things

things that made for his peace, but now they were hid from him, he opened his eyes too late. It is true, he saw Abraham and Lazarus in glory, but it was afar off; yes, there he saw the same beggar he suffered to perish without mercy at his gate; he saw him now in the bosom of the friend of God; he beheld him who was once unworthy his notice, sitting among the favourites of the God of Abraham; and he who had scarce any covering, while Dives wallowed in riches and was cloathed with purple and fine linen, now was cloathed with the white and fine linen, which is the righteousness of the saints, and in which they stand without spot before the throne. He had not minded his cries once, but now he cries for his help; and he cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." He perhaps had never prayed before, and now prays when it is too late, but he prayed to Abraham. It is the only prayer in the scripture made to the saints, and is a prayer made in vain. He called Abraham, father, but found it not avail to have had believing or good parents, without having their experience of the love of God, and trod the steps of the faith of Abraham. No more strong drink and new wine refreshed him; he begs not a drop of water, but less if possible, for he prays only that "Lazarus might dip the tip of his finger in water to cool his tongue." See how he intreats mercy from him to whom he would shew no mercy! Thus shall it be in the day when Jesus comes; then the despised and persecuted few, who loved him in the world, and who for his sake were hated, abused, slandered, reviled, and as it were, "killed all the day long," shall be honourable in their sight who slighted and used them ill. They shall then worship  
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at their feet, and sue for mercy with shame and confusion. This honour shall have all the saints. Thus Dives behaves to Lazarus, when he entreats Abraham to send him to ease him. "Have mercy upon me, he says, my father Abraham." This would have been a pretty prayer if made to the Father of mercies, and made in "the day of grace, and in the acceptable year of the Lord;" but now Abraham answers, "Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus his evil things, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented." Abraham call him son, but it did him no good; he expostulates with him, and shews the equitable dealings of justice; he bids him "remember, that once as he loved the world and the things of the world, so he had them, and had his portion in this life; and as he slighted grace, and the riches and things of the life to come, so they were far from him." On the other hand he says, Poor Lazarus, who had no good things here, but was a man of sorrows, was not of the world, but chose his part above, so the world hated him and forsook him; but now he is arrived to his treasure, and shall be comforted for evermore.

Hear this, ye who count them happy who live in pleasure, and who make merry as in a day of slaughter! ye, who are continually heaping up gold, and "who fare sumptuously every day!" ye, who ride on horses and in chariots, and feel no evil! and ye who are continually wishing for honour, and desiring to be great and rich, or to enjoy large possessions in the world, O hear it and tremble, and change your wishes into prayers for mercy, and a part at God's right hand! Remember, "they that love the world and the things of the world, have not the love of the Father in them; and that a man cannot be a friend of the world without being an enemy of God."

God." Desire not then to have here a fulness, but if you have it, behave as stewards of "the mammon of unrighteousness," and remember the strict account you must one day make. Have you no more than food and raiment convenient? be content, and know you are better off than your Lord. Or do you suffer want, or are poor? pray to have Lazarus's sure kingdom in the better world, and be not unhappy with cares, but give up yourselves and your wants to the care of your heavenly Father, who careth for you. Let not riches, or finery, or gay apparel, or pleasures, or wantonness, or lusts be a snare to you; be released from all, and "touch not the unclean thing;" keep out of the danger, and follow your plain and lowly Lord through the world, and have your glory where it is eternal, and let your riches be durable riches and righteousness.

Many have made another choice, and repented it for ever. Abraham tells Dives, that there was now no passing from one state and place to the other; a gulph, an infinite space was between. When he found this, he prays to Abraham, at least, to let Lazarus go to his father's house, where his brethren lived in the same wicked way, to preach and forewarn them, lest they should come into the same torment and perish in the same way. Abraham answers, "they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." "Nay, he said, father Abraham, but if one would rise from the dead they would repent." As if he would say, "O! I know how it was with me; I know how I jeered such as spake of danger; I know their thoughts of all preaching, they slight it as I did; they despise the scriptures, and atheistically mock religion, but if such an one as Lazarus, whom they knew to be dead, would go and appear to them, and tell them, Your brother is in eternal flames,

flames, he is lost, and crying out in his torments, Repent or you shall all likewise perish, then they would hear." But Abraham tells him, if they will not hearken to the law and to the testimony, if the word of God has no effect, and they regard not Moses and the prophets, "neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." They would still in their wanton manner scoff, and endeavour to account for it in a natural way; they would deem it fancy, or a juggle of the religious, or look upon it as a dream, and harden their hearts still more. If a message from the Lord God of their fathers is not received, nor the testimony of his children, the witnesses, then no miracle would be of service, and if one rose from the dead it would be in vain.

It should not seem that Dives's fear of having his brethren and wicked companions follow him into his misery, came out of love or compassion for them, so much as his dread of their increasing his pain and plagues, since he had helped them on in sin, had been the abettor of their evil deeds, and encouraged them to drink, game, whore, revel, blaspheme, and be infidels and irreligious to their ruin. He knew how it must add to his woes, to be the cause of their judgment and damnation, and therefore would by all means have hindered it; but all was gone too far, it was too late, and he left to feel the heavy wages of sin, with all the dreadful consequences which increase perpetually.

It is indeed a striking parable, and meant mercifully to comfort the poor and distressed people, by pointing to the kingdom where they are encouraged to seek their portion, and to apply to our Saviour, that he may forgive them their sins, and make them "heirs of a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and of treasure that no moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thief

thief break through and steal." O that all the common people, the poor, the indigent, the outwardly miserable and afflicted people would by means of this parable come to him who spake it, and obtain of him Lazarus's portion. He spake it for this end, and this was his chief view. Let not your heavy circumstances in this world, your pressing necessities, weigh you down too much, and make you lose your confidence in the Friend of sinners, nor let it put you upon worldly and unlawful means to extricate yourselves, nor tempt you to murmur or complain; but take it in good part, and be satisfied with your evil things, and seek to have your good things with Jesus and his disciples in another world. Now before you are called away, beseech him to give you a true and living faith in him, that thereby you may be persuaded of his everlasting love to you, the feeling of which will keep you happy, and at peace, under the most pressing and grievous trials; it will sweeten your passage through the world, and comfort you beyond all you can think or wish.

When you have no friend or dear companion, you will not be destitute, he will be near to you, he "will never leave nor forsake you." Instead of riches you shall have his merits, his kingdom, the treasures of his peace and salvation; you shall not want, you shall be happy, and your latter end will be blessed; the holy angels shall carry you home, and Jesus, your dear Saviour Jesus, shall kiss you and take you in peace to himself. Till then be content to be here a pilgrim and stranger, a poor and needy follower of the Lamb; be content to be hated, to be dishonourable and despised; in a very little while you shall see all the cloud blow over, and the time of the singing of birds shall come; you shall go into your Master's joy, and into the house he prepared for

for you in the New Jerusalem, to go no more out world without end.

Our Saviour had this also in view in this parable, namely, to warn kindly the wild, the rash, the giddy and wanton part of mankind, to escape the perils and sad estate of such as hear not the loving calls of his Holy Spirit, but eagerly covet the world and seek happiness there, and so miss the kingdom of God. The rich, the gluttonous, the epicure, the miser, the lustful, the lovers of pleasure and the world, are in a dangerous condition; they can easily be deceived and cry, Peace, peace to their hearts, while the world smiles, and they prosper and go on undisturbed, till suddenly they are summoned to depart this life, and, like foolish virgins, they awake out of the pleasing delusion, and are miserable for ever.

But our Saviour had yet in view to magnify the scriptures and make them honourable. They are his true sayings, and may not be trifled with, despised, or slighted. Who looks for miracles and wonders, and thinks he could be converted by that means, and thinks little of the oracles of God, he is a deceived person. The scriptures are never alone, but the power of God always accompanies them, so that with majesty they are sounded to the heart, and with a divine conviction that they are from heaven. If therefore a man has so long disregarded the striving of the Spirit with him, that by little and little he ceases to respect the scriptures, and at last is no longer persuaded to hear them, is no longer to be convinced by them, nor looks to experience the precious promises they contain, nor is awed by the threatenings, nor courted or prevailed upon by the intreaties and calls therein, but is willingly ignorant of them, is dead to all they say, opposes manifest truths declared therein, and can venture to dispute doctrines, which in his conscience he believes

believes are taught there, and was the mind of Jesus and his disciples, then it is gone far indeed, and the rising of one from the dead to attempt his conversion might be dreaded, and thought to be in vain.

As the apostle of our profession humbled himself to read out of the scriptures, reasoned out of them with men, with his disciples, "and expounded out of them the things concerning himself," and also therewith answered the tempter to set us a pattern, let us be his followers, and, as it is written, so believe, so act in every thing, that we may not only shew to others we believe and are disciples of him whose oracles they are, but also happily experience the fulfilling of the promises in our hearts, and be witnesses that they are true and faithful, to the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be praise and blessings for ever and ever! Amen.

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### A PRAYER.

**O** GOD my Saviour, I beseech thee for thy tender mercies sake, let not the deceitfulness of riches, nor any of the things of the world get my affections, nor suffer thou my own desires and lusts to blind my eyes to the pleasures at thy right hand.

Be pleased to make me a stranger and pilgrim here, and let faith in thee be my riches, thy word my lanthorn and staff in this dark world; and let my unfeigned love to thee, and my continual thirst to be for ever in thy favour, make me think little of all carnal joys and happiness. In all company and in all places draw me after thee. Give me a sensible conviction of thy love to me, and the assurance that I am born again of thy Spirit, and made a child of God; and let me know that all my

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sins are forgiven and buried in thy wounds, and in the red sea of thy blood for ever.

I will be thine, body and soul, O keep that which I entrust to thy care till the day of restitution, and in all dangers be near me. If I should be rash, or run in a way which is not right, or should mistake thy mind, disappoint and hinder me; but O let my soul be still precious in thy sight, till the appointed time is come for me to depart. Then, my dear Saviour, let the angels carry me to thy bosom, and without fear or dread in the assurance of faith, let me leave the world and come home to thee. Let this be my happy lot, and do what thou wilt with me here. Hear me, O thou good shepherd of Israel, and grant my prayer for thy name's sake. Amen.

**DISCOURSE**

# DISCOURSE XXVII.

## THE HIDDEN TREASURE.

MATT. xiii. 44.

*The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; which, when a man hath found, he hideth; and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.*

**T**HOUGH our Lord, in the days of his flesh, was pleased to speak in parables, yet he delivers his doctrine in such a plain manner, uses such easy comparisons, and with such an inimitable simplicity, that the peasant and herdsman, the little child and servant-maid can be as capable of understanding and comprehending his mind, as the most learned and studious philosopher on earth.

He did it, out of his infinite wisdom, to destroy the wisdom of the wise; and to set at nought, and baffle, and bring to nothing, the understanding of the prudent.

He would not leave room for the wise man to glory in his wisdom before him; nor give an occasion for the ignorant to complain, because he had not the gift of knowledge, or sigh under the disadvantages of a slender education; for however a solid judgment, letters, study, books, and sciences, may be valuable in respect of other matters, they help not often in the matter of salvation; nor have the



most understanding and witty men been always best ; but some, to their hurt, have found that true, " The world by wisdom knew not God." On the other hand, many unlearned persons, and men in other respects weak and unknowing, have found that wisdom which is from above, and been wise in the sight of God.

If the wise, the thinking, and studious would stoop to learn of Jesus, their knowledge in earthly things would not hinder them to be saved ; but if they are resolved to judge of divine truths by their carnal reason, and to disbelieve and doubt of what surmounts their comprehension, and of all that is not according to the nature of things, they must be no Christians, but are in a fair way to plunge into the abyss of Atheism, and lose the real enjoyment of God their Saviour here and hereafter. So if the poor servant in the house, or the shepherd upon the mountains, is disposed for eternal life, his ignorance shall not prevent him to become a child of God. The Holy Spirit, and Jesus the true light, will teach him wisdom secretly, and make him experience and feel in his heart the inconceivable happiness of the saints, and joy unspeakable. He shall be well satisfied of his safe condition, and be inly assured he has a part in the kingdom of God in worlds to come.

To the insincere, whether wise or unwise, the gospel is a book closed ; and when one gives it to the unlearned, and says, Read it, I pray thee ; he says, I cannot do it, because I am unlearned : and when it is given to the learned, he answers, I cannot read it, for it is sealed. Hence it is that so many look upon the scriptures as a book of mysteries which very few understand, and the way to be saved a difficult and intricate matter, and so live willingly ignorant of the things which make for their peace,  
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and neglect so great salvation; but else the way to heaven is plainly marked out, and the direction of the Leader of the people is so written, that "he that runs may read, and a fool need not err in the highway of holiness."

As I said before, all the parables of our Saviour are legible, and plain, and simple; and whoever wants to understand, let him do as the disciples, who asked their Lord privately, and they shall be taught of God, and find rest to their souls.

The kingdom of God cannot be easily likened to things temporal, and this made our Saviour seem to be at a loss unto what to compare it; but then, in many respects, he has compared it to things common, because of the infirmity of our flesh. Who can truly describe light to one blind, or make the deaf know what are sounds? or who can make a natural man sensible of the spiritual life, of the manifesting of Christ within the heart, and of his kingdom, which is not of the world?

The beginning of Christianity is trusting Jesus; he has continually preached of the kingdom, and which he says is within you. His witnesses are without number, who have entered it and possessed it in the earth, and who have sealed it with their blood, and confirmed it in their last moments, that "the kingdom of God is come, and his tabernacle is with men." It is one while compared to a marriage which a king made for his son; another time to seed sown in a field; and at another time to a net cast into the sea, which gathered of every kind, bad and good; at another time to a man who let out his vineyard to husbandmen; at another time to a merchant seeking goodly pearls; and, in the text, to "treasure hid in a field."

The whole gospel is full of these parables; for "without a parable Jesus spake not to the people."

He did it that he might fulfil the prophets, "I have used similitudes." And again, "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." Thus he had done during the dispensation of the law, which, with all its ordinances and ceremonies, was dark and typical of the kingdom which was to come. When he spake to the fathers, before his coming in the flesh, he used this way, and gave them visions, dreams, and signs, by which he made known his will. The necessity of blood-shedding under the law was to signify, that "without shedding blood there was no remission:" the exhibiting the victims upon the altars, the lambs and calves, &c. were figures of that Lamb, who should be shewn upon the cross a spectacle to angels and men; and, after the same manner, all the doctrines and rites delivered by Moses, pointed out Jesus and the redemption. Hosea must take to him an adulteress, and marry her before the children of Israel, as a sign that the Lord was an husband to an adulterous people. Ezekiel must see a valley full of dry bones, whereby the Lord would express the state of his church; he must prophecy to them, and they lived; to signify that by his servant's ministry he would raise them up to a new life, and recover them, though now so dead and dry.

Again; he is taught by the similitude of a newborn infant cast out in the open field, in a deplorable and unpitied condition, the fall; and, by the Lord's passing by and seeing it in its blood, and saying to it, Live, entering into a covenant with it, swearing to it, &c. clothing, washing, and adorning it with fine linen and gold, the free salvation is meant, and the happy and good estate we are brought into by means of the New Testament, which our Saviour has made with us and confirmed by an oath.

Jeremiah,

Jeremiah, by seeing the potter work, understood how all were made at first by the good Creator; and, when marred or broken, he saw how he did not cast the vessel away, but made it new, a vessel that pleased him; namely, that though the world was now like a broken and marred vessel, it was yet in a merciful Creator's hands, who would renew it in righteousness, and be their Saviour.

Daniel must see visions of the captivity, and of the Messiah; and in this way generally the Lord spake to the prophets. Nor did this way of communicating the divine will cease, till by the death of the Lord the veil was rent in two, and a new and living way opened into the holy place. From which time all the apostles and ministers of Jesus Christ have used great plainness of speech, and not done as Moses. They declare openly, Jesus is the Lord; and that forgiveness of sins, repentance, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, are received freely by all who believe in his name.

In my discourse therefore I would willingly open this parable of the treasure; and as I have just mentioned a few of the figurative visions and signs of the prophets before the incarnation of Christ, so it may not be amiss to do the same in respect of some of the many parables which are in the gospel, and even in that chapter out of which I have taken the text, because it may help to give a light into others of the same nature.

When the kingdom is compared to the marriage of the king's son, it respects that marriage of the Lamb mentioned in the Revelations, and in other parts of the scripture. The King is the father of our Lord Christ the King of kings; the Son is the Lamb, who will take his bride out of the earth, and invites all to this wedding; the supper is already prepared? the bride, his elect, is chosen and making  
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herself ready; her garments are the Lord's righteousness, her crown his glory; the servants sent out are ministers, who first preached to the Jews, but they made their excuses, and now are they sent to all Gentiles, and to the ends of the earth, to call good and bad to the wedding, or to invite every creature to the salvation. The King waits till all are in. On the last day he will see the guests. Woe be to such as have not on the wedding garment, for they may not sit down at his table. These are such as ventured into eternity, without being arrayed in the white linen of the righteousness of Jesus. In that day the trumpet shall blow, "The marriage of the Lamb is come!" and all who have virgin hearts, and are devoted to the Redeemer, whose lusts have been here washed away, and their raiment kept white; whose hearts, like a lamp, have burned with pure love; who have had Jesu's love within, like a stock of oil, to keep it from going out; who have left the world and gone out to meet the Bridegroom; these shall enter with him into his chamber, and follow him whithersoever he goeth. Others, who have expected his coming, and made profession of his name, but were foolish, slept in an insecure state, without their election insured, these are the foolish virgins, who too late pray, "Lord, Lord, open to us;" who must hear him say, "Depart from me, I never knew you."

When the kingdom is compared to seed which was sown in the field, which sprung up one knows not how, first the blade, then the ear, then the ripe corn, when the husbandman orders the servants to put in the sickle and gather it, because the harvest is come, our Saviour would have us to understand, that after the sowing time is over, the husbandman leaves all to the sun and to the early and latter rain to bring it forth, and understands not how the seed is nourished  
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and brought forth, but waits for the time to reap with joy. Just so, when the Son of man sows the word of life in the heart, he first breaks it like a husbandman, he defends it from harm, and keeps off the birds of prey, which are the devils, until his seed has taken root and springs up. A soul is sensible of its divine life, and of the work of our Saviour, but cannot describe to another, how his seed thrives and his husbandry prospers; it is so, and they are happy. They perceive, as it were, first the blade, the dawns of grace, the tender stirrings of the love of God, and are glad; and as they grow ripe, like as corn, the more ripe it is, the more it bows down, 'till the reaper comes and takes it into the barn; so a true Christian, the more he knows of Jesus, the more he experiences of his grace and mercy, and ripens for glory, the more he bows down, and with humility and shame confesses his own unworthiness, and adores the free grace of God his Saviour. Thus it is till he is called away, and brought home to the store-house above, like a shock of corn fully ripe; then all danger of birds devouring the seed is over, all fear of a blasting wind is removed, and every care ceases for ever.

When the kingdom is likened another time to seed sown in the field, it is after this manner: "A certain man sowed good seed, and, while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares," i. e. darnel.\* When the wheat sprung up, the tares came up also; and the servants told their lord, and would have rooted them up, and weeded them out directly; but lest they should weed up the tender grain with them, he bid them let them both grow together; and in the harvest, he made them gather the wheat into his garner, but burnt the tares in bundles.

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\* It is a weed much like corn; but has an infatuating, stupefying quality, and of great hurt to the crop.

This in a great measure our Saviour has explained: the sower is himself, the field the world, the good seed are the children of God, the tares the children of Satan. Whenever he gathers him a little flock of children; while his servants, the ministers, forget they are watchmen, and sleep, Satan sows among them hypocrites and wicked people; so that few, if any, congregations have continued always free from false brethren. Thus among the twelve was a Judas, among the disciples afterwards a Simon Magus, and Judaizing preachers who troubled the churches, and others, who, by their wicked lives, were enemies to the cross of Christ. The Holy angels would willingly root such out of the world by sudden deaths and by judgments, as in the former times; but, lest that severity should frighten a tender child, a young believer, and make him lose his confidence in his Lord, Jesus is pleased both shall grow together. He knows it is his enemy's work; that from the beginning he has done so; but when the last day comes, he will take the tares in bundles and burn them, the whoremongers in their bundle, the drunkards in a heap together, the covetous and avaricious men in their company; but the wheat, his own dear children, he will bring safe with him into heaven.

When the kingdom is compared to a net cast into the sea, it is unfolded thus: the sea is the world, the fishermen the ministers of Christ. The net is the gospel. When they preach the gospel to every creature, good and bad flock together, and are taken with the good news; but, when all is brought to shore, some are found unfit for use, while others are preserved in little companies, as in vessels, till they are brought home to God. Some the fishermen throw back into the sea as too small, and these may be taken again when they are fit for use. Some go back into the world

world, and perhaps are called another time, when they are thoroughly tired and sick of their sins, and the service of Satan, and are saved; but who is cast away at the day of judgment, he perishes, though caught in the same net with others, who are found precious in the eyes of the Lord. In that day "two may be in one bed, the one shall be taken and the other left; two women may be in the field together, or grinding at the same mill, when one is taken and the other is left."

In the parable of the vineyard, which was let out to husbandmen, our Saviour treats chiefly of the Jewish priests and rulers, to whom he had committed his word and law. The prophets were the servants who came to ask the fruit, and to exhort them to a life becoming a church and family of God; these they stoned, killed, and persecuted, till God sent his Son, and then Satan inspired them with double cruelty; they thought if he were killed they should have no trouble more in Israel, but go on in peace. Satan, who set them on, also thought, if I could but overcome him, whom he knew to be heir of all, he should then have the whole world in his hands. The driving out of these husbandmen, and letting out the vineyard to others, signified the rejecting the Jews, and giving the gospel to the Gentiles; but this parable is also levelled against all persecuting spirits and people, who, as soon as they lose the treasure of faith and the presence of the shekinah, and persecute the messengers and witnesses of the Redeemer, are rejected; the ark is removed, the candlestick brought out from among them, and given to a people who shall render the fruit to the Lord in due season.

In the parable of calling and hiring servants into the vineyard, much is included; the vineyard is the church, so Isaiah had preached long ago; the Lord  
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the Holy Spirit calls men into it; some are called in their childhood and youth, and some upon their deathbeds, and when their hair is grey with age. Very often the old sinner is paid first, i. e. taken first into the kingdom of heaven; and such as the penitent thief snatched from the gates of hell, as it were, and carried joyfully to the throne, while others, that were first called, continue labouring in the world, bearing the heat of persecution, and enduring all hardships, and these sometimes are tempted to murmur; with these our Saviour expostulates, and asks, "Is thy eye evil, because mine is good? or cannot I do what I will with my own?" As if he would say, Cannot I take a wretch from the jaws of death and save him, and might not I send the self-righteous away empty? Grace and heaven are my own, and I bestow them where I will, out of mere compassion and pity, and not because any have deserved it from me. This parable is to set forth the sovereignty of our God, and to justify his saving publicans and harlots, and calling into his fold the chief of sinners, as well as such who have been early serious and religious, and called in the first hours of the day. It was designed to suppress the Jewish risings and murmurings, as if the ways of the Lord were not equal, and to silence its self-righteous reasonings.

There is yet another parable, of a merchant seeking costly pearls; who, having found one of great value, went and sold all he had to purchase it. The merchant is a soul athirst for salvation, and who is like a merchant traversing sea and land to find it, who having found Jesus, the most costly pearl, parts with all he has, and counts all dross and dung that he may inherit this pearl. What he before esteemed precious, or served him instead of holiness, he undervalues; and whatever before he counted riches, wisdom, good deeds, gifts, graces, and qualities, esteems

esteems nothing now but this jewel, this elect precious stone; and is richer in the possessing him, than if he had all heaven and earth without him.

But the parable of which I shall treat chiefly, is of treasure hid in a field. Should a person pass through your country, and pointing to a field, assure the inhabitants and neighbours that there was much money buried there; as many as were incredulous would smile at the report, and mock those who would credit and go about to dig for it; they themselves would not search for it, because they could not believe it was there; nor could they help despising such as did, for the same reason. But if some believed the news, they would go and dig and search for the treasure, till they had found it; and, having secured it, would naturally part with all they had, to buy that field.

Thus it is when the kingdom of God is preached in a land; salvation, and the love of our Saviour, pardon of sins and our Lord's presence, is declared to be found in this life, and in our mortal state; Jesus is himself manifested and known: he comes and brings with him his Father, and dwells with us; his reward also is with him; his righteousness and merits, his redemption and kingdom are revealed at his appearing.

This is a treasure indeed! and this is that treasure spoken of in the parable, which is more precious than the gold of Ophir, but it is hid; it is in the world, but yet invisible, as all the great things of our Saviour are: his kingdom is not of the world, yet it is there, and, as himself expresses it, it is within you, it is not far from hence. His wisdom is understood secretly; the manna that he promises, is hidden manna; his heaven is hid in the meal. It is therefore well called the secret of the Lord, hidden wisdom, peace which the world cannot give, joy which a stranger intermeddeth not with, happiness which no eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of

man to conceive rightly of it, till inspired from the Lamb, or till it is revealed by the Spirit.

Our Saviour's kingdom is come, and many press into it; but some, when they hear of this treasure, despise it; they believe no such is found in this world; they think no such happiness is attainable in this life; and therefore they neither seek it, nor ask it, but are like people who hear of treasure hid in a field; but esteem it a dream, or fancy, or cheat, and so never seek for it; so all, who do not believe the kingdom attainable now, cannot possibly enter it, because of unbelief. They cannot seek it, because they do not believe it is to be found; they cannot ask for the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins, because they think it is not got till we die: they do not seek the Lord; for they believe to expect to receive the Holy Ghost, and know our Saviour, is presumption. Thus pure unbelief hinders them to enter into the rest remaining for the people of God. But why do not they believe? Is it because the Lord has promised no such blessing? No; he has promised it. All the scriptures are filled with promises of this kind. All was written that we might believe in Jesus, and have eternal life through his name.

Is it then because none have found this treasure? By no means; for in all places there are witnesses of it; among all sorts of people there are men who have found the Beloved, who know their Redeemer lives, and who have got salvation in his blood, even remission of their sins. But the truth is, they neither believe Jesus nor his disciples; they put it off and say, What is in the scripture concerns the apostles and first ages of the church, and as violently oppose the continuation of those blessings, as if no Bible was in the world. Let such take care lest that happen to them which is written in the prophets, "Behold I work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though a man declare it unto you." It

It is otherwise with some; for they hear of this hidden treasure, and they seek it till they have found it. If any should look for other treasure, a great part of them might look in vain, and perhaps after many days and weeks labour another may find it, and all their toil be fruitless and lost; but it is so ordered by him who has hid this treasure, that all who seek shall find, all that ask shall have, and all who run in this race shall win the prize.

This treasure is found in Jesus; in him are hid all the treasures of God. Whoever wants to be rich in eternity, must have him. He is the costly Pearl, the Pearl of great price. He is that true Treasure, "which no moth nor rust can corrupt, and which no thief can break through and steal." Ye dead souls, who are minded to find this true and real Treasure, this solid and lasting riches, come to Jesus, and you shall find it there.

Be not faithless, but believe Jesus Christ's kingdom is yet to be found; his salvation is yet to be experienced; his love is yet to be felt in the heart. Up and seek it; be in earnest about it; remember "the kingdom of God suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Whoso seeks with all his heart, shall find it, and then he will readily part with all he has, to purchase that field; he will count all other things, all gain, company, pleasures, honours, beauty, friends, and whatever else he valued before, spiritual or temporal, as loss, that he may get and win Jesus; nor need he be afraid of others getting his riches, and so must hide it, there is enough for all; and therefore when a soul has found Christ, he is like the woman of Samaria, Philip, and others, he would call and invite every man to come and see Jesus too: he is happy he is in the kingdom, and wants all, even his enemies, to come into the same.

My brethren, be thus minded; let all your business, your religion, your endeavours, and aim be, to know and have Jesus Christ. Let this be the mark of the prize of your high calling. Value nothing beside, love nothing, count nothing riches or treasure, desire nothing, ask nothing but to have him and his merits, and then you will be rich, the kingdom of heaven shall be yours, the life that now is, and that which is to come, all shall be yours for ever and ever.

While others despise so inestimable a benefit, disbelieve and scorn it, and mock and deride the sincere few, who are digging after this treasure, and in search after this riches and kingdom, continue ye in faith. Let our Saviour's promise be steadily believed, and think not well of yourselves till ye have entered the possession of this grace, so shall ye be happy here and hereafter. Here ye shall be kings over Satan and the world; and foretaste and anticipate your heaven, and no man shall be able to rob you of your crown; you shall have your portion safe when the heavens vanish away, and when the earth is burnt up; you shall then be in a continuing city, in a kingdom that cannot be shaken, world without end. Amen.

## DISCOURSE XXVIII.

### THE OFFICES OF THE MESSIAH.

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LUKE iv. 18, 19.

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*

**T**HIS was the portion of scripture our Saviour chose for his text when he preached at Nazareth on a certain sabbath-day, not long after his baptism in Jordan; and when he had read it in the synagogue he closed the book and sat down, and said, "This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears," and all wondered at the gracious words which he spake, and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him; but before he had done speaking, his own doctrine was verified in himself, namely, "that a prophet is not without honour but in his own country, and among his own kindred;" for they were offended with his doctrine, and thrust him out of their synagogue, and attempted to kill him, but he escaped through the midst of them, and went away.

I shall not now make observations on what offended the Nazarenes in our Lord's discourse, nor speak of his early persecutions, and how he used his divine

power in disappearing from among them that sought to destroy him, for this would take up that time which I would rather spend in treating of his blessed offices in the world. This shall always be to me a favourite subject, as long as I am his servant, and permitted to labour in his vineyard.

It is certain, Isaiah, out of whose prophecy Jesus read, spake those things not of himself but of the Redeemer, since he has appropriated them to himself, and which things are the testimony of all the inspired writers concerning him.

Our Saviour would read in the scripture, to teach us they were the true sayings of God, and that we might not be tempted to disesteem or slight the law and the prophets. He often mentions passages out of the Bible himself, and bid such as wanted to be satisfied concerning him search the scriptures, confessing at the same time, "these are they that testify of me." He also blames the Sadducees, because they were ignorant of the scriptures, and urges no greater reason in his answers to the tempter than that it was written. He was, no doubt, the God of wisdom, and could easily have baffled Satan with the strongest arguments, but he chose only to say, It is written, and referred to the holy writings, as to the words of God; nor could the enemy, with all his temptations, stand against the simplicity of our Saviour. In this respect he has left us an example that we should follow his footsteps, when Satan or carnal men would reason with us. If they would oppose the Godhead of our Saviour, our answer must be, How readeest thou? It is written, "He is over all God blessed for evermore." Or should they despise free justification, the gift of the Spirit, the knowledge of our salvation, the assurance of faith, Christ's dwelling in us and manifesting himself to us, we must appeal to the scriptures, for so it is written; and when meek arguments

arguments from the oracles of God and our Saviour's own words are not likely to prevail, we may not use other wisdom, or hope to succeed by any other weapon; this is the sword of the Spirit, and "if men hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Christians are persons who have received Jesus Christ for their God, and are called by his name in the world; his word decides all controversies with them, and is believed, though it contradicts the maxims of the philosophers, and opposes the sciences of the schools; and therefore his disciples, the true christians in all ages and countries, think not, if such doctrines are probable; or if that declaration of Jesus, or this promise can be possible; but simply and implicitly they believe him in all things, and judge not after the sight of their eyes, or after the hearing of their ears, but follow his word through thick and thin, through evil report and good report, and venture all they have eternally upon his word. In this matter our Saviour proves and tries his children, for none of his doctrines are of the world, nor were calculated to please men. But some point blank oppose the common received opinions of men, and are only possible with God; such are the doctrines of his divinity; and having the whole fulness of the Godhead in him bodily, his incarnation and being born of a virgin, his miracles in general, his death, his resurrection, his meeting his disciples, and standing personally and bodily among them, when the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, his ascension in a cloud into heaven, and his making himself known to and dwelling with us.

But though our Saviour's doctrines do so far surpass natural conceptions, and transcend all human reason and knowledge, yet has he not left his children without the happiest and most solid certainty

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of truth; for whoever believes his doctrine shall know if it be of God, and shall have the witness in himself, the Holy Spirit confirms our faith and makes our hearts "rejoice in believing with joy unspeakable and full of glory," we anticipate our heaven here, and have here the evidence of things unseen.

It is well, for other reasons, that we have the scriptures, for else long ago the doctrines there taught had been lost in whole countries, and the heathenish religion of nature had usurped the place; so that if men enlightened from heaven should have come and preached, even in such an age as ours, the forgiveness of sins through faith, and the comfortable doctrine of the Holy Ghost's inspiration, the men of this generation would have been ready to condemn such preachers, and think, Ye bring strange things to our ears; and should they venture to say, "We are witnesses of these things," we have got pardon of our sins, and have found Jesus and eternal life, they would be ready to stone them for blasphemy and presumption. But now the scriptures are in the world, the ambassadors of the Lord may appeal to them cheerfully, and there prove to all men, that so the apostles and prophets believed and taught, and so it is written, and this is their spiritual weapon in the midst of an adulterous and gainsaying people. It is an unspeakable mercy we have the scriptures, and I blame such exceedingly who take away that key of knowledge from the people. It is a needless fear that ignorant and unlearned men and women would misconstrue it, and begin sects and create schisms in the church; such have not done it, but the subtle and wise scholars, the learned, and such as have atheistically scorned to believe in Jesus, and who have preferred human wisdom too much, and neglected the teaching of the Holy Spirit; these have made the breaches, and been the  
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the authors of the dangerous sects ; these have rushed into ruin, and drawn disciples after them ; and therefore only because the word of God was not their lanthorn, nor a light to their feet, but they chose another way.

Ye know, my dear brethren, how many promises are made to those who keep our Saviour's words, " they shall not taste of death, and he will keep them in the day which shall try all them that dwell upon the earth ;" therefore, and because our Saviour so read and spake out of the scriptures, let us prize them, and be deaf as the deaf adder to all doctrines that glorify not our Lord Christ, and which are not written, nor have their foundation in the scriptures of truth. Let us rest upon their veracity till Jesus comes, who will not suffer, " one jot or tittle to pass away till all is fulfilled."

So much seemed needful to say on this head ; I will now proceed to speak of the text in order.

It begins, " The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." All the children of God have of the spirit in measure, but Jesus had it without measure, even in his manhood, of which it is here spoken, the Holy Ghost in fulness descended and rested upon the holy Child Jesus, and qualified him for his great work. In his human nature he was weak, and weaker than any man, he being only the seed of a woman, and in his flesh he was capable of suffering, being tempted, grieved, and as liable to all weaknesses and hindrances as we are : " He was like us in all things, sin only excepted," therefore was he anointed with the fulness of the Spirit to be the Prophet, King, and Priest of his people. Hence he is called, " The Christ, the Messiah, the Lord's Anointed," for in respect of his humbling himself and taking the place of Mediator, being a man, and putting himself in the place of Adam, he was lower than the Father,  
and

indeed a little lower than the angels, the minister and servant of all, whose office and service was to restore fallen mankind, to do God's work, heal the breach sin had made, and set to rights the ruined creation, washing and saving the souls in his blood, and bringing them to salvation. For this his dear Father spared and sent him, and for this he meekly and willingly came into the world; this the lowly and gracious Lamb confesses when he says, "He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; it was the principal end of his humiliation to let the poor know that there was mercy for them. He was made man and anointed for this embassy; it was the glorious errand he had in the world, the chief message he had to bring from the throne of his Father and from the sacred Trinity, that the Holy One from on high had beheld their poverty, and sent them redemption, that they were beloved in heaven, and that God who made them, and from whom they had wandered and gone astray, had seen their affliction and was come down to deliver them. This was the glad tidings the servant of the Lord brought to his perishing world, and for this he, who was God from everlasting, and the Creator and Maker of all, when he had contrived the amazing scheme, and the due time was commenced, bowed the heavens and was incarnate, stooped to carry the news himself, as well as to pay the ransom of his enslaved and captive creatures, and willingly offered himself to take the servant's place, saying, "In the body that thou hast prepared me, lo! I come to do thy will, O God."

Daniel foresaw who the Messiah should be, and what person should be the finisher of iniquity, transgression and sin, and who should make reconciliation by being cut off and slain, and bring in everlasting righteousness,

righteousness, and therefore speaks of anointing the Most Holy.

None of the angels might announce the counsel of Jehovah in this matter till the Prince of their hosts appeared in the flesh, and to the poor was the gospel first to be preached. The poor are the miserable part of mankind, the friendless, the dejected, the helpless, such as are apprized of their lost estate, and who are unhappy, who cannot take up with the world, or be satisfied with their good things, but who sigh and mourn in secret, who know and feel their impotency, sin and unworthiness, and who do not know how to be saved out of their danger; their thoughts are "of all men I am the most miserable." These first and more immediately are the objects of the Lord's charity, and though all are poor but insensible of it, yet these are sensible of it, and their extremity and poverty has been the cause of Christ Jesus's coming to help them. They are the highly favoured of the Lord, and must hear how dear they are to him that made them, and what his designs are concerning them, namely, to love them with everlasting love, and to enrich them with the kingdom of heaven, and make them possessors of the world to come. This is easily observed throughout the scriptures, as well in our Saviour's sermon upon the mount as in the course of all his preaching, that the poor have the gospel preached to them. And to the poor in spirit, the spiritually poor, how glad news is this! To such as were in a low estate, and who were little, and base, and contemptible in their own eyes, and who were ready to conclude that they were forsaken and justly abandoned by the Lord, and unworthy his notice or regard because of their sin; how sweet must the gospel sound when it is published before them, that such may be saved, that the Lord  
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has opened a well of salvation for such to wash in and be clean, that a righteousness is prepared and finished to dress and cloath them for the wedding of the Lamb, and that Jesus had undertook for them, had paid their ransom price, and had forgiven their debt and disobedience, and was now their Saviour ! This must revive their sinking spirits and make their heavy and discouraged hearts rejoice, just as good old Jacob's heart revived when he looked out of his tent, and saw indeed the chariots and waggons Joseph had sent out of Egypt to fetch him ; O, he said, " It is true ! Joseph is yet alive, I will go and see him before I die ;" so when the report of the gospel is brought with power to the ears, and when Jesus himself speaks to the heart, and brings it out to see what he has done for sinners, and how he has prepared a salvation for them, when he embraces the soul and kisses it, and his soft still voice whispers peace and inspires faith, though small as a grain of mustard-seed, they revive, they receive the welcome message, and become the happiest of all creatures, As Zaccheus, the chief of the publicans in Jericho, received him joyfully, so do they, and no condemned criminal who stands ready to be executed, with the halter about his neck, so rejoices to receive the king's pardon, no prisoner is so glad to be released from his cell, no slave is so transported to be ransomed, as a poor sinner to have Jesus preach the gospel to his heart, and assure him of his favour. This is Jesu's work and office, this he must do himself, and though he sends out messengers with the same good news, they are like his fishermen, when they toiled all night but took nothing without him. It is his voice that goes to the heart ; he is the only Preacher of everlasting life in the strictest sense, and he was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor.

Another

Another of his offices is to heal the broken-hearted. The prophets who saw his day afar off, had called him the Healer, and said he should rise with healing under his wings, and this he preaches himself.

His great intention is to create the world, the heavens, and earth anew, to restore the decayed places and build up what is fallen down ; but especially he has compassion upon the broken-hearted, and must heal them, for therefore was he sent. When he came to Bethany and saw the grief and tears of Mary and Martha, he was so touched that before all he wept too, and rather than see them bear their cutting affliction, Jesus called back their brother and comforted them. Thus he did when, as he was entering into the city of Nain, he met the corpse of a young man, the only son of his mother; who was a widow and weeping bitterly for her child. The woman was distressed, and her heart broken with grief at the loss of her only son ; her soul refused comfort. I suppose she wished often, as David once did for Absalom, " Would to God I had died for thee, my son ! " She might think, I am a poor disconsolate and desolate widow, I had but one to comfort me, and he is removed, I have none left to care for me, or to be a comforter to me in my old years. O call my name Marah, for the Lord has dealt bitterly by me, he has taken away all I had, and will bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. Thus mourned the childless mother till she approached the grave, where Jesus met her. O how was his heart affected, his tender mercies could not let him suffer it, he ordered the men that carried the bier to stand still, and said to the poor woman, " Weep not ; " as if he would have said, O, dear woman, I cannot bear thy grief, I know sin has been the cause of all this ; there had been no sorrow, nor crying, nor death, had not sin entered into the world, but I come down to end

it, I am sent to heal the broken-hearted, weep not, I will restore thee thy son; and he called him from the dead, and gave him to his mother. If our Saviour could be so deeply affected in such cases, and pity the over-grieved children of men when their loss was natural, how much more, think ye, must he pity souls whose grief is intolerable about their sin, and who are broken-hearted about their future state? He knows what terrors can oppress a human creature, he has been a man, and has experienced it often, and thoroughly in the wilderness, and that night especially when he was in such distress and anguish that he sunk down and trembled, walked to and fro in the garden, and sweat blood, being in agony, and when he cried out, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me!" His pangs and sorrows cure us, and, "by his stripes we are healed." When he lays his bleeding hand upon the heart and says, Peace, be still, all is healed, and the hurt and pain removed. Remember this when ye are troubled, and ye who know what a broken and contrite heart is, for he will not despise it; offer it to him for a sacrifice and he will help you, and be assured he was sent to heal the broken-hearted.

Another part of our Saviour's office was to preach deliverance to the captives. He knew all were sold and carried away captive by the enemy; all were his bond servants, and properly slaves to Satan and to sin. The bondage in Egypt was but a type of our spiritual captivity, he therefore came to open the prison doors, and to break in pieces the fetters of iron and brass; but this he would do in equity and justice, therefore he became our ransom-price, and was given for us; his own blood was shed to buy us out of the enemy's hands, and by bearing our sins and punishments he merited our freedom. He only has the power to bring a soul out of the house of bondage,

bondage and deliver them into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and make him free indeed. No sin can rule any longer when Jesus has made him free: Satan no longer can lead them captive at his will when our Saviour has commanded, "Let my people go that they may serve me."

It is a false doctrine that we are bound to sin as long as we live, and must sometimes serve the old master; this is establishing iniquity by a law; but if a man had been wholly led and captivated by lust, or drink, or passion, or covetousness, or the world, or by any other vice, let him apply to the Deliverer and he shall be set at liberty. Our Lord's hands that were once bound with chains and nailed upon the cross for him, shall unbind him and dissolve his bonds, though he had made a league with hell, and a covenant with death, it should not stand; let him call upon the name of the Lord, and he shall be saved. He brings the prisoner out of the prison-house, and no sin, no inbred villainy and wickedness, no guilt, no bonds of Satan can detain a soul one moment longer when they believe in Jesus. All lose their power and become like tow that has touched the fire. Before the word of Christ all the strong holds of Satan tremble, and every one's hands are loosed. This every believer has experienced; they know what slavery they were once in, how unhappy they were under the dominion of sin, till the mighty God, who made war with Satan and overcame, preached deliverance to them, and assured their hearts he had paid their ransom, and was now their Redeemer. No one has a right to free debtors but the creditor, and he who pays all for them, nor may any man deliver the slaves from the galleys or plantations, or place of slavery, but he that bought them. In this respect therefore has our Lord Jesus the pre-eminence, for he is Lord of all in heaven, and earth;



and hell, and can free whom he will. He is the only creditor, against him only have we sinned, and he only can frankly forgive us, and acquit and release us; but this he is more ready to do than we to ask. It is his office, his work, and delight to preach deliverance to the captives, and to set them at liberty. If therefore any are oppressed of the devil, or find themselves chained and bound by sin, turn to him as prisoners of hope, and look to him and be saved.

Another part of our Saviour's work was to recover sight to the blind. All our stupidity and ignorance in divine matters is called and esteemed blindness in the scripture. The God of this world has blinded all, and with all propriety may it be said, we were born blind. The blind person is not more at a loss to know what light is, or to distinguish colours, than a natural man is to understand our Saviour and see his salvation. This is a hard doctrine to some, and especially to such as are knowing and gifted men, who have a philosophical genius, and also to religious persons who know the letter of the law of God, can distinguish between sound and unsound preaching, have adhered to the best church, and professed the best and most orthodox system of faith and religion. To tell these of their being blind would offend them as much as when our Saviour once told it to the strict Jew, who angrily asked him, "Are we blind also?" Our Saviour answered, "If ye were blind ye should have no sin, but because ye say, we see, therefore your sin remaineth. For judgment I am come into the world, that they who see might not see, and those that see might be made blind;" that is, Jesus was come to open the eyes of the blind, and to enlighten those that had sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to remove the scales from their eyes, as he did by St. Paul, that they might see God and his salvation. But it is a melancholy thing when  
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people suppose they know enough, and can see already, and are yet strangers to our Saviour, and whose eyes were never anointed with his eye-salve, neither did they ever come to him to receive their sight. These are those who love darkness, and are of the Laodicean stamp and spirit, who boasted that they had need of nothing, and knew not that they were poor, and miserable, and blind. Such who proudly stand it out, and will have no other illumination but nature, no light but reason, receive no benefit by the gospel; Christ, the light of the world, is of no service to them, they are only the more blind, and all their wisdom becomes a curse and a snare to them, and their brightest counsels are, like the counsel of Ahitophel, foolishness.

I believe all the gracious acts of our Lord, in respect of his curing so many blind people in the days of his flesh, were written not only as a history of his deeds and miracles, but that souls, sensible of their blindness and darkness, might apply to him and be enlightened. Let them then who are spiritually blind tread in the steps of Bartimeus, and others, let them sit in the way begging, and though they should be persuaded and charged by their prudent friends, who are afraid of their being righteous over-much to hold their peace, and not make so much ado, yet let them cry so much the more, "Lord Jesus! thou Son of David, have mercy upon me." See only the astonishing effect Bartimeus's prayers had upon the Lord; he stood still; he could not proceed on his journey till he had helped him, he called him to him, and asked him. "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" and he answered, "Lord, that I might receive my sight; and Jesus said, receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee, and he received his sight and followed Jesus in the way." If you wish, O that I knew the road in which Jesus would go, or  
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could be so happy as Bartimeus, to know the place where he would pass by, I would beg like him, and not cease till I had prevailed; then know, as surely as Jesus passed along the road to Jericho, so surely is he present where two or three are met in his name; go and sit with them, and be assured Jesus passes by: If you cannot see him, he sees you, and has compassion on you. Speak to him and beg of him, as a beggar intreats for an alms; let neither friends nor foes prevent your crying to him, till he has said to you, "Receive your sight, your faith has made you whole." Thus has our Saviour done to many thousands, and is come into the world on that errand, to preach recovering of sight to the blind. He only said in the beginning of the creation, "Let there be light, and there was light," the same said only to the blind eyes Ephatha, and immediately they saw; let him only speak the word and you shall no longer walk in darkness, but have the light of life. Many of those who were healed by our Saviour could not relate distinctly how Jesus did the miracle, and neither did he work the same by all, but spat upon the ground and anointed one man's eyes, touched another's, and only spake to a third; but this all could say, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I see." So some who have been converted and brought into marvellous light by the divine Oculist, and whose blind eyes his tender mercy has opened, cannot always relate the direct manner of his dealings with them, or tell as others, step by step, all his gracious proceedings with them, but this all can affirm, "I know I was blind, I know I was in darkness, and walked in darkness once, I did not know whether I was going to heaven or hell, I was blind to my part and interest in the Lamb, I did not see him, I did not look upon him, I was blind, but now I see; I see Jesus, I see the things that make for my peace,  
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mine eyes have seen the Lord's salvation; he has recovered my sight, and I walk no longer in the cloud and in darkness, I know whither I am going, I am a child of light and of the day, the Sun of righteousness is risen upon me, the Lord himself is my light and my salvation, he is my sun by day, and my moon by night, and my light shall go down no more; God, my own God and Saviour, the Sun that went down in clouds and blood upon the mount Golgotha, is my light, and his countenance, once covered with shame and spittle, is my everlasting brightness."

Yet another office of our Saviour was to set at liberty them that were bruised. This is to release souls buffeted and hurried by Satan, to extricate the tempted, and such as are continually unsettled and unsafe through the persecution and envy of the serpent. There are some souls of whom it may be said properly, they are bruised; they are sore with trials, and surrounded with numberless temptations, but they have a Friend who was tempted in all points like them, who will preach deliverance to them, and set them at liberty, so that the enemy shall not approach to touch them and to do them violence any more; these have been like sheep driven from the fold, and worried up and down in the wilderness by beasts of prey, but Jesus is their good Shepherd; he says, "I will go after that which is driven away, I will bind up that which is torn, and heal that which is sick, and I will bring them back and feed them in good pasture." There are some in the world pitiable indeed, sore and bruised above measure, but to none is our Saviour more nigh and tender than to these; he pities them, and will surely lead them safe out of all temptations, and be their Saviour out of all their troubles; he will comfort all that mourn, they shall sooner or later find him wipe away the tears from their eyes, and leave no cause to complain or sigh any more.

more for ever. Are ye bruised? tarry the Lord's leisure, be strong and he shall comfort your heart; only put your trust in the Lord; though you sow in tears you shall reap in joy, and though heaviness may endure for a night, joy shall come in the morning; though you pass through the fire, and go through deep waters that rage and swell against you, remember who has said, "Ye shall not be burnt, neither shall the waters swallow you up; he will say one day to you, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, I also have appointed you to sit down with me in my kingdom; come in ye weary and heavy laden souls, enter the joy of our Lord!"

There is yet another office of our Saviour to be treated of, and that is, to publish the acceptable year of the Lord. There is a day of grace, and an acceptable time in which God is found, and wherein salvation is tendered and offered, so long the door of the wedding-chamber is open, so long the trumpet of jubilee sounds, and it is possible to let this season of mercy slip and pass over. This was the case of the Israelites of old, "Forty years long was God grieved with them," and when they always erred in their hearts, and gave no credence to his word, after he had said, "To-day if ye will hear my voice; he swarè that they should not enter into his rest." They were more thoughtful about the onions and garlick of Egypt, than to get the vineyards and olive-yards of Canaan, they longed more to go back and get the flesh-pots and herbs of the heathen, than the land flowing with milk and honey, wherefore God gave them up to their lusts, and they perished in the wilderness. Thus now many look after the pleasures and vanities of the present life, and despise the pleasures at God's right hand; they are eager and athirst for the things of this world, to redeem them from which it has cost the Lord so dearly, and the true

true land of Canaan, the glory of all lands, they slight: all his tender calls are of little weight to them, the price with which they were ransomed and bought is slighted, and they let the day of jubilee pass over, and so fall into the sad estate of Jerusalem, over which our Saviour weeping said, "O that thou hadst known in this thy day the things that make for thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes."

On the other hand, many embrace the gracious opportunity, and while it is called to-day, lay hold on everlasting life. It is our Saviour who has the honour to let the soul hear, "Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation!" O that he would preach it to all here, and give you cheerfully and joyfully to betake yourselves now to the sanctuary and hiding place of his wounds, that when the night comes, when no man can work, ye may be safe in the refuge, and accepted for sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

The day and year of grace is now come, the gospel is now preached, salvation is now set before you, all things are ready, let your hearts also be ready, and enter in by Jesus, so shall ye experience all his tender mercies and loving kindness. Let your eyes be fastened on him, and your ears attend to the gracious words that proceed out of his mouth, hear all he says, and abide with him; he is your friend and Saviour, he is the riches of your poor souls, he can preach deliverance to you in your captivity, he can open your eyes and anoint them with his tears and blood, that best of eye-salve, he can heal your broken hearts, and comfort you in all afflicting times. Get an insight into his wounds and stripes, learn to prize their healing, and to them bring every disease, and pain, and grief, till you are entered into your Lord's joy. Sit down at his feet, like Mary, and O! hear what he will say concerning you. Attend upon.

upon him and he will preach to you, he will be your minister, and secretly manifest to you his love and grace; he will set you at liberty from all trials, and find a way for you to escape in all temptations, and be your present help in the time of trouble. I have proved him and found him thus to me, and I heartily recommend you to him, that you also may be his witnesses, and rejoice in your good Minister and Lord, who is only worthy to receive blessing, and honour, and glory for ever. Amen.

# DISCOURSE XXIX.

## THE GREAT SACRIFICE.

HEB. IX. 26.

*Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

**T**HE antients differed very much about the author of this epistle, and though the most believed it to be St. Paul's, yet there are others who think it was wrote by Barnabas, and some few by St. Luke.

Most of the christian churches receive it as the work of the former, but whoever was the writer, it is certain that we have not a more blessed part of the holy scriptures than this, and which is, as it were, a key to the whole Mosaical dispensation.

Whoever reads it, must see that the intent of the whole is, if possible, to remove what stumbled and offended the Jews in the person of our Saviour, and to prove out of the law and the prophets, and also out of the Psalms, that the Messiah should be God Almighty, that he should become man and die for his people, and by invincible arguments out of the Old Testament, is proved that all the sacrifices, offerings, priesthood, laws and worship, ordained from the times of Moses, were all but shadows of Jesus Christ, and the great sacrifice of his own body offered once for all.

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This is the aim of the whole epistle, and the language of the author throughout, betrays an earnest desire of the salvation of the Hebrews, or Jews, to whom it is dedicated; and also the Holy Ghost intends thereby to give us light into the offering of the Lamb of God, and to inspire us with the certainty of his priesthood and power to absolve from sin, that we might come to him and be saved, and be firm and eternal followers of this great Apostle of our profession, whose sacrifice is our hope and glory to all eternity.

If I speak of this text in order, then I must

1st, Shew who he is that appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

2dly, What is meant by his appearing.

3dly, What the apostle would have us understand by his having come "now in the end of the world."

4thly, To shew how he hath "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" and to this head belongs the doctrine of his priesthood.

Lastly, I will shew what benefits we now receive through the sacrifice of Christ, and in what sense we are priests to him upon earth, and attend to him in quality of servants, about his altar.

Of the first head I shall speak but a little in this place, because the chief matter which now must be considered, is the doctrine of his offering up his own self to put away sin; but so much is needful to say, though I have often repeated it in many other discourses, and which can never too  
much

much be preached, that this Person of whom the whole epistle treats, as well as all the scripture, is Jesus Christ the God of all the earth, the Lord from heaven, and who is very and essential God equal to the Father, and his express image and substance, and the same with the Holy Spirit in the blessed Trinity from everlasting and to everlasting **JEHOVAH**. This has an unshaken foundation in the Bible, and if any word in that book be true, then is this doctrine true, that Jesus the Son of Mary, who died upon the cross, in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, at Jerusalem, is the Son of the living God. Amen. Be it so. Amen and Amen.

But what is meant in the second place by his appearing, since God often appeared; and we read frequently all through the prophets, how the Lord appeared to them, and they saw his similitude, and spoke with him face to face? The weight of this expression does not then lie herein, that he has appeared, though that really is amazing and awful, that the invisible and incomprehensible Jehovah has often spoke and appeared to his servants and church; but this is now to be understood, that this last time, he has appeared in the mean form of a servant, and as a man. When he appeared formerly, he did it in the form of an angel, or sometimes as a king sitting upon his throne with all his hosts adoring at his right hand and at his left hand, with the seraphims covering their faces with their wings before him, and crying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord: and at other times, as the Antient of Days, reverend and full of majesty with ten thousand times ten thousand ministering to him; and often only in a pillar of fire, in a cloud, in glory, in great light, &c. But now he who reared the noble arch of heaven, and built the

house eternal, appears in the form of a carpenter, and he who made all things, and was before all beings, appears in the form of a new-born babe, and is found in a manger. He that was and is the immortal and unchangeable, appears in the form of sinful flesh lower than the Father, lower than the angels, lower than any man, the very scorn of men and the outcast of the people. And wherefore has he so humbled himself? why has he so appeared? For the suffering of death. When sin abounded and reigned in the world over all flesh, and none in heaven or earth, or under the earth could help or deliver man out of his cursed and perishing condition, or make a sacrifice for sin or offer up an atonement and make reconciliation, he that sat upon the throne, said, "Lo! I come!" in the body of his flesh, he said, "I will do thy will, O my God!" I will lay down my life and die, and be offered up as a lamb for my sinful people, and so will end all mischief, and make peace; hence he is called, "The Lamb slain from the foundations of the world;" and hence properly he merits that title, "The Lamb of God."

But what are we to understand by that part of the text, "he has now appeared in the end of the world?" for this is the third thing to be spoken of.

The fathers even before Christ, and much more since his incarnation, have divided the world into three parts: The beginning of the world was from Adam until Moses, and this was about two thousand years. In this time every father was priest to his own family: and though sacrifices were offered, and prayers made to the Lord, the divine service was not so regulated as that all should be the pattern perfectly of that which was to come. In this time God spoke to the Fathers by visions, by dreams, voices, and in sundry kinds of manners;

ners; and to these he revealed the future salvation, and redemption by the sacrifice, or "bruising of the Seed of the woman, through the Holy Ghost, and "afar off they saw his day and were glad:" "They died in faith, and God was not ashamed to be called their God; yet, though they perhaps more innocently and freely escaped the depths of Satan at that time, they did not see the salvation clearly, as in after ages; but the righteous men and kings, &c. wished to see the days of the Son of Man which we see, but did not see them. They desired to hear what we hear, but did not hear it. Thus it was in the first part of the world.

The second dispensation began in Moses's time, when the children of Israel were servants under the Egyptians in a strange land, and when many of them had mingled with the heathen and learned their works. Now God raised up his servants, Moses and Aaron to be their saviours, and by these he led them out "with a high hand and with a stretched-out arm," having shewn his wonders and terrors in Egypt; and when he had brought them through the deep of the sea into the land of the wilderness, he gave them the law and appointed the priesthood, regulated the order of the sacrifices, and sprinkling of blood, &c. This was called the first covenant or Old Testament, and was sealed with the blood of bulls and goats, and to continue as a shadow till the seed of the woman, i. e. Christ should come: for Moses had been forty days in the mount with God, and had been shewn all the process of the redemption, how the Lord would become flesh, and like a lamb be offered up for sin upon the wood; how his misery and the wrath of God shall burn like a fire; how he should spread out his hands in his high-priest's manner, and make intercession for the transgressors,

and then sprinkle the people from their sin with his own blood; and hence Moses was charged "to make and constitute all things according to the pattern shewed him in the mount," *Exod. xxv, 40*; and no wonder that hence we find the same faithful servant of God repeat it in the book of the law, "And these words the Lord commanded Moses." In this time God also spake by visions, by Urim and Thummim, &c. to the prophets, by whom the gospel was more clearly seen into; and as the days of the Son of Man drew nearer, so they spake not as men who saw afar off. It is therefore we find in the prophets so much of the pure gospel, and such clear things of the Person, Godhead, and sufferings of the Lamb. But under the law, which lasted also about two thousand years, the most common way of preaching Christ, was in the sacrifices, which were offered daily, morning and evening, besides at other times of the new moons, solemn feasts, and days of expiation, and celebrating the feast of the passover. Here the manner of killing the lambs, offering up their bodies, the dress of the priests, the form of laying their hands upon the heads of the beasts, their washing their feet, sprinkling of blood and water, &c. are to be nicely observed, for they were exact figures of the offering up of the body of the true Lamb, who took away our sins in his death, and the sins of the whole world. This manner of divine service was continued till Jesus appeared, or as it is written of him, "until the Lord himself came into his temple," and thereby made the glory of the latter house to exceed the glory of the first, and this is the middle part of the world.

The end of the world is from Christ's sacrifice, to his second appearance in the clouds of heaven, when the mystery of God shall be finished. These days

days are called the latter days, by Joel, and by St. John when he saith, "this is the last time;" and in our text when the apostle says, "Now in the end of the world has God our Saviour appeared to put away sin." So justly may it be termed the last days, or end of the world, that we may be sure no other dispensation shall follow, no other change of doctrine or revelation, till Jesus is revealed from heaven in flaming fire: For, "in these last days, God has spoken to us by his Son," not afar off, as to the fathers, not darkly as by Moses, but plainly, that we may hold fast his words 'till he comes, and every eye shall see him. How long he may delay his coming, or if according to our ideas, or manner of measuring time, he may come quickly, we do not know. It is our time now to have our lamps lighted, and we dressed with our wedding-garments, knowing it is the end of the world, that if he come suddenly at evening, or midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning, we may be ready to meet him with joy.

I come now, in the fourth place, to shew how "he has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and to speak of the priesthood of him who once offered up his own body for us.

The high-priest, under the law, was chosen out from among the people, and appointed for a year; and this was to signify that our High-Priest should be a man like to his brethren, tempted and tried with infirmities like them, that he might help us when we are tempted, and that we may not be terrified with his presence, and fly from him as at Sinai. Again he was obliged to be separate from women at the time of ministration, to signify that Jesus should be a pure and undefiled virgin. Again, three days before the high-priest sacrificed he was ordered to wash his cloaths, and this Jesus did  
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when, the third day before he offered up himself, he washed his raiment in a bloody sweat, and with which he now stands before the throne, namely, with his vesture dipped in blood. The high-priest was also ordered to wear upon his head a crown or mitre, and was deemed royal: and more, the name of Jehovah was wrote thereon, intimating, that the true High-priest should be royal: "The King of kings, upon whose head are many crowns, and the name of the Lord is called upon him." Whoso looketh upon him may bow down without fear of idolatry, and worship and adore him, who is verily and truly the Lord. Again, the priest's vestment was a white ephod or surplice, which was a shadow of righteousness, but it reached only to the knees, to shew that the righteousness of the law was not perfect, and therefore John says, "Jesus hath a white garment down to the foot, because his righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and complete and perfect; and this is the white linen, the righteousness of the saints. Over this ephod the priests of Moses put on a robe embroidered with purple, blue, scarlet and gold; and this made him appear glorious in his apparel. So glorious did the King of Israel look in the day when he made the great oblation on the hills without the gates of Jerusalem. When he was stripped naked before all, and began his priestly office: when the scarlet blood, the purple wounds, and black and blue bruises mingled like embroidered work over his whole body. These wounds shine brighter than gold, and are dearer to his people, and more precious, than the finest gold of Ophir. But upon the priest's breast he wore the name of the children of Israel, engraved on precious stones; and this was done to shew how our High-priest should have us graven upon his breast: The nails and spear have wrote

wrote our names on his hands, and on the precious stone of his heart. Therefore can it be said with all propriety, "our names are written in heaven." The priests among the Jews had the sole care of offering up the sacrifice, laying their hands on the head of the victim, and praying for the people for whom it was offered, and pronouncing them blessed, &c. So Jesus was the sole contriver of the offering of which we speak: He prepared the body; He, the Lord God, provided the Lamb; he washed it in blood and water; he salted the sacrifice with his briny and salt tears; he laid upon it the iniquities of us all, and laid down his own life; he spread his hands towards heaven, and made the intercession for sinners; he entered the holy place with his own blood, to appear in the presence of God for us, (as the high-priest of the Jews, once a year, went into the holy of holies with the blood of others); and he only pronounces us absolved and pardoned, when he sprinkles his own blood on our hearts, and says, "This is the blood of the New Testament, which was shed for you and for many, for the remission of sin." But before ever the high-priest, after the order of Aaron, could minister, he was anointed with oil and consecrated in the most solemn manner; so Jesus, the Man Christ Jesus, was anointed above his fellows; the Holy Spirit was poured out upon him without measure, and he also was consecrated with an oath, "the Lord sware, and will not repent: thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Three things are found in our Saviour to qualify him to be a good high-priest, and such as suited with us: 1. He is God, and able to save to the uttermost. There is not a soul under heaven, who comes to him, however spoiled or undone, but he can absolve and forgive him. 2. He is the Son of Man, and to whom we may apply as to our brother. He



is merciful and tender-hearted; and like as when he was in all his glory, he could not bear to see us lost, but was grieved to the heart at our fall, and came down to help us: so now he has felt all our miseries and poor estate, he cannot send us empty away from him. 3. He is not like a priest after the order of Aaron, that by reason of death must cease to minister to our necessities, but he has an everlasting priesthood. He dieth no more. He lives for ever, and is a priest for evermore. Now, as well as on the very day of his sufferings, is he able to save; and his cries, and tears and wounds, and blood, and death, have the same availing effect before the throne, and on the golden altar, as if now the smoke of his torment ascended up from the earth before the face of the Lord.

But now I must speak of the sacrifice, the burnt-offering which he made once for all. As in the day of expiation the sins of the whole house of Israel were laid on the head of the scape goat, and he was then brought out of their gates bearing away their sin: so when God our High-Priest, knew the fulness of the time was come, he prepared also a victim, and laid on him the sin of the world. The whole blessed Trinity were one at this solemn and striking transaction, and officiated. The day of the feast of expiation was come, the day of the true passover; and on that very night whereon the Jews killed the paschal lamb, was our Passover slain. God Almighty took the sin of the first Adam, with all its dreadful and shocking consequences and effects, all the curse and chastisements due to the whole, and all our hurt, and laid the burden on the body and soul of Jesus. Therefore was he dumb before the rulers, and opened not his mouth: He saith, "O God, it was thy doing." He was therefore represented on that day as a goat in the law, and we know the reason:

reason: For a goat was the figure of a wicked man, as the sheep was of one innocent: And on this account it is that the scripture saith, "He was reckoned with transgressors." He was esteemed the greatest sinner that ever was, and black, and laden with the crimes and misdemeanors of all the nations; yea, God "made him to become sin for us who knew no sin;" and heaped as it were together, in him all evil, that in his death all might die, and the law be entirely fulfilled, and its revengeful spirit satisfied. Thus stood the second Adam, the Head and Representative of the whole race, before the Jewish high-priest, who by the Holy Ghost confesses, "It is better that this man die, and the whole nation perish not." When this was said the Jewish priesthood ceased for ever, and the type was no more; and now Jesus was set at nought and given into the hands of wicked men, who were as the Levites, and took their office, and prepared the Lamb for his offering. Then, that the scriptures might be fulfilled, "thou shalt shed the blood upon the ground;" it is the blood which maketh the atonement for the soul; they began to wound and cut the Lamb of God. The thorns tore his head, and the scourges his back; and in this cruel and mangled plight they dragged him out, the true Scape Goat, the true Lamb of God, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. The sacrifice had commonly been made upon the hills, and the chiefest on the mount Sion; but this sacrifice was made on mount Calvary. The cross was the altar, and the nails served for knives to wound him to death. It was a custom among the Jews while the sacrifice was killing, and at the time of the setting fire to the wood to burn it, for all the priests and Levites to blow their trumpets towards heaven, and all the people shouted for joy; but instead thereof, at the dying of Jesus, all the harpers

harpers harped upon their harps, and all the angels of heaven blew their trumpets to the Lamb, while below all the spectators shouted with cruel joy. Here must be observed also another custom of the Jews at the feast of expiation, namely, when the high-priest had killed the bullock and goat, he took and sprinkled their blood towards the mercy-seat seven-times; and thus did our good High-Priest: for just so many times he sprinkled his own blood towards heaven! 1. When he was scourged: 2. When he was crowned with thorns: 3. When one hand was pierced: 4. When the other was also so cut through: 5. When one foot was wounded: 6. When the other was bored in like manner: and 7. When his side was opened. Thus our High-Priest made the atonement, and sprinkled seven times the true blood for expiation of sin, on the great day of his sacrifice. Three hours, at least, he wept and bled, and suffered upon the altar, pouring out strong cries and tears, and with his hands spread towards heaven: and all known and unknown pangs he sustained; until the smoke of his warm reeking blood came up for an everlasting remembrance before God, and until he had fully endured the chastisement and curse of the world, and made an amends for all done amiss; and then knowing all things were accomplished which were written concerning him, "he bowed down his head and gave up the ghost." There hung the Ransom-Price just like a lamb; his legs red with pain, his heart melted, and he so besmeared and covered over with blood, that he really appeared like a burnt-offering. This dying of God's only child, this free-will offering of his body once for all, had such an effect in heaven, that (though millions of bullocks, rams, goats, and calves of a year old, with rivers of oil and sweet spices, had been offered before him for four thousand years

years in vain, and without being able to wash away our sin, or make reconciliation) now the Most-High was so pleased, his law so fulfilled, and his justice so satisfied, that for the sake of this Sacrifice, and on the sole account of this Oblation, he passed the general pardon, sin ceased before his face, and the curse vanished, so that calling the things that were not as though they were, and foreseeing what an effect this should have in its due time, he again pronounced the world and lost man, "very good." Thus then sin was put away, and thus Jesus the Lamb of God carried it into the wilderness, into the land of forgetfulness, that God might remember it no more. Thus was Jesus the true Scape Goat, the Lamb of God which took away the sin of the world.

I come in the last place to shew what benefits we now receive by this Sacrifice, and in what sense "we are priests to God and the Lamb upon earth." Many receive this glorious doctrine of redemption by the sacrifice of Christ in theory, and yet I fear have had nothing really and indeed in the hearts of the amazing and deep benefits of this Sacrifice. The sacrifices of the Old Testament could indeed strike and affect them who looked on, and the shedding of blood has always spoke, but those sacrifices did not cleanse the conscience, or make the comers thereunto perfect. Guilt still remained upon those that offered them, and upon those for whom they were offered; because it was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, or quench the divine wrath; and this David knew when he confessed, 'sacrifices and offerings thou wouldst not, neither hast thou pleasure therein;' and for which cause Jesus saith, "but a body hast thou prepared me, lo! I come to do thy will." In this therefore the sacrifice of Christ transcends all other: his blood purges the consciences

consciences of those who by faith look on, and his blood speaks peace and pardon in the hearts of such as come and behold him crucified. The Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Christ, and who comes in the name of Jesus, takes the blood of the New Testament and besprinkles body and soul, so that we who believe can say, "I have found redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." And this is no fancy, no bare reflection or meditation; but as certainly as we have once felt the intolerable weight of sin, and known our guilt, so certainly do we know we are pardoned by the offering up of the body of Christ for us. We have been up at his sacrifice, we have been washed in the laver of his blood and water, and have now our ephods clean and white, and stand round about his altar with linen garments, kings and priests to our God. As it was the office of the priests formerly to offer their prayers while the smoke of the sacrifice went up toward heaven, so we offer all our prayers and praises in the smoke of the torment of Jesus Christ: we know nothing is sweet till perfumed with this incense; nothing is hallowed or sanctified, but as it is laid on this Golden Altar, and sprinkled with this blood. Again, as the priests formerly sung and blew trumpets all the while the sacrifice burned; so all our hymns and songs of praise are nothing else but a solemn thanksgiving; that by the sacrifice of Christ all our sins are remitted and pardoned, and blotted out, and put away. On this account we sing with such inconceivable pleasure of his death, of his wounds, and how he poured out his soul. We know how we, who once feared to approach the throne of God because we were unclean, now can come boldly and minister in our white garments without fear. This is our office as long as we are in the world, and this we shall not cease to do when in heaven. To us  
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who believe, and have our sins put away, it is given to be present with the Lamb, and to stand so in faith, as if we were among the multitude who were his murderers. We are his witnesses, as if we had seen him die; and while others deride and mock, or slight and disesteem the Lamb, we worship and minister to him. Our whole business for ever is to plead and offer his death and sacrifice before God, and to blow our trumpets in his praise to the world, and before all the first-born; and in this we do nothing more than mingle with that innumerable company, who now are bowing before him, as he sits upon his throne stained with his own blood, in the office of the High Priest over the whole house of God, and thank and bless him in their language; for we, as well as all the rest now with him, have been redeemed and ransomed by him. "Therefore with angels and archangels, and all the goodly company of heaven, we worship him that sits upon the throne, even the Lamb that was slain, saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord, and blessed be his name for ever and ever." Amen.

## AN HYMN.

1. **O** JESUS, Son of God!  
 Who lov'd the world so dear,  
 That thou to save 't, in flesh and blood  
 Didst in the world appear:  
 With tears of thankfulness  
 Our souls remember thee,  
 In all thy weakness and disgrace,  
 And pain and misery.

*The Great Sacrifice.*

2. Thee on that night we view,  
When Judas thee betray'd :  
We see thee with the soldiers go,  
With all thy raiment red :  
For with thy bloody sweats,  
Thy clothes, thou Child divine !  
Appear'd like those who tread the fats,  
And roll their clothes in wine.
  
3. Soon thorns thy temples crown'd,  
Then scourg'd before the crowd,  
Till streams of blood from every wound  
Down thy dear body flow'd :  
When sore thy flesh was hewn,  
That ev'n the bones were seen,  
Then wast thou to thy people shewn ;  
One cry'd, " Behold the Man !"
  
4. Thy pain here ended not,  
Thou yet thy clothes must wear,  
And on these shoulders, raw and cut,  
Thy heavy cross must bear :  
Then down didst meekly lay,  
(O dearest Lamb of God !)  
And let them tear thy clothes away,  
And with them skin and blood.
  
5. Thy hands and feet they tore,  
Then nail'd thee on the tree ;  
O then what grief didst thou endure,  
What pain and misery !  
Oppressed unspeakably  
With all mankind's misdeeds ;  
All unbelief and misery !  
Behold he hangs and bleeds.

6. Three long and bitter hours  
He groan'd and cry'd aloud ;  
The rulers of infernal pow'rs  
So long afflicted God :  
Then fell beneath their stroke  
The Prince and Lord of all !  
And down death, hell, and sin he broke  
In his amazing fall ;

7. Thus he for sin aton'd,  
Thus paid the ransom-price ;  
And thus the Lamb of God was bound,  
And made a sacrifice ;  
Salvation to the Lamb !  
Through heav'n immediate rung :  
Salvation to Immanuel's name !  
Shall ever be our song.



## DISCOURSE XXX.

### LOT'S FLIGHT.

GEN. xix. 17.

*Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain: escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.*

**T**HESE words the angels spake to Lot and his family when they had brought them out of Sodom, and were about to take leave of them. The blessed spirits seemed apprehensive of their being yet in danger either of loitering, or looking back, or staying in the plain, though they were out of the city, and therefore puts them in mind their lives were at stake; and to be disobedient now, or to delay, would be to run the risk of being consumed; and, in the most pressing manner, charges them in my text, to make the best of their way, and fly for their lives.

This part of the divine history is really most affecting: here we may see at once both the goodness and severity of God; his goodness in saving Lot's house, his severity in destroying the cities of that country in so awful a manner.

It appears, by what precedes my text, that all those unhappy cities, and the country round about, had abounded in all plenty; and pride and fulness of

of bread, as we read in *Ezekiel* xvi. 49. had made them forget God, and in general they were gone into strange and unnatural lusts; so that "the cry of their sins was gone up to heaven, and the Lord was come down to destroy it." We read in the eighteenth chapter, that three angels came to Abraham the day before, and staid with him all night; but two of them only came to Sodom, and rose up early in the morning; but the third, who no doubt was the angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus, staid behind, and revealed to Abraham what was in his heart to do to Sodom and the adjacent cities. For a good while the faithful patriarch pleaded and made intercession for the city; but at last he submitted; and the "Lord went his way from communing with Abraham, and he returned to his place."

Here we may observe many things worthy our notice: First, how our Saviour would not bring his judgments upon a wicked place; but he would first acquaint his servants, lest they should have been too much surprized at the sudden stroke, or questioned if the righteous were not destroyed as well as the ungodly, and so might have all their life time been in jeopardy, lest he that had visited so heavily those of Sodom, might, by and by, visit them also in the same way? therefore would God set the matter in a right light before his children, ere the vengeance and the storm fell.

Again, we may see how our Saviour humbled himself to stay and lodge in a tent, and disdained not of old to appear in the form of a man: for in the human form he and his angels appeared to Abraham, chap. xvii. 2. We have no right to grudge this happiness to Abraham, Lot, &c. for the same Lord and Saviour yet dwells with his children, and not as a guest that tarrieth for a night, but he comes to make his abode with us; and no doubt many angels

guard the beds and houses of such as are heirs of salvation. And this is no wonder; that they minister to us in this way; for they were witnesses what Jesus suffered to redeem us; and saw him in his worst agonies and sorrows to save us, and must count it an honour to attend upon souls whom God purchased with his own blood. Might they speak with us, I am persuaded they would often accost us, as once Gabriel did the blessed virgin, with, "Hail, thou highly favoured!" but this shall be done in worlds to come; and now they are continually ascending and descending before the thrones; to receive orders concerning us; and are daily employed and busied in ministering and serving to us. But I think we have a good reason to give, why we may not see them; but upon some particular occasions, nor speak with them; and that is, lest we should be tempted to worship them, or ascribe our safety to them, and dishonour; and even rob our Saviour, their master and maker; and had we liberty to commune with them, it would not be so well with us as now; for then we should be too apt to live without that near fellowship which we now have with Jesus Christ himself, and this is better than to have communion with all the angels in heaven.

But another thing is observable, and that is the diligence which was seen in the angels; for "they rose up early in the morning," and went about their grand business, which was the saving of Lot, the nephew of Abraham. O that the ministers, who are a sort of angels to the churches, and have an office, in many respects, like the angels, would learn hence; that their business is the king's business, and requires haste, and that early and late they would pursue it; and even not stay to salute any man by the way, when Jesus sends them: I mean, not stand complimenting and trifling with souls, but plainly, boldly, and

and at the loss of all things, deal in their work as servants of that Master, with whom is no respect of persons, and have his charge so at heart, that till they have finished their course, and laid down their staff and sandals, they might grudge no labour and spare no pains to win souls out of danger, and get them to flee out of spiritual Sodom.

When the angels came into the city, they stood in the street opposite to Lot's door, as if they would try the good man; but he would not rest till they were come in to him, but little thought who he had entertained. He little thought that they were come to be saviours to him; such blessings yet attend the receiving and being hospitable to strangers. Many, who have received unwares a child of God into their houses, may, in the last day, hear our Saviour say to them, "I was a stranger, and ye took me in;" and when they shall say, "When, Lord?" He shall answer, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it to me." As soon as Lot had brought in his guests, the men of the city, filled with lust, would rush in also, and know these men: and all the entreaties and wholesome advice he could make use of was of so little effect, that they were only so much the ruder, till the angels pulled in Lot, and smote the men with blindness. Hear this, ye poor adulterers! ye unclean! and ye who abuse yourselves with lusts, and know that the whole is but fuel for the fire of the last day! but get you to the cold sweat of Jesus; those great drops alone can check and damp the unholy fire, and make you, though ever so polluted, clean, and like virgins, before the throne of God.

As soon as Lot was got in again, the angels began their weighty message thus: "Hast thou any sons or daughters, or sons-in-law, in this place? or whatever thou hast, bring them out of the city; for we will

will destroy it. The cry of their sin is gone up to heaven, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it." Lot believed the word of God immediately, and went out to warn his sons-in-law, and those of his children that were married out; but all in vain. He seemed to them only as one that had dreamed. I suppose he told them, "Up, my children, and come out of this city with me: for, before the sun is well risen to-morrow, this place shall be laid in ashes, and the souls therein shall perish." But, as I said, however affecting and awful the warning had been to him, it had no great effect on them. They thought, "Poor Lot; he has got new fancies; he has always preached to us before now, but this is a new fear that has got into his brain:" and they mocked him, and he went grieved away. Just so the scoffers of our age make their game, and the drunkards make songs on such as come to invite them from endless ruin, and they do it upon the same ground as the children and relations of Lot when they mocked him. I do not doubt but they looked out, and saw the evening as clear and calm as ever; no sign of any storm, nor a thunder-cloud in all the sky; nor the least appearance of lightnings, or any other blazing lights in the air, and so could easily conclude it was only a dream of their religious, but weak-headed father. Men may now see no sign of any approaching evil; bless God that they live in a land of plenty, under a mild government, and in peace, and out of fear of invasions from abroad, &c. and so can despise their religious parent's kind admonitions and warnings, laugh at the preachers of God's word, and mock those who would beseech them to be reconciled to God, and come out of the world to be saved; but let them only remember the words of our Saviour, "As it was in the day when Lot went out of Sodom, they eat, they drank, were married,

married, and given in marriage, they bought, they sold, they planted and builded, till the fire and brimstone rained down from heaven, and destroyed them all; so (he says) shall it be when the Son of man shall come in his day. Watch ye, therefore, lest that day should come suddenly, and ye be unprepared."

When Lot was returned home, and the day broke, the angels hastened him, and bade him "fly with his wife, and the two young daughters who were there with him, lest he also should perish in the same iniquity as the city." He had been striving and labouring with others so long, that he had well nigh stayed and perished himself. This should serve to teach us, that though we do right in warning, yea in intreating and persuading our friends and relations to come with us, and follow the Lamb, yet if they will not, we must not stay with them: in this case, therefore, we must leave our fathers and mothers, and brethren and sisters, and wives and children, or whoever is dear to us, and go to heaven without them, rather than by thinking to yield a little for the present, to succeed with our purpose hereafter, we stay ourselves, and be involved in their ruin. This has many times been the case: arise, therefore, and leave all the world, and follow thou Jesus out of the camp, bearing his reproach, for the Lord will certainly destroy this place; this world shall soon be consumed, and all the kindreds of the earth shall mourn in that day, when he will burn up all like an oven, and when all the ungodly shall be like stubble before his fire." In that day shall it be said, "Blessed are all they that have put their trust in him."

I suppose Lot had much to do, and was careful what he should pack up, and what he should want

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on his flight, &c. Hence it is said; "He lingered, and then the angels took hold on his hand, and on the hand of his wife, and on the hand of his two daughters, (the Lord being merciful to them) and brought them out of the gate of Sodom;" and then gave them a solemn charge—"Now escape for thy life, look not behind thee, stay not in all the plains, lest thou be consumed, but escape to the mountains, for I can do nothing till thou art come."

Who could have thought that Lot, who had so stedfastly believed the word of God, and had so eagerly laboured to get out his children and relations, could have lingered himself? Yea, this went so far, that had not the Lord been doubly merciful to him, he had staid and perished after all.

Hear this, ye serious people, who surely believe that the Lord will destroy this world; who look upon yourselves as called out of it, and who are pilgrims and strangers in the earth, and who yet linger. You are so careful of your many matters, so busied and cumbered about many things, that though called so long ago, you have not perhaps yet fled to the refuge, nor laid hold on the horns of the altar; you have not yet made your calling and election sure, nor got safety in God's hiding-place. O may the Lord be merciful to you, and take hold on your hands and hearts, and bring you out! May he force you from your cares and lingering in your uncertain state, and with a high hand and stretched-out arm lead you out of all danger, and set you above the reach of men or devils: nor let this world, or world to come, nor life nor death, nor any power, be ever able to pluck you out of his hands, or separate you from his love.

When Lot heard this, and knew the mountains were

were at a great distance, and began to tremble for fear he should not be able to reach them before the storm fell, he entreated the Lord to let him turn into a cave in the little city of Zoar; and God said, "See, I have accepted thee in this thing; make haste, for I can do nothing till thou art come hither." Here is mercy upon mercy! and grace for grace! For though he had loitered, the Lord would not destroy Sodom till he was safe; and when his strength failed, and he could not hold out to the mountains, God provided him a cave of refuge in Zoar, and hid him there till the wrath was overpast. I do not doubt but as soon as he entered the cave, and saw the flames fall, and heard the overthrow of the cities, he adored that Lord who had been merciful to him, and brought him out, and comforted himself in his little asylum. Here I will leave him then and his daughters a little, and look back upon his poor wife; for she, notwithstanding the strict charge of the angel, "Look not behind thee," had ventured to do it, and was struck dead, and left as a standing monument of disobedience upon the plain. She had left the city, with her husband and daughters: but, perhaps, thought upon the riches, the fine streets, and well-adorned houses, which now must all be burnt and destroyed, and in her heart turned back; and, while she looked about to see the city once more before it was in flames, she was turned into a pillar of salt. So some have left the world in its lying vanities, have forsook all the delicacies of the mother of harlots, and followed the Saviour and his people a little while, but have by-and-by secretly wished for some of the old pleasures, the sweet darling sins which they had left; they have forgot that they were called to be a sort of spiritual Rechabites, and have wanted houses,  
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lands, or wished to indulge themselves a little longer in the feasts and drinkings of this world, before it should be all burnt up; and they have been there left, and made spectacles for angels and men, who were unworthy of the kingdom, and loved the world better than our Saviour. O my dear friends! you who are now escaped out of the world, and at any time should find a hankering after the things you have left, hear what our Saviour says, "Remember Lot's wife!" Yes, remember her fall, and run your race; looking to Jesus, resolved not to go back, nor even to look back, lest you should fall through the same example of unbelief.

The same message which the angels brought to Lot, I bring to you to-day—"Up, for the Lord will destroy this place." This world, however fine and goodly, however pleasant or valuable, shall, ere long, feel the fire of the great Refiner. The beautiful sun, that governed this day, shall be darkened; the moon shall be turned to blood; and those bright stars, that have ruled the night, and lightened the dark pavilion of the heavens, shall fall and be darkened; every mountain and green hill shall depart; and every well-built city, and every fine house, shall be destroyed, and not one stone left upon another which shall not be thrown down. Let me not seem to you as one that has dreamed; do not believe as the sons and daughters of Lot; but know ye, "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, and he will do it: up, then, and escape for your life, for your eternal life; look not behind you, neither stay in all the plains, lest you be consumed."

"Escape for thy life! This belongs to every soul under heaven, and intimates so much, "Thou art in danger, thy life is at stake—but there is a refuge

refuge :—there is a storm coming—but there is a hiding-place prepared by him who is not willing any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved.” If the danger I speak of was only that of losing our temporal lives, O that would be but little! and yet, even in such a case, what pains and labours do some take, and at what expences are they to support or preserve a life, which is but like a weaver's shuttle, and like a dream at best! But the life I speak of is for ever and ever. If you, therefore, have a mind to escape the danger of the second death, if you have a desire to get everlasting life, you may: our Saviour sets it before you, and tells you, “Come unto me, believe in me, look upon me, and you shall not perish, you shall have everlasting life.” He has appointed a place of sanctuary, a refuge in the stormy wind and tempest; and whoever sees or fears the impending judgments which shall come upon the world, whoever is willing to leave all, and follow him, he shall not cry, as if there was no safety, he shall not be in such a state for which there is no remedy, no help, no cure: for though his sins are numberless, great, and heinous, though the remembrance of them is grievous, and the burden of them intolerable; though they were more in number than the hairs upon his head, and though his heart fails, still there is a place to fly to, there is an asylum, there is an altar, a sanctuary, from which none have ever been dragged. It is the cross of Jesus, it is our Saviour: escape hither, and thy soul shall live. Whoever comes to his blood, shall never perish; it is the very fountain of life and was opened because of sin and uncleanness. Out of mere pity and grace our Saviour contrived this, for the healing of the nations, and invites all to these waters. All the many heavy and even terrible things

things spoken of in the scripture, either of the judgment to come, of death, or the chains of darkness, is only, if possible, to awaken the soul to a sense of the reality of that loss it can sustain, if it stays with the world in the unregenerate state; and, therefore, it is as often, and far more often, shewn what love Jesus bears to sinners; how he has died for them; how he is not pleased with the death of them that die, but would have them come to him, and be saved; and the language of his tender heart hourly is—"Escape for thy life! Come to me, and I will receive thee; ask of me, and I will give thee living water: escape to me, and thou shalt live." May all that hear me obey his voice, hearken, and come, and so save their souls alive!

The next part of the text is—"Look not behind thee." This belongs to such as have been awakened, and are really concerned about their salvation. Our Saviour knew how many snares should be laid for such well-meaning souls; how many contrivances, Satan and the world would have to seduce them back; therefore in general he charges them, "Look not behind thee. Remember Lot's wife." Remember, "He that putteth his hand to the plough and looks back, is not fit for the kingdom of God." The charge he gave the prophet, who cried against the altar in Bethel, is what he gives to thee. "Turn not again by the way thou camest." You know what wonders God wrought in saving his people once out of Egypt; how he fought for them, how he dried up a way for them through the sea, and made the waters stand on heaps on each side till they were safe over; how he plagued Egypt till they let them go; and at last buried all the hosts of Pharaoh that pursued them into the depths of the waters, and then set the good land of Canaan before them, "a land flowing with milk and honey; the

the glory of all lands." But after all, those who before had groaned under the bondage of the heathen, and had cried in their affliction and were delivered, forgot it, and began to wish for the flesh-pots of Egypt, garlick, onions, and cucumbers; and though they had manna and fowl in abundance, and were kept with water out of the rock, they were not contented: "In their hearts," it is said, "they turned back into Egypt; wherefore God was not pleased with them, but they perished in the wilderness." They despised the land before them, and chose present blessings, though so small and trifling, and it became a hurt to them, so that they could not enter into his rest. Many serious people set out after a good manner; they run well; till by and by somewhat of their old pleasures appear before them; their company persuade, their own lusts tempt, and the enemy is perpetually busy in seeking to get them to look back, and at last he succeeds—"They return as a dog to his vomit, and a sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire." These are they, who, for the sake of temporal riches or pleasures, or for other things, venture the loss of the heavenly Canaan, the New Jerusalem, and the true promised land; these are they who look back, and fall again into their old sins by little and little, and despise the glory of all lands. Not so did Moses; he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to be a prince, and be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and enjoy the pleasures of sin, which are for a season. His eye was to another world; nor would he look till he had entered, by the gates, the paradise of God. Be ye, my brethren, not like the disobedient wife of Lot; count it not a pity that this whole world, and its fashions and rarities, pass away, and are burnt up, without being enjoyed by

you ; you have a better world, and a kingdom that cannot be shaken, before you. Nor be you like the foolish Israelites, who forgot so easily and so soon their cruel servitude in Egypt, and only remembered their flesh-pots, and herbs, and so displeased God their Saviour. No, never forget the cruel slavery you have been in under the yoke of Satan, and out of what extreme distress and deep misery you have groaned when you served sin, and felt the fearful smart of a guilty mind, and the looking for judgment. Above all, forget not the price God the Lamb paid to rescue you from such a thralldom and cursed state ; how he trembled, and sweat blood, and was so many years acquainted with grief, only to ransom you. O ! do not play with the Most High, or trifle with Jesus ; but leave all, nor dare cast a wishful look back on any of your former sins, or on this world, for it is dangerous ; but " escape for thy life, and look not behind thee."

The third part of the text is, " Neither stay thou in all the plains : escape to the mountains, lest thou be consumed."

This belongs to people who are come out from the world, who are very much against looking back but yet settle in a strange lukewarm estate ; and with all their cry against the world, and condemning of apostates, themselves are staying, as it were, in the plains, and not arrived at the mark of the prize of their high calling ; they are not yet happily persuaded of their interest in Christ ; they have not received the earnest of their everlasting inheritance, and do not know their sins are forgiven. Of these there are many in the world whose hearts daily misgive them, and who inwardly feel they are not right, and yet stay or halt, almost persuaded to be christians. These are they to whom the Holy Ghost gives this advice, " Stay

“Stay not in all the plains, but escape to the mountains.” By the mountains we may understand, in a spiritual sense, the mount Zion, the everlasting hills, the end and height of all our aims in this pilgrimage. But lest you might think as Lot did when he found himself grow weary and tired, “O let me turn into Zoar, and live:” lest you might think, “O I am afraid I shall never hold out! I shall not arrive timely to the mount of God! I feel my strength very little, and my corruptions and sins strong!” therefore has God, your God, the Saviour, your Saviour, prepared for you a Zoar; he has ordered a cave whereto you may fly; it is his own open side! his wounds are the best refuge, the safest and most secure place to fly to in heaven and earth. Methinks I hear him say to you, “I know thy weakness, I know thy little strength, and how thou wouldst not hold out till thou shouldst reach the eternal rest; the storm would have surely overtaken thee, and thou wouldst have been consumed; therefore behold my hands and my feet; see my pierced side, and turn in there, and thou shalt be safe; hide thee there, and no harm shall befall thee. This shall be to thee like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” This is the voice of our Beloved; and this is his language to guilty souls, who are flying for their lives. There is indeed no other plea you may try, and God’s sword will find you; his fire shall burn you out: the avenger of blood will pursue you, and cut you in pieces; but turn in there; fly to the wounded Lamb of God, take refuge under his shadow, and you shall be safe in time and in eternity, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. O turn to that friend of sinners, that city of refuge; betake yourself to Jesus, and lay open all your frights and fears, your guilt and sins,

before him. He will hear you, he will accept you, and shew mercy to you, and under his wings you shall rest, and none shall make you afraid.

Just so as Lot could comfort himself in his cave, when all around him was in flames, so shall you comfort yourself in Christ's wounds, and in his arms you shall feel that peace the busy and cumbered world are strangers to; that joy which they meddle not with; and that safety in the assurance of your everlasting part in the love of God as is inexpressible. You will then be for inviting all into your strong-hold; every affrighted sinner you will call into your refuge, and every uneasy heart entreat to come and rest with you out of the reach of all harm or dangers. Do not then linger any longer, you half-minded people, nor make light of it; for hear only how weighty it is to our Lord God—"I can do nothing, he saith, till thou art come." As if he had said, "Knowest thou, my poor child, why the angels, with their destroying weapons, are ordered not yet to destroy? Or why those who have the power over the winds, are forbid to hurt the earth, or any green tree? Or why the so long threatened tempest is delayed, and the storm kept back? It is because thou art not yet marked, thou art not yet got into the city of refuge; thou art in an unsafe and insecure estate, and I am so tender over thee, I cannot suffer the last trumpet to blow, nor set the angel to proclaim *time shall be no longer*, till thou hast escaped into the true Zoar; till my new name has sealed thee to the day of redemption, and my bleeding wounds have sheltered thee. O my child, make haste and escape hither, for I can do nothing till thou art come." This is indeed the case: if Jesus was not in heaven, with his vesture dipt in blood; if his cries and tears did not avail so powerfully,

fully, and his intercession take such effect, before now we had been like Sodom and Gomorrah, or Admah and Zeboim; and Tyre and Sidon had not been in a more wretched estate than we. And this is the true reason why judgments and sudden taking of vengeance are not so frequent now as formerly: then fire from heaven, earthquakes, plagues, and many shocking strokes of divine justice chastened the sins of whole countries, and of particular men, but now our High-Priest stands before the throne; he spreads out his hands, and turns away the wrath. Instead thereof, he invites the sinner to him; and having borne the storm and weight of all our wrath in his own body and soul when he hung on the tree, he has the just right to shelter whom he will. May all that hear me to-day take the alarm, "Up, for the Lord will destroy this place." And because ye surely expect it yourselves, and believe ere long the world that now is shall be consumed, and that all who belong to it will perish, therefore, Escape for your lives; look not behind you, nor stay in all the plains; but hasten to Jesus, and obtain of him pardon and eternal life; and then let the judgments come when they will, you shall be safe, and like virgins, ready to meet the bridegroom. You shall not be in danger by any means: Jesus shall be your Saviour, and "the eternal God your refuge; his everlasting arms shall be underneath you," and his wounds shall shelter you, in your last hours, in the great day, and to all eternity. You shall find what the scripture means, which saith, "A man shall be for a hiding-place in the storm, and a covert in the wind and tempest, and like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." In the day when the sign of the Son of man shall be seen coming in the clouds of heaven

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in his Father's glory, and with him ten thousands of saints, and all his holy angels, when the heavens shall melt at his presence, and a shower of fire shall burn up the earth, and all shall tremble, and be shaken terribly, that soul shall be happy who has made his wounds their Zoar; and who have, in time of grace and salvation, fled to his side for refuge. That harbour is safer and better than the city into which Lot turned; more secure than the sanctuary in the temple; and that cave more nigh to every affrighted soul, who would fain flee from wrath to come; and more real, commodious, and suitable, than that wherein Lot hid with his daughters, or that wherein Elias was preserved, when the strong wind passed by before the Lord, and rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks, and which was followed by an earthquake and fire: for when once a poor sinner is become a refugee here, and is got to his crucified Saviour, and by faith has laid hold on his grace, and entered into his embraces, persecution, sicknesses, troubles, losses, famine, the sword, and death with all his terrors, and Satan with all his rage, may pass by and threaten, but—“No harm shall happen unto his, nor any evil come near his dwelling.” Should such an one be called suddenly at midnight to meet the bridegroom, he is ready, like a virgin, with his lamp burning; and should he see all in flames about him, and find men's hearts failing, he could sing with a holy triumph, “The Lord, the eternal God, is my refuge, my fortress, my tower, my safeguard, my stronghold, the Lord is my hiding-place, and my sanctuary for ever.

Thus shall the man be blessed who takes the Lord's warning, and escapes to Jesus. Thus may you and I be blessed; and as long as we live may  
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we live in this safety; and when we die, may we depart in peace, and stand in the judgment boldly, and be indeed like doves who are fled to the clefts of the rock, and are saved.

Grant this, O most dear Saviour, to all here, for thy tender mercy's sake. Amen.

## DISCOURSE XXXI.

### DELIVERANCE FROM DEATH.

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JOHN viii. 51.

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my sayings, he shall never see death.*

**T**HESE words of our Saviour, like many other of his sayings, are too lightly passed over, and not regarded, as being difficult to be understood, and appearing a sort of parable, although nothing concerns us more, or is more certain and true.

Whoever reads the holy scriptures, must needs observe that many such places as this are found therein; and no doubt many, like the Jews, are offended with them, and serious people, who dare not reject any part of the oracles of God, and yet see daily the just and unjust fall alike a prey to the grave, must wondering think, "How can this be?"

I will therefore in this discourse, treat of this matter freely, and shew what properly death is; what it is to keep his sayings; and confirm this blessed doctrine out of the scriptures, "that whosoever keeps his word shall not taste of death;" or, as once he said to Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, at another time, "they shall never die."

It is very certain that, in this place, by death, is not meant the departure of the soul out of the body,

body, nor is it the language of the Holy Ghost, either in the Old or New Testament, to call our leaving this world, death; but, on the contrary, it is generally said of such as die in faith among the patriarchs and prophets, "such an one was gathered to his people;" or, "slept with his fathers;" or, "gave up the ghost:" so Daniel saith, "they that sleep in the dust:" and very seldom it is said they died, unless spoken of unbelievers, or such as were not people of God; and herein the nice distinction of the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls is to be observed in the New Testament, for speaking of the decease of Lazarus, to his disciples, he saith, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth;" and only on account of the weakness of his followers, who did not understand him, he said, "He is dead." After the same manner he said in the house of the ruler, when the mourners were lamenting over a departed child, "Give place, she is not dead, but sleepeth." Matth. ix. 24. Thus the Lord would have us look upon the natural change which good and bad experience. The apostles followed our Saviour in this way of speaking, and so wrote of Stephen, "That he fell asleep." And St. Paul calls such as were departed in Christ, persons "who sleep in Jesus," 1 Thess. iv. 14. But what properly then is death? When God had blessed Adam and Eve in paradise, he forewarned them not to eat of one tree, saying, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;" and this undoubtedly came to pass, according to the word of the Lord; for though Adam lived some hundred years after he had eaten the forbidden fruit, yet that same day, in which he sinned, the life which God breathed into his heart, when he became a living soul, departed from him, and he became dead to God while he lived. Thus death entered the world  
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temporal and spiritual; and in this sense it is said, "In Adam all died," i. e. all were robbed of divine life, and lost that which is the image of God, and which is only recovered by faith in Christ, who came to be a quickening spirit, and to give life to the world.

I know that some think the death threatened to Adam, was only temporal, and that his sin only rendered him subject to die, or made him mortal; and that because a thousand years are, with the Lord, as one day; so it might, in a certain sense be said, he died, that day he sinned, because he died before he had seen a thousand years; but this sense is far too shallow, and serves only to please such as would not willingly allow of all becoming sinners, and dying spiritually in Adam; which is a doctrine most surely true, and according to the scriptures. I cannot look upon temporal death as a curse, or that we suffer any thing through God's ordering the cherubim to guard the tree of life, that Adam might not eat of it, and live for ever; but I think it was the tender mercy of our Saviour, who after sin had entered, and death and hell followed, designed we should not live for ever in that fallen state, but let our poor bodies return again to dust, from whence they were formed, and rest there till he should create all things new, in which day they might rise again in likeness of his glorious body. And thus, if a man by mischance, had let some goodly grain, such as wheat or barley, fall into some nasty ditch, or dirty place, so that it was no longer fit for use; his best way would be to sow it, and he would nevertheless lose nothing by it, but get a good harvest out of it. Even so the good Husbandman does with our mortal and vile bodies: He sows us in likeness of his death, that we may be raised in likeness of his resurrection,  
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And, indeed, one can easily see that temporal death, is now of no harm to us; for how miserable would our lives be, after we had passed some hundred years, and were sickly, infirm, and a burden to ourselves, and all round about us? It is better, as I said before, that we can lay down our poor spoiled tabernacles; and rest till the Lord comes: and this must be looked upon in no other light, if we believe, than that the weary pilgrim has laid by his staff and accomplished his warfare in a good age, and is now resting in the same bed, in the same earth from whence they were born, and where once their dear Lord lay. A believer cannot have such ideas of the grave as those under the law had; for we cannot dread it as a pit, or a prison, but as our beds, out of which we surely awake, and sing, "O grave! where is thy victory?"

But this is not an easy matter to a person unconverted, I mean one who was never quickened by Jesus Christ, or ever knew what it meant, to get eternal life by believing in his name. These are dead indeed: and however far they have advanced in the form of godliness, and can make their boast how well they have lived, how little evil they have done, how much they have served God, and are educated and brought up in the best church, yet God shall say of such, "I know thy works; thou hast a name to live, but thou art dead." A man departing this life, loaded with the sins of his youth, a soul taking its flight into eternity, who does not know the Saviour, who has never received its pardon, who does not know its name is written in heaven, but has madly gone on in the world, and slighted the precious blood and merits of Jesus Christ, or foolishly contented itself with being strictly honest, and having lived a moral life in the sight of men, such a one can taste of death,

death, such a one can feel horrors and distress unspeakable; and when the death-sweat is upon them, when their limbs are growing cold and benumbed, and the eye-strings breaking, and no friend can comfort them more; when they must go, and feel there without Christ and his righteousness, and are now not worthy to be with him, O, such die, such feel the pangs of death, the sting of the king of terrors, through the fear of which all the world have been subject to bondage. Every man by nature lies in his death, and is not sensible of it till awakened by the voice of the Son of Man, till the Holy Spirit, through the preaching of the gospel, awakes those who sleep, and leads them to Jesus Christ, who can alone give them life; or as himself expresses it, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and they that hear shall live." And this is not spoken of the last or general resurrection, but of a work wrought in the heart in this world; because he saith, in the same place, "The hour is coming, and *now is*, when this shall be done." At the sepulchre of Lazarus he preaches thus: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me shall live, though he were dead. And again the scripture saith, "Blessed are those who have a part in this resurrection, the second death shall have no power over them. They shall never die." But let a man venture into eternity carelessly, and experience nothing of this; let a soul dare go to another world, depending on his own righteousness, or die without having in the heart the witness of God's Spirit, with his spirit, that he is a child of God, or without feeling and knowing that our Saviour has given him life; and such a one shall find there is somewhat true in our having died in Adam; and forasmuch as he did not come to our Saviour, that he might live, he shall not  
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not save his soul alive; he shall die, he shall see death, and tremble, do what he will. Do not then put these things far from thee; do not say, as Felix did once to Paul, when his doctrine made him shudder and quake, "Go thy way, for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." O rather go into thy closet, and shut the door after thee, and hold an assize in thy own breast, Ask thy heart, Am I ready for my change? Have I not indeed lived without Christ in the world? Is not my heart yet dead to God, and cold as ice to the dying of Jesus, and to his bleeding wounds? O let nothing be so weighty a matter to you as this! Let nothing be so much your desire, as to get eternal life through Jesus Christ! Look up to him, and speak to that dear crucified Lamb; he will hear you, and make you feel that his death has destroyed Death, and brought you from the dead to live with him in time and eternity.

But this brings me to speak of that way in which we escape the tasting of death, and that is by keeping our Saviour's words: "If a man keep my sayings, he shall never see death." To keep our Saviour's sayings is, properly, to believe them, to embrace his promises, and hold them as the most precious treasure; that when in the world the blessings of our Saviour are questioned by wicked men, you may depend upon his promises, and hold fast his word; and at the loss of all things keep it as the true sayings of God. When men, who love not our Lord Christ, speak lightly of his scriptures, do you let them be weightier to you than all the arguments of reasoning men; and let Jesus Christ's answers to Satan, in the days of his temptation, be your answer in such cases: say, "It is written." Therefore I believe, and upon this will I venture body and soul. But a child of



God can say more : he has not only looked upon the writings of the prophets and apostles, as sacred and inspired ; he can say, I believe and know. For that faith whereby we keep the sayings of our Saviour has, in its own nature, the assurance and knowledge of the thing believed. " Faith is the evidence of things unseen." And our Saviour says, " If a man keep my word, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." The Holy Ghost writes it so upon the heart, gives such an inward and comfortable confidence of the truth of it, that whoever keeps his word, sees the glory of God, is made free, has our Saviour manifested to him, overcomes Satan and the world, and gets everlasting life in his heart. All these are scriptural truths, and have had in all ages multitudes of witnesses who have suffered martyrdom, or died in faith, as good soldiers upon their beds, assured that they had already laid hold on eternal life, and escaped death. Do thou, as Mary did, lay up all the words of the Son of God in thy heart, and let them be dearer to thee than thousands of gold or silver ; a lantern to thy feet, and a light to thy paths.

A man, who superficially views this text, may reason thus, as the Jews once did, " Is not Abraham dead ? And Moses and the prophets, are they not dead ?" Do we not see the good as well as the bad die ? How then can it be true, that he that keeps the Lord's sayings shall not taste of death ? To this I answer, it is true, Abraham, Moses, and the prophets, as well as an innumerable company of the first-born, are now departed this life, and are returned to dust, but they did not die, they are not dead, they have not tasted death. When kings, proconsuls, and persecutors, saw the exit of the martyrs, heard them sing in their flames, beheld them meet the torments with the greatest heroism and

and bravery, and undaunted smile at the sword, the wild beasts, or instruments of death, they could not help being amazed: and no man, no sage, no philosopher, can account for the joyful manner in which such have left the world, as well as millions of others, who in their life-time, and in their last moments, have supported the utmost trials, and held fast their confidence to the end, but by acknowledging our Saviour's promise has been verified in them; they knew their sin, which is the sting of death, was taken away; they knew the High-Priest had absolved them, his dying had opened the happy passage for them. And thus blessed with his near presence, and persuaded of his everlasting love, they have panted to be gone; and rather than start at the approach of death, they have looked upon him as a messenger sent to tell them, "the Master calleth for you" and have thought, like the mother of Sisera, "Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?"

But there is one thing here which I must observe, and what seems to contradict all which have been said relating to that part of the text. "He shall not see death." And this is too in one of the sayings of the same blessed apostle and Doctor of our profession, Christ Jesus. After he had so often said, a believer shall not die, and wisely had called their departure out of the body, a sleep, a being returned to God, &c. he saith to John in the Revelations, "I have been dead:" But here is opened an adorable mystery indeed; he says, we shall not die, we shall not so much as taste death; but he says, "I am he which liveth and was dead;" as if he would say, I have drank up your curse, I have felt the sting of death, and him that had the power of it, that is, the devil. I have tasted the bitterness of

death, and gone through the dark valley of the shadow of death, I have experienced what death is. I have died in the strictest sense; the pangs of death compassed me about; the pains of hell gat hold upon me. I have endured the sharpness of death, when I opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. A man must have thought very carelessly on the account of our Saviour's death, if he has not observed with what anguish he sunk down, with what shocking cries he poured out his soul, and especially when he uttered that amazing prayer, which makes even every drop of blood in one's veins tremble with awe when it is repeated! "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me!" What must his dear heart have felt! What a cloud covered his soul! How properly did he taste death for every man, when he roared thus for the very disquietness of his heart! If at no other time, it may properly be said now, "He descended into hell." Then the same curse and death which a lost soul feels, our God and Lord felt; and the same misery, distress, and vengeance which we had merited, burst upon him, and drank up his spirits; and thus, in the strictest sense, he has died for us. He has been dead to save his poor sheep from so great a plague; and has by this means deserved the living and dead, and merited that blessed character, "The good Shepherd; who laid down his life for the sheep."

However, the doctrine of our Saviour's so painful dying should melt the hardest heart, and make the most light-minded and trifling soul adore him with eyes overflowing with tears; yet we see, it has had quite a contrary effect on many men, whose false wisdom have made them fools; or some have concluded from all this, that our Saviour was a mere man; and either like the Jews, thought he suffered justly; or, like Arians, dreamed he died only

only to shew us a good pattern, and was only a martyr for his doctrine. Far be such cursed thoughts from our hearts! He is certainly God over all: "He lives and was dead, and is the almighty, whose goings-forth have been of old, even from everlasting." And it is his being the eternal God, which has made his sufferings so meritorious and dear; "and hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." When a certain deist, who read diligently how Jesus expired, and observed how his martyrs, in many ages, laid down their lives, and the Head dying with so much trembling and horror, and the disciples with so much courage, he blasphemously confessed, he could sooner trust the blood of one of the martyrs than the blood of Jesus Christ; for, said he, these died like men, and behaved courageously, and as heroes, but he died as a fool dieth, and behaved as if abandoned and forsaken, and like one in despair, and worse, so he ended his life. This has somewhat in it of truth, for he truly died in this frightful manner, with horrid groans and cries, while the martyrs and all true christians have gone unconcerned, or rather rejoicing to the stake, sung in their fires, leaped for joy at the place of execution, or departed in peace and assurance upon their beds: but the reason of this strange difference is this, Jesus died, bearing the sins of the world, the wrath of God, the rage and malice of Satan; and for every man tasted death, loaded with our transgressions, and afflicted and accursed with all our iniquities and chastisement, as it is written, "he was made a curse for us." But, on the other hand, the martyrs and witnesses of Christ have had no such burden to bear, no death to taste, no hell or Satan to be afraid of; and the feelings and knowledge of this, by the Holy Ghost, led them triumphantly through all torments and trials; and because their hearts experienced what the bitter death  
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of their dear Master and Lord had effected upon them, they followed the Captain of their salvation through sufferings, and sung to him, "thou hast loved us, and saved us from our sins by thy blood." This gave the first witness such boldness, that when they were casting stones at him, without mercy, he saw by faith the heavens opened, and fell asleep, calling upon the Saviour, saying, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit!" This was no other than after the Hero had slain the enemy, his children could put their feet upon his neck and sing; or when one had robbed a serpent or dragon of his poison and sting, others come and handle it fearlessly; so the children and servants of God glory over death, and ask, "O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory?" but must bless that Lord who waded through, and made war and overcame, namely, he who gives them their victory, even our Lord Jesus Christ.

So that, properly, all our happiness, boldness, joy, comfort and assurance, is owing entirely and solely to the bitter and painful death of our Lord, God, and Saviour, upon the cross. This every true child of God is well convinced of; he knows what a miserable estate he was once in, and shunned death as a lioness robbed of her whelps. He cannot forget with what an aching heart his eyes were open to his own lost and corrupted estate, till the Holy Spirit directed him to Christ crucified; the very believing he died for him, and suffering that hell in his stead, eased his heart, and in the sweet streams of his blood, he got pardon, and an ease from all his pains and fears: so that with greatest certainty he can thank our Saviour for his bloody death; and rejoicing say, with David, I shall not die but live; or with St. Paul, "The life which I now live, is the life of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

This is also the reason why now we in the christian

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tian church, in all our hymns and songs, mention only, and above all things, "The Lamb that was slain;" and like as Moses, David, Deborah, and others, taught the children of Israel to sing of their salvation from Egypt, Philistines, Assyrians, &c. and tell of it in their songs from one generation to another; so we, who have been redeemed by the blood and death of the Lamb of God, esteem his merits and sufferings alone worthy to be sung in all places, and believe all other deliverances were but shadows of this.

We behave as witnesses of his death and victory, and sing of his reproach and shame, his wounds and bonds, his cruel mocking and scourging, meekly suffering our chastisement and charges of our sin; and while others deride and disesteem him in his affliction, weakness and meanness, and salute him in scorn, we look upon him with the greatest reverence and thankfulness, and think, how glorious did the King of Israel look! how red in his apparel! how beautiful in that form which was marred more than any man's with the crown of thorns upon his head, the crown wherewith he was crowned in the day of his espousals! How brave, when he would not yield, but endured the cross, waded through hell, was stung to death by the king of terrors; and who, amidst all his torments and countless trials and sufferings, weathered out the storm, and having loved his own, loved them to the end, and put it beyond the power of pain or death, or hell, or eternal wrath, to separate us from him. We sing how at last Satan gave out, and his death abolished death, and the smoke of his torment ascending up, and made an eternal atonement before the throne; from that moment the Captain of our salvation said, "It is finished," began in heaven the new song which we repeat with joyful hearts on earth, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive blessing and glory for ever; for that he saved our souls from death

our eyes from tears, and our feet from falling; and hence we know, "we shall never die, death shall have no dominion over us."

These are the benefits of believing in Christ, and these are the common privileges of all the faithful in every land. Let these be then the mark of the prize of your high calling, nor account yourselves christians indeed, till you have received from heaven the blessed and comfortable knowledge, that you shall not die eternally; nor even, when you depart this mortal and troublesome life, taste that death which for your sake Jesus Christ in our flesh has suffered for us. Do not let unbelief hinder you from seeing it your privilege, or keep you back from entering the possession of so valuable and divine a treasure, or check your most earnest prayers to him, who has the keys of hell and death, to grant it to you. He is God, and can save you: he is loving, and will do it; he is the very refuge and sanctuary for such as are ready to perish, and whose whole bleeding form preaches his grace. His head is bowed down to kiss you, his arms extended to embrace you, his wounds open, that, like a dove, you may turn in and dwell in those clefts of the rock and be safe. Arise, ye dear people, go into his wounds, live in his death, and go no more out. Search the scriptures with greater diligence than ever, and hold fast the blessed words of the Son of God. Believe then with all your hearts, and that blessing shall come upon you which is sent to the churches in the Revelations, "Because thou hast kept my word, I will keep thee." Let the sayings of Jesus be laid up in your hearts, and you shall be witnesses that "he who keeps his sayings shall not see death."

Now to Him that lives and was dead, and is alive again for evermore, even to Jesus the Son of God, be glory, to his Father, and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

## DISCOURSE XXXII.

### THE PRIVILEGE OF BELIEVERS.

JOHN i. 12.

*As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name.*

**WHEN** the due time was come, in which the God of Israel would be Immanuel and tabernacle with men, he came, according to the many prophecies, to his own people the family of Abraham, to whom, and to their fathers, he had been promised upwards of two thousand years, and for whose coming all the tribes had waited with great impatience and earnestness from the time of the departure of the sceptre from Judah, which happened not long before his appearance in the flesh; but whether his mean form, his low birth and estate in the world, or their being disappointed in their carnal expectation of his restoring the kingdom to Israel was the reason, or both together, it is certain his own people received him not. They were offended at him, and scorned to acknowledge him for the Messiah. His whole doctrine and manner of preaching was rejected by the far greater part of the Jews, who always had him in derision, and especially when he said he was the I AM, they openly blasphemed and rebelled against him. Thus they forsook the Rock that made them, and hid their faces from that  
Jehovah



Jehovah whom their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob saw, and who was worshipped by them and their children through many generations, and who was not ashamed to be called their God.

Some, however, even of this sinful and adulterous people, waited for the day of his coming; and they, like Abraham, saw it and were glad. Among these were Zacharias and Elizabeth, the virgin Mary, Simeon, Joseph of Arimathea, and Anna the prophetess. They knew when Augustus Cæsar laid the tax upon the Jews as well as others, the sceptre was entirely gone from Judah, and a lawgiver from between his feet, and believed the Shiloh must be come; and as they were led by the Holy Spirit to look for him, his extreme poverty, meanness, and despicable appearance in the world did not stumble them. They believed on him, blessed God that their eyes had seen his salvation, and spake of him to all that looked for redemption in Israel: to these, as well as to that happy few who in those times received him and all who have since believed on his name, he has granted the privilege or power of becoming sons of God, while all, who receive him not, miss this great blessing, and suffer loss eternally.

From the days of God's being first manifested in the flesh to this time, he is preached in the world, and now, as well as formerly, many received him not. Some stand aloof and hear concerning his redemption, but are in no immediate want, and let him go unconcernedly. He knocks indeed at the door of their hearts, but they are like the inns in Bethlehem, there is no room for him there; the pleasures of this life, the deceits of honours, friends and riches supply his place, and they receive him not. Others like the proud children of Israel, scorn to submit to him, and with Jewish haughtiness

ness despise his Godhead, and wantonly and presumptuously, like the gentile and heathen nations, are resolved not to have this man to reign over them, or to acknowledge for their Lord a man who suffered death upon a cross between two thieves. But yet there are some who still receive Jesus with open and glad hearts, and who inherit the adoption of sons, and are numbered with his friends, and counted to the Lord for a generation. These in general are the poor in spirit, souls who are ready to perish, lost sheep, miserable and unhappy persons, and such as were self-spoiled and ruined, together with such as had sincerely sought after righteousness by works under the law, and who, weary and almost in despair at finding they failed, were ready to conclude themselves without hope; these, when Christ has been preached to them, or when the Holy Ghost has glorified the loving Saviour in their sight, like Zaccheus, have gladly received him, and so commenced his children, his sons and daughters.

To receive Christ implies not only a concession to the doctrine of the creed, or assenting to the truth and validity of the scriptures, or the acknowledging him to be the Lord, the Messiah and Christ that should come into the world, and so choosing to be called by his name, and blame Jews and Deists who are of another mind; but to receive him, is to accept of him as he is offered and preached in the scriptures as our Lord God, our only Saviour, our righteousness, wisdom, holiness, and redemption. It is a closing in with him in his new Testament; he becomes a Father to us, and we become his children; he is our God, and we are his people; our Shepherd, and we are his Sheep; our Husband; and we are his rib, his sister, his spouse and wife; yea, it is receiving of him into our hearts by his Spirit, we let in him that stands at the door and

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knocks, and he supps with us, gives us a foretaste and pledge of the marriage-feast, the earnest that we shall sup with him there for ever. This cannot be learnt in theory. It is no matter for the sensual and natural man, he cannot understand it. In this matter, no worldly wisdom helps or avails, no large capacity, no depth of thought is of use, but an honest heart, who day and night thirsts for salvation and grasps after Jesus as a hart for the water, and as a dry land for refreshing rain, and who learns it of the Holy Ghost within. There he brings the news, and makes them to understand this wisdom secretly. He speaks in the soft still voice, "Open thy heart; open the everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." "Open, my love, my dove, and I will come in," Jesus says; and where he is manifested, there is his reward with him; his Father also comes and makes his abode there; and the chaste and new-washed temple of the body becomes the house of God.

The receiving Christ is a thing wholly for the heart, and is known only by experience. It is the common privilege of all the faithful; every believer in Jesus knows this precious benefit of having received the Lord; and whoever does not know he hath found the Saviour, he is no true Christian. As many as believe in his name, have him in them. He dwells with them; he is their new and eternal life, as it is written, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." St. Paul says, "Now the life which I live in the flesh, is the life of the Son of God. It is not I that live; it is Christ that liveth in me."

When one of the martyrs was advised to have God before his eyes, when he was near his execution, he answered cheerfully, 'I have him in my heart.' This is what I mean, and what the Holy Ghost means in the text, for such and such only are

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of his family who receive him. Others, whether they are professors or profane, live without Christ in the world.

Our Saviour never intended, when he was taken up bodily into heaven, to leave his disciples orphans and desolate upon earth, he promised certainly to be with them and in them, and not only would so appear to them who were then his followers, and let them see and enjoy him, that they should find he had not left them comfortless, but he made the same promise to their generations and children then unborn when he said, "If any man love me, I will come to him, and manifest myself to him; I will bring my Father, and we will come and make our abode with him." Again, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him," &c. All who believe on him, find his words true and faithful; they are his witnesses that he has fulfilled his promise, and happily experience that he is come with salvation to them; and the high and lofty One, who inhabits eternity, and who dwells in the high and holy place, vouchsafes to dwell with them. But the receivers of Christ, or such as believe on him, are not only thus honoured; they not only receive the Lamb of God into their houses; the King of saints, the God of heaven and earth does not only condescend to make their bodies his temple, but they receive with him remission of sins, deliverance from hell, death and the law; beside they have power to become sons of God, or the privilege to call the Father of Jesus Our Father, and he is pleased to adopt them for children, and to call them, "My sons and daughters." This is that doctrine so often repeated even in the Old Testament times, as well as by the apostles of our Saviour and by our Lord himself.

In the New Testament writings servants of God are clearly distinguished from sons, for indeed there

is a great difference between them. A son or child of God may be a servant, he may over and above his sonship be employed in the Redeemer's work, and labour in his vineyard, as the apostles and other ministers of Christ have done; but their hope was not that they had been servants or prospered in the work of their Master, nor did their safety consist therein, but in being made children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. When the disciples once returned from their labour of preaching and working miracles, &c. in the name of their Master, they told him with a sort of joy how well they had succeeded, and how even Satan was subject to their word; but Jesus answered them, "Notwithstanding rejoice not in this, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven;" and at another time he told them, "I have not called you servants, but friends." Again, "A servant abideth not in the house alway, but a son abideth alway;" so when he sent Magdalene to tell them he was risen, he says, "Go tell my brethren that I go to my Father and to your Father, &c." He had often done after this manner in the days of his flesh; he taught them in their prayers to call God their Father; "when ye pray, say, Our Father," &c. Again, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Again, "Your heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him." This is what David, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Jeremiah had foreseen so long ago when they said, "Thou shalt call me, my Father," And that name was known among the prophets some hundreds of years before the New Testament was of force, and they taught the people how the Redeemer would bring the souls strayed afar off, and such who had forfeited their right to the kingdom, into the nearest fellowship and kindred with God, that he would be their Father, and vouchsafe to call them his

his children. This is now come to pass and effected through the death and blood-shedding of the Lamb. We who were afar off by wicked works, and who could not have claimed the benefits of the family of Abraham; for he was not our Father, and Israel acknowledged us not as children, are now adopted by faith into the family and household of God. We are sons, and have received the power to call God Father; we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father. This is the glorious liberty of the children of God, and is the highest and most desirable privilege that can be attained.

It was formerly the name and character of the saints, and they were called so of the Lord, Servants of God; they served the Lord in their generation, but it is not so much used in the gospel, because Jesus, who was Lord of all and the only begotten Son of God, has taken the servant's place and done all the work worthy to be mentioned, and, by way of eminence, is called of God, "My righteous Servant." All our services are nothing in comparison with his, and not worthy to be named. He has made peace; he has bruised the serpent's head; he has sweat blood, and opened a fountain for sin; he has undergone the chastisement of his people, obtained their pardon, and wrought out with cries and tears a perfect righteousness, and made, in offering up his body on the tree, a full, compleat and sufficient atonement for sin, disannulled the old covenant, abolished death, removed the curse, and carried away the iniquity of us all. He is only worthy of the name, Servant of God, and deserves and merits above all to be accepted for his work's sake, by which we are made righteous and justified. But here it must be observed, how superficial their Christianity is, who imagine they

are in a safe estate, and in a fair way of going to heaven, because they do good works, as they say, and serve God. Such must be told, if you go no farther, ye are not safe, ye are yet under the law, and have no hope but the hope of a Jew, and one who expects his works and duties will entitle him to the favour of Almighty God, and bring him to the reward of eternal life. O let the ministers of our Saviour endeavour to undeceive such people; let them make their righteousness appear as it is, a cobweb, a garment of fig-leaves and filthy rags, and make mention of Christ's righteousness and his only.

Are any so shallow and thoughtless in religious matters as to imagine their alms will purchase heaven, their tears wash out sin, their imperfect and slight obedience be accepted, and get the kingdom for a reward? O no! you who think so, trample upon the blood of Jesus, and slight the great price he paid for your ransom. Nothing less than the blood, the precious heart's blood of God's only Son, his many thousands of tears, and his sweat in the garden, can wash out sin and quench the divine wrath. No price less than himself ransomed us out of Satan's bands, his whole life's obedience, his sore afflictions, his faithfulness in his temptations, his painful death, and his anguish and torments, bought heaven for us, and his many years of sufferings alone made satisfaction, and recovered us out of our enemy's hands. Be ashamed and blush then, ye who have boasted of what ye have done; be greatly ashamed that ye have done no more to his honour, and so much to grieve him. Think what sin have you obliterated and cancelled? what iniquity have you purged away with all your doings? Put all you have done together, and all the works and merits of men and angels, and it will not avail

avail you; if you receive not Christ into your hearts, ye are only servants; and for the least of your disobedience, you may be sent in strict justice to hell after all.

Herein then a servant is different from a son of God. A man may have lived a strict life, done much good and observed the law, been zealous, a promoter of piety; he may have prayed often and long, given away much to the poor, and did all in his power to please and serve God; but then if he has no more, he is not a Christian; a Turk, a Jew, a Heathen may go thus far. And St. Paul and Cornelius did all this, when they were without our Saviour, and aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, and needed conversion to make them safe. All the promises in the law were temporal, and the rewards preached to such as lived strictly under the covenant of works were entirely such as related to this life, but God never promised to make men his children on any account but through faith, that the divine favour might be of free grace, unmerited and undeserved love. If a man should serve his master quite faithfully, do all that he was commanded, and not wrong him in any thing, not squander away nor embezzle his goods, but be trusty to the last degree; work day and night, and fail in no respect of his service, could he therefore expect his master would make him his son, and make him the heir to all he had? or could he think he had merited so much? would not his wages and full hire be his just reward? In like manner Jesus says, "When ye have done all that is commanded, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done no more than our duty." I wish only all who argue and dispute so much for their works could say, they had done all that was commanded them; but even then it would be presumption to suppose



suppose they had a right to heaven and to be of the Lord's family. All who serve God shall meet with their due reward; but as it was never promised, so they cannot enter the kingdom by their works, nor stay in the house of God alway; but as Hagar and Ishmael were turned out of Abraham's house as bond servants, so shall all who proudly have thought by their merits to get salvation: they are servants and not sons. Satan and all wicked men are more or less servants of God. When God bade the destroying angel kill the first-born in every family in Egypt, but touch not one where the blood was on the door-posts, he obeyed strictly. When he gave Satan leave to afflict Job and touch all he had, only not to hurt his life, he was punctual and went no farther than his commission; so it was in the matter of deceiving the prophets of Ahab, but it was an obedience of dread and fear, it was servile and not filial; so is the obedience of three parts of the world, they are overawed by the fears of death, the terrors of the law, and the looking for judgment; the dread of hell, and the wrath of God, makes them in some measure obedient, and restrains them from sinning; but all this is nothing. Their service is like the service of Satan, it is done out of fear and of constraint, it is not the obedience of sons, and from the faith that works by love. They may carry it as far as they will, and go on till the last day with their striving and working, and plead it at the judgment when they have done, and say, "Lord, we have been called by thy name; we have eaten and drank in thy presence; we have cast out devils, and done many wonderful works in thy name;" and yet, if they have gone no farther, Jesus will answer them, "Depart from me, I never knew you."

It is much otherwise with true believers; to  
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them is the power given to be of near kin to the King of kings; they have the privilege to be sons of God. This honour and unspeakable happiness is given to those who receive Jesus in the world. This is conferred upon all freely, and only for Jesus's sake, and is obtained by all who believe in his name. God is so well pleased with his Son's free-will offering, so satisfied with his death and obedience, that, for a reward for his sufferings, he has given him all believers, who shall be his brethren and children of his Father. God therefore so glorifies and honours his crucified Child, that whosoever in the world shall believe in him, shall, by his means, be saved, and numbered with the saints and with the sons of God in glory everlasting. This serves to exalt our Saviour and his merits, whereby is known how precious and dear his sufferings are in the sight of the Godhead, since whoever rests thereon and is thereon resolved to venture all for ever, is made for ever happy. The obedience in which he trusts, the blood in which he believes, and the righteousness to which he looks, has deserved for him a greater happiness than to have been made an angel or lord of ten worlds. He has the privilege to become a son of God, to be a younger brother to Jesus Christ, a near relation to his Creator and Saviour.

This should be the aim of all enquiring and seeking souls; this should be the mark of the prize of their high calling. They are not invited by the gospel merely to escape hell, or to fly the wrath to come, or to be made again a little lower than the angels, to be crowned with glory and worship, nor even to be reckoned with the chief of the principalities, or to be raised to a level with the highest of the seraphim, but to be children of

of our Lord God, to be in the family and co-heirs with Christ Jesus, to sit at his table, to be his brethren and sisters; and this honour have all his saints.

Men who have received this privilege and embraced this glorious offer, though they are not brought into the possession of so great mercies, by means of their righteousness or merits; and though they have not the least dependence on their works, nor would suffer that thought which would so rob Jesus of his honour, but are in a readiness to revenge every such theft, and to lay all glorying in the dust, and ascribe to his praise all their salvation; yet are constantly employed to his glory, and out of love to him live good lives. His words are too dear to them to be neglected, and his commandments too precious to be despised or disesteemed. Out of the bottom of their hearts they are glad to serve the Lord Christ, and rejoice at every opportunity of doing any thing to please him; and this is not out of fear, not for reward, not to make a righteousness of it, or because they are not fully satisfied to depend wholly on the Lamb; but, as I said, it is out of pure love to Jesus, who has saved them, and brought them into his Father's household. It is their meat and drink to do his will; it is natural to them; and he who acts otherwise, be assured he has not seen God, neither known him.

A servant of God, or one who has been brought up in the church of God and served under the law, may for a time do well, be very exact and careful, be enlightened from above, taste with joy the good word of God, and run as if he meant sincerely to be saved; who after all perhaps rests there, or goes again back into a sinful life, and brings a blot upon all his services, "all his righteousness

teousness that he has done shall not be mentioned to him, in the sin that he has sinned in that shall he die, saith the Lord God." No state is therefore safe or secure, but the state of the children of God. It is above all things necessary that a sincere person make his calling and election sure; namely, that he is not content with having done much, or learnt or understood or comprehended much, but that he is sure Jesus is become his Saviour, and is now near to him as his brother, and as near as if he had sucked the breasts of his mother; that our Saviour's Father is his Father, and that he will not be ashamed to confess him as such, when he comes the latter day upon the earth. Then shall he say to such, "Come, ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This grace is attainable; it is preached to all mankind; it is promised in all the prophets by our Saviour, and by all his apostles and evangelists, and may be entered by every upright soul. A greater favour cannot be. The benefit is exceeding great, the privilege inexpressible, but is surely granted to every believer in Christ Jesus, and is part of the commonwealth of Israel, the rights of the New-Testament, and what was the pure aim and intention of our dear Lord and Master, when he stooped to be the servant and minister of all, and when he paid our debts and died for us.

Since then all the scriptures preach this, let none seem to come short of it. Let not our Christianity be only the form, or without the happy enjoyment of this privilege, but let all look upon it as the free gift of grace, and what belongs to them and their children, and to all who believe in the name of Jesus, so let them seek it, so ask  
it

it of the Lord Christ, whose prerogative it is to bestow it, and they shall find, "that as many as receive Jesus, to them gives he power to become sons of God, even to as many as believe on his name."

Let the spirit of adoption only be given you, and all that is said of this divine matter by St. Paul to the Galatians will be clear and plain; you will know by experience what that means; "Thou art no more a servant but a son; we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free, namely, of Jerusalem above, who is the mother of us all. We are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba, Father."

May that merciful and gracious Lord, of whom it is said, "Who shall declare his generation?" make you of the number of his children, and of that race "who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God!" These shall be reckoned to the Son of man for a generation, and be named after him. These shall help to fill up the innumerable company of "children that shall be born to him as dew out of the womb of the morning." May you, my dear brethren, be found among them, and be entitled to this grace to your soul's comfort in this life, and to your eternal joy hereafter! Amen.

**DISCOURSE**

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## PART VI.

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### DISCOURSE XXXIII.

#### THE PATTERNS OF MERCY.

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I TIM. xv. 16.

*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief; howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life.*

**I**N St. Paul's epistle to Timothy, wherein he represents the great doctrines of godliness, as became a person in his high office and place of trust, and which he delivers now into his successor's care to keep for Christ's sake, he several times speaks after this manner: "This is a faithful saying, &c." and this was not done as if any part of the scriptures or this his charge were of less authority or truth, but as Moses often renewed his message and errand to the Israelites, with, "All these words the Lord thy God commanded;" or, as the prophets very often repeated, "Thus saith the Lord;" and Jesus himself, when he delivered doctrines of the utmost importance and things necessary to our eternal happiness, generally began with, "Verily, verily, I say unto you:" Thus does the apostle in the text, when he writes to another great minister



of Christ, and indeed all who labour in God's vineyard, that with boldness and courage they might propagate such confirmed doctrines with all their might, and give more heed to the divine charges delivered in so extraordinary and in so solemn a manner.

The time will not allow me to speak of the many blessed doctrines handed down to us in this way. I shall therefore speak chiefly of this main doctrine of the apostle, and upon which all the hopes of poor men are grounded, namely, our Saviour's coming from heaven into the world to save sinners. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." This doctrine is properly the substance of the whole gospel, and is every where taught us in the New Testament, both from our Lord himself and by all who heard him, and were sent by him to bear the glad tidings, through the earth, to every land and nation, and to invite and beseech sinners to be reconciled to God, and come back to Jesus the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, that they might be saved. This (however slighted by so many, and though by some even scorned and despised, especially by all the opposers of salvation by grace alone) is a true doctrine, and worthy to be heard and believed, it is worthy the acceptance of all men.

If an offer of life and pardon could be made to rebels in distress and chains, or if the news of liberty and redemption should be brought to the slaves in the galleys, or such as spend their melancholy days in prison or banishment, or should the most wretched and poor person in the world be offered a full receipt from all his creditors, and a fine estate besides for the longest term, all would think the offers worthy of their acceptance, and leap for joy

joy at the good news; but should the news of liberty come to his ears who thinks himself in no danger, or should the tidings of a general release be sent to freemen, or bread be brought to the exceeding rich, and to such as fare delicately every day, it would have no such effect, and it is no other than a false conclusion of their being safe, good enough, not fallen from God, or so desperately wicked and in danger of perishing as they really are, that makes the gospel to be heard so coldly and indifferently by more than half the world. Could a preacher tell his auditors where every one should find treasure hid, or how they might ensure to themselves a vast fortune, or could he teach them how to free themselves of every pain and sickness at once, and in what way they could be immensely rich, O how would people flock to hear him! there would be scarce room for the concourse any where, and he would not be able to make his voice reach to the least part of his hearers; but when a messenger of the King of saints comes and brings the news of the kingdom of God opened, and preaches free grace, redemption from death and hell, eternal life, and all the blessings of the world to come, into which all should press eagerly, how coldly is he heard? When he speaks of "the treasure hid in the field," how few believe the report? And when he declares how near our Saviour is to justify and help the sinner, how willing he is to pardon all sin, and to come with his Father in to them and there make his abode, how very few open the door and look for him? and in how exceeding few is "the arm of the Lord revealed?" The enemy of souls, the god of this world, succeeds amazingly even in christian countries, in keeping men ignorant of Jesus and his love to sinners; and when his divinity is only slightly confessed,

fessed and his eternal redemption considered but superficially and at a distance, it is no wonder that the blessed news is so indifferently entertained.

When Jesus entered Simon the Pharisee's house, he got no kiss, no hearty welcome, no water to wash his feet, no oil for his head, no incense burnt before him, and no precious ointment perfumed his chamber; the reason was, he did not know his guest, he did not feel how much he wanted a Saviour; but the sinner, the harlot Mary, who was called by him out of her sins and invited to the kingdom of heaven, thought she could never make enough of the Lord, she embraced his feet, kissed them, washed them with tears, and broke her alabaster box of spikenard upon them, and loved much. Thus is it now:—while men deceive themselves and fancy they are good churchmen, pious and religious enough, and that there is no danger of their future state; there a few prayers, a little alms or some acts of self-denial and mortification lull to sleep the stirring conscience, and make the poor heart at peace without Christ. To such, as well as to the wanton, the profane, the worldling, the resolutely wicked and lover of pleasure, the gospel of salvation seems unworthy their acceptance, and is neglected to the very last; but an awakened soul, a man who feels his own sinfulness as an intolerable burden, and who wants to be saved, but trembles at the word of God, has many fears about his condition, &c. he hears that God our Saviour came from heaven, out of mere pity and compassion, to save undone souls, to help poor people and to undertake for them and be their Saviour, and this is the best news to such an heart. Deep humility and a solid conviction and consciousness of his sin and whole corrupted nature, makes him only willing to know, if Jesus can receive such a wretch

as

as he has been? And when he can be persuaded of this, O how entirely does he leave all his old and darling sins! With what joy does he receive our Saviour's offer of forgiveness, and is glad in his salvation! His heart leaps and bounds in him for joy when the Holy Spirit within whispers the word of reconciliation; and then he thinks upon inviting others to the same grace, and is ready every where to tell how worthy of all men's acceptance this good doctrine is, that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom (he thinks) he is chief."

It is indeed a glorious gospel; it is a privilege bestowed upon men beyond all hopes and wishes, and which makes all who accept it happy and blessed for ever; and all who slight or reject or delay the closing in with so gracious an offer, thereby make themselves of all men the most miserable. But then who is Jesus that is coming into the world that is of such importance? He is the eternal God! he is that Lord, that Creator and divine Being, against whom all had sinned, and who out of tender mercy to the world came from his throne and majesty, and was incarnate, a man, a servant, and whose whole painful life, sorrowful and shameful death, was endured by him with this sole and pure view, to save sinners. He had no design but singly and entirely to help them out of their condemnation and slavery, and to bring them in peace back to him. He would have been glorious and high the same, if we had been left in our guilt and suffered hell eternally; but as he loved all his works and chose not the death of a sinner, and as he knew hell was not made for man but for the devil and his angels, he pitied us when we were sunk into their ruin and come under their judgment, and before all his innumerable company of  
angels

angels and blessed spirits resolved to be their Saviour. This Jesus has now brought them out of the hand of the enemy; all souls are now his; the soul of the father and the souls of the children they are his purchased possession, and he has, on their account, made a perfect amends, atonement, and satisfaction in his heavenly Father's sight; he has prepared an everlasting righteousness for them, and opened such a fountain in his own blood that washes out every sin and even the remembrance of them before God; and now has he ordained it as an everlasting gospel to be published and announced to every creature, that whoso in the world would be glad to be saved, and who sincerely wants mercy and salvation, may come to him and have it. The worst and most undeserving, even the rebellious, are invited to this happiness as to a feast; and this gospel, these true sayings, are worthy of all acceptance, since it comes from God Almighty, and is a gift worthy only of that Giver who is the author and cause of eternal life, and who hereby gives the best gifts he can give, namely, himself, his kingdom, his Spirit, his blood, body and righteousness, and whatever is able to make us completely happy and perfect. Many, yes many, as the stars in number, have been witnesses of this grace, and now reap the great salvation, the fruit of the Lord's toil and servitude for their sakes.

Lest Satan should suggest to an honest and well-meaning soul that his sins were too many, too great, or of too heinous a nature to be pardoned, Jesus, our kind and dear Saviour, has set forth examples of his mercy, and as it were chosen out from all classes of sinners the very vilest, and such as were come to the height of danger, and these he has graciously saved, as patterns to them which should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life.

St.

St. Paul calls himself one of these, and says, "I am the chief of sinners, but obtained mercy for this cause," and sets himself forth as a monument of free mercy. None can believe that in respect of outward gross sins he was chief, for he had been brought up in the most strict way; but he speaks in respect of his having, out of an unbelieving heart, despised and slighted Christ's meritorious death and righteousness, and in the manner of the Pharisee attempted to establish his own, and out of a false zeal persecuted the disciples and doctrine of Jesus. In this sense he calls himself the chief of sinners, i. e. one who has sinned above others, and whose crimes were of a scarlet dye, and who had given our Saviour and his Spirit so much trouble to conquer and subdue him to the faith.

All truly awakened souls think with the apostle thus, and whether their lives have been notoriously vile in men's eyes or not, they feel too deeply their sin to extenuate or lessen it; they can easily excuse others, but themselves they condemn and loath in dust and ashes, and, like Jeremiah and St. James, confess, "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked;" and it is to encourage such to hope for mercy and draw near to Jesus, that he has exhibited and shewn forth so many instances of his mercy and compassion in the scriptures, who, as St. Paul calls them, are patterns, examples and monuments of mercy, and pillars in the temple of God. Of these there are five eminent in the gospel, and who seem to be the chief of every rank of sinners; the account of whose conversions and mercies are written for our sakes, that we, who want mercy, may obtain it through their mercy, and venture to come boldly to the throne of grace by their example. The five whom I shall mention are Mary Magdalene, Zaccheus, the thief who was crucified with our Saviour, Cornelius, and St. Paul;

Paul; of all these I will speak freely, and first of Mary Magdalene.

This poor woman was taken from the head of the unclean and incontinent: she had been a known sinner, a public harlot and aduress. It is likely she had been the ruin of many, and seduced them at first into sin; her whorish heart had made her seven-fold the child of the devil, who no doubt thought surely to have her; lust and impurity ruled her and led her captive; her shame was her boast, and perhaps her polluted body was hastening to the grave through her intemperate and unchaste life, while her wretched soul was ready to perish for ever. In this state was Mary when Jesus came seeking the lost, and preaching the gospel of repentance and remission of sins, and called her out of her slavery and danger. Some of the first Christians say that our Saviour had been preaching on the shepherd who left the ninety and nine in the wilderness to seek the one lamb that he had lost. It was, however, on that day Jesus dined with Simon that she was converted. She followed him into the house weeping; her haughty looks were humbled, her brazen and impudent face washed with hundreds of tears, and she, who before could appear boldly before all the world and on purpose entered company with her eyes full of adultery and darting her fire on all sides, now crept behind and kneeled at Jesu's feet, like Eve and her guilty and naked husband when they heard the voice of the Lord God, in the cool of the day, in Paradise. O come hither, ye loose and debauched livers, ye whoremongers and harlots, ye whose beds and bodies have been defiled like Magdalene, look upon her, see those lips which uttered such obscenity, trembling, kissing the Lord's feet; see her hair, once curled and platted to entice men to sin with her,  
now

now hiding her blushing face and wiping her tears away as fast as they fell upon his feet. With all her fine clothes, her splendid veil, her seducing attire and ornaments, she sinks in the dust before our Saviour, and makes tears and sighs speak the language of her heart. Come, O come and do likewise! Do not think, I dare not, I may not; my sins are too many; my secret crimes and pollutions are too predominant and render me unfit to pray, unfit to hope for mercy, since she is set forth as a pattern to those of her class who repent and believe in Jesus. Think, O think where she is now; yonder she sits at Jesus Christ's feet a pure virgin in heaven; our Saviour had mercy upon her, and said, before Simon the Pharisee and all those who sat at meat with him, "Thy sins that are many are forgiven thee, go in peace." At once she found her soul redeemed; the enemy, her master, lost his hold, while God, her Saviour, spake her clean. This was the woman who afterwards loved Jesus so much; this was her that before the self-righteous Simon obtained mercy; this was she who had the honour to minister of her substance to Jesus, and to stand with the virgin Mary under the cross, and who first saw the Lord after he arose. He did not first appear to his mother, or to the twelve, or to his favourite John, but to her who before day was up and weeping alone, because she had missed her Lord. This was the first preacher of the resurrection, the highly-favoured person who got the first greeting from the risen Redeemer, and is sent by him to appoint the place where all the rest should meet him. I dare say, no spotless maiden now shines brighter round the throne, or more loves and adores the Lamb! All her fellow saints see her, and worship God because of the great mercy bestowed upon her. Lift up your eyes of faith, ye who have followed



followed her in lusts, and see what a pattern of mercy she is for you! see what the blood of Jesus has accomplished on that once wretched, but now happy woman! A drop of Jesu's blood can make you clean, like her, and make the worst and most defiled, chaste virgins in a moment. The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin; and does not only damp the impure nature, prevent and extinguish wild and unholy fire, but eases the conscience, and washes away the remembrance of sin from before the Lord. O let this woman's mercy compel and encourage you, apply to the same gracious Master, and you shall find that the history of Mary was written not for her sake only, but for your sakes also, to whom the same grace shall be imparted, if you believe on him. Let the sense of your disobedience and abominable deeds bow you down at his feet; shed your tears there, and thence stir not till the same Lord who granted her eternal life, and made her so near and dear to him, vouchsafes you to hear, "thy sins are forgiven;" I mean, till his Spirit has made it clear to your heart that all your sins are pardoned and done away in the blood of the Lamb, and your lusts and impurities killed and abolished in his cold sweat and tears. Since the chief of sinners is saved, venture you also and be saved freely, and experience that it "is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Zaccheus was another monument of grace; he perhaps had not gone on in Mary's course, but was a public sinner; he was chief of the publicans, and he was rich. The publicans were a sort of unconscionable men who farmed the taxes and tribute money, and who had it in their power to use extortion and distress and oppress the poor; the strict part of the Jewish church held them anathema, and

and our Saviour and St. John rank them with harlots and the worst of men; but beside his being of this business, beside his being the chief of this clan, he was rich. He was in double danger, he was ungodly and without any religion, and he was rich. Our Saviour had said, how hard it was for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And if so, here was one rich and wicked too; all in Jericho knew the sinner Zaccheus. Come near, ye covetous, ye worldly-minded and miserable people, ye oppressors of the poor, and ye who are rich, though your danger is great and the obstacles in your way many, yet, if you are minded to be saved and want to see Jesus, behold Zaccheus is a pattern of mercy for you. See the man who without pity grinded the face of the poor, who stood like a flint unmoved at the cry of the widow and fatherless, who could distress the needy, and thrust into prison, threaten and oppress his tenants, and who got his gain with cruelty and extortion, who took barbarously the bread as it were from the orphans and hungry, and made many a child suffer want, while the parents wept bitterly unminded; behold the rich, who was in danger of crying out with Dives for a drop of water in vain for ever, and of being one of that number who have their good things in this life, he has found pardon! Jesus saw him in the sycamore-tree and hastened him down, that he might bring salvation to his house, for, saith he, "to-day I must abide with thee." O happy day! O happy Zaccheus! He that shewed no mercy when it was asked with tears and cries, finds mercy without so much as asking for it. This exalts the doctrine of free grace indeed, and makes Zaccheus a glorious pattern of mercy. He made haste and received Jesus into his house and into his heart, and had scarce received pardon and believed unto

unto salvation, but his faith worked by love, and yielded the fruits of good works: "Behold, Lord, said he, I will give half of my goods to feed the poor, and where I have wronged any one by false accusation I will restore him four-fold." Thus it is where a true faith in Christ is, there are good works and a tender heart immediately. No soul in Jericho could have received the Lord with so much joy as this man; he had much forgiven him, and he loved much. If any who hear me would fain be saved, but, because you are rich, tremble, O take courage by the example of Zaccheus; take our Saviour's advice, give alms, of such things as you have, disperse abroad, give to the poor, and begin to be faithful stewards of the mammon of unrighteousness, and believe in him, and so shall you get treasure in heaven. Or are you afraid because of your former covetousness and search after riches? Does the remembrance of your atheism, infidelity, carelessness in religious matters, oppression of the poor, hard behaviour to your inferiors, or want of tenderness and kindness to persons in necessity and who were in debt, in prison, and overwhelmed with penury, &c. bow you down and dishearten you? See Jesus Christ's compassion on Zaccheus! See the worst and most hardened of wretches has found mercy, the chief of the publicans is saved! O go, guilty and unworthy of pity as you are, stand before the merciful Jesus, shew him your public and atrocious crimes, your secret injustice and hidden offences, spread all open before him, and fall at the Judge's feet a self-condemned and guilty sinner; he came to save such; his bowels of compassion yearned over such. "It is a true saying, and worthy of your acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Plead this and this alone, and stand only in Zaccheus's place

place with the same willing heart to see Jesus, with the same believing heart, and you shall find his mercy to all eternity.

The dying thief is another eminent pattern of mercy, and witness that Jesus came to save sinners. This man seemed hardened above measure, else he could not have joined with his other fellow-criminal in the insults and blasphemy of the multitude: his blood guiltiness (for in all likelihood he had been a murderer), his robberies and thieving seemed to lie with small weight on his conscience; it appeared as if sin had seared it and made it obdurate and hard as the nether mill-stone; it was as if he had no thought of his danger, body or soul, but was springing headlong into eternal flames: while he joined the scoffers and mockers, how did our Saviour pity him? He saw how far Satan had prevailed and deluded his slave, and with strong cries and tears interceded for him and was heard; his petitions reached the ears of his almighty Father, and rebounded as it were to the thief's heart; he awoke at once out of his sleep, the infidel believed in Jesus and called him Lord, the blasphemer repented of his blasphemy and besought the King of Israel to think upon him when he should come into his kingdom. Surely all, even the vilest, must have wondered at his reprobate behaviour before; but above measure they must be astonished now to hear him sue to him for mercy, whom before he had so derided and despised, and as much all in heaven and earth must have wondered when Jesus gave him that sweet and merciful answer, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." He was an open and public sinner, and as openly and publicly did the Lamb absolve, reconcile and save him: he took him home with him in peace, and from the very brink of hell, brought him to heaven.

Here then look, ye poor rebels, ye thieves and most criminal and guilty men, ye unjust and wicked, behold Jesus made his death with the wicked, and stretched out his hands as if he meant to offer both the guilty partners in suffering, mercy. Look and see how the chief of felons, the chief of sinners, is saved! It is likely this man had lived an abandoned and debauched life, careless of God and his own poor soul, a lover of bad company, idle and wanton, till his crimes brought him to that shameful end. So far Satan led him, and would have carried off his prey, had not a dear Saviour interposed and shewn mercy; but he did it so openly, that he might make him an example and pattern to those who should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life; also to give hope to such as turn to him on their death-beds, and who repent in their last hours: but it was especially to shew that he justifies the ungodly, and that even when an unjust, careless, or most profligate and bad person is disposed for eternal life, and wants to be saved, he may; let him apply to the Friend of publicans and sinners, to the Son of God, who came into the world to save sinners, he shall not perish, he shall be saved. Perhaps some one may say, I have been unchaste and unclean with Mary, I have been covetous and hard-hearted with Zaccheus, and wicked, unjust, dishonest, and a liar, a swearer, a blasphemer with the thief, and what then? Should all their complicated crimes center in you, and you be guilty of all, and were even the sins of all the world upon you, Jesus is the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world: he is just such an almighty and tender-hearted Saviour as you want; and because he knew you were lost, perishing and undone without him and could not recover, or by any other means get delivered from Satan and the wrath to  
come,

come, therefore he came into the world to save you; and has set forth so many examples and patterns of mercy to encourage you to turn to him with all your hearts and be saved.

Cornelius, the centurion at Casarea, is another of these patterns, and of whom I must also speak a little. I will not reckon him of the sort of Mary, or number him with Zaccheus, or rank him with the malefactor, for it seems as if he was eminent in another way. He was certainly famous among the Roman Heathen for bravery, since he was a centurion of the Italian band; and for piety, because he fasted, was devout, just, gave much alms, feared God, and prayed always: so far the light of nature and a tender conscience, helped by the morality of the doctors among the philosophers, had brought him, but he was still without Christ and unsafe; for could morality and his obedience to natural religion have saved him, the angel appeared to him in vain and sent him to hear the gospel from St. Peter in vain, but he must hear the words of Peter, whereby he should be saved; and this is a clear proof that such err, who think without our Saviour to get to heaven: but Cornelius is a pattern to all who look after mercy, and scarce know how. He was in his way a good man and wanted to be saved; and Jesus, whom he knew not, would not disappoint him; and to this day, whenever souls are sincere and honest in desiring salvation, (let them be Turks, Jews, or Heathens, and seek it with wisdom or foolishly), they will find it; our Saviour, who revealed himself to Abraham when he was an Heathen and blessed him, and who sent his angel to Cornelius, will find means to bring them to the knowledge of his gospel, and will send some to preach Jesus and his redemption to them. Their having lived, like Cornelius, without the benefit of revealed religion,

shall not hinder them to come to heaven; they shall hear the gospel and be saved; God shall send some faithful Peter to them, who shall preach Christ and his merits to their soul's health; or some book shall set forth that open door to them; or God, by his Holy Spirit, shall manifest his Son, and lead them to all the means of grace, and to the attaining perfect happiness and righteousness by Christ Jesus. In this respect therefore is Cornelius a pattern of mercy, in that, though he was not under the law of Moses, nor had the privilege of the Jews, when he wanted mercy God shewed him mercy; and when his moral obedience, universal benevolence, and strict observance of the laws of nature could not satisfy him, but he felt he lacked perfect righteousness, the angel of the Lord led him to hear of that Man, in whose name is preached forgiveness of sins; and he heard, believed, was baptized, received the Holy Ghost, and is now safe with the innumerable company of the first-born in the kingdom of God.

The last that remains to be spoken of is St. Paul himself, who in the text styles himself the chief of sinners. He differed much from Cornelius, in that he was no heathen, nor called upon other Gods, but was a strict Jew under the law; and as Cornelius sought righteousness without the law, so Paul sought it by the law, and profited in his religion exceedingly, being of the strictest sort in his church, and more zealous for the law and for the traditions of the fathers than many in Jerusalem; he was a person who carried the matter of righteousness, perhaps, farther than any one, was of the beloved tribe of Benjamin, the son of a devout and strict parent, circumcised the eighth day, lived in all good conscience, and as touching the law blameless: was in favour with the high-priest, the sanhedrim, and the

the elders; a disciple of Gamaliel; and indeed had all the advantages of education and religion, but knew not the righteousness of faith in Christ. This made him so angry with the christians; they preached Christ; they said that that person who was executed on the cross, who died the cursed death, and was numbered with transgressors, was the Lord and Christ, through whose name only could be obtained remission of sins, and by faith in whom righteousness was imputed. All his education and good breeding did not hinder him, he joined the rude multitude to blaspheme such a doctrine which set at nought self-righteousness, and a man's own holiness, and assisted at the killing of St. Stephen, keeping their cloaths who stoned him, and consenting to his death. He banished some, made others renounce our Saviour, got others scourged, and with all his might persecuted such as called upon the name of Jesus, scorning and despising his blood and merits, and trampling his atonement and righteousness under his feet; but lo! after all, our Saviour's grace overtakes him; and the self-righteous Saul, like a poor perishing criminal, continues day and night to pray, without eating or drinking, for mercy. He saw the necessity of a divine and better righteousness than his own; and when God had brought down his heart, stripped him of his fig-leaves, his beggarly raiment, and the righteousness of his works, then he pardoned him, and clothed him with his own righteousness, and justified the chief of sinners. Hear this, ye who have been of this sort, and valued so much your duties, piety, and alms, and thought so little of our Saviour and his death, like the apostle, deny all your own goodness, and come and trust the blood of Christ alone, and you shall be saved; though you have been lifted up, like Capernaum, as it were to heaven, and thanked God, with the Pharisee, that

y 3

you



you were not so bad as the drunkards, the publicans and extortioners, and foolishly thought yourselves well off and in a good way, but who now, ashamed of your thoughts, and who blush at your spiritual pride, and even shudder to approach the Lamb you have so disesteemed, or to ask the righteousness you have slighted, or to implore the mercy you have despised: let the example of St. Paul encourage you to call upon the name of Jesus; and though your sin may appear to have been the chief of all sins, in that you have so long sought by other ways, and as it were by another door to get to heaven, and put up the idol of your own righteousness in the place of Christ, and dreamt that your obedience, charity, and prayers, could buy you eternal happiness, and your self-denial make an amends for sin, when nothing less than the dying of God's only Son could accomplish this: I say, though all your pride and vanity be a sore burthen to you now, fear not, but wash away your sins, calling upon the name of the Lord. I know, if you are truly awakened, you must think yourselves the chief of sinners indeed, for you must feel how bad it is to slight our Saviour, and how much trouble he has had to make you truly religious, to submit to his righteousness, and yield to be saved by faith alone, freely.

I have now spoken of these five persons who have been eminent as patterns of mercy, and who were at the head of the principal classes of sinners. In one of these classes almost every one may find himself; but perhaps there may be some who think themselves guilty of all, and who are sensible of their unchaste deeds and impure nature, with Mary; like her, they have lived in pleasure and wantonness, rioted, feasted, and indulged their vicious and sensual appetites, lived at ease and in luxury, wasted their bodies and impaired their health with intemperance and

and debauched living, &c. like Zaccheus, they stand convicted of having used unlawful measures in securing to themselves riches, or find themselves guilty of covetousness, hardheartedness to the poor, oppression, cruelty and extortion, perjury and false witness against the innocent, and the like; besides, they have sinned with the thief, have hated their brother, been murderers therefore before God, (1 John iii. 15.); passionate, fond of bad company, given to drink, careless and irreligious, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, fond of games unfair and deceitful, unjust: and having deserved for secret crimes and black deeds to die, swearers, blasphemers, and, with all their bad and sinful life, tempted to imagine themselves christians, or satisfied their consciences that others were as bad, only hypocrites, and supposed indulging of their lusts and passions, &c. were not sins, since nature prompted them on; yea it is possible, amidst all manner of disobedience, to dream one is a good sociable person, a merry companion, that means no ill, not of the worst sort, but in many respects to be praised; and if at times such frequent church, give away a few alms, and refrain, for a time, from outward and gross crimes, they can cheat themselves, and hope they have made some progress in righteousness, &c.

If some should think I have been a sinner with all, and in a great measure am guilty with every class of sinners; yet let them so think, I have to deal with a God whose mercies are as his majesty, whose blood is almighty, and whose right hand saves to the uttermost. Only bow down at his feet, conscious of your being indeed the chief of sinners, and sue for pardon, and iniquity shall not be your ruin. Let your hearts repent unfeignedly, and with tears seek forgiveness at the foot of the cross, resolved, like Jacob, not to let the Lord go till he has blessed you

you with salvation, and you shall surely find it. The self-righteous spirits will find the hardest work to submit to Christ Jesus's free grace; but when they are heartily tired and weary with seeking happiness and perfection, they will be at last glad to sink at Christ's feet, and ask it there as poor sinners; but, as I said before, this costs the soul and the Saviour much before it is done.

I know by experience this: I was brought up strictly, taught religion from my childhood, and carried the matter of righteousness very far, and do believe solemnly that our Saviour has had more trouble in bending my poor heart to his free salvation, and conquering my self-righteous spirit, than in saving some hundreds of sinners besides; but I have obtained mercy, and I set my seal to this true saying, "that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." May you all happily experience the same mercy, to the glory of his grace, to whom be praise and salvation for ever. Amen.

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### AN HYMN.

1. **O** GOD, if thou hadst but abhorr'd  
 To wear our flesh and blood,  
 I never had approach'd the Lord,  
 But at a distance stood.

2. A sense of my unworthiness,  
 My guilt and just desert,  
 Had kept me in the worst distress,  
 And sunk my hopeless heart.

3. But

3. But since thou hast incarnate been,  
And took the Saviour's place,  
Only to save from hell and sin  
The helpless human race ;

4. And since, by thee, a countless troop  
Are now got safe to heav'n,  
Who once were sinners, I have hope,  
And pray to be forgiv'n.

5. In heav'n above, in earth beneath,  
Or in the pit below,  
There's none deserves the second death  
More just than me, I know.

6. I know, in thought, in deed, and word,  
I've put thy soul to grief :  
I am the chief of sinners, Lord ;  
I am of sinners chief !

7. My sins have made thy cross ; my guilt  
Has caus'd thy wounds and pain ;  
For me, unclean, thy blood was spilt,  
By means of wicked men.

8. But let a soul, redeem'd so dear,  
Be precious in thy sight ;  
Wash me, and sin shall disappear,  
And be abolish'd quite.

9. In pard'ning one so vile as me,  
Thy mercy shall be shewn ;  
A monument I too shall be  
Of mercy on thy throne.

DISCOURSE

## DISCOURSE XXXIV.

### THE VISION OF DRY BONES.

EZEK. xxxvii. 14.

*I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live.*

**W**HOSOEVER reads the Bible must observe that God used similitudes, types, and parables when he spake by the prophets; many instances of this kind we find in Ezekiel especially, to whom, more than to other holy men, God delighted to manifest his mind in his way, and to shew visions.

At that time it was more necessary than now to liken and compare the case of the church, and of the kingdom of heaven to temporal things for their sakes who heard the word, because then the veil was upon the true sanctuary, and the doctrine of the fall, and of salvation by our Saviour's death, was not spoken of plainly, as since the New Testament has been of force.

Thus when the Lord would shew Jeremiah, that the same God who made the world would redeem it, he brings him to the house of a potter, and lets him see the potter finish his vessel upon the wheel, which was spoiled in his hands; and then he did not in his anger throw it away, and take a fresh piece of clay, but new moulded that which was marred, and made of it a good vessel, as it pleased him. Then came the word of God to the prophet, saying,  
" Behold,

“ Behold, as the clay is in the potter’s hands so are ye in my hands, saith the Lord.” By this means we are taught, that God is the great potter, and we are his clay. When he made man, sin marred the vessel in his hands, but he would not cast us utterly aside, nor withdraw his everlasting arms from underneath us; we were kept still in his hands, spoiled and ruined as we were, till the Creator bowed the heavens and came down in our likeness, and with his own blood he softens our hardened and spoiled nature, and begins in the new-birth a new creation, and this he carries on till all things are made new; and in that day when all old things pass away, and time shall be no longer, every soul shall know, that God who made all things, and for whose pleasure they are and were created, is author and Lord of all, and our Saviour.

In like manner, when the Lord would shew Ezekiel the estate of his church, he brought him in the spirit, and set him in a valley full of dry bones, and caused him to pass by them, and go round about and view them, and lo! “ they were very many and very dry.” When the man of God had been shewn all this in a vision, the Lord asked, to try him, “ Can these bones live?” and he answered, “ Lord thou knowest;” and the Lord said to him, “ These bones are my people;” they are now in a low and dead estate, and they have no more hope that I will deliver them, than that the dry bones shall live, but I have spoken it, and I will perform it; I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of them, and I will bring you into the land of Israel; then shall ye know that I am the Lord, when I have brought you up out of your graves, O my people, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live.

In this vision three things are typified, First, the deliverance of the captive Israelites. Secondly, the salvation

salvation from the dead state of nature by Christ; And, Thirdly, the last resurrection, which shall be effected through the same divine hand of our only "Lord Jesus, who can subdue all things to himself," and raise up all that innumerable company who have slept in the graves, and who are now returned to dust, and scattered and dispersed far and near.

I shall not here speak of the temporal deliverances of Israel, nor of the resurrection, but of our lost and dead condition by nature, and of our salvation, and rising again to a new life, through the grace and Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ. This I will do when I speak of the text more immediately, and now will make a few observations on the vision.

I look upon it as one of the liveliest similitudes in the scriptures, and from whence a minister and servant of Jesus may learn many excellent lessons, and indeed all others also who would be wise to salvation.

By the valley we may understand this lower world, and by the bones all the whole race of mankind; for such is our state since the fall; and dry bones can as soon understand the things of God as we by nature; and as dead and dry as the bones, and as unlikely to live, so are we, and shall never be otherwise but by an immediate work of Almighty God.

Thus has the Holy One compared our state, and thus we are in his eyes, therefore he brings his servant to see a valley full of bones, and bids him walk round about, and go through, and observe them narrowly, and he says, "behold they were very dry."

When a true servant and minister of the gospel would describe the condition of lost mankind, he must so describe it, as dead and helpless, even as dry bones; and neither can he compare unregenerate men to any thing better, nor the societies of Christians with all their best forms and orders, who enjoy  
not

not Christ in them; they, like all others, are dead, and like the house of Israel in Ezekiel's time.

When God asked Ezekiel if he thought the bones could live; he answered modestly, Lord, thou knowest; as if he would have said, to all outward appearance, and according to all human thoughts, they cannot live, but thou knowest, thou art God, and canst do what thou wilt in heaven and earth, to thee all things are possible. Should a minister or any awakened soul, take a view of our natural state, make a narrow search into the depth of our misery and sinfulness; or be led by the Holy Ghost to see how far we are gone from God, and how sunk into the arms of Satan, he would scarce make any other answer than this, Except Almighty God be their Saviour, except the Creator and Lord of all be their Saviour, they cannot be saved, they must die for ever. The scripture observes of the bones, that they were very dry, to signify the very barren and lifeless nature we are possessed of, and yet directs Ezekiel to prophecy or preach to them. Had he measured the words of God by the rules of human wisdom, or resolved, as too many ministers do, to believe and teach nothing but what they can comprehend, nor do any thing without being able to account for their manner of acting reasonably, then he must have replied, Lord, to what purpose shall I preach to dead men and dry bones? But he did not do so, he behaved as an obedient child, and did as his heavenly Father bid him. Such ministers only does our Saviour use. For of what service is the vessel that is not passive? Or to what purpose are ministers sent to preach the word of God, who are determined to be led by their carnal reason, the philosophy of the schools, and the wisdom of men, since all the doctrines of Christ are against such, and teach us, that it was by such wisdom the world



knew not God! A true minister of Jesus Christ believes his word, and teaches it; he follows his dear Master, and chuses rather his reproach; he bears the sneers and insults of cruel men, is content to be deemed a fool and mad, rather than please men and not be the servant of Christ.

Had any seen Ezekiel preaching to the bones, no doubt they had mocked and derided him. We know how we should have behaved once; if we had seen one calling to the dead in a church-yard or burying-ground, we should have pitied such a one, and thought he was beside himself, or laughed at his folly and credulity. Just so carnal men, who hear the doctrine of original sin, and how all are dead in Adam, and left powerless and unable to do any thing to the attaining salvation, mock and jeer the preachers who call to such to come to Christ; but let them mock on, our Saviour has sent us on the errand, and bids us preach to the dry bones, and we will do it. He will stand by us to the end of the world, and what we speak in the ear, he will write upon the heart. That minister would be to blame who could think it was his preaching, labours, or arguments, which awaken souls, or inspires them with life: He might preach and pray till the day of judgment, and not win one soul to our Saviour of himself.

When the disciples had been fishing, and toiling, and rowing all night by themselves, they took nothing, all their labour was in vain: but when Jesus came to them and bid them cast their net into the sea, at his word they did so, and strait filled their net that it was ready to break, and all their boats were full of fishes, so that they began to sink; so must such think who would be fishers of men. Dear Saviour, I know I may speak till I die, and toil in a dark night all my days, and catch nothing, but speak thou the word, be thou only with me, and vouchsafe  
to

to own my labours, do thou give me my words and light, and lead and send me, and I shall prosper, else I beat the air, and deliver dead preaching to dead men, and they and I deceive our own souls."

Thus Moses, the meek prophet, when he was bid to go with the people, while God made as though he would not go, answered, "If thou goest not then will I not go." He knew he should lead them in vain, and be unprosperous in all he should undertake, without the good Shepherd's presence; but when his glory moved before the camp, then he could go cheerfully after; and when the Lord spoke to him he willingly told all the words before the people.

When we preach it must be so with us. Let us not rush into the ministry unsent, nor carelessly speak to the souls under our care, but be first well acquainted with our own hearts and with our Master, and when we have felt our own sad condition, and have found redemption in his blood and wounds; when we have been truly awakened, and have experienced our lost sinful state, and found Christ crucified, and obtained pardon of him, and lived in real fellowship with him, we may then speak boldly, preaching that we know, and testifying that we have seen; and as Moses spoke from the presence of Jehovah to the people, and all heard and felt the power of God, so shall it be with us who speak out of a warm heart, whereon our Saviour's blood has spoke peace, the people who hear us shall feel whose word we speak, and know whose servants we are. Our gospel shall not come in words only but in power, in the Holy Ghost, in much assurance, and in faith unfeigned, while we, like sowers, go on and sow in season and out of season, not knowing if this or that may prosper, or as prophesying to dry bones, leaving it over to him that sent us to make them hear and live. Ministers who so act, and who so believe, learn

to prize as an inestimable treasure, the Holy Scriptures, which are the words of God, and having been taught therein by the chief Minister, they shall not need to come barren or empty handed to the congregation, but be like scribes instructed in the kingdom of God, who bring out of their treasures things new and old, to alarm, awaken, comfort, and encourage men till they have laid hold on eternal life, and entered into the harvest-supper, where the sowers and reapers rejoice together for ever.

But to return: As soon as Ezekiel had begun to preach, "there was a noise and a shaking among the bones, and the bones came together, every bone to his bone." As soon as the servant of our Saviour enters a land, or city or house, and delivers with faithful simplicity the doctrine of Christ, immediately there is a noise. The souls that were dead in sin, and asleep in a lost and unsafe estate, awake and cry for mercy; they sound the same solemn alarm in the ears of others, and a noise of weeping and mourning for him whom they have pierced, comes up before the throne.

There is also a noise in the world; some when they have heard the gospel blaze it abroad far and near, and are for inviting and calling all to Jesus: Thus it was with the woman of Samaria, she no sooner found the Messiah, but runs to call all in Sychar of her townsmen and neighbours to come and see him. This often causes a stir in a city, or village, or family, and is the means God often uses to awake the dead, and rouse them who are asleep in sin, and at ease in Sion.

There is beside a greater noise in the world; for generally when a soul is bent for salvation, and his face is turned to our Saviour in earnest, and he with tears enquires his way to heaven, his friends, or relations, or old companions, or all together, strive

strive to hinder him ; the serious think he goes too far, and need not be so concerned, and the careless and the light-minded part laugh at and oppose him with all their might ; they make a noise indeed, some cry out, he is seduced and led into errors and heresy, or are afraid he should leave his church or first religion (though perhaps that was none at all) or should renounce his baptism, or deny his faith. Others report he is distracted, mad, and beside himself. Others tempt and allure him back with great subtilty, promises, and offers, or court him into his former company, pleasures, and diversions ; while yet others follow with cruel threatenings, slanders without number, mockings, revilings, &c. The father disowns his child, the relations change all love into bitter reproaches and hatred, the mother is against her daughter, and daughter against the mother, and nothing is heard round about but a storm, and a tempest, and persecution, and blasphemy on every side : and wherefore ? Because one is turned a drunkard, a whoremonger, a stage-player, a thief, a murderer, a rebel ? O no, but only because he is resolved to be Jesus Christ's disciple. Thus it has always been, and will continue to be so till Jesus comes the second time, and then it will cease for ever. This made our Saviour say, " that he who could not leave all for his sake was not worthy of him ; and with this he comforted his people, " They have hated me, and they will hate you, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

But besides all the noise made in the world, and in the house of our friends, there is a noise among the devils, for all rise up to hinder and trouble a newly awakened soul. Satan knows there is danger of his losing his slaves, and rages horribly. He strives with temptations, hurries, frights, and terrors to oblige the poor sinner who seeks mercy, to leave off

and quit his search, nor ceases to assail the defenceless weak heart, till he has found a refuge in the wounds of a crucified Saviour, and then there is a noise through all the heavens, of harpers harping on their harpers, and of the shoutings and hallelujahs of the angels and blessed spirits, at the return of a sinner to the Lord. Jesus himself is the author of this joy, by telling them, "Let us be glad and make merry, for this your brother was dead, but is alive again, he was lost, and is found."

This noise of joy properly begins when a sinner repents, but at that time he knows little of it; on the contrary he hears only the noise of the enemy, who crieth after him, the noise of a guilty heart, and of a clamorous and false world; but he shall hereafter hear "the noise of them that keep holy-day;" himself shall sing for joy, and clap his hands, and leap for very gladness of heart.

Ezekiel observes farther, that "there was a shaking among the bones," as well as a noise, to signify how the convinced heart trembles at the word of God. They are shook from all their false and deceitful hopes, from their sandy foundations and fallacious pleas; they feel themselves ready to perish, and are as if God shook them over hell. Their heart aches and sinks within them, their faltering lips can scarce speak plain, or utter any thing but broken sighs, and short but piercing prayers for mercy, and their poor knees are smiting together. Are any who hear me thus? O turn ye to that dear man who once went trembling into the garden of Gethsemane, sweating blood as he went and crying out of the bitterness of his soul. He only knows your disease and what you want. He alone can sympathize truly with you, and help and ease you. Turn to that Jesus whose flesh and whose heart shook and trembled because of the Lord's judgments,

judgments, and he will give you a rest to your souls. Apply to that good Physician, and you will find him mighty to save.

This is the way by which all happy souls have escaped ; when loaded and oppressed with guilt and fear, they have fled to a bleeding, groaning, and agonizing Lord, and found refuge from the avenger of blood. All the noise and opposition made in the world, or in hell, has not hindered them ; their threatenings and promises, their smiles and frowns, were treated with like indifference by the sincere souls, nothing swayed or drew them like Christ Jesus.

They were deeply and sensibly convinced of the danger they were in without a Saviour : they felt his words with invincible power, and having heard how God loved the world, that he once became like a lamb in their stead, and drank up, like a cup of wormwood and gall, the bitter wrath they had deserved, and at last died in hellish anguish to save them alive ; and this made their hearts bleed and shudder, nor did they, nor could they rest, till his small still voice within had silenced their fears and miseries, and made them feel his everlasting love and mercy.

Who never in his life was thus concerned about his salvation, who never was in any distress for mercy, or saw amazed his sinful state, nor was forced to cry out for the blood and help of Jesus as one ready to perish, who never was thus shaken from every thing but him and his righteousness, he never was awakened, but is dead to this day ; he has never had ears to hear the word of God ; he never had eyes to see, but is blind ; he has no heart, to understand ; but with all his sobriety, peace, and good hopes, with all his self-made comforts, he is in the utmost danger and peril, and, like the bones without life, dead to God and very dry.

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There was yet another remarkable effect of Eze-kiel's preaching; the bones came to their proper place, every bone to his bone. This is to teach us, that the gospel brings those together that were at the greatest distance, and unites even such as before were enemies; it causes the greatest order and decency, and sets every thing in its proper place. He adds, "the sinews and the flesh came upon the bones, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them." In this state are many, many souls, and whole congregations and churches. They have heard the preaching of the gospel, and felt somewhat of the power of the word of God; they have got good rules, orders, and articles of religion, like sinews to bind them together, and have their morality, like a fine skin, over all—but there is no life in them. They are utter strangers to the voice of the blood of sprinkling within, have not yet received the Holy Ghost, nor know that Christ liveth in them. All their religion is the form of Christianity, but they have not the power. O let every one ask his heart, "Is it not so with me?" I will not, I dare not say this of all, but of many it is certainly true; they have a good church, good laws, good rules and doctrines, appear like men and children of God, but after all, what our Saviour said once to a young man, may be said to them, "Yet lackest thou one thing." Thou hast a good form, perhaps, can boast of the antiquity, orthodoxy, or purity of thy church, and tell what good works thou hast done, how often-fasted and prayed, how charitable and devout, how strict in thy duties, "but there is no life in thee," so that thou art a stranger to the Lamb in thy heart, or unacquainted with his love inwardly; thou art, with all thy doings, like a dead branch and dry bones, yea, thou art very dry.

Now

Now when Ezekiel saw that the sinews had knit bone to bone, and the flesh and skin covered them and made them in the form and fashion of men, but yet dead, the Lord bid him prophecy to the winds, and say to them in the name of the Lord God, that they might breathe upon the dry bones and make them live, and he did so as he was commanded, and breath entered into them, and they stood up and lived, and became an army of men.

Here ministers may learn a weighty lesson; they may bring people together and make articles, creeds, and whatever else they please, so bind them in one body; they may teach them to cover themselves with what other covering they please, and when they have done all it will be like a body without the soul, till God breathes upon them, and gives them life. Let them therefore speak to the wind, to the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, that he may inspire the souls and make them live; for without his immediate aid all our labour is in vain. We do not pray before our discourses because that has been the long received custom, or because others have done it, but because we would implore the north and south wind to blow upon the church, which is God's garden, that the spices may flow out: Or, in plain words, to beseech our Saviour to quicken the hearts of all who hear, that they may be converted and saved. We have not many instances in the Testament of the apostles using prayer before or after their preaching, but generally they delivered their errands and divine messages, and went their way; but now prayer is almost every where in use, before and after sermons; and when he that ministers, and they who hear, feel the want of the Holy Spirit, it has its great use and blessing, for then they ask in faith, and receive the presence of the Lord, which blesses every meeting, and is felt by all the faithful, to their great



great joy and comfort. Alas! how cold is that assembly where Jesus is not! And how dead and dry that meeting where he does not preside! As of old the camp rested when the cloud and pillar rested, and went forward when that moved before them, so is it now. Let the Shekinah, the glory, be absent, and none go forward, all stops and is at a stand; but let the Lord arise, and his spirit move before, and all goes on after him happily. Also, as it is with the church of God in general, so is it with every child of God in particular; for till a soul has found our Saviour, and is made alive by him, he remains poor, and dead, and impotent, when He, the Sun of righteousness, arises upon him with healing in his wings, and when his Spirit brings the glad news, "Live, thy sins are forgiven thee!" then he can stand up and be happy; from that moment he becomes a new man, and lives a new life; he lives the life of the Son of God, and shall live for ever.

This is what the Lord aims at in the text, "I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live."

I wonder exceedingly how some men can read the scripture constantly, and yet deny altogether the gift of the Holy Spirit: for there is scarce any prophet that has not mentioned the promise of him; nor can we hardly open the New Testament but we find Jesus and all his servants confirming the blessed doctrine. How frequently is it repeated, "The Holy Ghost shall come. He shall be in you. He shall abide with you for ever. He will lead you into all truth. Your heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him. Ye shall receive the Holy Ghost?" And indeed all are exempted from being children of God and Christ's disciples, who have him not in their hearts. See Rom. viii. 9. 1 John v. 12. 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

Without

Without him all are dead to God while they live, and their works are dead works, and do not please the living God. A man who has not Christ in him, and who was never made alive by his breath, and by the word of his mouth, is no real Christian; he may be called so, and may have dreamed and fancied he was a Christian indeed, but he is one of that number "who have a name to live but are dead." "He that hath the Son hath life, saith the scripture, but he that hath not the Son hath not life." If he has not come to our Saviour and been pardoned by him, and fed upon his flesh and blood by a living faith, his estate is explained by Jesus himself, "He has no life in him." The same gracious Lord God who poured out his Holy Spirit upon the prophets and fathers, and taught them to see afar off the redemption by our Saviour, and to believe on him, and depend upon his death to their salvation; the same Lord deals in like manner graciously by us now, and bestows on us the same faith, the same gift of grace, and the same Spirit, and by which only we can possibly become heirs of the glory to come, or believe to eternal life. It is the Holy Ghost that quickens those who come to, or believe in Jesus. He opens the eyes and lets men see their sin, and he unstops the ears that they may hear the voice, the soft still voice of the Son of Man, and live. He awakes them from their graves, and beds of carnal security, and directs them to Christ, that they may have life: and though he could do all this without using preachers or ministers at all, and sometimes has done so, yet generally, "it has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." He makes himself witnesses in all ages, and these he sets in his church to testify of him, and to set to their seal that God is true, and his words true and faithful. Should a bewildered  
soul

soul inquire of them of the certainty of their doctrine, they can answer, "We are witnesses of these things;" we have been lost, but are now found, we have been dead, but are alive again, and shall live, because Jesus is our life for evermore.

The Israelites had been dejected, and thought, "as for us, we are cut off, and God has cast us away, we have no hope," therefore was Ezekiel shewn this vision, and ordered to say to that poor disconsolate house of Israel, that though there was no more likelihood of their deliverance than of their resurrection of dry bones, yet would God surely visit them, and bring them up out of their graves, that is, the low estate in which they were like men dead and buried; "then will I put my Spirit in you, and you shall live, saith the Lord God!"

In this way a poor troubled sinner may think to himself, I am dead and like one gone down to the pit; my hope lessens, and my heart and soul is dead and heavy to the last degree; I am afraid I am gone too far to be saved, and that, for my part, I am cut off as a dry branch and withered, and fit for nothing but to be cast into the fire. Such thoughts often occur, where a person gets awakened and is much alone, or who has not understood, though they were dead, who believe in Jesus, yet they shall live. Here the gospel is of the utmost weight and importance, it is of real service, and sets before the soul ready to perish a crucified Saviour, a dying and bleeding Lamb, the sight of which revives the heart, and begins a new and everlasting life. The feet of them who bring the glad tidings are beautiful to such, for of them they hear that "the dry bones can live." In this respect, therefore, we must admire the wisdom of our dear Saviour, in sending men with the gospel rather than angels; for though many may think, If I could have an angel appear  
to

to me and tell me of salvation, it would at once satisfy me; yet in great measure such, who have so thought, had their wishes been granted, would be mistaken; for should an angel or blessed spirit announce the death and merits of our Saviour, and declare his love and mercy, it is easy for a soul convinced of sin to think, Alas! thou art an angel, and one who kept his first estate, thou hast never sinned, nor been disobedient, nor felt a heart cold and dead like mine, to thee therefore it may be right and just to believe so well of the Redeemer, but I am a sinner, a poor, lost, helpless, and dead sinner, and have no right to venture to the Saviour like thee. In this case, I say, a minister of Christ can be of more use than a vision of angels, for he is a witness of the grace and pardon of God our Saviour; he was once in the same deep mire and clay, and convinced of his sad condition by nature, but found mercy and everlasting life in the wounds of Jesus Christ: but there is a greater witness than men or angels, and that is the Holy Spirit, who is the "Lord and Giver of life, and who beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." He will not commit this most important and weightiest work to any minister, however trusty or faithful, nor to any of the most dear angels, but is himself the ascertainer and witness of our adoption and sonship, that we need not be left to reason and question of the truth of an angelical vision, or be at the uncertainty of the message of a man, or be exposed to doubt and fear in their absence, supposing we could be well persuaded of their veracity and faithfulness; but we have the Spirit of truth with us, who cannot lie, and whose conviction in the heart is more solid and sure than if all heaven was opened, and every angel assured us of our part in Christ; yea, more solid and certain than if all the prophets, apostles, mar-

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tyrs, and witnesses of every age stood before us, and preached to us how we were beloved of God, and confessed by our Saviour, in presence of all his holy angels. This witness remains, when visions cease, when we do not dream blessed dreams any more, when preaching is over, and time is no longer. "He will abide with us for ever. He will never leave or forsake us," and in our last moments, when our strength fails, and our friends and nearest relations can comfort us no more, then he will continue "the faithful and true witness," in whom, till then, we live in peace here, and shall live to all eternity, through the death of Jesus, who is "the resurrection and the life." To whom be glory and thanksgiving for evermore. Amen.

**DISCOURSE**

## DISCOURSE XXXV.

### THE SAFETY OF A TRUE CHRISTIAN.

Ezek. ix. 6.

*Come not near any man upon whom is the mark.*

**T**HESSE words are part of the charge which God gave to the destroying angels whom the prophet, in a vision, saw standing in the Lord's presence, each with his destroying weapon in his hand; and who were waiting at his word to slay without mercy all but such as were distinguished by a hidden or secret character, called, in the text, "the mark." Ezekiel relates the manner of the sealing some to be saved, and the order to slay utterly all the rest, with an uncommon and striking solemnity. "He sings of mercy and judgment, of the goodness and severity of God," before the whole rebellious house of Israel: nor was the vision intended for their sakes only to whom at that time the oracles of God were sent, but the whole, like most of the other inspired writings, concerns the race of mankind in general, and particularly those who are called by the Lord's name.

It was undoubtedly sent to warn men of an approaching day, wherein all who have satisfied themselves without "the power of godliness, the one thing needful," should weep and wail bitterly, and be cut off and destroyed from among the people of  
God;

God; and to inspire all who are any ways disposed to be saved to make their election sure, and to get their interest and part secured in the book of life, as well as to shew forth their safe and happy condition "who are sealed to the day of redemption," and who have obtained of "God our Saviour the witness of the Spirit, that they are the children of God."

The blessings as well as curses made to the Israelites under the law have been observed chiefly to relate to things temporal, but then they were shadows of eternal things, and of which now the gospel treats plainly and without a veil. Hence we may innocently conclude, that how far soever this vision might relate to the overthrow and rejection of the Jews, on account of their unbelief, idolatry, and perverse behaviour, yet it certainly had respect to a time of greater desolation than that of cutting off the Israelites, or dispersing and scattering them among the nations: for St. John, in his book of Revelations, mentions of the things which shall come to pass in the last day, in much the same manner as in this part of Ezekiel's prophecy.

He saw that some angels, who had power to hurt the earth and the sea, &c. were charged not to do it "till the servants of God were sealed in their foreheads," and then to hurt and torment such who had not received that seal. Thus Ezekiel says, "There stood a man by the brazen altar, clothed in white linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side," who was appointed to set a mark on all that were mourners in Israel, and who sighed because of the abominations of Jerusalem; and when he had done this, then the other angels, who had destroying weapons in their hands, were commanded "to go out after him and spare not, neither shew pity, but kill utterly old and young, women, maids, and little children,

children, and to begin at the Lord's sanctuary; but at the same time they were ordered, "Come not near any man on whom is the mark."

The person clothed in white lined is, no doubt, our Saviour; for in this way he is described by all those who have seen him in his glory. His ~~in~~ <sup>mark</sup> is his pierced side, out of which he seals and marks his inheritance who are in the world. When he had said with a loud voice on the cross, "It is finished!" then were all his people ransomed, and the whole world retrieved and saved out of the enemy's hand; but after Jesus was dead, a soldier pierced his side, that out of his heart's most precious and costly blood he might sprinkle them, and mark them as a shepherd marks his sheep. This also is promised to all those who overcome, "I will write upon thee the name of my God, and I will write upon thee my new name." This is, in other places, called "the secret of the Lord," and this appellation is given it by Job, David, and Solomon. It is also called "that new name which no man knoweth saving him that receiveth it." It is the mark of the Lamb in their foreheads, the divine frontlet which the bishop of our souls bestows on all who are invited to the marriage-supper. In other parts of scripture, the Holy Ghost calls it "a jewel put on the forehead." In short, it is no other than our Saviour's giving to the soul the seal and earnest of his Spirit, whereby he makes himself known to them as he does not to the world, and in which they rejoice with joy unspeakable, knowing that nothing shall separate them from his love, or read them out of his hands. They have received the image and mark of Jesus; the name of God is upon them; the engraving whereof is like the engraving of a signet, which none can read, or blot out, or efface, but he only who is the Lord of hosts, and who has loved them



them; with everlasting love, which is only known to the Lamb and themselves who have received it.

This is the one Thing which so many, with all their splendid shew of christianity, yet lack, and without which it will avail very little to have been called christians.

The Holy Spirit, who is also a faithful and true witness, will not suffer any to suppose they are right in the sight of God till they have received of him the Lord's badge and mark. He continually troubles and disturbs the profane and wicked man with shewing him his spiritual nakedness, his crimes and aggravating sins; and as once he called to Adam in the garden after his fall, "Adam, where art thou?" so he calls the sleepy and unconcerned part of the world, as if he said to each, Where art thou? In what a state art thou? Knowest thou not, O poor soul, that thou art still a servant of sin and Satan; thou art unconverted; thou art no christian; thou art an enemy of Jesus; thy life, thy words, and thoughts, thy whole course is contrary to the scriptures, and true religion, and also contrary to the convictions of thy conscience. Shouldest thou be called away in thy passions, or snatched out of the world in thy drunkenness or whoredoms, how wouldest thou meet death? how bear the judgment of the last day, or stand at the bar of the Lord? Thus secretly does the Spirit strive with the rebellious, and seeks with paternal tenderness to win them to Jesus. Thus he makes his mind to be felt often when no eye sees it, and in such a manner expostulates with souls, that sometimes they tremble, weep and pray; they confess their unsafe state, and seem to resolve to alter their course and be converted, but as soon as the next morning light shines, or as soon as their fright is a little over, they hope they shall neither die or be called to a judgment yet, and again  
take

take their former liberty of sinning, and with greater disobedience and presumption, at last quench the Holy Spirit, and send him away grieved; but whether he departs or shews forth all long-suffering towards them, he imprints too deep for all company, sin, pleasure, or Satan himself to blot it out, that they are in the road to perish, and without that happy part of christianity, the feeling of his love, which all his children have.

Nor are the people of a self-righteous disposition left to go on comfortably without any misgivings and doubts in regard to their being right: for the same Holy Spirit who convinces the sinful of their gross outward crimes and offences, is also continually busied in shewing these that their righteousness is not perfect. It is as if he daily preached to their hearts, "Thou art weighed in the balance and art found wanting." He makes them feel how subject they are to the fear of death as well as others; what natural inbred sins rise and stir within their hearts, while they look so well without. How much self-admiring, spiritual pride, hypocrisy and double-heartedness mingle with all their piety and devotion; how far they are from having a single eye; how far from being truly low in heart and full of faith; how worldly minded; how carnal; how dead and cold towards Jesus: and when they have carried their religious acts farther than ordinary, and put all their good purposes and vows in execution, he still whispers, "Yet lackest thou one thing, still one thing is needful." This dying persons betray to others who stand round their beds repeating their moral lives, duties, charities and good works, trying thereby to persuade them they are safe; they still are uneasy and dissatisfied; they are not yet without secret fears and jealousies lest they should miscarry; they are sensible things are not right with  
them;

them; they have not a living faith in Jesus Christ; they find somewhat is wanting still; and indeed they think justly, and it is a pity they should be by any means cheated, for they want "truth in the inward parts;" they want to see Jesus is theirs; they want to feel the redemption, to be sealed; they want the mark. As soon as this is felt within, and the Spirit has testified of this to their hearts, as soon as he has shed abroad the love of Christ, or given them one divine touch, one view of their part in the blood of the Lamb, or shewn them a reconciled or loving Jesus, they can die in peace, they sing and think with faithful Simeon, "Now, Lord, let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

Some people are so far enlightened by the sun of righteousness, as so see they are not right; and who can, or will afterwards venture on, and not seek earnestly for themselves, through the assurance of faith, their part in the book of life, and in the flock and fold of the good Shepherd, but stay carelessly without the door of the sheepfold; such must look to be of that unhappy multitude, of whom Jesus complains, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life; I would have healed you, but ye would not be healed; I would have gathered you often as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not; and who, when the messenger of death shall call them out of the world, and when they stand with the small and great in the last day, shall fall in the general slaughter of the old and young who have not the mark.

In that day the having had a name to live will avail nothing; the riches of the rich will cry against him in the ears of the Lord of hosts, the wisdom of the wise will fail him, and he will weep bitterly; the strong man's knees will smite dreadfully together, and

and every one's face gather paleness, and no prayer, no plea, no excuse, no cries or tears will avert one moment the blow, or move to pity the destroying angels; they must remove mercy out of their eyes and hands, and slay utterly all who have not known God, nor obeyed his righteous gospel. They have not the mark of the sheep, and must perish with the goats. They have not the seal of the living God: Satan may seize them; as reprobate silver, so shall they be refused in the day of decision, in the day when God shall try all them that dwell upon the earth.

When the Lord was minded to bring his last plague upon Egypt, and to make every house feel his displeasure at once, he first commanded his own people to sacrifice the paschal Lamb, and sprinkle the blood of the Lamb upon their door-post, that when the destroying angel should pass by at midnight, he might see the mark, and not enter that house. Accordingly all who feared the Lord, and hearkened to the voice of his minister, Moses, did so; they made ready a lamb of the first year without blemish, and eat of the sacrifice in haste, at the same time they sprinkled the blood upon their door-posts and on the lintels; and while they were eating their supper, the destroyer received his commission, and without any mercy passed through the whole land of Egypt, and slew the eldest or first-born in every house, so that there was a cry heard throughout the whole land, such as had never been known since the world began: mean while the Israelites were all safe in their houses, they had the mark on their doors, they had sprinkled the blood in faith and were preserved; so that he who smote down the most reverend and ancient in every family, in that night, much to be remembered, did not touch them.

Thus

Thus it is now: Jesus the chief priest, and all his ministers have forewarned us, that the angels of his wrath stand at his gates waiting only for the word, and in one moment the four who have power over the winds would loose their hands, and raise the last and final tempest; the finest cities would be laid in ruins instantly, the most magnificent buildings would be overturned, and not a stone left upon another which should not be thrown down, the mountains and hills would be swept away, and the sea and its waves would be roaring every where, while the pillars of heaven would be so shaken that the stars would fall as when a fig-tree casts its untimely figs shaken by a great wind; mean while the six who stand with their flaming swords drawn, would smite the nations, and all the kindreds of the earth, with an entire slaughter. This is called in the prophets, "the day of gloominess and darkness, which shall burn as an oven, and in which all the ungodly shall be as stubble." But before this day our Saviour has shewn us how to be saved. All who hear his voice, like wise virgins, get ready, they come in faith to himself, the true paschal Lamb; and his Spirit sprinkles on the door-posts of the heart his precious blood. "We are come, saith the apostle, to the blood of sprinkling." This secures all who have found it; so that let the judgment hasten on, or linger; they have received the mark; and let it be this evening or next midnight, or at cock-crowing, or to-morrow morning, that the angels of destruction shall pass through the guilty world, or let all out of the bottomless pit be unbound to go over the earth to destroy all thereon, no harm shall happen to the sealed ones, nor shall any evil come near their dwellings; a thousand may fall beside them, and ten thousand at their right hands, but it shall not come nigh them. No plague shall cut them off, no  
son

son of violence shall approach to hurt them; and wherefore? because they obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and fled to the sanctuary of the cross of Jesus; they have their hearts and consciences sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb. Their sins are blotted out, they have believed and are saved. The Holy Ghost has sealed them, and anointed them kings and priests to God and the Lamb, and they shall stand before the God of the whole earth safely. His new name who died for them, the name of the New Jerusalem and the name of his Father is upon them. If the blood of a common lamb sprinkled in faith on the doors of the Hebrews could so keep off the angel from doing them harm, and if he could so be deterred from hurting them, that not one suffered the least damage, how much more must the blood of the Lamb of God sprinkled on the heart preserve it against all the gates and powers of hell in safety for ever! Satan, and every enemy, knows what the blood of Jesus can do; he has already heard the Judge's charge, "Touch not mine anointed; come not near any man on whom is the mark." He has heard the eternal decree made in their favour, and trembles before the blood of Jesus, and like lightning flies before it. O people, who art sealed and marked herewith, "Who is like unto thee? thou art saved of the Lord; the Holy One of Israel is thy defence, the everlasting God is thy refuge."

When Rahab was told by the spies what the Lord would do to Jericho, and how all therein should die by the sword, she also was warned to put out of her window the mark and sign which was told her, and she did so; she hung out the scarlet thread, and when the day came, in which, at the last blowing of the rams-horns, the angels of God overturned and threw down the wall of this city,

her

her house stood safe, though it was built upon it. The Holy Ghost signifies hereby, as by the sprinkling of blood, the same preservation of those who believe, and out of whose window hangs, as it were, the scarlet thread, the bond of the covenant in the blood of Christ. Let the stars fall, let the skies be rolled up, and the heavens pass away with a great noise, and the firmament melt with fervent heat, let all God's thunder-bolts fall, and break in pieces every goodly thing, and let the showers of fire and brimstone fall and set the whole universe in a flame, they shall be safe, as Rahab in her house upon the walls of Jericho, they shall be out of danger; every thunder-clap, every storm and judgment, every stroke of divine wrath, and every destroying angel, has his commission, "Come not near any man on whom is my mark." Such shall wait, like virgins who have oil in their lamps, when they shall see the Lord descend with ten thousand of his saints; they shall wait with inexpressible longing to see the Son of Man coming in the clouds, and to hear the cry, "Behold, he comes, the Bridegroom comes, go ye up and meet him in the air." O how will they rejoice! how thankful will they be that once in their life-time they laid hold on eternal life, and made their calling and election sure by believing unfeignedly on Jesus Christ! How will they adore the riches of his grace, who prevented them to deceive themselves by resting without the door of the fold, by stopping short of "the mark of the prize of their high calling," or by sleeping, like others who are foolish virgins, without oil in their lamps.

But may I not ask you who are present here, in which number would you be reckoned, think ye, should the trumpet now sound? Are you of the blessed few who are marked? or are you ignorant what it means?

You

You know in the parable of the ten virgins, that all of them expected the Bridegroom, all were professors, all went out to meet him;” and therein consisted the wisdom of the wise, they took oil in their lamps,” and were ready to meet the Bridegroom, let him come when he would; on the other hand, the folly of the foolish was their neglect. Setting aside all the nations of those who are not named after Christ, and who make little of his appearing or second advent, one half, if not more, of those who are called by his name, are foolish virgins, and take the lamp, have a glorious profession, but have no oil; they are without eternal life, without the grace that bringeth salvation, and sleep on and take their rest, as if all was well; they slumber and dream of being christians, and think they have made some proficiency in the true religion of Jesus Christ, when alas! they know only his name, and have no more the witness of his spirit that they are his, and know no more what it is to be sealed by him to the day of redemption, than Turks, or children unborn: To such the day of the Lord would be terrible: and for them to hear the midnight cry, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!” would be worse than to hear the loudest thunders of mount Sinai, worse than to have heard the shrieks and cries of Egypt when their first-born were slain: Such would wail because of him; and the mourning of such at the descending of the Lord to judgment would be more and worse than the mourning in the valley of Hadadrimmon! O may I in that day be found worthy to stand before the Son of Man!

What will make the day of judgment more awful will be the bringing to light all the secret sins, the black and horrid crimes, as well as all the slighting and neglecting salvation, the hard thoughts and words spoken against the Lamb, and revealing the



272. *The Safety of a True Christian.*

hidden mystery of iniquity in every creature; all which might have been done away in the fountain of the blood of Christ, had not they made light of it, and trifled till the season and day of grace passed over. Then must the hypocrites and dry and dead professors feel first the sword of the destroyer: "Begin," says God, "at my sanctuary," begin at those who have named my name, at the ministers and unfaithful servants who have rejected the Corner-Stone, who have not warned the souls, but been careless watchmen, who have rather hushed and lulled to sleep such as were awaking and beginning to be concerned, persuading them, there is no more necessary than an honest, moral life, and "who have healed the wounds of the daughter of my people slightly, crying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace:" and they began at the honourable men which are before the house of God, i. e. they began with the persons cried up for good men, and noted and honoured for their strictness and devotion, for having done a great deal, and compassed sea and land to make a proselyte; but who, after all, were without the seal of the spirit. In that day, and not till then, will the cause be decided between the false and true professor of Christ. Then, however they have dissembled, and made a fine appearance of religion, all but inward and pure christianity will burn up, and leave the almost christian miserable; but as they cheated themselves, and liked to be deceived, they must bear the loss and blame, because in their life-time, and in the day of their visitation, they did not prize or value the precious wounds and blood of Jesus, nor hide in the clefts of that rock. They slighted him, they lived without him, they loved the world, they chose the honour of men, they would not come to our Saviour for life, they chose their own way, and ventured on, and must

must now feel what it is to be without Christ in the world.

It will be far otherwise with the children of God, the once despised and reproached, but now honoured and blessed people. As soon as Jesus sits on the clouds and all the heavens are opened, and their innumerable hosts blowing their trumpets, and harping on harps to the Lamb that was slain, how will they lift up their heads! the first smile they get from their dear Lord shall more than reward them for all that they have undergone and suffered on his account in the world; but he shall confess them in the presence of his Father, and before all his holy angels, These, will he say, are they that have followed me, these continued with me. "Come, ye blessed children of my father, come up hither." Those arms which were once bound to the cross shall embrace them, and the same lips once struck by the officer shall kiss them. They shall be caught up to meet him, they shall sit down with him on the throne; and when he shall ascend from his judgment-seat, they too shall ascend with him, and enter into the wedding chamber, before the door is shut. They shall have a right to enter by the gates into the holy city, and to eat of the fruit of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God, and shall live for ever with him.

Ah! do not you wish to be among these children of the bride-chamber? do not you long after this happiness? and is not Balaam's wish the desire of your heart, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his?" Methinks I hear you say it is. Why then, nothing can hinder you but your own poor bad self-will. Ask any thing of Jesus, and he will do it for you. Come to him honestly, and with an upright and sincere heart, and seek his salvation, and you shall find it. Be in

earnest, for his name sake, and for your own soul's sake; leave all the world, and from this moment retire out of it, and devote and give up yourselves wholly to follow him, nor satisfy yourself with a self-denying and mortified behaviour, or with an innocent or strict life, but look for the inward witness, the seal and mark which I have been treating of, and which is on the hearts and foreheads of all the inheritance of the Lord; I mean, get such a confidence of his love to you, and such a secret and hidden witness of his Spirit with your spirits that you are children of God, and that you are destined by him to be with him for ever, and you will not be ignorant what is his mark, nor will you any more dread death, or have a fearful looking for judgment; you will sit down at his feet in peace, you will sleep and wake happy; live and die to the Lord, and be saved with an everlasting salvation, will be blessed in this world and in the world to come, in time and in eternity, and nothing shall be for ever able to pluck you out of his hands; you will bless yourselves in the Lord, and have your hearts leap for joy, when you are called hence to be no more seen; for then you will go in peace to God your Saviour: or should you stay till he comes, you would meet him with eternal joy and gladness. To him be glory and thanksgiving, and salvation, and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE

## DISCOURSE XXXVI.

THE ASSURANCE OF FAITH; OR THE EXPERIENCE OF A TRUE CHRISTIAN.

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ISAIAH xxxviii. 17.

*Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption, for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.*

THESE words are a part of that writing which Hezekiah the good king of Israel wrote after a recovery from sickness, and is a sort of a song of thanksgiving, and a relation of his happy experience, viz. of his own natural estate, and of the work of conversion on his heart.

I prize this portion of holy scripture the more, because under the law, the believer generally walked in a cloud, and but few seem permitted to look behind the veil, and to experience the blessedness which, through the gospel, is every child of God's proper right and privilege.

From Moses until Christ, that veil which was upon all nations darkened the Israelites also, and in great measure overshadowed the whole church of God which was among the Jews; and only a small number of choice and chosen men and women, such as the prophets, and those who believed their report, had true ideas of the kingdom and redemption of

him that should come; and hence it was that the prophets who spoke plainly of Christ, and who having searched diligently and found out the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, in a sort of ecstasy and rapture uttered the glad news, were as coldly received, and often, if not always, the most persecuted and most despised of their time.

The truth was, they could not relish the testimony of the men inspired, but liked rather to hear of being the greatest people in the world, to be prospered in all their wars, to be rich, to reign, to enjoy a flow of milk and honey, and to abound in all plenty, and to have kings among themselves whose dominions should have no end, and to see all the heathen hewers of wood, and drawers of water subject to them. They loved this world, and erred in their hearts about the world to come; and this made their chief minister sigh over them, when he was finishing his course, "Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" They were, as too many of us are, fond of things temporal, and careless of things eternal; lovers of the shadows, but thoughtless and inattentive to the substance.

But stiff-necked and disobedient as they were, there were among them in all ages, men, who like Hezekiah, sought after the best riches, and who followed the example of their fathers, "counting themselves in the world strangers and pilgrims, and looking for a heavenly country and a city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

These sought and found the Lord: These received the remission of their sins, and their songs of praise are often filled with expressions of the assurance of faith. These abound among the Psalms, which however collected by the sweet singer of Israel, are not his alone, but the work of many saints, who  
with

with him partook of the same faith, and were illuminated by the same Paraclete and Comforter.

It is easy to prove out of the Psalms of David and others, as well as out of Isaiah, Ezekiel and Zechariah, that they who believed truly in our Saviour, though so far off, knew their sins were forgiven and blotted out, to be remembered no more; and this grace they prophesied should come unto us: But there is something particularly beautiful in that writing of Hezekiah, out of which I have been reading. It is to me a solid and weighty account of God's dealings with him, and tallies with the experience of all true christians in the world.

Three things are particularly to be observed in his relation:

First, The distress he was in before our Saviour spoke peace to him and delivered him from his sins.

Secondly, The assurance he had of being pardoned; and accepted by his heavenly Father, and saved; and how boldly he testifies that this must be the case with all the children of God.

Thirdly, The cause of all; which he says, was the love of Jehovah to him: of each of these let me speak a little.

And first, I will mention his distress. He was outwardly troubled with sickness, and within with fears and heaviness: he wept sore for fear of dying, and was in bitterness about his peace with God. He expected every morning to be cut off, through a grievous boil that caused his illness; and every evening he dreaded more than meeting a lion, that the Lord would remove him, while a more heavy burden lay on his heart; for he doubted if he should ever see the Lord in the land of the living. There are few lovers of Jesus who read this pathetic writing, but with tears in their eyes, think, "Ah, dear Saviour, so it was with me; thus I thought once; this

this was my case. I cried and mourned alone. I sat moping and grieving in secret like a dove. I seemed to sigh unregarded, like the swallow that chatters alone on the house-top. I was in pain for a Saviour; I mourned for him as one mourneth for his only son. I was in bitterness for him whom I had pierced, as one is in bitterness for his first-born.

Thus it was with poor Hezekiah; nor was he comforted till the Lord pitied him, and saw his tears, and sent mercy and pardon to him. O this was a happy sickness, a sanctified visitation! For this little moment's affliction he shall thank the Lamb to all eternity. It was grievous for a few days, but had the desired effect, and helped to lay him low at the throne of grace; and now behold he who turned to the wall upon his bed and wept, he who dreaded to be consumed, and expected daily when the Lord would make an end of him, is now in peace. He has found a merciful Saviour, and is with him; he once trembled to think he should behold men no more, and be no more with the inhabitants of the world: now he sees the Son of man, and is with the inhabitants of the world above. O that sickness might thus be blessed to all those who pine away with it! They have much time, and are released from the employments and hurrying business of this life; O that they would turn to him "who himself bore their sicknesses and carried their infirmities," and pray him to help them to the place where sickness, sorrow, and pain is no more, and where all tears are wiped away from their eyes. They may have many or few to comfort them with hopes of doing well again, recovering their health, &c. but till they have the assurance of their part in Jesus Christ, they need the right Comforter, and are without the best Friend: Had they his presence, then, when none else were near to comfort them, he would be  
near;

near; and to have him is better than life; and to die in him is gain.

It is very common for persons, before their assurance of the love of Christ, to be in misery and sore afflicted. To me it would be a great proof that a man was unconverted, who never knew what it was to be so pained at his very heart, so concerned about his soul's future welfare, that he could not rest or be easy. Such who sleep on and take their rest, and never experience that distress, which our Saviour calls "hungering and thirsting, being weary and heavy laden, being ready to perish, &c." were never awakened, they are in a carnal security, and dead to the divine life, dead to the faith, dead to the Lord, and to their own souls. They deserve that character in the prophet, "Careless and at ease in Sion." But though in general, children of God in this sense, through much tribulation enter the kingdom; yet there are instances of some who have been so drawn by love, and carried so like lambs in the Shepherd's bosom, that they are excused from much pain, and saved from many sorrows; yet altogether they are not strangers to that heart-uneasiness which I have been speaking about. Many have therefore called it the pangs of the new-birth, and our Saviour himself so compares it, John xvi. 20.

Who can forbear to be uneasy when the Holy Spirit awakes him from his dangerous sleep, shews him his wicked heart and life, sets before him in order his sins, and how great wrath he justly deserves? Who, unregenerate and conscious of his being a natural and carnal man, can do otherwise than shudder when he knows he must die, and after that come to judgment; and when he feels that if he should be called away as he is, he must perish in eternal burnings, and be numbered among foolish virgins, hypocrites and unbelievers? But what can pierce still deeper



deeper and cut with more intense pain, is the conviction that we have slighted Christ, slighted and disesteemed his person and merits, his sufferings and blood, his shame and humiliation, his labour and servitude, and as it were, trampled under foot the holy things wherewith he redeemed us; besides denying and refusing the tender calls of his Spirit, and rejecting his convictions. These reflections, when the eyes of the soul are opened, cause inexpressible sadness and grief. These make the heart sink, and the tears flow day and night: this makes the stoutest tremble and sigh, nor can all the world cure them whose eyes God has thus enlightened.

In the same manner when he has touched those deaf ears "which refused to hear the voice of the charmer," and said Ephphatha, they no more listen to the scriptures with a cold or untouched or unaffected heart, but the thunders of Mount Sinai make the marrow in their bones quake; and then often betwixt Satan who labours hard to disturb, discourage and perplex them, carnal friends with their threatenings and promises, false teachers with their smooth doctrines and self-righteousness, and their own more false and deceitful hearts, they are overwhelmed with trouble and confusion, and for fear, lest amidst all those dangers they should lose eternal life, they are brought to the very sharpest pain and deepest distress. An unusual thoughtfulness makes them heavy, and temptations and many groundless suggestions dishearten them to the last degree; but all this in the end makes them resolve to cast themselves down before our dear Saviour's feet with this determination, "If I perish, I will perish there."

Souls in this case are to be pitied, but they are safe, they are in good hands; he who sweat blood in his agony knows the right time to help, and he who brought them to the birth, will surely give strength to

to bring forth. Nor can I believe a soul who sincerely wants salvation, and who more than all things dreads being parted from our Saviour or his love, will perish; they may have fears, but he will deliver them out of all. Who reads the psalms, which were the experience of David and others under the Old Testament, and who thinks only on the reason why Paul, after he was so shocked at his entry into Damascus, could neither eat or drink for three days and nights, but continued praying, will not be surprised if a soul in our time should be so broken and cast down under a sense of his sin and want of Jesus. The behaviour of Mary, the thief, those who were pricked to the heart under Peter's discourse at Pentecost, the jailor at Philippi, and many others, are only instances of this kind; and, as I said before, Hezekiah is far from being the only person who fell under such a concern, as made him express the language of his heart in such a manner: for all the children of God drink of it. Jesus has drank up the dregs. He has taken the bitter draught, the worm-wood and the gall, and he lets us pledge him.

It is both safe, and also an honour to us that we have thus been tried. Safe, because when souls are thus stripped of all their false hopes, their legal righteousness, and fancied goodness, they see, feel, and are assured of their own vileness, inability, and lost estate; and are divinely assured that they must perish for ever and ever, unless Jesus out of free mercy and mere pity and compassion should help them. They are, as it were, in the deep mire and clay, in the shadow of death, on the verge and brink of hell, and know nothing less than a miracle of grace can deliver them. This is safe for them; for thus does the Holy Ghost do with them, to bring them off entirely from all self-goodness, and from every hope from angels and men, to fly to the cross as poor, guilty, condemned

demned and hell-deserving wretches, at whose heels the avenger of blood pursues with all his terrors. This is safe for them when they have found mercy, for they are saved from ascribing any thing to their own deservings, and to their own merits; they know, they remember well (when a self-righteous thought arises, or any thing that would be self-admiring, or self-pleasing stirs) what a lamentable, helpless and ruined condition they were in, when Jesus saw their tears, heard their cries, he had pity on their pain, and delivered them; and this makes them thank, and adore, and love him, on whose head are many crowns, and with shame and deepest gratitude they lay all the glory of their salvation and happiness at his feet, who only is worthy to receive blessing and thanksgiving, because he was slain.

It is an honour; for thereby we taste a little, we sip of the cup which he drank, and can guess, in some degree, what our dear Lord felt, when the sins of all were laid on him. We do not really taste the wrath of God, nor the punishment; for that the Lamb took on himself and bore alone; but what we experience is in apprehension, and is somewhat of that distress and amazement which Jesus shared so powerfully when he foresaw what he must undergo for his poor people, when the cup ready mixed was held out, and when his sweat was like blood.

This also teaches us to prize the redemption. We reflect with eternal joy, from what a death has he delivered us!

There is, at the same time, a danger in this awakened state, of which I have been treating. A soul can value itself on account of what it has sustained, and despise them who have not been tried in the same way, or who have not so long laboured in the fire. This is from the old root of self-righteousness,  
and

and is unseemly in the eyes of Jesus, and odious in the sight of a soul truly converted.

Very often the stubbornness of a soul, the being loath to part with all its own holiness, its hardness of heart, and false knowledge, cause it much trouble, and create it much unnecessary uneasiness. Did a soul directly, on the sight of its own lost state, fly to our Saviour, and with all simplicity believe in him, it would escape and get out of the hands of the adversary, and before the spirit of the law could assault, or terrify, or Satan tempt, or the avenger reach them, they would get into the city of refuge, and so be out of the reach of all perplexity. Let then, whoever are troubled in mind, concerned about being happy, or afraid of miscarrying, immediately apply to the Lamb; they will never be more fit to come to him, than in the moment they are sensible of their poverty and sinfulness. When is a man more fit to go to the surgeon, than when wounded and with his bones dislocated and broken? When is a person more fit for the physician, than when extremely sick? When does the sinner more need a Saviour, than when ready to perish? May every trouble, every sickness, every conviction bring you and me to the feet of Jesus Christ! So it was with Hezekiah, when presently his sickness of body and soul took a turn. He was almost overcome with his misery, and with his heart ready to burst, when he cried out, "Lord, I am oppressed! undertake for me." Our Saviour heard, and knew the time was come to deliver him, and immediately did undertake for him, and released him at once from the sickness of his body, and the sin of his soul; and thus he does to all souls in like distress. When they turn their faces and hearts to him, when they have done with all other hopes, refuges and helps, and pray to him alone, one may safely say to such, "Ye are not far from the king-

dom of God, Ye are nigh to be delivered indeed. Your salvation slumbereth not, and your redemption lingereth not."

O if there be any who hear me, who are oppressed, lay hold on the horns of this altar, and use Hezekiah's availing prayer, " Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me. I am in a perilous condition, beset on every side, O take my part! I am a debtor, undertake for me: Thou canst free and set me at liberty, for against thee only have I sinned; and thou, Lord, if thou wilt, canst make me clean. I am like a poor man who has had a suit at the bar; undertake for me, thou mighty Counsellor, advise me, thou almighty Advocate, plead my cause, and gain my suit." This do out of the bottom of thy heart, and thou shalt prove that true of Jesus: " He is a friend of publicans and sinners."

But now it is time that I speak on the second thing remarkable in Hezekiah's writing, and that is, the assurance he had of his being pardoned and forgiven,

" Behold (he says) for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast, in love to my soul, cast all my sins behind thy back." This is generally the language of a pardoned and accepted sinner. This is the joyful sound of them that come to Christ. This is the right and privilege of every believer in Jesus.

Let who will oppose this comfortable doctrine, it is true, and all who seek shall find it so; and they who oppose and contradict it, speak against the oracles of God, and the experience of his children. Unbelief has invented all the fallacious and delusive arguments against the assurance of faith: and because the far greater part of mankind are void of this excellent gift, therefore those who would fain be accounted true christians, who have it not, are on the strongest side, and have the advantage of all the carnal and plausible reasons for their being safe, though ignorant

ignorant of it, but they have no ground in the scriptures. There are swift witnesses against such as plead for walking in darkness, not knowing whither they are going. "Let us draw near, says the apostle, with full assurance of faith." Another apostle exhorts the professors of christianity, "to make their calling and election sure." And John says, "that all the scriptures are written that men might believe on the name of the Son of God, and have eternal life through his name, and that they might know that they have eternal life." This is the nature of faith; it is itself the evidence of things unseen, it is the substance of a hoped for heaven and eternal glory; it has always with it the eternal life which is in Jesus Christ. "All my people, saith the Lord, shall know me. We know him that is true. We know, that when this earthly house is dissolved, we have a house with God, eternal in the heavens. I am persuaded, nothing shall separate us from the love of God. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall see him for myself." But why need I quote so many scriptures, since all aim at nothing less than that the believing soul might be happy here and hereafter? To ascertain this to the faithful, the Holy Ghost is given, that he might comfort the children of God, shew them the things of Christ, glorify him, and dwell in them for ever. "He beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God." He leads into all truth, he reveals the good things to us, which the eye hath not seen nor ear heard. He sheds abroad the love of God, seals to the day of redemption, and is the earnest of our everlasting inheritance.

The prophets and apostles would have been but poorly off, if they had not been assured of being happy for ever. The primitive christians would have had also but little encouragement to attempt the

conversion of the heathen, if there had been no more certainty of eternal happiness in true christianity, than in the strict moral life of a heathen; nor could the martyrs, in all ages, have met death so cheerfully and with songs of joy, if they had not had the assurance of faith, and thereby enjoyed Christ's love in them. But they had it, and every true believer has it also. Some insincerity at the bottom, some darling sin, or cherished unbelief hinders all who have it not. It is a great gift, but not too great for him that bestows it. It is worthy of its Giver. It is the way in which he manifests himself to his children, as he does not unto the world; and must be sought for, for it is the hidden treasure, it is what no man knoweth, saving him that receiveth it.

A truly poor sinner does not ask, How is it possible? How can this be? But because Jesus has promised it, he believes, and seeks, and finds it; while one, who has much knowledge in his head, thinks he has attained something great, and settles upon his lees, with his heart still among the fearful and unbelieving. Those above all others are to be blamed, who hinder souls to press after this blessedness. Surely they have it not themselves; for did they enjoy it, they would be eager to have all their hearers enjoy the same precious faith; but therein they shew how unwilling they are to think themselves mistaken, and unconverted. Surely they love darkness rather than light, and do not want to be undeceived, but are the blind leaders of the blind.

When they say, No one in this life can know our Saviour, or their sins forgiven; how have they read the scriptures? Why, with eyes that could not see, and they have heard it with ears that could not hear, and thought thereon with a heart that could not understand; for all the scriptures teach that if any man says he has communion with God, and walks in  
darkness,

darkness, he lieth. He that follows Christ shall not walk in darkness, he shall have the light of life. He shall know whither he goeth, and the way he shall know.

When they say, We cannot know till we die: how weak is their doctrine? For might not they affirm as well, that we should not know then? Who ever came from the dead to let us hear how it passed with them? Or where have the scriptures taught a lesson so carnal? If a believer in Christ does not know he shall be happy till he dies, then wherein does he excel in our holy faith? Or why is it preferable to that of the Turks, or the worshippers of Confucius? They who are sincere among these, hope they shall be happy, but do not know it; and if we did not know, we and our religion are on a level with them and their darkness.

O adored be the Lamb, who is the Sun of righteousness in this benighted world! And who does not leave his flock like bewildered sheep, but is with them, dwells with them, and in them, comforts them, is found of them, manifests himself to them, and gives them to know him.

Should he forgive us only then (when we depart,) he would lose his glory; for we could not praise him to others, nor tell to his honour what he had done for us; and therefore, full of joy, Hezekiah breaks out, "The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth." As if he would have said, Should men not know thy forgiveness till death, then they could not praise thee before their children, nor tell of their experiencing thy grace and mercy. When once the body is laid to rest in the grave, it is too late to expect it to celebrate thy praises. They that go to the tomb cannot relate thy mercies, nor can they, who venture into eternity, without thy



pardon, hope for thy truth, but the "living, the living, he shall praise thee," as I to-day; he shall tell his believing friends, his neighbours, "O come hither, and hearken, and I will declare what God has done for my soul." I was once in a poor way, I was in bitterness for want of peace with God my Saviour; and lo! out of love to my soul, he has cast all my sins behind his back. Thus, he says, "The father shall make known thy truth to his children; he shall tell them, I am a witness, my sons, my daughters, that salvation is in the Lord; I have found so, I have sought his mercy, and experienced it in my heart, and therefore can lay my grey hairs with joy in the grave."

O dear people! do not dream of enjoyments after death, who have been so negligent of your interest in our Saviour now in your life-time, as not to insure to yourselves his love and forgiveness. Do not fancy death, and after death, is the only right time to know his salvation: "the living, the living, he shall praise him," as Hezekiah did. Now is the right time to be assured that you shall go to heaven "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

Only the assurance of faith renders this life happy and comfortable and, at the same time, entirely abolishes the fear of death and hell, and creates the truest love and thankfulness to our Saviour. As for such who wantonly and wildly confess, *If they knew they should be saved, they would live in all manner of sins; let them know, as long as they are in that mind, they shall never have it, nor heaven neither.* They are on Satan's side, and willing servants of sin.

A soul who has found this blessedness of faith, has far other thoughts. He loves our Saviour too dearly to grieve him, and prizes his dear bought happiness

too much, to forfeit the enjoyment of it one hour for all the world. Would to God all who name the name of Jesus, knew this faith! the earth would be a nether heaven and paradise.

One walking in the assurance of faith with humility, and real poverty of Spirit, which always accompany it, not only has peace in respect of the confidence he has of being accepted of his heavenly Father, through his beloved Son Jesus; but he walks with God as Enoch and Noah did; he has (to use the New-Testament language) "communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son," and can speak to his dear Saviour as a child to his father, and as a man talketh with his friend, so he converses, by prayer, continually with his Lord; and is familiar and intimate with God, who made and loved him beyond all he could ever ask or wish. He knows his Redeemer, he is acquainted with God, and at peace with him: an eternal covenant of peace is made and in force between him and the Lamb; the mountains may depart, and the hills be carried into the depth of the sea, but the covenant of peace, which the Lamb of God has established with him, shall not be removed, world without end; nor will our Saviour be angry with him any more, nor will he leave or forsake him, but the ark of his presence shall dwell with him, and he will be with him going out and coming in, and in all troubles, in all company, in all countries and places, the Lord himself will comfort him and give him rest. The dread of endless death, the gnawings of a guilty conscience, and the terrors of judgment to come and eternity, vanish out of his heart: the death of Christ has devoured up all other deaths, and his misery and pain have swallowed up and devoured all curses and dangers, so that the peace of God, Jesus Christ's own peace; and that which he has had from everlasting, rules in him;

him; and he trusts in the Lord, and is not afraid. For whom can he fear? because of what should he tremble? the mighty God of Jacob, the omnipotent King of saints, the Lord of hell and death is on his side! He has forgiven him; who can lay to his charge, or impute folly to him? The blood of the Lamb has washed him so white, that he, who could see no iniquity in Jacob, nor behold perverseness in Israel, looks on him as fair, "altogether fair, and without spot." Thus does he live blessed, and in the glorious liberty of the children of God. Thus he dwells safely alone, and enjoys the kingdom of God within himself; while the noisy world are clamouring without; and the nominal christians, and such as are not upright and sincere, through unbelief in Jesus go unhappy, and miss the enjoyment of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and his presence and love in this world. This is the happiness of a disciple of Christ. Of this I am a witness; and thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honour. Such honour have all his saints.

Such can say to enquiring souls, whose faces are towards Sion, I am the man who have been of all others a sinner. I have lived careless and mistaken in the world, dead to God while I lived: but after I was awakened by the voice of my Beloved, I sought him with tears, and with a heart ready to break. I lay down in sorrow, and rose oppressed; nor could eat or drink in peace, but was always sighing for mercy, and till the Lord shewed me mercy, and manifested himself to me; and now I have found Him whom my soul loveth. I have my eyes open to his love; I have found the Lord. I now live to him, and he lives in me. I am his and he is mine.

But should it be asked, Is there then no danger of losing this happiness? Can a person, who has faith, sin no more? Yes verily, there is danger; for pardoned

doned and beloved as the believer may be, yet he is a sinner; and will carry his old spoiled nature of flesh and blood to the grave. He must be as a sentinel watching over it and its dead fruits; for though he has a new heart and a new spirit, he has a sinful body, in which rise and stir the motions of sin, and which nothing can damp or overcome but the sprinkling of the blood of Christ. This keeps the soul low and ashamed, and obliges him to live a sort of life like martyrdom; he feels desires and lusts which must be crucified; and however they may be natural, and not so abominable in their first motions, yet they must be denied and mortified. They war against the soul, and are contrary to the chaste nature of the virgin-like Spouse, to whom the believer is wedded. All acts of carelessness, and especially any thing of disobedience, and refusing, or not heeding the tender rebukes and warnings of the Holy Spirit, lead into darkness: and when an unfaithfulness is allowed but a moment, it brings a cloud and veil over the sanctuary. This, experience as well as scripture, teaches the christian; and therefore, like David, he finds it good to hold fast by the Lord. He continues with Jesus, and will not stir from his cross and crucified person. It is his strong hold, his fortress and safeguard, his only refuge in any danger, his only secure place.

If a pardoned and absolved person should venture into any sort of unlawful love, unjust behaviour, worldly and carnal pleasures, he must not wonder if his tender Father visits his offences with a rod, and his sins with scourges: or should selfishness, pride, one's own righteousness, or the like, be indulged, he will suddenly feel a withdrawing of the powerful presence of our Saviour; and to perceive the heart cold toward him, or be conscious of an indifference to his merits, or to find any thing separate, though but for a little,

a little, between the Lamb and him, is worse to the soul than death, and far, far more to be dreaded by the sincere christian and true convert.

As none can rightly guess at his happiness, who is assured of his part and interest in Christ, but him who has the same; so none but one in his case can be capable of thinking what pain that heart can feel who has backslidden from its first love, and forfeited the sweet company of the beloved Jesus. It is indeed a heaven upon earth, to be in his favour, and to walk with him in peace; and a nether hell to feel the Lord departed, and withdrawn, grieved away. Like as Mary was happy and blessed at her Lord's feet, while he said, "Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee;" and was as miserable when she could not find him, but thought him taken away, and so continued seeking and weeping till he appeared to her again: So a faithful soul is in his right mind, in his right place, and would not change states with an angel, while he feels the love of God which transcends and surpasses knowledge in his heart; but weeps day and night, if he can but imagine he has displeased the Saviour and cannot rest or be comforted till anew our Saviour smiles and visits him, and restores his peace. Then all his tears are wiped away, and he learns with a tender heart "to go and sin no more."

But now I must speak, in the third place, of the reason and cause of all this blessedness; and this is the pure unmerited love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus. "Out of love to my soul, Hezekiah says, he cast all my sins behind his back." There can be no other reason assigned for it; it could not have been our righteousness; we have none. It could not have been our merits; he purchased it for us before ever we were born. It is, as I said, grace, free grace; and this is constantly taught in the bible.

This

This should make every poor heart leap for joy. For though you have no goodness, no sort of inherent claim to this bliss, yet you are invited to come and take freely of it; nor need you be afraid. Jesus loves you freely, and though neither himself nor you can see any thing worth his notice in you, yet he loves you with everlasting love, and is not willing that you should perish, but have everlasting life. Come, then, all you that are poor in spirit, you that are self-condemned, and guilty, you that are hungry, thirsty, and in want; yea, you worst of sinners, publicans, and harlots, drunkards, and wine-bibbers, sensualists, and rioters; and above all, you dear souls that have sought for righteousness under the law, with a troubled head and heart; and you that have been awakened to see your own spoiled and corrupted hearts, so that you have lost nearly all hope and courage; come ye to the Lamb, and he will ease you; he will undertake for you; he will cast all your sins behind his back, and put a new song in your mouth, even praises and thanksgiving to our God. O come boldly and in faith, nothing doubting. Open your mouth wide, and he will fill it. Ask any thing, and he will do it for you. Ask then the forgiveness of sins, and to be assured of your eternal happiness in him, and you shall receive it. So shall you be blessed here and for ever, and safe living and dying. Ye shall be witnesses of his love to your children, and to the rising generation; and in the Lord's own good time, ye shall go to him, and see him whom ye love so much here, and be for ever with him. Amen.

DISCOURSE

## DISCOURSE XXXVII.

### THE LINSEY-WOOLSEY GARMENT.

DEUT. xxii. 11.

*Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together.*

**H**E, who despiseth the law of Moses, or thinks lightly of the doctrines there delivered, is mistaken; nor can he rightly understand the gospel; or value the New Testament, who does not esteem the Old, since therein is hid much of the treasures of the revelation of God, and which is only brought to light and made manifest by the gospel.

In the law Christ is preached, but only darkly, and the commandments, which seemed to respect ceremonies and outward things, were not given in vain; for all things commanded by Moses were shadows of the good things which came in by Christ Jesus, and patterns or copies of things shewed Moses in the mount.

We are told by the apostle, that the souls of good men, before our Saviour, were shut up under the law, and did not see the end of every commandment. Hence it was that Moses put a veil upon his face when he spake to the people; and his ministers, and such as are hearers of him, to this day use veils. The law is covered with a veil, the ark also, and the sanctuary were hid from the Jews by being veiled.

veiled. The Holy Spirit would have us understand that this is not merely human tradition, but that himself has his hand therein, signifying that the veil is upon the heart, where men see not farther than the law and its appurtenances. To such all is veiled and dark, and they see not the glorious end of all the law, nor know their way to eternal life, but are perpetually in bondage under the yoke of Moses, without feeling the redemption of Jesus Christ.

There was however so much light shined in the law of Moses, as served to help on the pious worshippers in that time to faith in the Lamb of God, and which assisted them to pry a little into the great design the Almighty God had in saving the world.

The rigid prohibition and charge to abstain from blood had its good effect. Two reasons are chiefly assigned by the faithful and meek prophet, wherefore blood might not be eaten: First, because it was the life: and secondly, blood made the atonement for the soul. No religious Jew could forbear to look upon blood as sacred, not only because of this so often repeated commandment, but also because he saw how it was blood that hallowed the altar, the vestments, and whatever was used in the service of God. All things were purged with blood; and though many found out, and spake of it, that God did not drink the blood of bulls, nor could it wash out sin, yet they all could not see the unprofitableness of it; nor did any think worthily of it, but such who were inspired of the Holy Ghost, to look upon it as the figure only of the true blood which Jesus shed once for all; and these were persons who saw afar off the salvation, and who died in faith.

The doctrine delivered in the text is yet more hard to explain, and not so clearly opened in the gospel, as many other doctrines, of the shedding and



sprinkling of blood, sacrifices, &c. are: but yet enough is said by him who rent the veil in two from the top to the bottom at his death, and by his apostles, to make this dark law of use to us in this day.

This doctrine is one of the many, of which the christians seem to take notice. It seldom would come into our minds in our life, to scruple wearing a garment of woollen and linen together. They are often mixed, and worn by religious people, and men of tender consciences, who at the same time have no conviction that they sin; yea they would have but weak heads, should they believe nothing more was meant in this law than only to forbear wearing two sorts of stuff in the same garment.

Could I believe our Saviour would have me go in sackcloth, or be covered in any way particularly, however it might seem a needless scrupulosity, or ridiculous, I should think it my duty to obey. Wantonness, and the gay spirit of the world have prevailed far upon the most of christian congregations, so that it would be hard to find out those whose only ornaments are a meek and a quiet spirit, and whose only finery is the garment "all glorious within." But as the treating upon the dress and garb of christians is not my purpose, I shall only wish all the lovers of the plain Son of David, to follow him in all simplicity of dress and manners, and not be ashamed of God whose coat was without seam, and who did not conform to the fashion of a world which passeth away; and so pursue my design.

The woollen garment in the text, is a shadow of the righteousness of the law or the righteousness of works; the linen also is a shadow of the righteousness of faith, or Christ's righteousness. To speak plain therefore, and after the manner of the gospel, the text teacheth us not to blend both together.

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There are three sorts of preachers who receive the scripture, and confess the God of Abraham.

The first are such as preach the law alone, and these are generally Jews, and men of their spirit.

The second sort are evangelists, or true gospel preachers, ministers of the New Testament, who preach only the Lord our righteousness, and who will know nothing among their congregations, and souls committed to their charge, but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

There are others, of which the world is now too full, who sin against the law, and against the gospel, blending both together, and teaching the people to wear the garment of linen and woollen; of all which I intend to speak freely.

I do not wonder that St. Peter calls the law a yoke, which neither they nor their fathers could bear, because it must have been so to them who heard not plainly of Jesus and his salvation. Who, under the law, could have any comfort, when he knew he was under the curse as long as he continued not in all things of the book of the law to do them? The more sincere, the more unhappy such were who served under the law, and heard of no way to heaven but a perfect obedience to all the ordinances of God.

The sacrificing their turtle-doves, lambs, and goats, could not make easy the consciences of awakened and truly pious persons. Such as made no more of religion than only to hear the law, frequent the temple, observe the customs and traditions of the elders, who fasted twice in the week, and found out means so to explain the law, as to make a sincere, though imperfect obedience (as they termed it) the whole, such might content themselves under the law, and hope they were righteous and good, and in a safe way: but where men had no time to deceive themselves, but heard and knew the com-

mandment was exceeding broad, judging the very thoughts and desires, and condemning, and sentencing such as broke the least tittle of the law in any wise, such could not but be unhappy, and have their heavy hearts sink, when they heard a zealous lawyer thunder out the curse against transgressors.

Faithful ministers of Moses, and true preachers of the law must thus preach: "If you have done ten thousand duties, fasted yourselves to mere skeletons, paid tythes of the herbs in your garden, attended night and day in the house of God, and shall have failed only in some little matter, you are cursed."

If you have kept six hundred and five of the commandments, and shall have come short in the six hundred and sixth, you have the sentence of God passed against you; you are accursed.

If you have denied yourselves all the pleasures, and honours of the world for a hundred years together, and been without blame, and shall only have a covetous thought, you are in a cursed state and condemned in the law.

If you have read and heard the word of God with reverence, obeyed all precepts, taught them to your family, wrote them upon the walls of your house, and upon the lintels and door-posts, bound them about your arms as the most precious bracelets, and hung them upon your foreheads, as the most costly frontlets and jewels, prayed often and long, in public and in private, and should only take God's name in vain, you are accursed, and shall not be holden guiltless; you are undone and ruined.

If you had lived as righteous as Noah, Enoch, or David; yea, if your holiness had been excellent and perfect as the cherub, and should have kept it to your last moments, and should then sin, all your righteousness is polluted, your holiness becomes abominable, you have forfeited your right to the blessings

blessings of God's covenant, you shall die, you shall surely die and be cursed of God.

“ If you keep the whole, and offend but in one point, you are guilty of the whole.”

“ Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things of the book of the law to do them.”

This is the doctrine of the law ; and if it be preached, this is the right way to preach it. Those persons are to be commended, who know not Christ, who thus preach the law, and who thus echo the thunders of Mount Sinai, and repeat his dreadful language ; for this must alarm the soul, and concern the careless and sleepy sinner. But this way of preaching can set men beside themselves with very fright and terror ; it can make them tremble and quake, and force them to cry out bitterly : It can make them dead to the law, i. e. without hope of ever being helped, or getting to heaven by their works : it can convince them how bad is the nature of sin, which so brings the curse upon all who obey it in the least, but it cannot save. It can distress the soul, but it cannot deliver it. It can wound deeply, but not heal ; bruise and make sore the heart, but not cure ; shew the hurt and evil, but not make sound ; condemn and curse, and doom to hell, but it cannot release, or set a soul free, or help it a step forward to salvation.

When the religious and sincere persons formerly saw the end of the law, and heard its rigorous threatenings, they groaned under the yoke, and when the prophets mentioned the deliverance, or hinted at the coming of a Saviour, O how did they rejoice ! They that before sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, and who feared eternal misery, obtained hope, and longed to see the days of the Son of Man, and to hear his redemption preached plainly ; and though they could not have this privilege,

lege, yet as many as believed the Lord's report, died in faith, and escaped from under the fiery law and its curses.

But how much to be pitied are honest Jews, who aim at righteousness, and find all their efforts in vain ; nor they alone, but all, in every religion, who have been taught to stumble over Jesus Christ, and to despise and depreciate his righteousness, and who are trying to erect the Babel of their own, how must they shudder, when they perceive the stirrings of sin in their members ? for let them reason as they will with their own hearts, and try to quiet their guilty and condemned consciences, they must know sin is there, and will be like a canker at the root of all their piety, and, like Jonah's gourd, blast all their promises of being happy in eternity.

This is the case with all sincere people who follow after righteousness, and seek it by other means, besides our Saviour's death and blood. They are hewing to themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. They are striving to make the Ethiopian white in vain, and attempting to get to heaven by another way than the ladder of Jacob, the gate and only door into the paradise of God, Jesus, and his wounds.

I say, this is the case with upright souls, who either have been trained up in the false notion of being saved by our own works, or who have not heard of Jesus, but were kept blinded to him by the god of this world. For wherever men are, who fancy themselves righteous, or would have others think so of them, they should be told plainly, thou art a hypocrite ; God, the faithful and true witness, has made thy false heart feel, many hundred times, that thy works are not perfect before him ; thou art willingly deceived ; thou art willingly ignorant of thy own lost state, and of true righteousness ; all what thou hast

hast is a mere cobweb, a painted sepulchre. Thou hast not even the woollen garment of the law ; boast as much as thou wilt with thy prayers, thy charities, thy devotion, thy piety, thy knowledge, thy zeal, thy duties and obedience ; thou art still a sinner ; thy conscience shall be a swift witness against thee, the law shall pronounce thee accursed and worthy the damnation of hell. If thou hast not a better righteousness, thou never shalt enter the kingdom of God world without end ; thou never shall be saved, but perish with the righteousness in which thou hast trusted.

The true christian preacher is one whom the God of the whole earth, the Lord who gave the law, has taught, and who is convinced that the law was given to make sin known, and to make it more exceedingly sinful, and that righteousness comes not by that means, but by Christ Jesus, who is become righteousness to every one that believeth ; and having heard the gospel with ears to hear, and having understood the gracious sayings of Jesus, and been a witness himself both of the deplorable estate under the law, and the deliverance by the merits and cross of the Lamb, determines only to know and preach him crucified everywhere. To small and great he testifies, that Jesus Christ's righteousness, his obedience to death, his sufferings, and wounds, and blood, are the only things that make a sinner clean, or cause him to stand boldly in the judgment. This is the only white linen, the only righteousness which the saints wear above, and which can make them beautiful and fair in the eyes of God Almighty, and in the sight of his holy angels. This makes the harlot fair in a moment ; the polluted and defiled are herewith cloathed, and the shame of their nakedness, does not appear, though their sins before had been innumerable, though they had not so much as the least shadow of righteousness, but were self-condemned  
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and accused ; though they might think, I am a cursed man ; I deserve hell ; yet let them put on the Lord Jesus, let them get into his wounds, put on his shame and sufferings, and they shall be altogether fair, their sins shall be for ever and ever hid, and their iniquities covered. This mercy is granted freely, this wedding-garment is bestowed out of pure sovereign grace on lost souls, and such as turn to the Lamb from the law. Jesus delivers them, that they shall no more be under the law, they shall be under grace. He stands their friend ; he helps them and saves them from their sins, hell, death, and the law, and gives them eternal life.

This was his design in coming into the world ; this was his grand purpose when he became man. He would first send his law, his holy and just law into the world ; and by all means make the souls feel and see their sin, and the equity of his passing judgment upon all ; and when the sinner is well apprised of this, and wants a Saviour, is dead to the law, has lost all boasting, and sinks down before God who made him, as a poor condemned criminal, then does the Holy Spirit exalt a dying Jesus before him, then does he glorify God his Saviour, in his eyes, and make him look to the cross, where his dear Lord bled to death for him. He takes the righteousness of Christ and decks him therewith ; he eases his pained heart, and assures him of his being justified from all sin through his faith in the Redeemer. He has made him loath the filthy rags of his own righteousness in which he once trusted ; he has convinced him the woollen garment of the legal obedience would not do ; and then brings the best robe, the white ephod down to the foot, the fine linen washed in the blood of the Lamb, and puts it on him. Thus shall it be done to the man whom the King of saints delights to honour. O may you and I have this for our robe when we leave

leave the world, and enter worlds to come! With this we might go through the valley of death cheerfully and fearlessly, and in this enter the wedding-chamber, and stand before God, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. This is that raiment so often mentioned in the Revelations, where God says, "Ye shall walk before me in white, &c." and this is that which the prophet calls "the covering of God's Spirit." This is the white linen which all must have if they would be saved, or go to heaven; and without it all else, however fair and specious, is faulty and imperfect before him, whose eyes can behold no iniquity.

This then is the doctrine of the gospel, the glad news brought us by Jesus; this is what has been hid from ages, and from generations, and of which the fathers and ancients, in the first four thousand years, got some glimpse and were glad. This is what the patriarchs preached to their children, and of which the prophets searched, and wherewith they comforted the mourners in Sion.

Would to God all preachers and ministers would teach the same; they would teach sinners in the right way, and be the means of saving themselves, and the souls of them that hear them; they would deserve the characters of ministers of Christ, and priests of God and the Lamb. They would finish their courses joyfully; and after their toil and labours were happily ended, they would go and rest with their chief Shepherd, and see him whom they had so loved, exhibited and exalted in the world. Jesus would meet them with a smile, and with "well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye the joy of your Lord!" So let it be with me and with you in your dying hours.

There are yet other preachers, who, in a measure, preach the law, and seem as if they believed morality  
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and obedience were the only cause of our being accepted with God. They insist upon the necessity of making ourselves righteous, and doing our part, keeping the commandments, and attending the service of God, &c. but lest they should awaken the consciences of those who hear them, or bring under a deep concern about their salvation their poor hearers, they tell them, when you have done all you can, Christ will do the rest; he will make perfect your good works with his righteousness: you must begin and set about the work, by repenting, and living a religious life; and if that is not sufficient, when you come to die, he will supply the deficiency, and make it up with his merits: This is the smooth doctrine of our times; with this the soul is lulled to sleep and cheated: this is the new doctrine which is neither the law nor the gospel, it is neither the old covenant of works, nor the new covenant of grace, but made up of both. It is the device of man entirely, and cannot be found in all the scripture. It is taking the new piece of Christ's precious cloth, which he wrought out with so much pain, and sweat, and blood, to mend the old garment of our own righteousness. It is teaching men to make a garment of woollen and linen together. It is against the law; for that saith, "If thou continue not in all things in the book of the law to do them, thou art cursed." It is against the gospel; for that saith, "We are saved freely, not of works, lest any man should boast, not by our righteousness, not of ourselves, but of the gift of God."

Satan himself contrived the doctrine which so many now teach in all religions; for let them differ among one another as much as they will about antiquities, numbers, habits, forms or orders, in general all are drunken with this wine of fornication of the whore. All, in general, try to patch up the false  
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righteousness of works and duties, and foolishly hope our Saviour will accept it, and add his own merits and sufferings to make it complete.

The enemy, when he cannot hinder men [so as] to be altogether irreligious, has therefore invented this new religion, which is neither Jewish nor Christian, and this has deceived the nations amazingly. This people drink in greedily, and this is every where known. Better were it for the propagators of it that they had never been born.

If they preached the righteousness of the law alone, and only aimed at what the Levites and priests aimed at, they would do better than now: for did they shew out of the law, that whoso had not kept the law blameless, could not be free from the curse; did they affirm zealously, that without perfect and sinful obedience, none could be justified by the law, but was condemned; then their sincere hearers would be alarmed, they would awake and begin to ask, "What then shall I do to be saved?" They would be concerned indeed, and be driven to Jesus, weary and heavy laden, for mercy; the language of their heart, when they had seen how impossible it was for them to be saved by their works, since they had broken the law, would be, "Lord, save me, or I perish!" But to prevent this, when a soul is a little uneasy about his present or future state, and wants advice, he is told, O do not be troubled, but go on in your good way, go to church, to meeting, to mass, say your prayers, and do nobody any harm, and God will accept you, and together with your sincerity, and his mercy, you need not doubt of getting to heaven.

This is crying peace when there is no peace, and healing the wound slightly. This is indeed daubing with untempered mortar. This is mingling the woollen and linen together, and making the commandment

mandment of God void by the traditions of men. This is the religion of the whole world. This is the false hopes of the so-called Christian part of mankind, and is in effect no more than what the Musselmen or Mahometans profess; only with this difference, one party teach our own goodness and the mercy of God through Christ, saves us, and the other party hope through their own obedience and strict observance of the Alcoran, together with the love of God gracious and merciful, they shall enter Paradise. The Jews, and poor blinded and benighted children of Israel, think they are Abraham's seed, and partly by keeping the law, and partly by God's mercy, they shall be gathered in peace to their fathers, and escape being cut off and destroyed from their people. The more bewildered children of Ham and Ishmael, the heathen, and such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, dream the same; for though conscious of their being sinners, and though sensible of their guilt, and dreading death, yet comfort themselves that God is good and gracious, and hope he will only punish such as have wholly neglected the law of nature, and despised altogether virtue and religion; and though their notions of God are innumerable, and often idolatrous, and very confused, yet this is the substance of their hope; and with this one could bear in such who have not heard the gospel, nor seen the scriptures; such thoughts are tolerable in men on whom the day-spring has not shined, and whose day of grace has not dawned, and it must be tolerable in this respect with them in the day of judgment; but for men called by Christ's name, and professing his merits, death, and divinity, to have any hope but in his righteousness, is intolerable. To them are those words in full force, and are my errand to them, "Thou shalt not wear a garment of linen and woolen

woollen together." Thou shalt not mingle the righteousness of God our Saviour with thy own; thou shalt not rest upon both; either trust thy own righteousness, or his alone. Trust thy own, and thou shalt find what a broken reed, what a whited wall, what a sandy and false ground thou hast leaned on, and how dreadfully thou hast been cheated: but trust in Jesus Christ, and lay hold on his righteousness by faith; let the Holy Spirit clothe thy naked soul with his white raiment, with the fine linen wherewith all the armies of heaven are arrayed, and thou shalt be safe; thou shalt find it a sure covering, long enough and wide enough to hide all thy sin, and cover all thy iniquity, and to make thee perfect before God: Put on this robe, and thou art blessed, yea, and shalt be blessed for ever and ever; as it is written, "Blessed is the man whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered."

If thou wilt know what is the only true wedding-garment, and if thou hast no mind to be found naked and unclothed, when thou goest to another world, then arraign thyself, and call thy soul to the bar; ask thy heart, if indeed thou couldst venture into eternity with thy own righteousness? I will go farther, couldst thou die, couldst thou depart this day, and be content now to hear the trump blow the last loud blast, and summons thee to stand before the Judge of all the earth, and have no covering but the righteousness of thy own works? Yea, if thou hadst all the righteousness of Noah, Job, and Daniel, and the obedience of every angel, and the good works of every saint, martyr, confessor, and virgin, that ever was, thou wouldst shudder to launch into the eternal world, nor couldst thou be safe in any righteousness but that of God's own, and which we receive by faith in him.

However the Lord approves of the faithfulness of his people, commends and will greatly reward their good works and labours of love which have been done for his name's sake; however he praises such of his churches and children, whose last works have been more than the first, and blames such whose works were faulty; yet that righteousness which saves the soul, and that which he calls so, and is the only proper righteousness, is the obedience, sufferings, and merits of our crucified God and Lord Jesus Christ; and this is imputed to us by believing in him. This was the way in which the Father of the faithful found righteousness, and was justified in the sight of God, and in this only a soul can be clothed at the great day. Venture who will to try any other, it shall be dearly repented, and cost them dearly. They shall only once be sorry for their rashness and presumption, and that will be for evermore. O do not let it be a light matter with you, whether or no this doctrine be true; neither be content to say Amen to it, but put on the Lamb and his righteousness, fly into his wounds, and cover yourselves up in his merits; make sure of his pardon and forgiveness, and obtain of him that raiment of which he speaks to the angel of the Laodiceans, that ye may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness may not appear. Have you never made any shew of religion, but have lived altogether without seeking righteousness hitherto? Now let it be so no more; come now to Jesus, the Friend of publicans and sinners, and he who hanged naked on the cross will hide your shame. He was stripped to clothe you and dress you for his Father's house. Come to him with all your heart, sincere and willing indeed to be saved, and you shall find, notwithstanding all what men can say, your own false heart fancy, and Satan suggest to the contrary, a God nigh, and not afar off, and who is a covering to his people.

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Or, are you devout and religious? have you attempted by the law, and strove by works to become righteous, and when ye failed, patched up your rags with Christ's merits, God's mercy, and the like? Have ye, to quiet your conscience, mingled the woollen and linen together? Now, then, throw away the linsey-woolsey cloth, the forbidden garment, the unclean and illegal dress, and approach naked to him who clothes the lilies of the field, and he will be your covering; the Lord God and the Lamb will be your shield, and in as much as you have obeyed him, and trusted his blood and merits alone, you shall see, for his honour's sake, for his word sake, and according to his eternal purpose, he will save you, and you shall appear at his wedding in linen clean and white.

You shall here, in this life, rest well persuaded and confident of his love, of your being pardoned; and clothed, and blessed; and die when you will, nothing shall part you from his love, ye shall go to him, ye shall follow him with that company which no man can number, who are in white raiment, with crowns on their heads, before the throne. With whom may you and I have our eternal part. Amen.

## DISCOURSE XXXVIII.

### THE REPROACH OF THE CROSS.

HEB. xiii. 13.

*Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp,  
bearing his reproach.*

**I**T is in vain to hope to become true christians, and escape the shame of the cross of Jesus.

The whole doctrine of the Son of God's incarnation and death, when set forth in simplicity and plainness, and not preached with wisdom of words, has been always esteemed foolishness, and the believers of the gospel, and sincere professors of true christianity, have continually been accounted fools; and the more zealously they have confessed Jesus Christ for their God, and the more firmly they have been attached to his merits alone, the more the world have condemned and despised them, the more they have been made, as it were, gazing-stocks to men and angels, persecuted, reviled, rejected and reproached; and if pitied by any, it has been because (as they think) "much religion has made them mad."

Whoever therefore unfeignedly desires to be a christian indeed, must set his face as a flint against all opposition, and resolve to deny himself, leave all he has, and take up his cross daily, and follow Jesus through a gainsaying and perverse generation.

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There is no palliating the matter, or seeking to reconcile men of the world to our religion, without danger, as long as they are unenlightened from above, and stay in the course of flesh and blood, judging and weighing things according to rules of common sense and reason alone, and not according to the scriptures, they cannot be pleased with our manner of acting, our lives must seem madness to them, and our principles foolishness. Our faith must be exploded by all, and our practice condemned by all.

The many attempts made by great and learned men to make the religion of Christ coincide with the measures and minds of men, have been fruitless, it cannot be effected. The world, with all its customs, pomp, glory and pleasures, are at enmity with the King of saints; the spirit of the world is the enemy of him and our happiness; therefore it is so often repeated in the gospel, that whoso will be a lover of the world, or the things of the world, is an enemy of God, and therefore Jesus, when he makes men his disciples, calls them out of the world, teaches them, that neither himself nor his doctrine were of the world, wherefore the world hated them. He warns every where his people to leave all and follow him; to come out from among them, i. e. the world; and be separate, and not partake with their sins, that they might not partake of their plagues.

Those are ministers of Laodicea who have a shew of piety and keep in with the world; and as long as they can please men they cannot be the servants of Christ.

How stupid are such who profess to believe in the Son of man, and who conform to the world? Or who would endeavour so to dress up the doctrine of our Lord and Master, or to speak of his



person as to shun the infamy of being his disciples?

The world cannot love the doctrine of the Lord Christ. Sensual and carnal men cannot value the redemption: Lovers of pleasure, and covetous persons, cannot like the life of a christian; nor can wise men, and such as will be governed by philosophical principles, ever approve of our way. They will constantly find fault with us, blame us as weak and inconsiderate men. They will wonder why we act and believe so unreasonably; while the careless will condemn us altogether. The bigotted in every sect deem us heretics; our friends wonder why we risque thus our honour, name, character, and fortune; and all sorts will pour on us, from every side, calumnies, revilings, and charges innumerable; nor can we, by any means, satisfy them, or reconcile them to us, unless we even resolve to stay in the world with them, and suffer religion to lead us no farther than to put on the form of christianity, be sober, moral and moderate people, without being Christ's disciples indeed.

Since then it is thus, since our Lord and Master has assured us it would be so, and since experience teacheth us daily the truth of his words, what shall sincere souls do? Why, for Jesus Christ's sake, that they may please him, and for their own sakes, that they may be saved, let them take his advice who is the Counsellor; let them escape for their lives, rise up, and at the loss of all things follow him. Let them "go out of the camp after him, bearing his reproach;" and remember, that whoso loves father, or mother, or wife, or children, or fields, or estates, or any thing else, more than him, is not worthy of him.

Wherever we find honest men, or women, or children, who unfeignedly seek salvation, it will not be hard to persuade them to leave all for his name's sake,  
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and to count the best riches and greatest honours, the most desirable pleasures, and plentiful fortunes and enjoyments, but dross and dung, that they may win Christ and be found in him. They can easily be brought to think, what shall it profit me if I gain the whole world and lose my own soul!

If they are in earnest to secure the love of Christ, and to gain the incorruptible crown, no persecution or slander, or shame, or friends, or enemies, will be able to turn them back from pursuing their high aim; they can be content to be reduced even to beggary itself, and smile to become like their dear Forerunner, the scorn of men, and the outcast of the people. They can hear the blasphemy of the multitude, the songs which drunkards make on them, and not be turned back. They can hear opprobrious and cruel language from their once dearest friends, endure stripes and blows courageously, and without answering a word; and part with the best of fathers, the tenderest of mothers, and the most affectionate relations with dry eyes; nor be entreated to look back to all they have left in the sinful world.

The general received opinion of many is, that now in a christian country, we need no more to be thus resolute: that we may enjoy the world, and be not bad christians; that there is no necessity of laying aside the pomp and fashions of the cities, or forbear the lawful recreations of the times, that we may keep our friends and our religion too; and therefore the common manner of preaching, and what is almost universally approved of is, "Do thyself no harm; be not righteous over-much, wherefore shouldest thou destroy thyself?" And thus are many satisfied in a state of nature, to the last degree dangerous.

The world is the same as formerly, and no more now, than in our Saviour's time, can men be his true disciples,

disciples, who are not persecuted by the world, and counted the offscouring of all things. The faithful ministers will be still reckoned babblers, deceivers, and men of unfair views, and every private christian will be a partaker in bearing the scandal of the cross, and sharing infamy with his Lord.

Whoso values his name, his riches, his possessions below, will risque losing his part in a kingdom above; and whoso is determined to keep in with the world, must not be surprised if he shall wail with the kindreds of the earth in the great day of judgment.

Come, then, all ye who love the Lord Jesus, or wish to be among his people, Behold the Captain of your salvation, and valiantly tread in his foot-steps. He has been made perfect through sufferings, and is now entered into his rest; be of good cheer, and go after him.

He has made himself of no reputation, who was from everlasting God; and who only is the Most High in the glory of God the Father. Let us then not think a moment on our own good name, but be content to have it stink in the earth, and cast out, if only we can but have it written in the Lamb's book of life.

If a king, an emperor, should stoop to be a beggar or slave, alas! where is the great humiliation? or if an angel should condescend to become a man, and be on a level with the poorest mortal under heaven, what is it compared with the humiliation of God our Saviour? He who thought it no robbery to be equal with God, and was in the form and nature of God from all eternity; he who created every thing visible and invisible, and is, and was, and is to come, Jehovah, God over all, blessed for ever, the same with the Father and the Holy Ghost; he who made and upholds all things, was meaner and lower than  
any

any man, and his form was that of a servant, in which he was yet more humble, and his face covered with shame and spittle. He was counted a vagrant, a base-born child, unlearned, a blasphemer, a seditious person; a murderer was preferred before him, and no felon on a gibbet, no sacrilegious wretch broke on the rack, no gallows-bird condemned to die for rebellion, robbery and murder, was more infamous, or more abhorred than him. O who can esteem his reputation, when he views the Lord his God so disgraced and stripped of glory and majesty? Who can value his family, his pedigree, his learning, his estate, his gifts or glorious endowments, who lifts his eyes to the Cross, or comes in faith to mount Calvary.

My dear brethren, we must not think to be great or wise, or admired in the eyes of the world; we are the poor despised followers of a man, who was accursed by his own people, the Jews; we are the disciples of a Lord, who had no where to lay his head; we are scholars of a master, whose life was taken from the earth in the worst pain and most shameful manner that men or devils could invent; we are the people and inheritance of that God, whom now thousands of those called by his name, are ashamed to confess; our glory is his cross and sufferings; our only strength is his weakness and distress; our boast, of his blood and wounds, and our only hope, his meritorious cries and groans, his bloody sweat and obedience to the death of the cross.

We are the foolish people who will know of no God but in him; we worship the Lamb that was slain, and believe unfeignedly that he who was crucified is the only One in heaven, or earth, or under the earth, who can give us eternal life.

We credit his words, let them appear reasonable, or surpass reason as far as heaven surpasses the earth.

His

His words are more to us than thousands of gold or silver. We are pilgrims, that are bound for the country to which he is gone, and will never sit down, or count ourselves at home, till we are where he is. We ask no other glory, seek no other honour, beg for no greater mercy to all eternity, than only to be with him. Hence it is, that we are so afraid of displeasing him, or yielding contrary to his loving warning, to the flatteries of a false blind world, wherein he is not beloved, and where Satan's seat is. Hence it was that Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproaches of Christ, greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. So we are satisfied to be shunned and hated every where, and carry our lives, as it were, in our hands, are ready every day to die for his sake, rather than not be his children indeed.

Those upright souls, those whom the holy scriptures frequently call perfect men, are a sort of living martyrs for his sake, and that they may please him, and be in body and soul acceptable to him; and this not only in respect of their suffering outwardly through friends or foes on his account, but in respect of the crucifying the old man with his lusts; every impure inclination, every wish or desire, however natural, as men call it, which is not comely in his eyes, is not spared, but nailed with his body to the tree! If a darling pleasure, a beloved and cherished lust stir or lurk within, though it would be as easy to tear out one of our eyes, or chop off our right hand, [it] is brought without mercy, and denied and killed before him; and the last day will make it appear how truly chaste, how faithful and clean they, who love Jesus in sincerity, whether married  
or

or unmarried, have walked in his presence in the world.

But the more true and faithful in this and other respects a christian is, the more Satan will war with him, and stir up all he can to oppose him. His faith, his actions, his every word will be condemned and blamed; and there is no better way for him than to be heedless of all these things, and behave just so, as if he was going out of the gates of Jerusalem, after his despised and suffering Lord, or as a wayfaring man, who passes through a strange country or town, hissed at and ridiculed by the inhabitants; his comfort must be, that he does not belong to the place, that he is here only as a foreigner, and will soon see his own land, be in his own continuing city, stand on his own ground, arrive upon his own shore, rest with his own dear fellow-pilgrims, the saints and martyrs of Jesus, who have gone before him through much tribulation, and are now got to the end of their trials, whose sufferings are over, whose bonds and imprisonments, whose shame and reproach is ceased; and what is still best of all, he shall be with his own God and Saviour, and be embraced by him, and honoured in presence of all those who sit at meat with him. This, this shall be the happy finishing of their course, who have followed Jesus in the regeneration, and continued with him in his temptations and shame.

My dear friends, and you who are disposed to obey the call of the Lord our God, let me advise you, and even entreat you not to consult with flesh and blood, or be swayed by friends, relations, or benefactors, but with a single eye to please the God of your salvation, Christ Jesus, and with a whole heart, leave the world, come out from among them, and no more touch the unclean thing, and he will receive

receive you: Dedicate yourselves entirely to him, who loves you more than a parent his only child, and depart out of the Egyptian estate, into which all flesh are fallen; and without reflecting on, or railing at others who stay behind, take up your daily cross, and, at all events and hazards, follow the Lamb.

Do not dream, after you have done this, that your self-denial, your recluse life, your forsaking the world, or abstemious behaviour, with your other pious and religious deeds, shall buy you heaven, or merit the favour of the Holy One. You are beloved freely. It is his nature to love and pity poor souls. His delight is in mercy, he waits to be gracious, and therefore it would be a sort of spiritual theft and robbery, to ascribe, in the least degree, our safety, or future or present happiness, to our own goodness or obedience. All this is his free gift, and which he bestows willingly on all who seek it. All our Saviour calls you to, or asks of you, is to leave the world, to come out of their noise and hurry, to lay down the weights, which have hindered ye to run the spiritual race, and break off the bonds of the customs and fashions of a sinful generation, and retire to enjoy the liberty of the children of God, who accompany him, and who sit down at his feet and learn of him, who insure to themselves a part and interest in his favour and love, and whose title to the kingdom purchased with his precious blood, is clear and sure.

It is a glorious and blessed privilege to be released from the lying vanities of men, and to be disengaged from their inconstant friendship.

Is a child of God anointed to preach the gospel to the poor? Is he a minister of Jesus, a servant of the sanctuary? let him wait on his office faithfully, but let him be aware of the rich and the great, for  
few

few of them choose to be the Lord's: Their promises, preferments and threatenings, he must value alike, seeking only, if possible, to observe who among them are not ashamed of Jesus Christ, but would fain be saved; such he must attend and labour with, without any view of reward or recompence, till the resurrection of the just; but his chief blessing and fruit will be among the common people, such heard our Lord gladly, and such as the rest of mankind deem poor fools, and weak, are the precious treasure of the church. Let the minister then *only* seek to please our Saviour, who is his Bishop and Constituent alone: let him keep clear from the blood of all men, and if he cannot win them by a loving, laborious, and servant-like behaviour; and if the gracious words of Christ and his apostles do not prevail, let him not be bribed to prophecy smooth things, nor be over-awed to forbear to declare the whole counsel of God. Let his eye be on the strict account he must one day make, and while he remembers, with trembling, that the souls have been purchased with the Lord's own blood, and is thereby induced and constrained to preach and labour in season and out of season, to gain them over to the Saviour, whose wandered sheep they are; let him on the other hand know, that by no art or cunning this may be effected, but in true simplicity and godly sincerity he must prevail and be successful, *only* by having his Master's presence and blessing with him; and to equivocate, or dissemble, or cry peace when there is no peace, would be cowardly to shun the reproach of the cross, and make his labour of no effect, it would risque his joy, and the present peace of his heart, grieve the Holy Spirit, and tempt the Lord, who hideth himself, to leave him in a cloud, or, as it is said in Jeremiah, to confound him before them.



That minister who is wise, wishes only to be honourable in the eyes of the Lord, and to finish his course comfortably; if he can but die in favour with his Master, and behold him smiling to receive him to his sabbath, if he can but say, in his last hours, I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, and feel within the testimony of a good conscience, and the love of God shed abroad by the Holy Ghost, he seeks no more, he has gained his Saviour's aim, and shall bless the day he ever was born.

But are ye private christians, and not called to be prophets, but eased, and spared, and excused from such burdens? then let not your heads be filled with reasoning, seek not to be wise and full of words, but first and chiefly seek to be assured of your election in Christ, leave no stone unturned to make it certain that he has chosen you out of the world. Or, is it gone thus far with you? O then happy, happy, happy folk, whoever you are! leap for joy when you are slandered unjustly for his sake, or for the sake of the gospel; but take care that ye are not blamed deservedly, for this would be a scandal to your holy profession. Whatever is of good report, viz. industry, honesty, gentleness, lowliness, a willingness to help any one to the utmost of your power, rather suffering want than be indebted, or suspected on such accounts, glad to live plain in diet, and house, and cloaths, for the Son of man's sake, and labouring with your own hands to relieve necessitous persons, this is pleasing in the eyes of our Redeemer; but if men will despise you because you believe Jesus is your Lord God, because you pray to him, or because you adore him incarnate, or that you will allow of no real or true righteousness but his, nor will acknowledge any safety but in his wounds and under his cross; if, because you will  
know

know nothing, praise nothing, exalt nothing but the crucified Jesus, do not be dismayed; and should it happen that you should be hard beset with reasoning men, disputing and jangling persons, abide in your heart low at the feet of Jesus, let your answers be few, and always, "It is written." Are you used cruelly? look to him who bore the contradiction of sinners against himself. Are you treated unjustly? commit your cause to him who judgeth righteously. Are you reviled? O! I pray you, learn of Jesus, to be meek and lowly, and revile not again. Do you lose much? It shall be restored to you again above. Are you brought to the bar, or before magistrates? Value it not, Jesus was there before you; and remember the good confession he witnessed, when he was adjured by the high-priest to answer, and which he also made before Pontius Pilate. Abide thereby, and know no other Lord, no other righteousness, no other good; accept no help, or right, but from him; and be faithful and true to him; so he will keep you in peace, which the world cannot give, and his joy shall be fulfilled in you. Should it lie in your power to revenge the injustice or injury done to you; for the Lord's sake, do not touch it with the least of your fingers; but if your countrymen, or friends, or brother repent, forgive them; and if your enemies fall bound into your hands, forgive and loose them; if they hunger, feed them; and so bear with them, and all who are against you, for your religion's sake, as Jesus bore with you in the state of your enmity.

Above all, be not shy or afraid of sufferings, or shame, for Christ's sake. Our Beloved has told us how it will go with us, if we are his; that the world will hate us, that we shall be cast out for his sake, and our names be reproached on his account: but since so the prophets were treated, and since they

they have called the Master of the house, a Samaritan (which, at that time, meant heretic), a devil, a madman, a Beelzebub, let us not mind it, if they thus call the children of his household. Do not, let it not grieve us too much, or afflict us too deeply, to be shunned, disowned, and slighted, or even to be wholly forsaken of friends and dear acquaintances; we only tread the steps of the believers in all ages; it is the highway wherein they walked who follow the Lamb, and are now entered their glory. Only let us cherish the blessed moments of intercourse with our Saviour; let us live with him, and continually be busy in pleasing him; let us be still and at peace in our hearts, through the witness of his Spirit, that he has forgiven us, and washed us in his own blood from all our sins; and by an uninterrupted communion and fellowship with him, we shall, without fear or amazement, be called home, and get out of the reach of every danger, shame and misery. Now our first business is to know Jesus has suffered without Jerusalem; he has been deemed unworthy to live, and dragged out of their gates, loaded with sins innumerable, and with the curse and wrath of all his people; let us go after him; let us be the despised disciples of this dear and despised Lord. Let our lives be a pilgrimage to Calvary, and let our eyes and hearts be fastened on him, till it can be felt within we are his redeemed ones, and till our eyes, so often red with weeping, and our hearts, tender with feeling our sin, and his dying and divine love, shew to angels and men we have been with Jesus.

We have hitherto been like soldiers, who have rested at ease in the tent while our Captain suffers in the field. Indeed we cannot help, he has borne the heat of the battle, and has conquered; but he gives us the honour to share his shame, and the prize.

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Let us then go out of the camp to him, bearing his reproach; let our songs of triumph be his dying on the tree, and our whole religion to love and live to him who endured the cross and despised the shame for our sakes. To him be everlasting praise and glory. Amen.

## DISCOURSE XXXIX.

### THE WIDOW OF NAIN.

*Weep not.* LUKE vii. 13.

**I**N the days of our Saviour's flesh, as he was fulfilling his course, and walking about doing good, it is observed, that he not only preached in the synagogue, or in the temple, or where great multitudes resorted, but oftentimes seemed to go long journies only to speak with few, or with single persons, or to heal one sick, or to help a sinner ready to perish. He must needs go through Samaria to save an adulteress, and a few out of the city of Sychar; he would go into Jericho to save Zaccheus, and be fatigued in a throng another time, that one poor woman might touch the hem of his garment; and on another day go to the pool of Bethesda to heal one lame man; travel along the road to help a blind beggar or two; and go into Simon's house to give a wretched woman the opportunity to sit at his feet, and hear of and receive his free forgiveness. All this serves to show how the Lord is of tender pity, and despises not the least soul he made. This should teach his ministers not to spare any pains or labour, though it should be to toil and spend themselves in journies, by land or sea, if only one single soul is thereby won to the kingdom of God. It should also teach every sinner, that though he may think little whether he be saved or not, and though he may undervalue his own soul, the Lord had not thought so, but spared no pains to redeem and make that neglected soul happy. Should a guilty

a guilty and self-condemned man, or woman, or little child think, I am unworthy the Lord's notice, I am but as a piece of vile dust or ashes, and may justly be passed over unheeded by him that made me: He may learn from all these instances, and from all our Saviour's behaviour in the gospel, that our very hairs are numbered, and that the least and [most] worthless heart is not rejected by him, or cast off, or forsaken because of his being good for nothing, and worse. A person used to affliction and crosses, can sometimes be tempted to think there is no help for me; the Lord has forsaken me; he has cast me aside as a dog; my God has forgotten me: for their sakes, therefore, he saith in the prophet Isaiah, "A woman can forget her suckling child, but I can never forget thee;" as if he would say, However small and mean thou art in thine own eyes, however despicable and worthless in the eyes of others, thou art dear to me; I have esteemed thee precious; I have graven thee on the palms of my hands.

We were all to him like grasshoppers, and as a drop of the bucket, or as a little grain of dust on the balance compared with his heavenly worlds and their hosts; but yet he would not see us perish as a thing of nought, but [from] the beginning, his eternal mercies moved him to be our Saviour, and to help a people who had no other friend, and who could not help themselves. He saw us, as it is said in Ezekiel, "In our blood," i. e. in our sin and ruin, when no eye pitied us, nor could do any thing to wash us or cover us; and he had compassion on us; and though he knew he could have made a better world with a word, and though he knew what a poor unthankful race we should prove, it did not shut up the bowels of his everlasting love, but he would become our Saviour. Nor this alone; but if only one soul had sinned, the least and poorest that

that ever was. Rather than that soul should have perished without any means of help, he would have as freely left his throne, and suffered, as for all the whole creation. Who can read the gospel and not see that this is his very heart? If a Magdalene came weeping behind him, he was overcome, and must pardon her. When a dying rebel, after all his blasphemy, and hardened behaviour, began to relent, and beg to be remembered in his intercession, his heart yearned, and he took him straight into his favour. The tears and distress of Saul made him hasten away Ananias to speak comfortably to him. Even the outward troubles and sicknesses which oppressed such as he saw in the streets, or who came to him, so touched him, that nothing is more frequently repeated all through the gospel than such expressions; "Jesus had compassion on him; I have compassion on the multitudes;" and he bids the *dæmoniac* tell his friends, how the Lord had had compassion on him; and this tenderness of nature made him heal all, of whatever disease they had, whether it was spiritual or bodily, so that the report of his merciful behaviour was blazed about, insomuch that when they came to be helped, and could not get to him for the press, or were blind, and could not find their way to him, or were lepers, and were afraid to come near to him, they cried out, "Jesus, have mercy on us! Lord, have mercy upon me! Lord, pity me!" intimating, by the very manner of their speaking, that they had been told of his tender behaviour to others, and begged the same grace; as if they had said, Lord Jesus, thou hast helped others in their deplorable state, O help us! O have mercy on us too! Indeed all our Lord's words, his actions, his carriage, proved him to be the same proclaimed of old by the fathers, "The Lord gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great

great goodness, him whose compassions fail not, he whose mercy endureth from one generation to another.

Though he is and was a just God, yet he delights in mercy, and he is touched to the heart with the miseries of his poor people. How far this has been visible, we may see in his behaviour at the grave of Lazarus, when he saw the grief of the two sisters of the deceased, and beheld one weeping at his right hand, and the other at his left, his meek heart melted, and Jesus wept too. He considered their distress, and remembered sin had been the cause of all this trouble. Had there been no sin, there could have been no death, nor sorrow, nor sighing; therefore his friends and enemies, his angels and apostles could see how God pitied his children in their fallen state; nor did he cease groaning in spirit before all the Jews, till they observed it and said, "Behold how he loved him!" And when nothing could dry up the sister's tears whom he loved, but recalling their brother, he made use of his Almighty Divinity, and spoke him again into life.

But though this was a most special mark and proof of the Lord's great tenderness and pity, there is in the word preceding the text, another edifying and singular relation of Jesus Christ's tender mercy, which I shall this day speak of, and must pray all to hear with the utmost attention.

As he was one day entering the city, called Nain, with many of his disciples, and many other people, he met at the gate of the city the corpse of a dead man, whom they were carrying out to his burial, and many of the people of the city attended the solemn procession. The man was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and it appears, by what our Saviour spoke to her, that she followed her son, weeping and lamenting greatly. This sight so affected



affected the Redeemer, that it seemed hard to say who felt most, the childless mother, or the God who created both; he could not suffer to see how the tears ran down her aged cheeks, nor could he bear to hear her sobs and sighs; as the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and went up to her, and said, "Weep not," and stopped the bier, and called back the young man, and gave him alive to his else inconsolable mother. This whole account has somewhat extraordinary in it, so that I am obliged to expatiate a little on it, and call you to look on and consider it. I have no doubt but this was one great end, if not the only one, the Lord Jesus had in coming to Nain, namely, to comfort this poor widow. He knew when her husband was called from her, and knew she had been a woman of a sorrowful spirit, and met with many sharp and cutting afflictions and trials, but was comforted in her child, who was, in her widowhood, in the stead of her husband to her, and who, perhaps, was not only her only son, but the last child she had living; and as Benjamin was the darling, and, as it were, the life of good old Jacob, so was this man the life and comfort of his mother, and her heart seemed wrapped up in him, so that when he was taken away, she became desolate indeed, and of all women the most miserable. All this Jesus knew, and in the multitude of his mercies resolved to comfort her, and at the same time let her know the Lord had had compassion on her, that so she might not only receive back her son, but feel and know her Maker was her husband, who had seen her affliction, and was come to deliver her; but he suffered it to go far before he interposed to relieve her. He often lets things go to the farthest, and when, to all appearance, there is no remedy, he makes bare his arm and stretches out his hand to save; and this he does, that we might know

know our help standeth in the name of the Lord that made heaven and earth. Thus oftentimes it seemed as if the children of Israel in their battles would be totally defeated and overborne by the enemy; but when they cried to him, he soon made all their adversaries know, that the God of Jacob had as it were, the strength of an unicorn, yea was Almighty. So when Peter seemed ready to sink, and was just on the brink of being drowned, Jesus stretched out his hand and saved him: and thus he does by many hundreds and thousands in the time of their trouble; he lets the souls come into extremity, so that they can feel and know that no one less than God Almighty can help them, and then makes his grace and power known in helping them; and this he does for his own name and honour's sake, that we might give him his due praise, and not fancy we have helped ourselves, or that our case was such, that out of it men or angels could have redeemed us. No, all who are saved in Jesus, have first felt and been convinced by the Holy Ghost, that without him their pain was perpetual and their wounds incurable.

After this his wonted manner, then, he dealt with this widow. It was the custom of the Jews to have their burying-places without the gates of their city; and no sign of help appeared, till the woman was just come to the place where she was to take the long farewell of her child, her only son.

I dare say, before Jesus met her, had any looked on as she passed the streets of Nain, they would have seen her wringing her hands, with her grey hairs hanging over her face, while floods of tears flowed down from her swoln eyes; I suppose many of the people, who followed the corpse with her, strove to comfort her, but all was in vain. It was to her as if the whole world was dead and lost to her. Methinks

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I see her striking upon her breast with the utmost grief, and bemoaning her hard fate; methinks I hear her say to those that would have comforted her, O call my name Marah, for God hath dealt bitterly by me. It has pleased him to take away my husband; and now, in my old age, when my son, my only son, should have supported and been a comfort to me, lo, he has cut him off, and left me desolate, without a friend, or husband, or child, to go down with my grey hairs in sorrow to the grave! O my son, would to God I had died for thee, my son, my son!

Jesus felt her pain and anguish, and hastened to meet her. He might think, this will be my poor mother's case, not many days hence; Joseph is gone, and when she beholds me dying, a sword will pierce through her soul, and force her to cry out like this poor widow, who is in bitterness for her only child. Thus can he pity one who loses his friend, and that widow who must follow her last child to the grave. Thus he can pity a child who loses a dear parent; and much more can he pity such as feel the loss of his presence, and who mourn for him whom they have pierced, as one mourns for his first-born.

I had said, that Jesus felt her sorrow ere she appeared in sight; but what his heart endured, or how deeply he was touched on that account, none knew till he drew nigh the city-gate, and then all his disciples were witnesses how much it affected him, for "when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not."

O! methinks I see the dear Lord Jesus with the tears ready to burst out of his own eyes, going up to the woman; methinks I see the concern of his heart in his meek looks, and hear him saying, O do not weep, thy cries cut my very heart; I cannot bear thy tears; I know thy forsaken state; I know thou art desolate,

desolate, and hast lost thy only son, but I will give him to thee again, only be comforted and cease thy lamenting; thy God has compassion on thee; he pities thee and loves thee; "Weep not," but wipe away thy tears, and lift up thy drooping head; thy son shall live again; I will raise him up; and thou shalt know that the Lord has seen thy affliction, and will ease thee and comfort thee.

I doubt not, but at first the woman could not hope, but thought it far too good news to be true, till she saw Jesus stop the bearers of the corpse, and he came and touched the bier, (and they that bare him stood still), and he said, "Young man, I say to thee, arise," and he that was dead sat up, and began to speak; and he delivered him to his mother. In this miracle the Godhead of Christ shone forth bright indeed; for when the prophets did their wonders, or performed any great cure, it was done in the name of their God; they generally called on the Lord, and let all see it was not by their own power that the sick were cured, or the dead raised. Thus the apostles used the name of the Lord Jesus, and in his name did all their miracles, and ever preached it, "Be it known unto you all, that through Jesus Christ's name is this man made whole;" even our Lord himself, in doing many of his amazing works, in his usual humiliation, prayed to his Father, and learned obedience, as if he had been a servant; and this was seen in a measure at the resurrection of Lazarus, for he looked up to heaven, and besought his Father to hear him before he called the dead man to life; but in this account, as the Lord and God of the living and of the dead, he demands the prey out of the mouth of the lion, as it were, and death knew who spake, when he said, "Young man, I say to thee, arise:" And death delivered up his captive at his word. Thus shall it be in the last day; no sooner shall he,

who is Lord of death and hell, command both to give up their dead, but all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth. This act of our Saviour's as well as the manner in which he did it, like the raising of Lazarus in much the same way, must then be our invincible argument, that he is the resurrection and the life, and that neither death, nor the grave, nor hell, nor Satan, nor any spiritual bondage, nor sin, nor darkness, nor misery, nor fear, nor pain, can confine a soul a moment longer, when he says, "Loose him and let him go." This must teach us, in all times of trial, to apply directly to him. Are we in bondage through the fear of death, or through the sin that most easily besets us? he only can say, be thou loosed from thine infirmity, and it shall be done. Are we drawing near the time of our change? He that tasted death himself, and met it in its most frightful dress, and who sunk down into it surrounded with all its terrors, he can order it so, that we shall not be holden of death a moment, nor so much as see or taste of it, but have it so sweetened and altered to us, that it shall be only like the open door out of our exile and banishment into the chamber of our Bridegroom, and into our everlasting rest.

Satan and death would laugh to scorn all our courage, and mock all our resolution and bravery, if Jesus did not arm us with his armour, and with divine authority make his voice heard. I say unto thee, Death! and to thee, Hell! hurt not mine anointed, let my servant go free.

And when the young Man was raised to life, and sat up in his coffin, he began to speak, and his mother began to praise the Lord! He had turned all her mourning away in a moment, and instead of the voice of weeping and lamentation, there was heard nothing but the voice of thanksgiving and rejoicing. I do not doubt but the Holy Spirit, who had made  
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her sighs so prevalent, before now, made her see who Jesus was; all glorified God, and many of them that were witnesses of this charitable and merciful miracle, thought, a great prophet is risen among us; but it seems as if more was meant by that remarkable expression used by some, "God has visited his people." Who knows but this tenderness of our Saviour was the means of saving eternally the mother, the son, and many of those who were at this happy opportunity; for I cannot help believing that our Saviour, who so pitied persons in sickness, in bonds, in pain, in sorrow, which were only temporal trials and burdens, much more pitied, their spiritual estate, and often made these the means of bringing them to him, and humbling their souls at his feet, that he might make them know who he was, and that he might give them eternal salvation.

All the many examples and proofs of his love to the children of men, are therefore noted and handed down to us, that his long-suffering might lead unthinking and careless mortals to repentance, and comfort such as are in distress, and encourage them, with all their afflictions and miseries, to go to Jesus, who was, and is acquainted with grief, and whose delight and pleasure are to deliver such as are ready to perish. O let it have this effect upon us in our trials. Let us remember the Lord has compassion on us, and he [who] would go to Nain to comfort a poor desolate widow once in the days of his flesh, is the same now, and will surely comfort us. All the afflictions, misfortunes, or grievous things which befall us in this world, are known fully to him, and when they have served the end for which they were sent or suffered, he delivers us out of them. Be not any of you therefore cast down and dejected too much, when your dearest relations are called away, or when all things seem to make against us; do not rashly

rashly conclude the Lord deals hardly with you, or that he resolves to make all your days bitter through afflicting visitations, crosses, or troubles; but learn, that your good things are in a better world, and rejoice, that though heaviness may endure for a night, joy shall come in the morning. Let your disappointments below wean you from having any confidence in flesh and blood, or in any thing earthly; for all are transitory, all perish, and the most promising blessings in the world, without Jesus, are splendid lies and painted bubbles. Live you as men who have built your house upon a rock, which no wind, or storm, or flood can move, undermine, or shake. Since Jesus the Lord has compassion on you, why need you be uneasy, if you are used unkindly or cruelly in the world? and since he will be better to you than a father or mother, or (as Elkanah told his wife) than ten sons, do not be dismayed, should all you have be taken away. The Lord is the same; and when the heavens and earth are changed, and when time is no longer, he will be your everlasting God, and your portion for ever.

But there are some who grieve and will not be comforted, and who are not concerned after losses, nor mourn because of any outward want and trouble, nor because their friends, husbands, wives, or kindreds, or only children are dead, but because they have a heart dead to God, and who feel themselves without true life in Jesus. This is a state common to all who are awakened, and who feel the plague of their own hearts: in this condition a soul can say with the Psalmist, "My soul refused comfort." Such are restless indeed; such never can rest till the Lamb of God has given them a rest for their souls; they mourn, and their mourning is for him whom they have pierced, and just as a parent laments for his  
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first-born, or like as the widow of Nain mourned for her only son, so they mourn and languish for redemption, and day and night cry out for God their Saviour; and are there any here in this case? let such know that his heart, who was so affected and touched with the woman's cries and tears, will in like manner meet them and comfort them. Thus he overtook the two brethren who were walking sad to Emmaus. He comforted them, and did not leave them till all their sorrow was turned into joy. Thus he met Magdalene in the garden, when he asked her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She had scarce time to tell him, she mourned her absent Lord, but Jesus called her by her name, and at once made her heavy heart leap for joy and gladness. The women who went weeping to the sepulchre, were told by the angels not to fear; for, said they, "Ye seek Jesus that was crucified." They knew all who looked with tears for the Lamb that was slain, should surely find him. Let me in like manner then comfort you. Go on weeping after him; let not your heart or eyes rest till the moment comes when Jesus shall reveal his love to you, and bring the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. While you are waiting upon him, let his compassionate behaviour to the woman in the text encourage you; let his promise be a staff, as it were to you; and in all your deadness of heart, in all backwardness to believe, heaviness of spirit, or desertion, sit low at his feet, as objects of pity and compassion, till he say to each of you, as he did to the widow's son, "Young man, young woman, I say to thee, arise." At his word all your sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and you shall rise up to life eternal; you shall begin to speak and shew forth his praises, and tell to others what the Lord has done for you, and how the Lord, your own Lord and God, your own



God has had compassion on you. May he do this for you all, to the glory of his great name, whose redeemed people and inheritance you all are. Amen.

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### A P R A Y E R.

**O** THOU merciful and compassionate High Priest, who hast experienced and known all the infirmities and sicknesses of thy people, and who hast pity on the ignorant, and such as are out of the way, and art ready to save all who are friendless and ready to perish; look upon me; behold a poor sinner at thy feet who cannot do without thee. I am undone; I am uneasy and dissatisfied; my flesh and my heart tremble because of my sin, and I cannot be comforted. I cannot rest, nor sleep, nor wake, nor live, nor die in peace, till thou assurest me that thou hast forgiven me. Say to me, as to the widow of Nain, "Weep not." Still the tempest in my breast, and grant me that peace in thee, which the world cannot give. See the restless condition of my heart, and for thy tender mercy's sake, grant me such a confidence in thee, that I may trust and not be afraid. I know I have sinned against thee, but O, have compassion on me. I am nothing but sin, and unworthy and worthless, and neither can any one else help me, nor can I help myself; have mercy on me. All my desire and wish is, to feel and know thou pitiest me, and wilt save me. I am weary with sinning; I am sorry that I have lived so long disobedient; I repent (O my God! my God, thou knowest my inmost heart; thou knowest I repent), and beg for pardon. Think upon Gethsemane; think upon thy distress and agony; think upon thy uneasiness  
and

and frights in the wilderness ; remember thy sorrows on Mount Calvary ; remember the wormwood and the gall ; and for thy sufferings' sake, for thy bitter torments' sake, and for the sake of thy name, thy love, thy death, thy wounds and miseries, save and comfort me. Teach me to wait upon thee without distraction, to be faithful and true ; cause me to cleave to thee, and never go away ; and make it so clear to me that I am thy beloved, and thou mine, that all afflictions may be light, and easily borne, with a patience becoming a soul who is called by thy name. Thou who art easy to be intreated, and who canst not send souls empty away, fulfil my desire, that I may love thee, and live to thy praise, and be a witness that thou hast visited thy people, and hast power on earth to forgive sins ; yea, do this for me, that I may glorify thy dear and holy name for ever. Amen.

**DISCOURSE**

## DISCOURSE XL.

THE BEATIFIC VISION; OR, BEHOLDING  
JESUS CRUCIFIED.

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JOHN i. 29.

*Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of  
the world.*

OUR Saviour calls John the Baptist one of the greatest of the prophets, and that, no doubt, not only on account of his abstemious life and renunciation of the world, or because he was a martyr for the sake of his testimony, but because he, of all the goodly company of the men of God, was the only one who survived till the dawn of the days of the Son of Man, and saw the Lord in flesh. Other prophets and holy persons, since the beginning of the world, had the favour to see in spirit the kingdom and redemption of Christ; but they saw afar off; and though they knew God would surely visit and redeem his people, and published the glad tidings to all who mourned in Zion, or looked for salvation in Israel; and though they were persuaded of his incarnation, or, as they termed it in their predictions, his tabernacling among us; though they foresaw how, by his death, he would abolish death, and by his sufferings heal the hurt of his people, and save the world, and could die in this faith rejoicing; yet none among them had the honour to see him like  
John,

John, or be able to say boldly, while he could point to him, that is the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

John Baptist had been inspired with the Holy Ghost in his mother's womb, and had so early leaped for joy at the approach of his Lord, God, and Master, who was then newly conceived in the Virgin Mary. He had retired early into the desert, convinced of his high errand to proclaim the coming of the Lord, and to prepare his way. He had baptized the inhabitants of many countries to repentance, and set them upon expecting one greater than himself, preaching that they should believe on him, who was then among them, but not yet manifested, who should baptize with the Holy Ghost, whose shoes latchet he confessed he was not worthy to stoop down and unloose; but all this while he was not sure his cousin, the Son of Mary, was he, till at his baptism in Jordan, and then the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in form of a dove, while a voice from heaven assured the Baptist, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Till this time, John had many disciples, who, with himself, waited for the Messiah to be revealed; but now John pointed him out to all his converts, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God!" See the Lamb God has prepared to be offered for the sins of the world. Ye have hitherto read the law, and been present at the sacrifices, and at the morning and evening oblation: ye have known with what solemnity the beasts have been appointed to be slain on the days of atonement, and heard your fathers tell how, after the same manner, they offered their goats and lambs for four thousand years: Behold now the true Lamb; all the rest were the patterns, but this is the substance. The others were but shadows, and were the gifts and offerings which men made out

out of the best of their flocks upon the altars of God ; but this is the Lord's own Lamb, this is the Lamb which he prepared, and the body which he ordained to be offered once for all. Behold him, turn from every other sacrifice, and expect your help and atonement and forgiveness from this Lamb. He shall take away the sin of the world. Thus the disciples of John understood it, and they left him and followed Jesus.

The whole gospel is included in the declaration of John ; and by him, God the Holy Ghost has begun, and continues to exhibit and set forth the Son as the Lamb, whose death hath abolished sin, and taken it away, teaching sinners to look to him and be saved. Thus the prophets had, in their measure, preached him ; and all the Scriptures set forth remission of sin in this Man's name, and in no other. All the divine missionaries have, in other words, more or less plain, declared that he takes away sin, and finishes iniquity, and that to him every one must look, and all flesh come, who would be saved.

Three things especially are contained in the text ; namely, the character of Jesus Christ ; his office ; and the way to be saved by him. Of these let us think a little, and learn rightly to esteem that sacred Person, whom John in the text, and whom all the scriptures preach alone.

The first thing to be considered is, his character ; the Lamb of God. John the Baptist was not the first who thus names the Saviour ; for Moses in his dark manner had preached him as a Lamb, throughout the law, and even the fathers had thus offered lambs as shadows of him, from the days of Abel. Isaiah had said, " He shall be led as a lamb to the slaughter." And again, " Send the lamb to the ruler of the people." But after John had called him a Lamb, the apostles, through the same spirit, spake  
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of him under that name. St. Peter says, "Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." St. Paul calls him, our Passover, our Paschal Lamb, sacrificed for us. Thus St. Philip preached him to the Eunuch; and St. John the Evangelist, who had seen him in his glory, and well knew what name best suited him, who is not ashamed to appear in heaven as a Lamb that has been slain, in his whole book of the Revelation; calls him the Lamb, the Lamb that was slain.

There could be given many reasons wherefore the name of the Lamb so becomes our Saviour: First, because of his innocency, his being harmless and meek; for as the Lamb is without any thing of the fury, poison, or ravenous disposition of other animals, so that the least child is not afraid to approach it, or the most timorous to be where it is; so Jesus is of such a tender lamb-like disposition and nature, that the most affrighted and fearful soul may approach him, and come into his presence without danger. At the time when the ancients looked upon him as a lion, by which name he was known in Judah, and in many ages; no wonder that Hezekiah and others so trembled before him, and poor sinners were afraid, lest, as a lion, he would tear them to pieces, when there was none to help. But now those gloomy times like shadows flee away, and as John himself looked to see the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and behold he saw a Lamb; so all who approach Jesus, and apply with fear and trembling to him, however they may justly expect to meet him as a lion, since they are conscious of their having so grievously sinned and offended him, yet they shall find he is now a Lamb, and now fury is not in him; he is come not to destroy men's lives, but to save them; and such as are not cruel and lion-like to themselves,

themselves, shall find nothing in Jesus but mercy, and love, and gentleness for ever.

There is another reason why our Saviour's name may well be called the Lamb; for no creature of God is more useful than a Lamb, their flesh is meat, and their wool our best raiment; thus is Jesus our meat indeed, the only flesh that gives life to the world, and his righteousness the fleece of the true Lamb, which can hide sin, or cover a naked soul, or dress it for the King's marriage supper.

But the best reason that can be given, why the Lord delights to be known by his new name, the Lamb, is because, from the beginning of the world, lambs were used for the sacrifices. Lambs were used at the deliverance out of Egypt, and for the consecration of priests, and for the daily sacrifice. Thus is our Lord Jesus incarnate called the Lamb, by way of eminence, as if all the rest were nothing, and unworthy of the name; he is properly the Lamb; the rest were but faint figures, and no sacrifices which could take away sin, make peace, or atone for our fall, or avert the just wrath of Almighty God.

This could only be effected with a better sacrifice, and with a better Lamb than men could offer, or present to the Most High. Now, this God himself found out a Lamb, he prepared a body, and offered up his own eternal Son, his dearest Lamb, his co-essential and beloved Child. This is the Lamb of God, the Lamb he gave up to die in the room of a sinful creature. God will have it now known, that his Child Jesus is the very and true Lamb, the antitype of all obligations, gifts, sacrifices, and offerings, and the fulness and substance of all whatever the law or the prophets preached.

I come now, of course, into the office of this holy Person, which was, to take away the sins of the world.

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God Almighty saw eternally through the insufficiency of all human performances, presents and attempts to remove sin, and too well knew how far sin had reigned over the earth, and how deeply it had stained, poisoned, and corrupted all flesh, and merited divine wrath, to propose that mere man should make an amends; he knew no blood of lambs, nor all the offerings under heaven could atone for iniquity, or make an end of sin: wherefore he found a ransom, and contrived the incarnation and dying of a Lamb that could do it, and save the world. "Lo! I come, he saith, to [do] thy will, in the body which thou hast prepared me." It was a secret to many in the world, and the more is the pity, it is a secret still to some thousands, how the sin of the world is removed and taken away. Men confess it in words, but O! they think little more of the matter; for else all would go weary and heavy laden with sins to him, and be witnesses that he takes away the sin of the world. I shall not enlarge much on the manner of our Lamb's taking away sin, because I have done it in other discourses, and because my design is to speak more especially on beholding the Lamb: but yet I may not altogether pass over the dolorous life and journey of Jesus, when he went out of the gates of Jerusalem, bearing our iniquity, to carry it into a land uninhabited, and to release the guilty world. In doing this work, it became him to put on a nature lower than the nature of angels, that he might die, who else could not die; and that in making atonement, and satisfying for sin, he might be capable of suffering the utmost of all our chastisement, stripes, and judgment; and this he did undergo, feel, and endure in his own body and soul, when it pleased the Lord to heap upon his head, and charge and lay on him the iniquities of us all. Then did it also please the same God, even the blessed Three who



bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to bruise and afflict the Well-beloved and innocent Lamb, who now stood in the sinner's place, and willingly bore their guilt, and became their surety. One man had brought sin into the world and ruined it; and this Man, the very image of the invisible God, and the only blessed Person in whom God is manifest to men, meekly undertook to take sin away, and set all the world to rights.

He was not only treated as a sinner by Jews and heathens, who attended at, or consented to, his death and bonds, but God the holy and undivided Trinity so condemned and visited sin in his person, that in heaven, as well as in earth, it could have been said, with equal propriety, "He was numbered with the transgressors." He was made sin for us; he was a curse on our account, and for our sakes.

This was the solemn and awful manner in which the Lamb removed the sin of the land, in one day; thus the Lamb of God took away the iniquity of the world. He saw contentedly, all whatever could be called sin, in the sight of Almighty God, was now laid upon him; and then he humbly, and like a lamb, stood silent, and resisted, and answered not, when the rewards of sin flowed thick upon him from hell, from men, and from heaven. No blows, shame, injury, pain, reviling, blasphemy, terror, nor even hellish distress could make him speak or cry aloud; he went out of the city of Jerusalem like a sheep going to the shearer, dumb, and bore his hateful and hell-deserving load like a lamb, so he opened not his mouth. He had taken the debt upon him and would pay it; he stood surety for his world, and would satisfy the Creditor; he was the sinner's bondsman, and would be answerable for all their guilt, past, present, and to come: and as he was the God of equity, so he did justice; and having fulfilled the law, and made

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it honourable, he submitted meekly and lamb-like to its fiery and terrible, but just sentence. Thus he bought the church; thus he obtained pardon, and with righteousness demanded all out of the possession of the enemy of our souls, and out of the reach of the thunders and condemnation of the law and divine judgment.

When he had stood out the storm, and languished on in his torments until the last pain and sorrow was inflicted, and till he had drank up all the wrath which remained due, knowing that all things written of him in the Psalms, and in the prophets, and in the law were fulfilled, he sunk down and died, when he cried with a loud voice, "It is finished." Thus he carried away all sin out of the sight of his heavenly Father, and in his own death slew and destroyed sin, death, and the curse, and abolished and blotted out the bills and bonds which were against us, and so opened a way for us to escape out of our prison and chains into eternal life, and into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Then hung the Lord's Anointed truly like an ensign in the air, on the hills, a spectacle to angels and men, naked, and wounded, and dead. Behold him; all ye who love him! Behold the Man, whose dying saves you! Behold your King, who bled and suffered in the room of his rebellious and guilty subjects. Behold your God, who thus humbled himself to redeem his creatures. "Behold the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world." O may we have our eyes like those in the synagogue of Nazareth fastened on him; and even after we have viewed him, by faith, all our lifetime, may we see him that was slain, in peace, and in his glory for evermore.

I come now to shew what is meant by beholding him, for this is the way to be saved.

This, as well as his death and sacrifice, had its figures under the Old Testament; for when the

Children of Israel in the wilderness were stung with serpents, and could get no cure, but the whole camp were in the utmost distress; Moses lifted up a serpent of brass, high in the midst of the congregation, and preached, that whosoever should be bitten or poisoned, should look to it and be cured. Those who slighted this remedy, died without mercy; but as many as raised their eye to the serpent, were immediately healed, so that it stayed the plague, and eased a confused and despairing people of all their pain and fears. Of this our dear Saviour takes particular notice, in his conversation with Nicodemus: and thus, he says, "shall the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoso looketh and believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Moses might not make the image of a man, and put it upon a cross, but the likeness and pattern of that hateful creature which had stung them; to signify, that as sin had stung us, and been the sole and only cause of all our inward or outward pain, as well as the reason of all calamities and complaints, temporal and eternal, so Jesus should be made sin for us, and be lifted up in the shameful and loathsome manner of a criminal, a naked, cursed, and defiled man, from whom all hid their faces: but whosoever believes in him, whosoever looks upon him in faith, and sees all his sins transferred on his head and staining his raiment, he obtains deliverance, the pains of Christ ease his heart, his bonds loose him and let go free, his cries quiet him, his wounds heal him, his blood washes him from all sin, his dying breathes eternal life into him, and his shame and nakedness cover him with the true wedding-garment; his curse blesses him, his condemnation acquits him, and his servitude and slavery adopts him a son and heir into the family of the King of kings and Lord of lords. See, first, if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow, wherewith he was afflicted

afflicted for our sakes, in the day of the Lord's fierce anger; and then look to him and be saved: "Whoso looketh on him shall not perish, but have eternal life." Those willingly ignorant of his divinity and merits, who out of pride and Turkish haughtiness, scorn to apply to him, or to bow down at his feet for mercy, but choose to believe in some more reasonable and fashionable way, are those, who, like their brethren in the wilderness, who despised the brazen serpent and died, must perish; their blood is upon their heads; in the sin, in which they have sinned, they must die.

The prayer which *Solomon* made at the dedication of the temple must not be forgotten in this place, for in no part of the Old Testament service, was the looking to Jesus for salvation more divinely set forth than there.

The temple itself was the shadow of Christ; for which reason in the Gospel, he calls his body the temple: and John, when he saw heaven, beheld no temple in the holy city or New Jerusalem, but says, the Lamb was the temple thereof. All the nations esteemed the temple of Solomon as the throne of God, and thither the tribes went up as to the gate of heaven, to offer sacrifices, and to seek forgiveness, and set their faces towards that temple, when they prayed or made their supplications. Solomon, in his inspired intercession on the solemn feast-day of consecrating the house of God, intreats the Lord to hear the men who shall turn from their sin, and make their prayer towards that place, and to forgive them; and in case of a famine, pestilence, mildew, locust, or invasion of enemies, in the time of sickness, or when any man has known the plague of his own heart, and should spread forth his hands towards that house, that God would hear from heaven and forgive; also he begs, that if a stranger, an alien to

Israel, should hear of the Lord who dwelleth in Jerusalem, and should come and pray towards that house, that God would hear and grant all the desire of the stranger; and if his people should go out to battle, and should pray towards the city, and towards the house which was built, that he would maintain their cause; and he closes this manner of praying with this most remarkable petition: "If thy people sin against thee, for there is no man that sinneth not, and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy far or near, yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the strange land, saying, We have sinned and done perversely, and committed wickedness, and so return to thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, and pray unto thee toward the land, which thou gavest to their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name; then hear thou from heaven, thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people that have sinned against thee: And the Lord said, I have heard thy prayer."

Thus Daniel, in the captivity, opened his window, and looked toward Jerusalem, when he made his prayer; and David and such as compiled the Psalms, who saw in faith somewhat of this mystery, said, "I will pray toward thy holy temple: I will look to the hills, whence cometh my help."

This looking and expecting mercy and deliverance from the temple, or, as it is elsewhere called, the holy place of Sion, was no human invention, but ordained of the God of Israel, to be a figure of the faith afterwards to be revealed. Now the veil is rent asunder, and the apostles and disciples of Christ have spoken

spoken plainly, that the object of all our worship, the true temple, the true place of help, is Jesus Christ, who was crucified on the hills, and set as an ensign, that the scattered and dispersed of Israel, and the nations of the Gentiles might seek to him. Let us look to Jesus, saith the author of the epistle to the Hebrews; and the prophets, who saw beforehand his salvation, taught, "Look to him, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth;" and again "Behold your King;" and again, "They shall look upon him whom they pierced, and mourn for him;" and again, "Look to the Rock whence ye were hewn;" and again, "Turn ye to the Strong-hold;" and again, "As the eyes of a maiden to the hand of her mistress, so do our eyes look unto the Lord our God, till he have mercy upon us." As the lame man looked upon Peter and John, expecting to receive something from them, so a sinner must look on Jesus, and know no other can help or relieve him to all eternity; he must behold the Lamb. This is the sweet gospel of glad tidings; when a soul is oppressed, is overladen and bowed down with cares, sin, and fears, the Holy Ghost bids him behold the Lamb of God. This is the prescription all true physicians give to the souls under their care, let their case be what it will, however sad and deplorable, however distressed and tempted, however sick, tired, or faint, however hurried, pursued by the enemy, or avenger of blood, however seemingly incurable, look to Jesus! behold him! behold the Lamb of God! those open arms are extended to embrace you; that pained breast was made bare, that you might lean there and be comforted; that cross of his was raised up to screen and shelter you, like a great tree, from the burning heat of the wrath of Almighty God; those wounds are the cities of refuge, set open that you might turn in and be safe; that reverend head was bowed

bowed down to listen to your complaint and sighs; and those dear lips stooped to kiss you; the blood which runs down from all parts, from head to foot, hastened to make a river of life, that you might drink and live for ever, that you might wash and be clean. O go to him, venture near him, spread your hands and hearts towards this temple, make your prayer towards this gate of heaven, and apply fearless, and with trust, to him who was lifted up and slain, and you shall find help. But are you carried away captive by sin so far from him, that you cannot come to him? yet, remember the hills, turn to Mount Calvary, and make your prayer, looking towards Jesus, desire him to take away your sin; and he who can do it alone, he who is mighty to save, he who supported the whole world's crimes and bore them away, will let you experience what his outstretched arms, his pierced hands, and almighty blood can do. Behold the Lamb of God; look to him till he have mercy upon you; and sooner or later, as surely as he is God's holy Lamb, he will be your Saviour and Redeemer, and you shall glorify him.

All our christian service and worship is, Beholding the Lamb. As formerly, if an heathen, who had heard of the fame of the God of Jacob, and had travelled some thousand miles to Jerusalem to see their worship, and was returned to his own country, was asked to give a relation of all he saw, he could only have told what a multitude he saw together worshipping, how the psalms were sung in pious order, and how the trumpets and harps played with solemn awfulness, while no image, no vision appeared, no God shewed himself, nor any similitude was to be seen as the object of their pompous and grand worship, but the priests and people all surrounded an altar, whereon a lamb lay bleeding or burning: Thus it is in our days of grace, when we meet together,

when

when we sing or pray, we have no other thing in view, we turn in faith to none else, but to him, who is the image of the invisible God, the dying, bleeding, and crucified Lamb. It is with us, as if we celebrated our daily or hourly service on Mount Calvary, and compassed round about the altar, whereon our Passover was slain and sacrificed for us. Our office is to be priests to him, our white ephods are his righteousness, our robes are made white in his blood; him we worship, him we preach, to him we sing, to him we pray; we will know him only, and are and will be to all eternity, the inheritance and worshippers of him that was slain. Those who have found redemption in his blood, abide with him in white and clean linen, with songs of everlasting joy; and such as seek salvation, look to him and pray; and all have their eyes and hearts fastened on the Son of Man, the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.

Thus John saw it in the New Jerusalem above, all the angels' innumerable host, the four full of eyes, the four and twenty upon thrones, the souls of the martyrs under the altar, the virgins on Mount Sion, and all the company, which no man could number, who stood around about the throne, worshipped and sung, and fell down and adored and blessed the God and Lamb that sat thereon, whose vesture was dipped in blood, and who appeared as if he had been a Lamb slain. They praised him on whom they had believed in the world, and who had loved them, and washed and made them clean from their sins in his own blood; and no one else was visible, none else is seen of the angels, or can be seen to all eternity, but that God who is manifest in flesh, that man "in whom dwelleth the whole fulness of the Godhead bodily," in whom the Father is revealed, and from whom, and in whose name the Holy Ghost

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is known and glorified, that Lamb that was slain, he "that was dead and is alive again," and liveth for evermore. Out of the person of Jesus, God dwells in inaccessible light, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; but in his face and in his faith, the pure in heart see God, even the Father, and live.

Let us, dear brethren, only be solicitous then about seeing Jesus; let our whole sincere and serious aim be to believe in him, to look upon him in faith, that we thereby may escape the danger of perishing, and find eternal life and the kingdom of heaven. Let us not forget that we live in a bad world, in spiritual Egypt and Sodom, where also our Lord was crucified; many, on all sides, still are offended with him, and others ashamed to confess him for their God; the professors as well as profane, are displeased with our manner of believing on the Lamb. Let us not wonder, but pass through among such as esteem the preaching of his cross foolishness, and such as deny the Lord that bought them; professing before heaven, and earth, and hell, that we are the disciples of the Lamb of God, that we follow him, and will only and alone know and set forth him till we die. Our eyes shall be fastened on him, we will look to him in all times of need; we will praise and pray, looking to him crucified, till we behold the Lamb of God face to face in heaven, where I pray him to hasten our appearing, for his blood's sake! Amen.

FINIS.

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