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THE

OFFICES OF CHRIST.

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OFFICES OF CHRIST.

SECTION I.

MEDIATION IN GENERAL.

MEDIATION supposes an existing controversy. A third party comes forward to make up the breach. Hence the official title, mediator. The mode of mediation must depend upon the nature of the offence, and the dispositions of the parties. If the offence is of that description which will admit of its being passed over without a legal satisfaction, the mediator may bring about a reconciliation, in so far as the offended party is concerned, by simple intercession; but, if the offence is of such a character as to injure the honour of public law, or to violate the rights of public justice, reconciliation can only be brought about by mediation, in the way of the mediator's giving that satisfaction in the room of the offender which the law requires. In this last case, mediation involves suretiship—the mediator takes the place

of the offender in law, and gives satisfaction for his offence. But, though the offended party may be satisfied with the reparation made by a surety for the injury he had sustained; and, though the honour of public law may be vindicated, the offender may still remain unreclaimed. To complete the reconciliation of the parties, in this case, the offender must be brought to such a frame of mind, and to such a line of conduct, as would entitle him to future confidence, and to the restoration of that friendship which he had deservedly forfeited. In effecting this, the mediator must be regulated by circumstances. If the offensive conduct proceeded merely from error in judgment, the offender may be reclaimed by instruction or persuasion; but if to ignorance he add obstinacy, then, if the mediating party has the right and the means of interfering, the offender must be brought to submission by power. These principles apply to the reconciliation between God and men.

1. The parties between whom the Lord Jesus is called to mediate are God and fallen men. "There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." God made man upright, and so long as he re-

tained his primitive integrity, he had no need of mediatory interference in his approaches to his Maker. But sin separated between them; and as man had neither the inclination, nor the ability, to satisfy the claims of the divine law which he had violated, if he was to be restored to the favour of his offended sovereign, it behoved to be by mediation.

2. The plan of mediation originated with God. He was the party offended by the sin of man, and according to the principles already laid down, to him alone the right of admitting the satisfaction of a surety in the room of transgressors belonged. But God whom he had offended did not merely admit of a vicarious satisfaction; he also, in his boundless wisdom and grace, provided the ransom, in the appointment and mission of his own Son to be the Saviour of the world. The whole plan originated in the grace of God, was framed by his wisdom, and is carried into effect by his power.

3. Our Lord has a peculiar fitness, as God-man, for accomplishing the work of mediation. A condignity of character, in the person who mediates, to the persons with whom he is to mediate, has been invariably thought necessary

in cases of mediation among men; but it was still more necessary in the present case. It behoved him who was to approach God to make expiation for our sins, to be himself a divine person. Jesus is a divine person, "in the form of God, and thinks it not robbery to be equal with God." But it was no less necessary that he should be nearly related to the persons for whom he was to mediate; and Jesus is not only God's fellow, but our brother. "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same."

4. Our Lord mediates with God in behalf of fallen men as a priest, by sacrifice and by intercession. God is the party offended by the sin of man, and to him satisfaction was due for transgression, and this satisfaction could only be made by blood-shedding. The Socinians admit of our Lord's mediation as a priest in heaven, by intercession; but they deny that he mediated by his death as a sacrifice for sin on earth. The Scriptures, however, make his death as a propitiation for sin the fundamental act of his mediation, on the validity of which all his other mediatory acts proceed. "For which cause he is the mediator of the New

Testament, that by means *of death*, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Heb. ix. 15.

5. Our Lord's mediation, as it respects sinners, is by instruction, and by power. By his obedience unto death, the controversy on God's part is removed, sin, the cause of it, being expiated, and an everlasting righteousness for the justification of the church brought in. "He has made peace by the blood of his cross." But to complete the work of mediation the offenders must be reclaimed, and brought to a dutiful submission to the law and government of God. This our Lord accomplishes by his instruction as a prophet, and by his power as a king.

6. These remarks serve to show that our Lord's general office as mediator, necessarily includes the particular offices of prophet, priest, and king. Sin had separated between us and God; and sin could only be expiated by sacrifice—hence the necessity of his priesthood. We are alienated from the life of God, by the ignorance that is in us, because of the blindness of our hearts—hence the necessity of his

prophetical office. We are under bondage to sin, Satan, and the present evil world, and not only captives, but also willing captives—and hence the necessity of his kingly office. Thus his official character is complete, as it is commensurate to the utmost extent of our miseries and wants.

7. We shall only add here, that our Lord is the *one* mediator, to the exclusion of all others. He has no partner with him in this arduous work; and as he is alone in the work of mediation, so to him, and to him alone, the glory of it is due. "He builds the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory." "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

SECTION II.

THE MEDIATOR GOD AND MAN IN ONE PERSON.

When we assert, that the Mediator is God and man in one person, we are not to be understood to mean that his incarnate state was necessary to his appointment to the office; for his appointment was from everlasting. Nor is it to be understood that he was incapable of

mediatory acts till he became incarnate; for he entered upon his work immediately after the fall. But what is meant is, that all his mediatory acts supposed his future incarnation; and that the actual assumption of our nature was absolutely necessary to the full discharge of his work.

1. Our Lord subsisted in Godhead, not only as a distinct, but as a divine person, before he assumed our nature. This appears from the personal properties and personal acts ascribed to him before he became incarnate. He was a distinct person with the Father before he became man. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and go to the Father." John xvi. 28.

2. This divine person who was in the form of God, actually assumed our nature into union with his divine person. He "was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John i. 14. He was "manifest in the flesh." 1 Tim. iii. 16. The nature he assumed was our nature; not a nature simply like ours.

3. This union did not change our Lord's personal identity. His person was *one* before he became incarnate, and it continued to be

one after he was manifest in flesh. The Son given, and the child born, are one person. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon HIS shoulder, and HIS name name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah ix. 6.

4. Though this is an intimate union, yet the two natures are not confounded, nor their properties mixed. When the Son of God was manifested in flesh, his divine nature did not become finite, neither did his human nature become infinite. They continued to retain their distinct properties or attributes. They have distinct understandings, and distinct wills, though their operations are always in unison. Thus, though, as God, he knew all things, yet, as man, he is said not to have known the day of judgment. John xxi. 17. Matt. xxiv. 36.

5. By virtue of this union, the divine and human natures in the person of Christ came to have communion with each other in personal relations, and personal agency. Our Lord was naturally and necessarily the Son of God, previous to his assumption of our nature.

His sonship is not founded, as some have supposed, upon his incarnation, or upon his mission. He was the Son of God before he was sent into our world, and before he was conceived in the womb of the virgin. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," &c. John iii. 16. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law," &c. Gal. iv. 4. But his sonship is predicated of his human nature; because, in consequence of his assuming that nature into union with his divine person, it came to have communion with him in his divine sonship. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore, also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke i. 35.

SECTION III.

THE PROPHETICAL OFFICE OF CHRIST.

The term prophet in Scripture sometimes denotes one who is employed by God to foretell future events. In another sense it signifies one who is employed to reveal the will

of God to men, whatever be the matter of the revelation. In this extended sense it is applied to Jesus Christ. Our Lord acted as a prophet from the earliest period of the church. He was however, to appear in our nature in the end of the Jewish dispensation as a public teacher, and in this view his appearance as a prophet was till then matter of promise. Moses foretold that God would raise up to Israel a prophet like unto him, to whom they should hearken. Deut. xviii. 15. His approach was foretold by Malachi, chap. iii. 1. and iv. 2.

SECTION IV.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

1. Our Lord's prophetical office was necessary to the accomplishment of his work as mediator. As the plan of mercy for the recovery of fallen men is supernatural, and could only be known by supernatural revelation, so the honour of the divine character required, that this gracious communication of God's will to his fallen creatures shall be made by a mediator. And it was no less necessary for the benefit of sinners, to whom the communication was to

be made. A consciousness of guilt rendered them incapable of receiving with profit even the overtures of mercy immediately from God in his absolute character. The dispensation of the law from Horeb was a dispensation of mercy, as the law was prefaced by an exhibition of God's gracious character; yet from its being accompanied with the awful symbols of the divine presence as a rectoral judge, the Israelites could not endure what was commanded, and earnestly entreated Moses to mediate between God and them. Exod. xx. 19.

2. Our Lord has a peculiar fitness for his work as a prophet, from his incarnate state, and official gifts. Considered *as God*, he is in the bosom of the Father, and hath the most perfect knowledge of his nature, perfections, and purposes; and when he unfolds these to men, he testifies what he hath seen. John i. 18. Viewed *as man*, he hath a peculiar fitness for communicating these mysteries to the human race, in such a way as to prevent them from losing the benefit of his instructions by his overwhelming majesty. To see the advantage arising to the church from our Lord's incarnation, considered as a prophet, we have only to compare the terrific symbols of his

presence when he gave the law from Horeb, with his meek though majestic appearance, when he expounded the same law on a mountain in Galilee; or to contrast, as is done by the writer to the Hebrews, the former with the present dispensation of God's grace. Heb. xii. 18—24.

3. Our Lord's prophetical office derives a peculiar glory from the duration of its exercise, and from the extent of his commission. With regard to the duration of the exercise of his prophetical office, it commenced almost with time, and will be bounded only by eternity. It would be an extremely partial view of our Lord's prophetical work to limit it to what has been called, though perhaps improperly, his personal ministry. His abode on earth was but short, and he acted as a public teacher only during a small proportion of that period. He began the exercise of his office as the prophet of the church in the publication of the first promise in paradise, immediately after the fall; for that revelation of the plan of mercy was made by the *voice* or personal *word* of God, who was in the beginning with God. Gen. iii. 8—15. He continued to exercise it during the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensa-

tions by means of the prophets. It was from him they received their commission, from him they derived their instructions, and it was to him they were indebted for their success.

4. The grand end of our Lord's administration as a prophet on earth was the manifestation of God's name, or the unfolding of his character, attributes, and purposes; and he could, when about to leave the world, appeal to his Father, that in this important work he had acted faithfully; but the continued prosecution of the same work, though not exactly in the same manner, after his resurrection and ascension to glory, was also the matter of his vows. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I *have* declared unto them thy name, and *will* declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." John xvii. 25, 26. See also Psalm xxii. 22, 23, 24; and Rev. xxi. 23.

5. With regard to the extent of his commission, it far exceeds that of all the prophets who went before him, both with respect to the matter and the objects of it. They were sent to communicate only certain portions of

God's will to men, but his commission embraces the whole counsel of God. "He is full of grace and truth." "In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Their commission was in a great measure confined to one people, but his commission extends to men of every nation under heaven. "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." Isa. xlix. 6.

SECTION V.

THE VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH OUR LORD'S INSTRUCTIONS AS A PROPHET HAVE BEEN, AND CONTINUE TO BE COMMUNICATED.

In general our Lord's instructions were communicated to the prophets before his appearance in our world as a public teacher, and to the apostles and evangelists after his ascension, *by inspiration of the Spirit;* and they were to be delivered by them ministerially to the church diffusive. The Holy Spirit, in inspiring the prophets, and afterwards apostles, acted in the appropriate character of the Spirit

of Christ. 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. We shall submit to our readers the following remarks respecting the nature of inspiration.

The possibility of inspiration seems to be granted by all who profess to be Christians, though there is a great diversity of opinion with respect to its nature and degrees, as applied to the Scriptures. Some are of opinion that the inspiration of the Scriptures amounted to nothing more than a mere superintendence over the minds of the sacred writers so as to prevent them from publishing gross errors. Others go a little further, and maintain that, besides superintendence, the understandings of the several writers were enlarged—that their conceptions were elevated above the measure of ordinary men—and that with their minds thus elevated, they were left to their own judgment both as to matter and words. The advocates of plenary inspiration, again, maintain that the Holy Spirit suggested to the minds of the persons inspired not only the matter to be communicated, but also the words in which the communication was to be made. A fourth party are for taking in all these supposed kinds of inspiration now mentioned; and they maintain that the sacred writers

sometimes wrote under mere superintendence, sometimes under superintendence accompanied with a high elevation of conception, and at other times under divine suggestion, or what is called plenary inspiration, according to the nature of the subject on which they wrote.

We are humbly of opinion, that inspiration, as employed in communicating the sacred oracles to men, *is only of one kind*, and that this is the inspiration of suggestion, according to which not only the matter, but the words also were communicated to the minds of the sacred writers.

1. The Scriptures themselves take notice of only one kind of inspiration, and represent it as extending to all the parts of Scripture—to those which are historical and moral, as well as those which are prophetical and doctrinal. See 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17, and 2 Pet. i. 21.

2. There must have been more than an enlargement of the understanding and an elevation of conception in inspiration, since a great many of the things were such as could not have entered into the hearts of men or of angels, had they not been suggested to the mind by the divine Spirit. Of this descrip-

tion were the events foretold by the sacred writers many years before they took place, and the whole of the doctrines that relate to the supernatural plan of man's redemption.

3. For similar reasons we must insist for the suggestion not only of the ideas, but also of the words of Scripture. To us it is altogether inconceivable how the sacred writers, who, like other men, were accustomed to think in words, could have the ideas suggested to their own minds except in words; or how they could have written intelligibly about future events, with which they could have had no previous acquaintance, and on doctrinal subjects far above their comprehension, had not the language as well as the matter been furnished to them by divine suggestion. The apostle Paul seems to put the matter beyond a doubt. 1 Cor. ii. 13.

4. If what has been called the inspiration of superintendence and elevation, could in any case be deemed to have been sufficient, it must have been in cases where the sacred writers may be supposed to have had a prior acquaintance, from other sources, with the subjects on which they were called to write; such as subjects of morality and history. But even in

these cases plenary inspiration seems to have been absolutely necessary. With regard to moral subjects, it may be observed, that in giving the decalogue to the church, which contains a summary of the whole duty of man, he did not employ the ordinary means of communicating his will to men, but spake it with his own mouth, and wrote it with his own finger upon two tables of stone. With respect to history, it may be observed that if we consider the different colouring which different historians of the same age have given to the same actions, (though they came under their observation respectively,) when left to their own judgment and inclination, it is impossible for us to conceive how the actions recorded in sacred history could have been selected, the principles and motives from which they proceeded traced out, and their moral tendencies, as they affect not only the temporal destinies of nations, but the spiritual and eternal state of individuals, delineated, as they have been, by the sacred historians, had they not written by divine suggestion or plenary inspiration.

We may add further, that the typical, prophetical, and even chronological writings of

Moses and the prophets pointed uniformly to the person, offices, sufferings, and future glory of Christ, as the magnet does to the pole. "To him gave all the prophets witness." But this could not have been the case had they been left to their own judgment in the choice either of matter or words; for it was after they had received these communications, and not before, that their judgment was employed in diligent search to find out their typical and prophetical references to this glorious person, and the period of his advent.

5. We may notice further that the evangelists professedly give our Lord's discourses in his own words, and an account of his miracles in all their minute circumstances, and that, too, a number of years after his ascension. But it is impossible to conceive, that, at any time, and more especially, at a period so remote from the time when these discourses were delivered, and those miracles wrought, they could have done so merely from memory. Besides, John informs us, that there were also many other things which our Lord did, which were not recorded either by himself or his fellow-evangelists. Now, can we suppose for a moment, that the evangelists were left to their

own judgment to select the things which were written, especially when these were intended for the standing use of the church, in all future ages, as a rule of faith. Indeed, every consideration forbids that we should admit, even with regard to historical facts, any other species of inspiration than that of divine suggestion.

6. We observe further, in support of plenary inspiration, that, unless it be admitted, the Bible has no valid claim to be called the word of God. The Scriptures frequently lay claim to a divine origin in support of their supreme authority as a rule of faith and manners; but if the sacred writers were only under what is called superintendence, we cannot see the justness of that claim. It would be a gross perversion of words, to call a man the author of a book, who had no hand in its composition further than merely guarding its real author from falling into gross error. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

It may be observed, that, besides inspiration strictly so called, the church was favoured with communications of God's will by the more immediate appearances of the Son of God: sometimes in the likeness of human nature,

which he was to assume in the fulness of time, and sometimes in the shechinah. Communications from God were made also by means of dreams. Though these modes of communicating God's will to men were distinct from inspiration so called, yet they were always accompanied by it; for the impression on the minds of the prophets, that what they heard was the voice of God, and that what they saw was the symbol of a present Deity, was as really the effect of the inspiration of the Spirit, as were those revelations of God's will which were communicated by simple suggestion.

Let it be observed further, that one attribute of inspiration was, that the persons inspired could not conceal the words of the Holy One communicated to them; which plainly shows, that they were not left to their own judgment or inclination. This appears from the case of Balaam, who was, on one occasion, employed to announce God's will to mankind. Nothing could be further from his inclination than to bless Israel; but when God put the word in his mouth, he found himself impelled to give it utterance. See Numb. xxiv. 12, 13. The same thing appears from the example of

Jeremiah. Though a good man, he once rashly resolved, from the contempt and persecution he met with in prosecuting his ministry, to speak no more in God's name; but he tells us, that he was impelled to speak what was communicated to him by the Spirit; not, indeed, by mere physical force, but by the same supernatural influence which communicated to him the message itself to be delivered. "O Lord, thou hast *persuaded* me, and I was *persuaded;* thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name; but his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." Jer. xx. 7—9.

The circumstance now mentioned is inseparably connected with the very design of inspiration. The gift of inspiration was conferred not for the private benefit of the prophets themselves, but for the public edification of the church. Had it been left to the choice of the

persons inspired to reveal or conceal the message delivered to them according to their own inclination, the very end of inspiration might have been defeated. The mandate of heaven was *peremptory*. See Jer. xxiii. 28.

SECTION VI.

OUR LORD'S TEACHING.

SEVERAL things characterized the teaching of our Lord while in the world, as

1. His instructions were delivered with authority peculiar to himself.

2. His instructions were delivered with the utmost simplicity and plainness.

3. In his instructions, we see majesty combined with humility and meekness. The majesty of divinity pervaded the whole of his work. Every thing he uttered indicated that the speaker, as well as his doctrines, was of heavenly origin. But though his instructions were delivered with majesty, that majesty was accompanied with meekness: he sought not his own glory, but the glory of his Father. On no occasion do we find him exhibiting himself as an object of applause. In him the

ancient predictions were fully verified. "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street." Isaiah xlii. 2.

4. His instructions were seasonable, and delivered with sympathy and feeling. "A word spoken in season," says Solomon, "how good is it!" And again, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." This property our Lord's instructions possessed in the highest degree. "The Lord God," says he, "hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." Every word he uttered, whether for reproof, instruction, or consolation, was admirably adapted to the circumstances of the persons whom he addressed.

5. His instructions were eminently characterized by integrity and faithfulness. None of the popular prejudices of his countrymen escaped his reprehension. Neither could the presence nor the threats of those in power deter him from his duty. When told that if he would not depart hence, Herod would kill him; his reply was, "Go ye and tell that fox, Behold I cast out devils, and do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be

perfected." The same integrity characterized his conduct towards his friends. While he treated them with great tenderness, he did not suffer sin upon them, but detected, and pointedly reproved them for their unbelief, their prejudices, and their contentions.

6. He was a most condescending and patient teacher. He condescended to instruct the meanest of the people. In this, as well as in other respects, he supported the character given of Messiah in ancient prophecy. Hence he adduces this, to the messengers of John, as a proof of his Messiahship. "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and *the poor have* the gospel preached unto them."

7. His instructions breathed the most ardent zeal for his Father's honour, and the most affectionate regard for his people's salvation. He was actuated by ardent zeal for his Father's honour. When he had spent a whole day without food in teaching the people, "his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat; but he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of." "My meat is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work."

When he cleansed the temple of money-changers, his disciples remembered that it was written of him, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Again, he was actuated by a strong regard to his people's salvation. He was a man of sorrows; and the only occasion on which he is said to have rejoiced, was when the disciples gave in the report of their success in preaching the Gospel. "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." On the other hand, the impenitence of the Jews deeply affected his feeling heart. Hence the tears he shed when he approached Jerusalem: "When he came near, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou at least, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Luke xix. 41, 42.

8. His instructions came with irresistible power upon the minds of men. This remark applies not only to their saving effects upon the minds of those who believed, but also to

the mere rational convictions produced by them upon the minds of many who continued in unbelief. He detected the most secret plots of his enemies, and solved the most intricate questions proposed to him in order to ensnare him. Thus, when the Pharisees put the question to him, "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not?" his answer displayed such consummate wisdom and prudence, as filled them with shame and confusion. "Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites! show me the tribute-money; and they brought unto him a penny. And he said unto them, whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he, render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's. When they heard these words they marvelled, and left him, and went their way. Mat. xxii. 17—22.

With respect to those who were saved, his words were "with power" for their *conviction.* They found his word to be quick and powerful, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. What a discovery did the woman of Samaria obtain of the evils of her heart, and the profligacy of her past life,

from our Lord's discourse to her at Jacob's well! "Come," said she, "see a man that told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?" They were also with power for their *saving illumination and conversion.* Though the want of apparent success as a preacher seems to have been a part of our Lord's humiliation, yet no inconsiderable number were, by his personal ministry, turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God; and these could tell that the words which he spoke were "spirit and life."

SECTION VII.

THE EXTENT OF OUR LORD'S COMMISSION WITH REGARD TO ITS OBJECTS; AND ITS VARIOUS RESULTS.

In regard to the extent of his prophetical commission, with respect to its objects, it may be observed in general, that our Lord came to instruct fallen men, and not fallen angels. Though we are not warranted to assert that our Lord's commission extended to all mankind, or that all mankind have in every age had even an obscure revelation of the plan of mercy; yet the objection that this plan is unworthy of God, from

the revelation of it being confined within such narrow limits, has less weight than some have supposed. Though this, as well as many other things connected with the providence of God, must be referred to divine sovereignty, yet it will be found, that the *moral cause* why comparatively few of our race have hitherto enjoyed the Gospel, at least in its purity, is, their own hatred of the light, and their aversion to come under its influence. This will appear from the following remarks:

1. At two periods the whole of mankind were favoured with the revelation of the plan of salvation. They were so in the family of Adam. The plan of mercy was revealed to him, and to his wife, in the first promise; a threatening, indeed, to the serpent, but a promise to the woman and her seed. The circumstances in which this promise was given contributed greatly to render the knowledge of it permanent in Adam's family.

But the whole human race again enjoyed the light of supernatural revelation in the family of Noah. Before the flood he was "a preacher of righteousness," which supposes his acquaintance with the first promise; and God's covenant with him after the flood not

only reduplicated upon that promise, but served greatly to illustrate and confirm it.

In both these cases the same cause is to be assigned for the loss of the knowledge of God. Men hated the light, and, hating it themselves, they neglected the means, even then in their power, of transmitting the knowledge of it to their children.

2. When the knowledge of the plan of mercy communicated to our first parents, and afterwards more fully to Noah, was nearly lost among their degenerate offspring, God called Abraham, gave him a new and enlarged exhibition of his covenant of promise, and, under the charter of that promise, erected his church in his family, for preserving alive the knowledge of supernatural religion "until the time of reformation." It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose that the promise, and the special privileges connected with it, were intended exclusively, during that period, for the benefit of the Abrahamic family. Provision was made for the admission of the Gentiles also to the same privileges, on condition of their submission to circumcision and a ceremonial ritual—the same terms on which they were enjoyed by the descendants of Abraham.

In various ways, our Lord from age to age, taught to different nations the true knowledge of God. But men "did not like to retain God in their knowledge." At length he came in the flesh and wondrously revealed God's mind and will, not only by his personal ministry, but also by giving some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.

Having made these general remarks, we proceed to observe more particularly,

1. That our Lord instructs all mankind externally, who are favoured with supernatural revelation. The word read or preached is the grand means of instruction, so that wherever the word comes, or wherever the dispensation of the gospel is enjoyed, thither Christ comes to instruct men in those things that belong to their eternal peace. He is, in an especial manner, the prophet of the church, as her salvation is the grand end proposed by his prophetical commission. But it would be a great mistake to affirm, that his instructions are to be confined to the church in her organized state. The gospel is to be preached to all nations as the means of God's appointment for gathering sinners into the church; they are

therefore supposed to be not only the objects of his external teaching, but even the subjects of his saving instruction before they enter her fellowship. Into whatever country the ambassadors of peace enter, and proclaim the good tidings of salvation, the kingdom of God is come into that country; and into whatever city they enter, the kingdom of God is come into that city; and into whatever house they enter, salvation is come into that house. It is very true, that there may be many in that country or city, and some even in that house, who are never properly brought under the influence of the gospel; but if they have heard of it, and have ready access to it, they have themselves to blame, if they continue ignorant of it; and they will be treated by the great prophet of the church as gospel despisers. See Matt. x. 11—15; and John iii. 19, 20.

2. Our Lord instructs some not only by his word, but also by his Spirit.

The word of Christ, whether read or preached, possesses a special fitness as a means for leading mankind to the knowledge of the truth; but owing to the natural blindness and ignorance of their hearts, they cannot discern or appreciate the excellence and suitableness

of the objects presented to them in the word. These are spiritual; "but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The understanding is not only incapable of discerning these things in their true light, but the will and affections being wholly engrossed with the honours, profits, and pleasures of the world, are strongly opposed to them. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." These mighty obstacles to a saving acquaintance with the truth as it is in Jesus, can only be removed by supernatural influence; and hence the necessity of the saving instruction of the Spirit of Christ. He leads the followers of Christ into all truth—he takes of the things of Christ and showeth them unto us. He is the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and all that we know or can know savingly of God and of divine things, must be traced to his illuminating influence. 1 Thess. i. 5.

We now proceed to speak of the various results of our Lord's instructions.

But before entering upon their spiritual results, it may be observed in general, that our Lord's instructions have had a beneficial influence upon the character and happiness of society at large, independently of the consideration of their spiritual effects and consequences. This deserves notice.

Supernatural revelation is a remedial system to society at large; it has contributed more by its direct or indirect influence to the elevation of the human mind—to the civilization of barbarous nations—to the improvement of their government, laws, and institutions—to the general amelioration of the state of society, and to the advancement of public morals, than all the discoveries of human science and the power of the civil arm combined, either in ancient or modern times.

We now proceed to consider more particularly the spiritual results of our Lord's instructions both in the case of those who are saved, and in the case of those who perish.

1. With respect to those who are saved, our Lord's instructions prove the wisdom of God, and the power of God, for their conversion, and for building them up in holiness till they arrive at perfection. When he com-

mences his work of instruction, he finds this class in the same state of ignorance, enmity, and obstinacy with others—"having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God by the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts;" and having their whole attention engrossed with the honours, profits, and pleasures of the world, to the total neglect of those things that belong to their eternal welfare. Or, if some of them are of a more serious cast of mind, he finds them filled with deep rooted prejudices against the plan of salvation by grace, and building their hope of acceptance with God on the sandy foundation of their own righteousness. But the change produced by his saving instructions is of the most striking character. They are aroused from their state of gross indifference about the things of God, and their total insensibility to their own spiritual condition, and brought to exclaim with the gaoler, "What shall I do to be saved?" They are not only driven from their carnal confidence of obtaining happiness in the enjoyment of the perishing things of this world, but brought off from their dependence on their own works for salvation, and shut up to the

faith of pardon and acceptance with God by grace, as it reigns through imputed righteousness. All this is effected by means of the law, accompanied with the gracious calls and free offers of the gospel, brought home with power upon the mind by the Spirit of Christ. "His arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies, whereby the people fall under him." "Through the law they become dead to the law, that they may live unto God." A thorough change of heart and life is produced upon those who are brought under the saving influence of our Lord's instructions. Once they were darkness, but now they are light in the Lord, and walk as children of the light and of the day; once they were enemies to God in their hearts, and no less opposed to the grace of God than to the law of God, but now the enmity of their hearts is subdued, and sweetly constrained by the love of God towards them through Christ Jesus, they give him love for love. Once they were the slaves of Satan, and the devoted servants of sin; but now, being made free from sin, they have their fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life. Once "they yielded their members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin;" now "they yield

themselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and their members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Once their affections were wholly set upon carnal and sensual objects, and these were the objects of their main pursuit; now, being risen with Christ, they seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Once they could not look forward to a future state without alarm, and to gain temporary ease they endeavoured to banish from their minds the thoughts of death and judgment, by engaging more earnestly in worldly pursuits, by fleeing into vain company, and perhaps by rushing into scenes of riot and dissipation; but now, blessed with the hope of a happy immortality, they have their conversation in heaven, from whence also they look for the Saviour, even the Lord Jesus Christ; and under the influence of this hope they give all diligence, in the use of every appointed means, to be found of him in peace, and without spot, and blameless, at his coming. How wonderful the change! "Old things have passed away, and, behold, all things are become new."

2. With respect to those who perish, the

contempt of our Lord's instructions greatly aggravates their sin now, and in the end will bring upon them accumulated and inevitable destruction. Christ, as an instructer, finds all our fallen race, as we have seen already, in the same state of guilt and depravity; but while his instructions, by being accompanied with the power of his Spirit, are the means of reclaiming some from the error of their ways, they are the occasion of hardening others in a course of folly and wickedness. Every discovery which God is pleased to make of himself to his fallen creatures must have either a mollifying or hardening influence upon their minds; and, in the case of those whose hearts are not renewed by divine grace, the discovery must always prove hardening. They view God as an enemy, and the dread of him as an enemy and avenger produces slavish fear, and slavish fear genders hatred, and the more fully and clearly the object we hate is brought under our view, the more powerful the operation of aversion in the mind to that object. Paul felt this, with regard to God and the spirituality of his law, previous to his conversion. The law of God, which condemns every sin, and which is a transcript of

God's own moral image, was, when brought home with power upon his conscience, the occasion of irritating instead of subduing his corruptions. Rom. vii. 8.

But the carnal mind is not less opposed to the grace of God than to the law of God. The freedom and sovereignty of God's grace are peculiarly offensive to the natural pride of intellect and supposed moral worth, to be found in the breast of every child of fallen Adam; accordingly, under the power of the pride and legality of the heart, the sinner meets the invitations of mercy through a crucified Saviour, in the gospel, with strong aversion. 1 Cor. i. 23; and 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.

As the sinner wholly under the power of sin meets the offers of grace and mercy with strong opposition, and must continue to do so, unless the enmity of his mind be subdued, so by every new act of positive unbelief the heart becomes more hardened as it tends to cherish the pride of the heart, and to increase its enmity to God. Hence the Spirit of God makes *unbelief* and the *hardening* of the heart against the voice of God, terms of similar import. Heb. iii. 7, 8.

As the sin of the despisers of the gospel is

accompanied with special aggravations, so their punishment, if they continue in unbelief, will be great in proportion. Hence the final doom of those who reject the gospel is described as the most awful in the penal code of heaven. "This is *the* condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." John iii. 19. We are told that those who have sinned without the written law will perish without law; but a still more terrible doom awaits those who have not only sinned against the revealed law of God, but have poured contempt upon the gospel of his Son. It will be more tolerable in the day of judgment for the heathen than for them. "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you." Matt. xi. 20—22.

We shall only add, that the destruction of

those who reject the gospel must be inevitable. The dispensation of the gospel is the last and the most powerful dispensation of means provided by God for the recovery of fallen men, and if this be neglected, their case must be indeed hopeless. For those who reject the sacrifice of Christ, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin; and for those who reject God's calls in the gospel, accompanied with the strivings of the Spirit, to turn to him and live, there remain no more overtures of grace and mercy. Heb. x. 26.

We now proceed to consider the results of our Lord's instructions, as they respect the glory of God. In general, he receives a revenue of glory and honour from the administration of his Son, as the great prophet of the church. At present we would confine the attention of our readers to the development of the divine character and attributes, by the various results of our Lord's prophetic administration, in them that are saved and in them that perish.

1. In the case of both, there is a rich display of divine forbearance or long-suffering. The forbearance of God is exercised, first, in suspending the execution of the penal sentence

of his law upon transgressors, in the present life, for a longer or shorter period. He bears long with individuals and bodies corporate, after they have gone a great length in wickedness.

Again, divine forbearance, as exercised towards our fallen race, implies not only the suspension of punishment for a season, but also the furnishing of its objects with moral means, adapted, from their own nature, if not to lead them to that repentance which is unto life, at least, to restrain their wickedness, and leave them inexcusable; and it is in proportion to the nature and extent of the means of moral and religious reformation enjoyed, that God's forbearance derives a rich revenue of praise and honour from the prophetical administration of his Son. This is the richest dispensation of means for reclaiming mankind that ever God did or will confer on men.

2. In both cases there is also a rich display of divine sovereignty. The sovereignty of God is that right which he hath from his absolute supremacy to do whatever he pleaseth, independently of any thing in his creatures. God, however, is a holy, wise, and just sovereign; and though he does according to his

will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, yet in all his volitions and actions, his sovereignty is regulated by a regard to the *rectitude of his nature.* God's sovereignty entered deeply into his purpose from everlasting as it respected the final state of his rational creatures. This purpose, as it regarded the apostate part of the intelligent creatures, viewed them all as fallen and on a level, as exposed to his wrath and curse; but no other reason can be assigned why God passed by the angels who kept not their first estate, and set his electing love upon fallen men; or why he elected some of our fallen race to everlasting life, and to the enjoyment of all the means leading to it, and left others to perish in their sins, than this, "So it seemed good in his sight."

We notice the following particulars:

First, divine sovereignty is strikingly displayed in the distribution of the means of grace.

We have already seen that at two periods God favoured all mankind with these means, but that the knowledge of them was soon lost through their carelessness and aversion to the truth. At present our attention is to be turn-

ed to the sovereignty of God as displayed in restoring these means to families and nations in which the knowledge of them had been extinguished.

For examples we might refer to the calling of Abraham, an Ammonite, married to a Hittite; to the calling of Israel out of Egypt; and to the calling of the Gentiles; in all of which God illustrated his own sovereignty in an adorable manner. "I will, (says he,) have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

We shall only add here, that divine sovereignty appears in withdrawing the means of grace from, as well as in conferring them upon a people; but in this case it is always accompanied with a display of divine justice. The moral cause of their removal is the unbelief of those who enjoyed them. God does not love putting away. It is not till an enchurched people have deliberately and obstinately rejected the counsel of God against themselves, that God casts them off from being his people.

Again, divine sovereignty is strikingly displayed in the different results of these means with regard to individuals.

In the same family, where the children of the same parents had the same religious instruction and example, we find Esau turning out a profane person, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright, while his younger brother Jacob had power with God, and prevailed in his wrestling with the angel for the blessing. This can only be accounted for in the way that the Spirit of God accounts for it, by referring it to divine sovereignty in withholding special grace, and conferring it at pleasure. See Rom. ix. 11, 16. In the same religious assembly, and under the same dispensation of the Gospel, some receive the Gospel-report to the saving of their souls, and others reject it to their eternal ruin; while it proves to the former the savour of life unto life, it proves to the latter the savour of death unto death; and this can be accounted for only on the same principle. It is grace, sovereign and efficacious grace, that makes the distinction.

We shall only add, that while divine sovereignty knows no reason without God himself, yet all its acts are in strict accordance with immutable justice. In conferring special grace upon them who are saved, his justice loses none of its honours, for all its claims upon them for

satisfaction for sin were fully answered by their surety: "God is just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus;" and in withholding special grace from them who perish, God does them no wrong. It would have been just in him to have withheld that grace from the whole of our fallen race; therefore, in conferring it on some, he does no injustice to others from whom it is withheld; yea, this last class never sincerely wished it, else they would have sought it, and had they sought it in the way prescribed by God, they would have obtained it. The fact is, that those who perish under a dispensation of the means of grace, perish on account of their contempt of that grace, "they *will not* come to Christ that they may have life."

3. In the case of those who perish in their unbelief, God's justice will be magnified, and the power of his judicial anger displayed in their condign punishment. Every transgression of God's law, natural or revealed, exposes the sinner to God's wrath and curse—"The wages of sin is death." "Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." But as there are some sins, which in them-

selves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others, so they must expose those guilty of them to a higher degree of punishment; and our object at present is to show that unbelief, when persevered in, under a rich dispensation of grace, is the most aggravated sin that can be committed; and that consequently it must expose the unbeliever to the most severe punishment. It is a sin committed against great light—not merely against the law of nature, but against the written law—not merely against the law of God, but against the Gospel of Christ. It is a sin which strikes against God in a special and peculiar manner. Every sin is committed against God, as it is a contempt of his authority as a lawgiver; but unbelief is not only a contempt of his authority as a lawgiver, but of the riches of his grace as a Saviour—it not only pours contempt upon the grace of God, but tramples under foot the Son of God—it not only tramples under foot the Son of God, but it also does despite to the Spirit of God. But it is not only one simple act; in many cases it is a long course of hostility against God under a rich dispensation of means adapted in their own nature to lead the

unbeliever to repentance; and this of itself greatly aggravates his sin, and must, if mercy prevent not, greatly increase his punishment. As money at interest loses nothing by the prolongation of the term of payment, since it accumulates in proportion to the period payment is delayed, so, in proportion to the term of divine forbearance toward the unbeliever, must be the degree of his punishment in the end. Every year, every day, yea every hour that he is spared while continuing to pour contempt upon the rich overtures of divine grace and mercy, "he treasures up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

4. In the case of those who are saved under a gospel dispensation, we have the richest display of the love, grace, and mercy of God towards our fallen family. God's special goodness, considered as it existed in the divine purpose, is commonly in Scripture called his *love*—as manifested in conferring spiritual blessings upon his creatures, viewed as undeserving, it is denominated his *grace* or *free favour*—and as it terminates on them as ill-deserving and miserable, and is displayed in extricating them from their miseries, it is call-

ed his *mercy;* but, as if all these terms, so full of benignity, were not sufficient to express the special goodness of God with regard to our race, it is also called his kindness, which conducts us to the very heart of God, or intimates, that in doing us good, he doeth it with his whole heart, and with his whole soul. But all this unparalleled grace and kindness is brought into view under our Lord's administration, and by means of his glorious gospel. In its supernatural doctrines we are told, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" and that, "God sent not his Son to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."

2. The results of our Lord's instructions also serve to bring into view his official glory, or the efficiency and energy of all his offices. The gospel does this doctrinally, as he is the great subject of it. The whole gospel respects either directly or indirectly his person, offices, grace, and fulness. But at present we are to consider them as brought into view by their effects, in the salvation of his redeemed people. There was a glory connected with the decease

our Lord accomplished at Jerusalem as a priest, which, in many respects, exceeds the glory connected with the calling of the universe into existence. As none but God could create the world, so none but God could redeem the church. The purchase of the church was the most wonderful effect of the grace, the wisdom, and the power of God. But at the time it happened its real glory was veiled. To outward view it had no glory.

But Christ's instructions as a prophet, by their saving effects upon the minds of men, and their general influence upon the moral character of society, also bring into view his energies as a king. In the application of salvation, the exercise of our Lord's prophetical office, and the exercise of his kingly office, are combined. "His word is with power." And the power of Christ as a king is put forth in a variety of ways. Before the sinner can be rescued from the dominion of Satan, by whom he has been led captive at his will, Satan must be bound. Christ, the stronger man, binds Satan the strong man, and spoils him of his goods. But the power of Christ must not only be put forth upon Satan, but also upon the sinner himself. He is not only a captive, but a

willing captive; and the pride, enmity, and carnality of his heart must be subdued, before he desert the camp of Satan, and come over to the standard of the Redeemer. And this is the effect of the power of Christ: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," &c. Ps. cx. 3. Wherever the word of Christ as a prophet proves successful, therefore, for the conversion of sinners, and the building up of saints in their most holy faith, his power as a king is gloriously brought into view. Hence the descriptions given of him as a prophet are uniformly combined with attributes that belong to him more especially as a king.

But we are not to confine our attention to the grace of God as exhibited in the supernatural doctrines, free offers, and calls of the gospel; we must attend also to the power of that grace displayed in them who believe, in turning them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. It is power of no ordinary kind, and even no ordinary display of divine power, but such a display of it as corresponds with the exceeding greatness of that power manifested in raising Christ from the dead.

The trophies of God's converting and sav-

ing grace have often, prior to their conversion, been persons of most profligate character; or, if of more sober habits, persons whose hearts seemed to be steeled with the most deep-rooted prejudices against the truth as it is in Jesus. But the grace of God has proved all-powerful for "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and for bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

SECTION VIII.

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE PRIESTLY OFFICE OF CHRIST.

THE priesthood of Christ holds a prominent place in the plan of mediation. Every thing connected with his priestly office has a claim to our particular attention.

1. The priesthood of Christ has God for its primary object. In this respect his sacerdotal differs from his prophetical and kingly offices. These terminate, in their exercise, upon sinners, in turning them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God; but, as a priest, he is ordained for men

in things pertaining to God. It is as a priest he made satisfaction for sin, and this satisfaction was made to God, the party offended; it is as a priest that he intercedes for sinners, on the ground of his sacrifice; and it is with God that he intercedes: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father."

2. Our Lord's priesthood, with respect to its origin, is sovereign, and yet necessary. It supposes a purpose of mercy towards our fallen race, and is to be considered as a means devised by infinite wisdom, for carrying that purpose into effect; but the purpose itself springs from divine sovereignty. For any thing we know, God might have permitted the whole human family to perish in their sins, as he did fallen angels; and, in this case, there would have been no occasion for priesthood. On the supposition, however, of a purpose of mercy, priesthood was necessary to carry it into effect. This could only be done, consistently with the honour of God's law and moral administration, by a sacrifice for sin, and the bringing in of an everlasting righteousness; but these could only be effected by one invested with the priestly office.

3. Our Lord's priesthood took its rise from

the divine purpose and covenant. The purpose of mercy is ascribed primarily to the Father, as the first in the order of personal subsistence and operation in Trinity; and this purpose had a special reference to the priesthood of Christ, as the means by which it was to be carried into effect. We are redeemed with "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. See also Isaiah liii. 10; and Heb. x. 7.

4. This purpose, in its covenant form, as revealed in the scriptures of the Old Testament, contains our Lord's call or commission. The promises and predictions of the Old Testament have a special reference to his priesthood, and to the work which he was to accomplish in that character. The moral law, as promulgated from Sinai, accompanied with its awful sanctions, contained the rule of his obedience, and the penalty to which he was to be subjected as our surety. The order of his priesthood was prefigured by that of Melchisedek, and its various functions by the ritual prescribed to the priests of the order of Aaron.

These served, in the mean time, to direct the hopes of the Old Testament worshippers forward to the coming Messiah, and to shut them up to the faith of salvation through the blood of his cross; but another end proposed by them, was, to unfold our Lord's call and commission as a priest. His commission was, indeed, the matter of a divine purpose from everlasting; but, considered in this light, it was simply the object of his knowledge as God. He was, however, to execute his priestly office in his *assumed nature;* and it was, therefore, necessary that it should be brought under the view of that nature, which was done by special revelation in the Old Testament. Accordingly, when entering upon his work, we find him referring to that sacred book as containing his call: "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me," &c.

SECTION IX.

THE SURETISHIP OF CHRIST.

Our Lord's suretiship is essential to his priesthood and demands special consideration.

A surety is one who engages to pay a debt, or to suffer a penalty incurred by another. Thus, Paul offered to become surety to Philemon for any debt that might be owing to him by Onesimus. "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; I, Paul, have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it." Judah, in like manner, offered himself as a surety for Benjamin, to suffer the penalty supposed to be incurred by him: "Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad, a bond servant to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brethren." By our violation of the first covenant in Adam, and our own personal transgressions, we had forfeited our title to life, and incurred the penalty of death; and our Lord Jesus Christ, as the surety of the new covenant, engaged, by his obedience unto death, to redeem us from the curse of the law, and to recover our mortgaged inheritance. "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." Heb. vii. 22. We are aware that the adversaries of the atonement insist, that the term surety, as here applied to Christ, is to be understood in a lax sense, as referring to his fidelity as a witness for God.

But, were he called a surety in this sense, it would refer to his prophetical, and not to his priestly office; whereas, it is evident from the context, that his suretiship regards his priesthood. It is in consequence of his being made a priest by an oath, that he is the surety of a better testament. But, as we have seen, the priesthood of Christ has God for its object: he is not a surety for God to us, but a surety for us to God. The oath of God is a sufficient guarantee on his part for the fulfilment of the promissory part of the covenant; but as we could not fulfil its condition ourselves, we needed a surety. We are also aware, that those who plead for a more general atonement, as opposed to a satisfaction in kind to the law and justice of God, adopt the word *substitute* instead of *surety*, to denote the relation in which our Lord stood to those for whom he suffered. But we apprehend that term does not fully express that relation. He acted and suffered in their room, not only as a *substitute* appointed by God, but as a *surety* bound by his own engagement, to fulfil the law in their stead.

The suretiship of our Lord implies the imputation of our sins to him and the impu-

tation of his righteousness to us. On this subject we would explain—

First, that the enlightened advocates for the doctrine of imputation do not maintain that the personal actions of one being may, by imputation, become the personal actions of another being: what is pleaded for, is, that the guilt or righteousness of the actions of one being may be reckoned to the account of another. Secondly, this is not pleaded for in regard to acts of obedience or disobedience to the law in its natural state and as performed by persons acting in a private capacity; but only in regard to acts of obedience or disobedience to the law in a covenant form; and as performed by persons acting in a representative capacity. It is the guilt of Adam's first sin, committed by him as a public representative in the covenant of works, that is imputed to his posterity, and not the guilt of his future sins, after he had ceased to act in that character. In like manner, the guilt of our sins was imputed to Christ, as the surety of the covenant of grace, that he might bear their punishment from God; and it is his righteousness, as a surety, that is imputed to us for our justification.

The word impute invariably signifies to

reckon to the account of a person, or to charge to his account. It is a judicial term, and when used with reference to guilt or desert, it expresses the act of a judge charging that guilt upon a person in order to punishment.

When we say that sin was imputed to Christ as our surety, we mean only that the *guilt* of it was imputed.

The guilt of sin is the legal obligation it lays the sinner under to suffer the punishment due to his crimes, and the punishment of sin is death. But it is impossible to account, in a satisfactory manner, for the death of infants, who are never capable of personal transgression, unless by admitting, that the guilt contracted by Adam's first sin is charged upon his posterity. This is the way in which the apostle Paul accounts for it: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: for, until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."

Some, indeed, reject the word impute. They associate with it the idea of such a transfer as actually *imparts* guilt, and does not merely *impute* it. But their offence at the word impute is wholly unnecessary.

When the word *impute* is applied to persons in themselves criminal, it does not signify the conveyance of guilt to the criminal, but only the judicial charge of it upon him. This is evident from the example of Shimei. He had cursed David, and he was conscious of the *guilt* contracted by the action, as well as the *criminality* of the action; and his consciousness of guilt, as we have seen, dictated his request to David, "Let not my Lord impute sin unto me." He could not therefore, be understood as requesting the king not to impart the guilt of the action to him which he had contracted by his own criminal conduct. What he requested obviously was, that the king would not judicially charge him with it in order to his suffering punishment. That this was his meaning, is obvious from the king's reply in the way of granting his request. "The king said unto Shimei, thou shalt not die; and the king sware unto him." Now, what is pleaded for is, that, in the same sense,

our guilt was imputed to Christ, not by *imparting it* to him so as to make it his in the same sense as it was ours, but by judicially *charging it to his account*, in order to punishment. These observations are the more necessary, as some of the friends of the doctrine of our Lord's suretiship have stumbled at the word *impute*, as applied to the charging of our guilt to his account, from the idea that it implies a change of personal character. But this is a mistake; the word impute implies no such change. Had David imputed iniquity to Shimei, he had not made his personal character either the worse or the better; but merely charged his guilt upon him in order to his being put to death. In like manner, when our guilt was imputed to Christ, or laid upon him, it did not change his personal character. When bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, he was still "the *just* suffering for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

We are aware that it will be objected, that the case of Shimei and that of Christ are not parallel. Shimei had personal guilt, and had David imputed iniquity to him, he would have judged of him as he really was—a person deserving to die; but for God to have imputed

guilt to Christ who had done no iniquity, would have been to judge of things as they were not. This brings us to the main point in this important question. Though they are not in all respects parallel, yet, in both cases, the thing imputed, or supposed to be imputed, is guilt, or the obligation to suffer the punishment due to sin; and in both cases, the parties are supposed to have incurred the obligation prior to the act of imputation; but they widely differ as to the manner in which it was incurred. In the case of Shimei, it was contracted by his own criminal conduct; in the case of Christ, it was incurred by suretiship. When, therefore, God judicially charged his own Son with our guilt, in order to his suffering the punishment due to our sins, he did not judge of things as they were not; for, by the Son's own voluntary engagement, he had incurred the obligation to suffer that punishment.

But to render the matter, if possible, more plain, it may be observed, that guilt, or the obligation to suffer the punishment due to sin, may be incurred in three ways. First, by personal transgression, as in the case of Shimei, when he cursed David. Secondly, by

the sin contracted in the person of a representative, as in the case of all Adam's natural posterity. Thirdly, by a person voluntarily engaged to pay a debt, or to suffer a penalty in the room of another. In this last case, the party, though personally considered innocent of the crime by which the guilt was contracted, is amenable to the law for satisfaction for that crime, on the ground of his own engagement; and the judge in charging the guilt of the crime upon him, in order to punishment, proceeds on the ground of that engagement. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the establishment of the covenant of redemption, came under an engagement to bear the punishment of our iniquities. That engagement was to be fulfilled, and could only be fulfilled upon his assuming our nature; and the moment he assumed that nature, he came into a state of actual suretiship, and God, in the character of a judge, upon the footing of his engagement to make his soul an offering for our sin, charged him with the whole of our criminal debt, or exacted from him the punishment of our iniquities.

From these remarks it will appear that it is not the *crime*, but the *guilt* contracted by the crime, that is charged to the account of a per-

son by the act of imputation; that it does not transfer guilt so as to alter personal character, but supposes the guilt already incurred by personal transgression, by sin committed in the person of a representative, or by suretiship; and that imputation means the judicial charge of the guilt incurred in one or other of these ways upon a person, in order to his suffering punishment.

We shall only add, that the doctrine pleaded for does not depend upon the application of the word *impute* in any particular instance. That Christ was charged in law with our sins, in consequence of his own eternal undertaking, that he might bear their punishment from God, is a doctrine which runs through the whole of supernatural revelation. It remains, therefore, that we proceed more particularly to state the doctrine of our Lord's suretiship, and show its consistency with the moral character and government of God.

1. Our Lord was a surety in type, and in respect of the efficacy of his sacrifice from the period of the first revelation of the covenant of redemption. His suretiship respects the fulfilment of the condition of that covenant, to make way for the accomplishment of its pro-

mise in the salvation of his people. Hence it was necessary, that the exhibition of his death in type should be coeval with the promulgation of the promise of the covenant. This promise was revealed immediately after the fall in God's address to the serpent—an address containing, indeed, a declaration of ruin to the serpent, but a promise of victory, over all the power and policy of hell, to the woman and her seed. Gen. iii. 15. But this and every subsequent revelation of the promise was accompanied with a symbol of the future sacrifice of Christ. Hence the origin of the rite of sacrifice.

This rite was observed for ages. But it always pointed to him, who was "the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world." The idea of substitution was always prominent in all bloody sacrifices. It is also proper to observe that our Lord was a surety under the ancient economy, not in type only, but also with respect to the efficacy of his sacrifice. By that sacrifice which he offered in the end of ages, he expiated the sins committed by his people, not only under the second, but also under the first dispensation: "He is the mediator of the New Testament, that by

means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Heb. ix. 15.

2. Our Lord came into a condition of actual suretiship when he assumed our nature. He had voluntarily engaged from everlasting to obey the precept and endure the penalty of the law in the room of his people and in their nature; and the moment he assumed that nature, the justice of God exacted from him, upon the footing of that engagement, the whole of their criminal debt. He was made of a woman, and made under the law by a supernatural constitution, in the room of them who were under the law, and for the express purpose of their redemption. Gal. iv. 4. He was made under the penalty of the law by having the whole guilt of his people, contracted in their first federal head and in their own persons, imputed to him in the sense already explained.

Our Lord's suretiship was not confined to the penalty of the law, but extended also to its precept. As he was made under the penalty of the law, to redeem his people from condemnation, so he was made under its pre-

cept, to procure their title to life. On this subject the Scriptures are very explicit. Rom. v. 17.

3. Satisfaction by suretiship is no way inconsistent with the claims of God's law, nor with the honour of the lawgiver. It is readily granted that, in the ordinary course of divine justice, every man must die for his own sin; but this does not prevent God by an act of sovereignty, from admitting satisfaction to the claims of his violated law by a surety in the room of transgressors. This will appear first from the formal nature of sin on the one hand, and of divine punishments on the other. That sin is contrary to the purity of the divine nature must be admitted, but, formally considered, it is not an injury done to God absolutely, but in the moral relations in which he stands to his rational creatures as their Lawgiver and Judge. His independence places him beyond the reach of injury, absolutely considered, from any of his creatures. As their goodness cannot extend to him, so their wickedness cannot affect his essential blessedness. Job xxxv. 6–8.

Formally considered, sin is not, with respect to God, of the nature of a personal in-

jury, but an offence against his law and government. "He that committeth sin transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law." As sin is not to be viewed, in regard to God, as a private offence, so divine punishment is not to be considered as an act of private revenge, but as an act of retributive justice for the vindication of law and government. Were sin to be viewed, as committed against God, as a private injury, and divine punishment as of the nature of private revenge, there would be no room for satisfaction by substitution; for revenge will rest satisfied with nothing short of the ruin of its object. But since sin is an offence against the law and government of God, and punishment, under his administration, is for the vindication of the honour of his law and government, if this end of punishment can be gained even more effectually by satisfaction from a surety than it could possibly be by the eternal destruction of the sinner, the doctrine of satisfaction by substitution must be compatible with the honour of God's law and moral administration.

Secondly, This will further appear from the place which punishment holds in the moral

administration of God. It holds the place, not of an *end*, but of a *means*. God never inflicts punishment merely for the purpose of rendering his creatures miserable. No: "He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked." The end proposed by him is the vindication of the honour of his law and moral administration. If the end of penal infliction on the part of God were the misery of the sinner, it could not be gained by the death of a substitute. In this case it behoved the sinner to suffer the penal consequences of his own sin. But as it has for its own end the vindication of God's honour as a lawgiver, and as this end may be gained more effectually by the death of a surety, than by the destruction of the sinner, the doctrine of satisfaction for sin by the death of a surety, must be perfectly consistent with God's moral honour.

Thirdly, It appears further, from the nature of divine rewards, as annexed to obedience. As divine punishments have for their object the manifestation of God's judicial displeasure at sin, so divine rewards must have for their object the display of his approbation of righteousness; but, if the one object may be gained by vicarious sufferings, the other, upon

the same principle, may be gained by vicarious obedience. Besides, there is less difficulty in the one case than in the other, from the nature of divine rewards. God has a right to the services of his rational creatures, independently of any promise of future reward, the annexing of the promise of such a reward to obedience must, therefore, be an act of sovereign goodness; but the same sovereign goodness which attaches the promise of reward to the obedience of the natural subject of the law, may extend it to the obedience of a substitute regularly constituted; especially when by his obedience not merely *equal*, but even *superior* provision is made for vindicating the claims of the law and the honour of the lawgiver, as in the case of our Lord's substitution. By his obedience unto death the law is not only fulfilled, but "magnified and made honourable."

4. Though the honour of the law admits of satisfaction by a surety, that surety must be regularly appointed by the lawgiver who possesses the sole right of admitting the obedience and death of a surety in the room of transgressors; he must possess personal qualifications suited to his work, and be so identifi-

ed with those in whose room he is to act, as to be considered one with them in law. Such a surety is Jesus. He did not take to himself the honour of priesthood without a divine call, but was called of God as was Aaron. He possessed all those personal qualifications suited to his work as a high priest. Whatever prophecy or law had declared to be either essential or proper to the efficacy of Christ's priesthood was found abundantly, and most manifestly, in our Lord. "We beheld him full of grace and truth."

SECTION X.

THE HUMBLE STATE OF CHRIST CONNECTED WITH HIS SURETISHIP.

As our Lord, in the character of a surety, was to act in our room, so it was necessary that in all things, sin excepted, he should come into that low condition into which we are reduced by our fall. "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Heb. ii. 17. The fol-

lowing things claim our particular attention in illustrating this part of our subject.

1. It was not only necessary to the discharge of his work that he should assume *our nature*, but that he should take it in a *low condition* as to external circumstances. Our blessed Lord was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, before he was made in the likeness of man; and had he not been truly God, he could not have redeemed the church. But it is equally true that one who was simply God could not have redeemed the church. God made the worlds by the word of his power, but the church could not be redeemed by a simple act of divine power. Her redemption could only be effected by death; but one who was simply a divine person could not suffer or die. Hence the necessity of his assuming an inferior nature, in order to his accomplishing the work of our redemption. It was necessary that he should assume not only an *inferior*, but a *human* nature; not merely a nature in all respects like ours, but our nature. His human nature was not, like Adam's, formed of the dust of the ground, but "made of a woman"—"made of the seed of David according to the

flesh." This was necessary, that the law might receive that satisfaction in kind which it required, and from one to whom the right of redemption belonged. That he might be our Redeemer, it was necessary he should be our kinsman—"bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh." "He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Heb. ii. 11.

2. It was also necessary that he should come into the condition of a servant. He who is in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, took upon him the form of a servant. He undertook, from everlasting, to fulfil the claims of the law in our room; but, while only in the form of God, he could not be the subject of law. Besides, the law he came to fulfil was the law human nature was under, and did not attach to him, as our surety, till he assumed our nature. But the moment he came into a condition to satisfy the claims of the law, the justice of God took hold of him as our surety, and exacted from him the full payment of our criminal debt. "He was made of a woman, made under the law."

3. Our Lord also, in his assumed nature, and in the character of a bond-servant, came into a condition of dependence upon the Father in accomplishing the work of our redemption. He is God's servant whom he upholds, his elect in whom his soul delighteth. Isaiah xlii. 1.

4. He took our nature with all its sinless infirmities, and came into a scene of trial and suffering similar to that to which his people, whom he came to redeem, were exposed. He took upon him our mental infirmities, such as fear, sorrow, and grief; and our bodily infirmities, such as hunger, thirst, weariness and liability to death. It was necessary that he should assume our nature with these infirmities, since he was to suffer and die for our redemption. These are the principles of our nature which render us susceptible of suffering, or the avenues through which penal evil assails our frame; so that, unless he had assumed our nature with these infirmities, he could not have endured the curse in our room.

5. Though he took our nature with our physical infirmities and weaknesses, and came into a similar scene of trial, yet he was without sin: "We have not an high priest who

cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Heb. iv. 15. Those who adopt the unscriptural notion that our Lord assumed our nature as fallen and peccable, eagerly resort to this and parallel passages, where Christ is said to be touched with our infirmities, and to be tempted like as we are. It is to guard us against any such unscriptural notion that it is added, "yet without sin."

SECTION XI.

THE FUNCTIONS OF OUR LORD'S PRIESTHOOD.

The services attached to the Levitical priesthood were numerous. The high priest was to offer gifts and sacrifices; to sprinkle the blood as the symbol of intercession; to preside over the whole services of the sanctuary; to deliver the responses of God to the people; to explain the law and decide legal controversies; and to bless the people in the name of the Lord. As some of these had a typical reference to Christ, rather in his prophetical and kingly, than in

his priestly office, we shall confine ourselves to the things peculiar to his priesthood; namely, his obedience, sacrifice, and intercession, together with his presidency over the house of God.

Our Lord's obedience in general.—The writer to the Hebrews tells us, that "every high priest is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer up both gifts and sacrifices." Every sacrifice under the law was an offering; but every offering was not a sacrifice. Sacrifice implies blood-shedding; so that to constitute offering a sacrifice, it was necessary it should be slain; but many of the things presented to God by the Levitical priests were inanimate objects, and, consequently, incapable of suffering death. These were not intended for the purpose of expiation, but as acts of piety towards God and benevolence towards men; and, in so far as they had a typical reference to our Lord's work as a priest, they must have prefigured his obedience to the precept of the law to procure our title to life, and not his satisfaction for sin by his death. Nor is it any thing uncommon in Scripture, for acts of piety and benevolence to be termed gifts and offerings.

The services to be performed by the Gentiles, after the ceremonial law should no longer exist, are so denominated: "For from the rising of the sun, to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. i. 11. Besides, many of the sin-offerings and trespass-offerings that prefigured our Lord's sacrifice for sin, were accompanied with a meat-offering, which was consumed along with them upon the altar, to give them a sweet savour. This, without doubt, had a typical reference to our Lord's obedience, as it ran through the whole of his penal sufferings, and rendered them "a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." Eph. v. 1, 2.

1. Our Lord yielded perfect obedience to the first table of the divine law. As his knowledge of the divine law was free from every kind of misconception, so his acknowledgment of God and his laws and institutions was open, decided, and uniform, in the face of every species of opposition and danger. When only twelve years of age he appeared as a witness

for the truth in the temple, with a boldness and clearness of argument that filled all who heard him with astonishment. When he entered upon his public ministry, the whole of his doctrine was calculated to illustrate the divine character, and to vindicate the divine government. He could appeal to his Father at the close of his ministry: "I have manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world;" and again, "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it." On every occasion he supported the character of a faithful and true witness, and at length sealed his testimony with his blood.

2. His conformity to the second table of the divine law was equally perfect. He discharged every relative duty most exactly.

3. He never did any thing that was morally evil. The best of mere men have had their faults; but he was holy, harmless, and separated from sinners. His gold was without alloy, and his silver without dross. As he never omitted a duty, so he never committed a sin. As his heart was free from malice or deceit, so a malicious or deceitful word never dropped from his lips. "When reviled he reviled not again; and when persecuted he threatened not." He

could challenge his enemies in any instance to convince him of sin; and it was so ordered in the providence of God, that his innocence was vindicated not only by friends but by foes.

4. Our Lord's obedience proceeded from the most pure principles. Had we no other means of estimating his character, we might safely infer the rectitude of his dispositions and principles, from the purity of his life. In no case was ever his doctrine so happily illustrated as by his own conduct: "A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things."

5. It implies no imperfection in our Lord's obedience, that there are certain duties, or modifications of duty, incumbent on us, of which we have no example in the history of his life. This proceeds from two causes. First, from his personal holiness. The law enjoins certain duties on us as fallen creatures, which it would not have exacted from man, had he retained his primitive integrity. Every sinner is bound by the law of God to repent, and to glorify God by confessing his personal transgressions; but Jesus was a just man, and needed no repentance. Secondly, the want of such examples in other instances, is suffi-

ciently accounted for from the peculiar sphere in which he was destined to act, in accomplishing his work.

6. To have just views of our Lord's obedience we must connect it with the dignity of his person. He who honoured the law by his obedience as our surety, is God's fellow. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered." He obeyed the precept and endured the penalty of the law in human nature, but still his obedience was that of a divine person. Though all that he did and suffered was directly and formally the effect of his will as man, yet his whole service originated in his will as God. It was according to his divine will that he engaged to do God's will in man's redemption in the eternal covenant, and it was according to it that he came into our world and took upon him the form of a servant in time. Besides, every act of his will as man, in accomplishing the work given him to do, was accompanied with a corresponding exercise of his will as God, and this diffused infinite value and dignity through the whole of his obedience. The righteousness he wrought out in human nature is the righteousness of God, not

only as devised by God, but as fulfilled by a person who is God, and therefore of infinite value for our justification. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe." Rom. iii. 21, 22.

We proceed now to speak of

The Sacrifice of Christ.—This constituted the principal part of his service as a priest. The first Adam as a covenant representative, had simply to obey the law as unbroken; besides, his covenant obedience, by which he was to give proof of his submission to the whole law, was brought into a narrow compass in the positive precept respecting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; but the case was very different with respect to Christ the second Adam. The law demanded from him as our surety, not only perfect obedience, as the condition of life, to its precept, but also satisfaction for sin incurred by transgression. This is what our Lord emphatically calls the commandment he had received from his Father. John xiv. 31.

The sufferings of Christ as a sacrifice for sin are confined by some to what he endured upon the cross. To this we cannot agree. Though he was a sacrifice especially in his death, yet he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief through life, and all his sufferings through life led to and terminated in his death.

We shall only observe further, before entering upon the more particular consideration of our Lord's sufferings, that he endured all the penal evil contained in the curse, and which those he came to redeem must have suffered, had he not been made a curse for them.

While we insist that our Lord suffered the full amount of the penal evil contained in the curse of the law, it is not however admitted that all the ingredients which will enter into the sufferings of the wicked entered into his sufferings. Many of these do not arise necessarily from the penal sentence of the law, but from the state and character of the sufferers. The workings of the corrupt passions of the heart, such as pride, envy, and malice, are sources of real misery to the wicked in the present life, and they will prove still greater sources of misery to them in a future world;

but this arises from their inherent depravity, and could form no part of the sufferings of the holy Jesus. Remorse will be one bitter ingredient of their misery, but as it arises not from the law, but from the consciousness of personal guilt, and of their being their own destroyers, it could form no part of the sufferings of our Lord, who was always holy, harmless, and separated from sinners. In fine, their sufferings will be eternal, whereas his were only temporary; but this also proceeds not from the law, but from the nature of the sufferers. Sin is an evil of infinite demerit, and as sinners cannot endure infinite punishment in any limited period of duration, their sufferings must be eternal; whereas our Lord's sufferings, though limited as to their duration, were of infinite efficiency for expiating our sins from the dignity of his person.

Having made these general remarks, we now proceed to consider more particularly what our Lord suffered through life and at his death.

1. His sufferings were of great diversity. He suffered in every way that an innocent person could have suffered. He suffered much from the poverty of his condition in the world,

and the privations connected with it. Though he descended from the royal family of David, yet at the time of his birth that family had fallen into great decay, so that his birth was accompanied with circumstances of great external meanness. Mary brought forth her first-born son in a stable, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for him in the inn. As his real mother was a mean woman, so his supposed father was in poor outward circumstances; and this was turned to his reproach by those who formed their estimate of human character from worldly rank and affluence, and not from moral worth. "Is not this," said they, "the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses? and are not his sisters with us?" and they were offended at him. Till he entered upon his public ministry, he seems, from the passage now quoted, to have earned his food, with the sweat of his brow, at the humble occupation of his supposed father, hence called, not the son of the carpenter, but the carpenter; and after he had entered on his ministry, he was subjected to great poverty—being, for the most part, dependent for the necessaries of life upon the hospitality of others. "The foxes," says he,

"have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head."

The blessed Jesus also suffered in his reputation by the most cruel and unmerited reproach. Though holy, harmless, and undefiled, his enemies said, "Behold a wine-bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners!" And although he came to destroy the works of the devil, they ascribed his miracles to Satanic influence.—"He casteth out devils," said they, "by Beelzebub the prince of devils."

The blessed Jesus also endured exquisite torture in his body.

But his most severe sufferings were in his soul. He was always a man of sorrows. The wickedness of mankind was to him a source of continual sorrow; and their misery, even in prospect, pained his feeling heart.

2. He suffered from every quarter from which an innocent person can be supposed to have suffered. He was made a curse for us, and under it he did not only suffer immediately from God, as an offended judge, but from all the creatures of God, whom he was pleased to employ as the instruments of his judicial infliction on account of sin.

He suffered not only from the agency of men, but from the agency of devils. Satan having overcome our first federal head by his temptation, sought by the same means to ruin the surety of the new covenant; but when the prince of this world came, he found nothing in him.

But his most severe sufferings were in his soul from the immediate hand of God; and we now proceed to speak of them particularly, as they enter more especially into his satisfaction for sin, and the matter of his sacrifice as our great High Priest.

1. As the understanding is the leading faculty of the mind, so mental distress is produced by objects of an alarming nature being presented to it. Our Lord, during the whole of his state of humiliation, was under the curse of the broken law; and, from the time that he arrived at the age of discernment, he was always conscious of it. Besides, his painful feeling arising from this consciousness of imputed guilt must have been great in degree, in proportion to his extensive knowledge of the malignity of sin, and its high demerit. This accounts for his being, at every period of his life of humiliation, a man of sorrows. We

often read of his sorrows and of his tears, but only once of his rejoicing in spirit.

2. Besides the knowledge he had of the extent of the penal evil contained in the curse, we are to take into account the power with which that sentence was accompanied on his soul—called in Scripture the power of God's anger, and the fierceness of his wrath, which it was necessary he should feel in its full amount, that he might taste that spiritual death which is the wages of sin. It was not necessary that this power should accompany the sentence of the law in his case at all times, since the value of his sufferings did not depend upon their duration, but arose from the dignity of the sufferer, and his obediential acting under his sufferings; and this accounts for his mental distress not being at all times of the same degree of intensity.

3. It was necessary, however, to make atonement for our sins, that he should endure the power of God's judicial anger in all its extent for a season. This he did endure in the garden of Gethsemane—a scene of mental distress which never had, and never can have a parallel, and which can only be accounted for by admitting that it was produced by im-

mediate infliction on the part of God: "He was stricken, smitten of God and afflicted." God's fierce wrath went over him, his terrors did cut him off. They came round about him like water, they compassed him about together. See also Mark xiv. 33, 34; and Luke xxii. 44.

Our Lord's agony in the garden did not complete his sacrifice, but, without doubt, it constituted a principal part of it. Here was blood-shedding of an extraordinary kind, produced not as on the cross by an external visible cause, but by the secret, yet all-powerful agency of the rectoral Judge of the universe, inflicting upon his own Son the punishment due to our transgressions. This was the sacred fire from heaven that consumed his sacrifice.

But death, which is the wages of sin, includes not only the punishment of *sense*, mental and corporal, but also the punishment of *loss*. This our Lord sustained in all that degree of which his holy soul was capable, and which is in its own nature penal. He did not sustain the loss of God's moral image; for this, in our case, is the consequence of sin, and does not necessarily belong to its punish-

ment. His righteousness in suffering lay in maintaining that image unimpaired and unsullied, and in the full exercise of all its moral energies, amid a scene of unparalleled trial; but he sustained the loss for a season of the sensible manifestations of his Father's love. However, to prevent mistakes, and to set this matter in its true light, let it be observed:

1. That the desertion to which our Lord was subjected, especially on the cross, did not involve in it the smallest abatement of his Father's love to him. On the contrary, Christ says expressly, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again." John x. 17.

2. Nor are we to suppose that, at that trying hour, his Father withheld from him, in his suffering nature, his promised support. Even then he was God's servant whom he upheld—his elect in whom his soul delighted. With him, even then when suffering in weakness, God's hand was established, and his arm did strengthen him.

3. The desertion lay in the total suspension, for a season, both of the sensible manifestation of his Father's love, and of the sensible expe-

rience of his supporting influence. What but the total eclipse of the sun of heavenly consolation could have made the patient Jesus utter that bitter lamentation on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me, and why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?"

4. In order to our having some just view of the intensity of our Lord's sufferings from these causes, we must take into the account his untainted purity, and the supreme delight he had in his Father.

As our Lord's supreme happiness arose from communion with his Father, and the sweet manifestations of his love, so the complete suspension of these, for a season, must have constituted the very essence of mental death.

It was necessary, too, not only that he should suffer, but suffer even unto death. Death was in the cup of suffering given him by his Father, and it behoved him to drink it. Though we do not suppose that our Lord's sufferings at the moment of the separation of his soul from his body were greater than, or even of the same intensity as what he suffered in the garden of

Gethsemane, yet, doubtless, it was the lowest stage of his humiliation, as in his death there was a more public display of God's judicial displeasure at sin, and his determinate purpose to punish it.

We shall now speak of

Our Lord's obedience in offering himself a Sacrifice for Sin.—This was the principal part of his priestly functions, and that which gave value and efficacy to his sufferings unto death for our redemption. His penal sufferings were absolutely necessary—necessary as an expression of God's aversion to moral evil, necessary to the full manifestation of God's inflexible justice—and necessary to vindicate his immutable veracity, pledged in the penal sentence of the law; but it was not his sufferings, however intense, or his death, however ignominious, abstractly considered, that made reconciliation for sin, but his obedience in suffering and dying. Sin is the transgression of the law, but no sufferings can make a reparation to the injured honours of a violated law, except those which are obedientiel; and such were the sufferings of Christ, when he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. We now proceed, therefore, to

illustrate his obedience in offering himself a sacrifice for sin.

1. As a priest, in obedience to his Father's will, he provided a sin-offering for the people.

Under the Levitical priesthood, the greater part of the offerings was provided by the people. This was owing to the imperfection of that priesthood; but our Lord's offering was provided at his own proper expense. True, indeed, his Father prepared a holy human nature for him in his miraculous conception; but that nature became his own by the act of assumption, and, as such, he offered it for our redemption.

2. As a priest, he conducted his offering to the place where it was to be slain in sacrifice. The sacrifices under the law were not to be offered in every place, but only in the place where the Lord should choose to put his name. Neither were they to be offered at all times, but only at the seasons appointed by the law of sacrifice; and one part of the priest's office was to see that the circumstances of time and place should be regularly observed. This also entered into the service of our great High Priest. He minutely attended to the time, place, and manner of his death, as fixed by the

purpose of God, and unfolded in the writings of the prophets. Until the time fixed for his death arrived, emphatically called by himself *his hour*, he used all the means for his own preservation dictated by his consummate wisdom and prudence.

3. As a priest, he solemnly devoted himself to God as an offering for sin. Under the law, the offering being conducted to the place where it was to be slain, it was solemnly devoted to God. The devotement made by our great High Priest of his offering, may be considered as taking its date from everlasting in the eternal covenant. In that covenant he engaged, according to his Father's will, to make his soul an offering for sin. This engagement was properly the act of his divine will; but when he assumed our nature, his human will was always in strict accordance with his divine will; accordingly, this dedication was strictly and properly the act of his person. Having taken the form of a servant, he did not seek to go out free, till his work and term of service were completed. Hence we find him, in allusion to the rite by which the Hebrew servant devoted himself to the service of his master at the year of jubilee, when he might have gone

out free, saying, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ear hast thou opened."

4. As a priest he actually offered himself to God a sacrifice for sin. This takes in the exercise of all the graces of the Spirit with which he was anointed without measure, and these, put forth in his devotional exercise, under all his sufferings, and especially during his passion in the garden, and at the time of his death on the cross. He met these manifestations of God's judicial displeasure in the highest exercise of submission to the will of God, reverential awe of his holiness and his justice, love to him, zeal for his honour, faith in him for his promised support in his work, and for the reward of it when finished, accompanied with meekness and long-suffering towards his betrayers and murderers, and the most tender compassion towards his people. These, and the other pious affections of his heart, were poured out to God in the solemn exercise of prayer and supplication, and constituted the oblation that rendered his sacrifice holy and acceptable to God. Heb. v. 7.

We shall only add, that not only his sacrifice but his *agency in offering it* to God, derived infinite value from the dignity of his

person. He who approached God to make reconciliation was God's fellow. He who by himself purged our sins is "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." And though he suffered, and could suffer in his assumed nature only; yet his giving himself up to suffer, and to die, was no less the act of his divine, than of his human will: his agency in offering himself a sacrifice to God was therefore strictly and properly the agency of a divine person, and consequently of infinite value for our redemption.

We proceed to consider

Our Lord's Intercession.—Our Lord's intercession is an important function of his priesthood; and although it does not enter into the matter of the atonement for sin which was completed on Calvary, yet it is necessary to give full effect to the grand design of the atonement; as the atonement itself was intended to secure God's honour as a rectoral judge, in dispensing pardoning mercy to guilty men, so one grand end of his intercession is to perpetuate the manifestation of the connexion between the atonement and a dispensation of mercy.

Respecting our Lord's advocacy, it may be observed,

1. Our Lord's advocacy in our nature was foretold and typified under the former dispensation. It was matter of promise, or prediction, under the ancient economy, not because it was to be peculiar, to the new dispensation, but because under it Christ was to enter heaven and make intercession in our nature, having completed his work as a sacrificing priest on earth. Isaiah liii. 12.

2. Our Lord was an advocate, not only in type, but also in substance, from the first erection of the church. This advocacy belongs to the administration of the covenant of grace, but it began to be administered, as we have seen already, immediately after the fall. And as Old Testament saints were redeemed by his future sacrifice, so they were saved by his advocacy, not merely in type, but in actual operation, though not in the same manner as since his incarnation and ascension to heaven. Accordingly, he is more than once introduced under the Old Testament dispensation, as advocating the cause of his church and people before God. Waiting on God is expressive of intercession, but he is introduced by the pro-

phet Isaiah saying—"Bind up the testimony; seal the law among my disciples. And I will WAIT upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him." Isa. viii. 16, 17. See also Isa. xlii. 1, and Zech. i. 12, 13.

3. His advocacy is brought more fully and more clearly into view under the New Testament dispensation. The New Testament Scriptures inform us of the place where he intercedes, "He has entered heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:"—of the way of his access to heaven as our advocate, "It was not by the blood of calves and goats, but by his own blood that he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us:"—of the general mode of his intercession, "It is an appearance in the midst of the throne as a Lamb that hath been slain"—"an appearance in the presence of God for us." With respect to its duration and success, we are told, "that he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

4. He is well qualified for his work as an advocate, from his personal character, and offi-

cial fulness. With regard to his personal character, being God and man in one person, he is nearly related to God with whom he intercedes, and to man for whom he intercedes. He is God's fellow, and our brother; a fit daysman who can lay his hand upon both parties; while as God he takes a deep interest in his Father's honour, as man, he has a fellow-feeling with his people under all their infirmities and wants. Heb. iv. 15. He has also all that official fulness necessary to render his intercession ever prevalent with the Father. None could approach God as an advocate who had not a divine call; but he is called of God, as was Aaron. As he has a legal right by virtue of his call, so he has a federal right by virtue of his sacrifice.

5. As his advocacy proceeds on the ground of his sacrifice, so it is of the same extent with it both with respect to persons and things. With respect to the persons for whom he intercedes, they are the same definite number for whom he laid down his life. These were given to him by the Father to be redeemed by his death and saved by his life, and it is for them alone he intercedes. He has no plea for any other, as his advocacy proceeds upon the

ground of his sacrifice. "I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me, for they are thine."

6. With respect to the manner of his intercession, we are taught to conceive of it as an appearance in God's presence for us in the same nature in which he suffered and died. "He is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which were the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." It is obvious, that Christ used words in interceding for his people on earth, but it would be presumptuous to determine whether or not he uses words in heaven; but his appearance there as a lamb that hath been slain is an all powerful plea. Abel's blood is said to have cried for vengeance on him who shed it, and its cry is said to have reached from earth to heaven; but how much more shall the blood of Christ which he presents continually before God's throne plead, effectually plead for mercy on those for whose redemption it was shed?

7. Our Lord's intercession extends both to individuals, and to the church collective. The Jewish high priest, when he entered the holy of holies, bore on his breast-plate the names of

the twelve tribes of Israel, but our great High Priest bears on his heart every individual person given to him by the Father. It is in answer to his request, that the sinner, when the period of his conversion arrives, is either brought to the means of grace, or these means sent to him; and it is at his request that the Spirit is sent into his heart to render these means effectual for turning him from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Sprinkling under the law was the symbol of intercession, and on certain occasions it was applied not only to the throne but to the people; but Christ sprinkles the nations. He has not only carried the blood of his sacrifice into heaven, but he also applies it to the consciences of sinners on earth, to purge them from guilt and dead works. Isa lii. 14, 15.

8. Our Lord's intercession is ever prevalent. This may be inferred from the Father's love to Christ himself. When the men of Tyre wished to conciliate the favour of Herod, they made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, and then went in boldly to Herod; and with how much greater boldness may we approach God's throne since his dear Son is our friend and advocate! The Father will assuredly

give to his Son, so near and dear to him, his heart's desire, and will not withhold from him the requests of his lips. But in addition to this, the Father loves those for whom he intercedes. He does not intercede with God for them, to procure his love for them; his intercession, like his sacrifice, only respects the honourable channel of its conveyance. Our Lord was careful to impress this upon the minds of his disciples. "At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you." John xvi. 26, 27. The success of his intercession may also be inferred from the Father's faithfulness. "Him the Father heareth always."

We shall now remark briefly on

Christ's Presidency as a Priest over the House of God.—Under the legal economy, the whole management of what related to the services of God's house belonged to the priesthood, and was vested in the person of the high priest. Though a number of the functions of the Jewish high priest are merged in the exercise of our Lord's prophetical and kingly offices, yet that of presidency over the worship and services of the sanctuary of God is ascrib-

ed particularly to him as a priest, and held out as affording the greatest encouragement to humble boldness in our approaches to God. Thus, when the writer to the Hebrews speaks of the grounds of the Christian's boldness to enter into the holiest, he does not only take notice of the blood of Christ, by which the way to the holiest was opened, and its properties as a new and living way, but he adds as another ground of encouragement, "And having a great high priest *over* the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart," &c. Heb. x. 21.

1. As a priest he has not only opened up the way to the throne of God by his death, but he also keeps it open by his continual intercession. Sin separates between us and God, and excludes us from all gracious intercourse with him. But Christ has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; and in putting away sin, he has opened for us a new and living way, not into these holy places made with hands, which were only figures of the true, but into heaven itself, whither he himself entered as our forerunner, and into which believers have now access by faith, and will ultimately be admitted in their whole persons.

2. He does not only open the way to God by his death, and keep it open by his intercession, but he takes the lead in the services of the sanctuary, both in the church militant and church triumphant. To prevent mistakes, we must here call the attention of our readers to the twofold character of Christ, his essential character as God, and his assumed character as man and mediator. In his essential character as God, he is the object of all religious service, both in the church militant and in the church triumphant, equally with the Father and Spirit. The praises of saints and angels are addressed to the Godhead in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But in his assumed character, and created nature, he is subordinate to the Godhead, and must acknowledge that subordination in a way suited to the station he occupies in these characters. It is not meant to affirm, when we say that Christ takes the lead in the service of God's sanctuary, that in every respect his service and that of his people are parallel. While on earth, he obeyed the law as a substitute, and now that he is gone to heaven, his service is still official, whereas their service is that of the natural subjects of law; but in this they agree,

that both have for their common end the advancement of God's declarative glory.

We shall only add, that although the human nature of Christ is, by virtue of its union to the divine person of the Son of God, far exalted above every mere creature, yet it is still a created nature, and, as such, a dependent nature; and it may be inferred from its absolute perfection, that all its powers and faculties will be put forth in the acknowledgment of its dependence on the Godhead in the purest and liveliest strains of adoration.

3. Our high priest also consecrates all his younger brethren to God, and forms them for his service. They are made priests unto God, and as such, consecrated by sacrifice to his service. "Jesus also, that he might sanctify, (consecrate,) the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." This takes in two things—First, the opening up by his sacrifice of the way to the throne, which has been already considered. Secondly, the application of the blood of his sacrifice to the conscience. This was typified when the first covenant was dedicated by sprinkling the people. By that act they were set apart to God as a nation of priests, a holy people. As the offering of his

sacrifice was necessary to open the way to the holiest; so the application of his blood to the conscience is necessary to give them boldness to improve the way. With guilt on the conscience, we will never draw near to God; and nothing but his blood can purge the conscience from guilt and dead works. Heb. ix. 14.

4. Having inclined them to improve the way of access, and formed them for service, he has a fellow-feeling with them in their present state under all their privations and temptations. Our great high priest has all the pity of God, and all the compassion of human nature; and his compassion as man, so far as it regards the outward sufferings, privations, and temptations to which his people are exposed in the present life, partakes of the nature of fellow-feeling from his being once placed in similar circumstances of privation and trial. When in affliction, we expect most sympathy from one who has been in similar circumstances of distress. He may not naturally be superior to others in respect of feeling, but from the experience he has had of distress similar to that which we are labouring under, we expect he will enter more readily into our feelings under it, and be more prompt to afford

us, if in his power, the desired relief. Such is the compassion of Christ. "He suffered, being tempted, that he might know how to succour them that are tempted."

5. Our great high priest succours and relieves his people under their afflictions and temptations in divers ways. He sometimes rebukes the tempter, so that they are relieved from his attacks for the present, as in the case of Joshua the high priest. "The Lord said unto Satan, the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord who hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Sometimes the temptation is prolonged, as in the case of Paul, but then he affords relief by granting new supplies of grace in proportion to the extent and duration of the trial, so that they are, instead of fainting, led to glory in their infirmities, as they afford occasion for the manifestation of the power of Christ, and his care about his people.

6. His Presidency over God's house also secures the acceptance of their services before God. After all that is wrought in them, and after all the gracious succours they receive in the season of service and in the hour of trial, their services are very imperfect in this life;

still, as their persons are accepted on the ground of his righteousness, so, on the ground of the same righteousness pleaded on their behalf by him as their advocate before the throne, their services also come up with acceptance before God: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

7. As our great high priest over the house of God, he has not only a tender feeling for the worshippers, but an ardent zeal for God's honour. His zeal for God's honour in what relates to the religious observances of the sanctuary, was displayed by him while on earth *doctrinally*, by detecting and exposing the many corruptions that had crept into the worship of God, and *actually* by purging the temple of buyers and sellers. John ii. 13—17.

But his zeal for the purity of every thing connected with the house of God is nothing abated now that he is gone to heaven. He is still spiritually present in his church on earth, and he sits in her as a refiner of silver, that he may purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

Nor is his care in this respect confined to those in office in the church. It extends to every church-member.

S. His presidency over the church triumphant will continue for ever. Jesus, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood; but his presidency over the worship and services of the church triumphant will constitute, if not the principal, at least one of the main functions of his priesthood in eternity. The splendour of his royal dignity will never eclipse the memorials of his death as a priest on Calvary, which he carried along with him to the throne of God. No; while eternal ages roll on, he will appear in the midst of the throne as a lamb that hath been slain, and by his appearance in this character he will continue to direct, enliven, and stimulate the praises of saints and angels for ever and ever. As believers in the church on earth are sweetly constrained, by the love of God in giving his Son to save them, and the love of the Son in giving his life a ransom for them, to devote their persons and services to God, so the saints in glory will be sweetly, yet powerfully, influenced by the same motives, in prosecuting the services of the celestial world; and these mo-

tives will be maintained in constant operation by the saints in light having perpetually in their view the memorials of that death by which they were redeemed to God out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

SECTION XII.

THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST.

The kingly office of Christ holds a prominent place in the Christian system. As a priest, by his one sacrifice he obtained eternal redemption for his church; but that would have availed us nothing had he not applied it to us by his power as a king. The doctrine of our Lord's kingly office has in every age strongly excited the jealousy of the powers of the the world. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed." Besides, it finds an opponent in the heart of every child of Adam, from its aversion to the extent, purity, and spirituality of the divine

law. For these reasons it has always occupied a distinguished place in the testimony of the church. Christ himself died a martyr to the truth of his kingly office. A great cloud of witnesses suffered unto the death in support of the same truth, under pagan and antichristian Rome; and it still continues to be opposed in various ways, even in Protestant countries. These considerations, as well as its vital importance in the Christian system, give it a high claim to our most serious attention.

General Remarks.—1. Our Lord is necessarily a king as God. He is the creator of all things: "For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him." Besides, he sustains the universe in existence. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." "He upholdeth all things by the word of his power."

2. Our Lord is also a king as Mediator. His dominion as God belongs to him necessarily, but his dominion as Mediator is delegated to him by the Father, as the representative of Godhead in the economy of redemption: "Yet

have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Psal. ii. 6. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." John iii. 35. See also Eph. i. 20—23. Accordingly the Scriptures ascribe royal names and titles to him, such as "Ruler in Israel"—"Judge"—"Leader and Commander"—"the Captain of salvation"—"Lord of all"—"Prince of peace"—"King of saints"—"King of kings, and Lord of lords." To the same purpose the Scriptures assign to him symbols of royalty, such as royal unction, a royal sceptre, and a royal throne. Psal. xlv. 6, 7.

3. As his mediatory authority as a king is delegated to him by the Father, so it is by the Father's grant that he possesses *ability* for carrying into effect the ends of his administration. These could only be effected by divine energy; but this is put forth by Christ as a king in the salvation of the church. It must be remembered, however, that this grant to Christ as Mediator supposes his supreme Godhead; for, as the Divine nature cannot be communicated, so the life, said to be in Christ by the Father's grant, could not have been conferred upon him in his official character for mediatory purposes, had it not been in him

necessarily as the eternal Son of God. We shall only add here, that our Lord applies salvation to the church by the more immediate agency of his Spirit, and for this end he is said to have been anointed with the Spirit without measure; but had he not been a divine person, he could not have been the recipient of this immeasurable unction. - "He whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God, for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him."

4. Our Lord, as Mediator, is not only the King of the church, but also head over all things for her benefit. The church, comprehending all who profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him, as also their children, is our Lord's proper kingdom over which he reigns. This is his free, spiritual, and independent kingdom; a society *in*, though not *of* the world, and which is created and maintained on earth for the purpose of gathering God's elect out of the world lying in wickedness, and building them up in holiness, through faith unto salvation. But the church, while on earth, is exposed to many and powerful enemies, who are continually plotting her destruction. This rendered it necessary for her pro-

tection, that the power of Christ as a King should be extended to all things in heaven and on earth. "He rules in the midst of his enemies."

5. Though our Lord's dominion as Mediator is equally extensive with regard to its objects as his dominion as God, yet it does not subvert or even supersede God's essential dominion.

First: The government of Christ, as it respects religion and law, does not subvert or set aside God's moral government. One grand design of our Lord's work as Mediator, was to fulfil and establish the law originally given to man. This he did most effectually, in his own person, as a priest, on earth, by satisfying all its claims, as a covenant law, both for obedience to its precept and satisfaction to its penalty, in our room; and he continues to prosecute the same design, as a king, though in a different way, in bringing back sinners by the power of his grace to a dutiful submission to the same law as a rule of righteousness. Believers, it is true, are under the law as a rule of duty, not in the form in which it was originally given to man, though it is the same law in substance. They are under the law as in

the hand of Christ; but this does not dissolve but strengthen their obligation to it, as a rule of duty to God. They are "not without law to God but under the law to Christ."

Secondly: Neither does our Lord's dominion over all things, as Mediator, subvert or supersede God's physical government. His physical government over all things consists in his ordering and disposing of these things in their natural order, so as to accomplish the natural ends proposed by them. Our Lord's mediatory government, as it respects the same things, lies in his ordering and disposing of them, in a supernatural way, so as to prove subservient to the interests of his church and people. Nor does this introduce any discordance into the plan of the divine government, for the God of nature is also the God of grace, and in fixing the plan of his general government, he made provision for making every thing in the plan tend to the advancement of the interests of his church.

6. Our Lord's mediatory government, as it consists in the prescription and administration of religion and law, does not extend to all mankind, but only to the visible church, and those who have access to the means of grace

as dispensed in her. This appears, first, from the fact that these alone have the means of acquaintance with the Mediator. The light of nature affords no notices of a mediator, or of the law as in the hand of the mediator; but where there is no law there can be no transgression. The heathen who perish, shall perish, not for the transgression of the law considered as the law of Christ, or the contempt of his authority as a mediatory king, but for their violation of the law of nature. This is certainly the meaning of the apostle when he tells us, that "as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law." Rom. ii. 12. Secondly, The Scriptures never represent Christ in his official character as the moral governor of the heathen, but only as the king of the church. He is God's king, whom he hath set upon his holy hill of Zion. Ps. ii. 6. He rules as a moral governor, not over all mankind, but over the house of Israel; over his own house, which must signify his church, which he purchased with his blood and saved by his power. Luke i. 33.; Heb. iii. 6. Thirdly, His kingdom, over which he rules by a dispensation of law,

admits of having multitudes added to it. Hence the conversion of the isles to the Redeemer is signified by their waiting for his laws, which implies, that they were not originally under them.

7. Our Lord's administration as a King must have been coeval with the revelation of the plan of mercy. The old world was drowned—the cities of the plain were consumed—the Israelites were delivered from Egypt—Pharoah and his host were overwhelmed and God's people saved by the power of Christ our King. "The angel of his presence saved them." See Exodus xxiii. 20, 21; and Joshua v. 13, 14.

Though the main design of his incarnation and appearance in our world was to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, as a priest; yet he continued to act as the king of his church during his humbled estate. This is evident from his clearing the temple of buyers and sellers, his casting out devils, his instituting ordinances, and appointing office-bearers in his church. In his resurrection, ascension, and session at the Father's right hand, he was more openly and solemnly invested with royal authority in the church, and over all things,

for her benefit. And he shall continue "to reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke i. 33.

SECTION XIII.

THE EXTENT OF OUR LORD'S DOMINION AS MEDIATOR.

WHILE the church is the proper kingdom of Christ over which he is appointed as Mediator, yet his dominion extends to all things for her benefit. Under the head of his mediatory dominion, therefore, we include his church on earth—his subsidiary kingdom—and his kingdom of glory.

I. The dominion of Christ extends to his church. She is the proper kingdom over which he reigns. "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Under God, as the God of grace, Christ is the alone king and head of the church. He is her Lord, her lawgiver, and her king, and he will save her. She is his free and independent kingdom—a kingdom in the world, but not of the world; and none can claim headship over her, or inter-

fere with her internal laws and administrations, without usurping his rights and the royal prerogatives.

II. Our Lord's dominion extends to all things for the good of the church. The church, his proper kingdom, has often been confined within narrow limits, but his subsidiary kingdom extends to the whole creation of God.

1. It extends to all the human race, and for various purposes. First, That he may collect his own elect out of the world and bring them into the church militant, and thus prepare them for being introduced into the church triumphant: "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." John xvii. 2. Secondly, That he may employ the agency of the unbelieving part of the world for the benefit of his church, whether in the way of contributing to her temporal interests, as when the earth is made to help the woman, or by over-ruling their malice against the church for correction or trial. "The wicked are established for correction. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Thirdly, That he may bruise the finally impenitent under his

feet, and the feet of his people. Hence the grant made to him in the second Psalm, a grant which has a retrospective view to the combination mentioned in the beginning of that Psalm, of kings and others in authority, against the Lord and against his Anointed; and which is intended to defeat their malignant designs by their condign punishment. Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Verses 8, 9.

2. His subsidiary kingdom extends to holy angels. These blessed spirits retained their allegiance to God when their kindred spirits fell from their first estate, so that they are the subjects of our Lord viewed in his essential character. But they are also put under him as Mediator, to be employed by him for mediatory purposes; and, considered in this light, they act voluntarily in the service of Christ. The service in which they are employed is extensive.

3. The subsidiary kingdom of Christ extends to fallen angels. Our Lord reigns not only over holy angels as willing subjects, who fulfil his pleasure with alacrity and delight, but

he reigns over fallen spirits also, as rebels and vanquished enemies. His dominion as Mediator is extended to these for obvious reasons. Those whom he came to redeem by his blood, and save by his power, are, in their fallen state, under the dominion of Satan, and led captive by him at his will; it was therefore necessary that the Redeemer of the church should be invested with power to enter Satan's dominions and rescue his chosen people—to bind that "strong man," and to spoil him of his goods.

4. The subsidiary kingdom of Christ also extends to the lower animals, and the different parts of the inanimate creation. Heb. ii. 5–8.

III. Our Lord's dominion also extends to the kingdom of glory. His kingdom of grace in the church militant is erected and maintained for the important purposes of gathering sinners to Christ, building them up in holiness, and thus preparing them for entering the church triumphant. Christ has taken possession of the kingdom of glory as the Head of the church. It is, with respect to its local situation, the third heaven—the throne of God, or the place of his glorious residence. "When Christ had by himself purged our sins, he sat

down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Christ is now a king on his throne, and his throne is in heaven. And, to show the intimate connexion between his mediatory and God's essential dominion, and the tendency the former has to secure the honours of the latter, he is represented as associated with the Father upon the same throne. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne." Nor is Christ, considered as a mediatory king in heaven, a prince without subjects. A great number of the redeemed from among men have already entered heaven in respect of their souls, and not a few both in soul and body; all of whom serve him day and night in his temple. Besides, his kingdom of glory is continually increasing. The saints leave the church militant that they may enter the church triumphant. The saints on earth and the saints in glory are but one family, only the former are in a state of minority, and the latter have arrived at a state of majority; the former are on their way to their Father's

house, whereas the latter have entered it to go no more out. They have all one Father even God, one Lord, and one inheritance; though believers on earth have the inheritance only in prospect, whereas the saints in glory have it in actual possession.

SECTION XIV.

OUR LORD'S ADMINISTRATION IN THE CHURCH.

We have seen that the church is Christ's free, spiritual, and independent kingdom, and that the power given him over all things is for her benefit. His administration in the church has, therefore, the first claim to our attention. This naturally divides itself into two parts: First, what relates to her external form or organization; and, secondly, what relates to that spiritual influence by which her ordinances and administrations are rendered effectual for the ends of her erection and maintenance in the world.

What relates to the external form or organization of the church.—1. The first act of our Lord's administration in the formation

of the church, is the authoritative publication of her charter of privileges. This charter is the gospel, called by Christ the gospel of the kingdom.

That this must be viewed as the primary act of Christ in the erection of his church as a king, will appear from the following considerations. First in order to the formation of a church, there must be persons who are joined together as a visible society; but the gospel is the grand means of converting the soul lying in sin, and it is by a profession of faith in the gospel that we enter the church, and are admitted to the enjoyment of her privileges. The members of the church are in their natural state enemies to God by wicked works; but a gospel ministry is the ministry of reconciliation, and the gospel itself the rod of the Redeemer's strength sent out of Zion, by which those who were once alienated from God and enemies to him by wicked works, are made a willing people. 2 Cor. v. 13, 19; Psalm cx. 2, 3. Secondly, it appears from the nature of our Lord's administration as it regards law and government. We have seen already that it grafts duty on privilege; and this supposes that the authoritative grant of

privilege must be the first act of his administration.

2. As a king, he prescribes laws and appoints ordinances of worship in his church.

Our Lord, as Mediator, is a lawgiver, but not in the sense in which it is understood by the adversaries of the doctrine of grace. They maintain, that the main end of his coming into the world was to procure for his people a new and easier law as the condition of life; but so far from this, our Lord himself assures us that he came "not to destroy the law," as originally given to man, "but to fulfil it."

3. Our Lord, as a king, institutes offices; appoints office-bearers in his church; calls them to their work; assigns to them severally their sphere of labour; and determines the measure of their success.

4. Our Lord, as a king, has appointed a form of government and discipline in his church, distinct from, and not subordinate to, civil government.

Christ's internal administration in the church.—Having finished what was intended upon our Lord's administration as it regards the external form of the church, we proceed to speak of his internal administration as it

respects the power with which he accompanies his own institutions for the conversion of his chosen people, and for building them up in holiness through faith unto salvation.

In this important work, the king of the church appears with all the gentleness and meekness connected with his character as a Saviour. The cause in support of which he appears, is the cause of meekness, of truth, and of righteousness. His appearance itself is sweetened with meekness. He is meek and bringing salvation. But his coming in the gospel dispensation is also with all the majesty of a mighty warrior. Ps. lv. 3, 4.

1. He subdues sinners to himself by his word, accompanied with the power of his Spirit. The season of this spiritual conquest, as it regards individuals, is the period fixed in God's eternal purpose, for their translation from a state of nature into a state of grace. When this period arrives, they are sought and not forsaken, and the means of grace which are to be rendered effectual for their conversion, are either sent to them, or they are brought to the means. The good shepherd seeks out his sheep, and gathers them from all places where they have been scatter-

ed in the cloudy and dark day, and brings them into his own fold.

2. The change of the sinner's state, as well as of his heart, is ascribed to our Lord's administration as a king. He is "exalted a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts v. 31. The same observation applies to adoption, another relative change. Formally considered, adoption is the act of God as a Father; but Christ is said to give power to become the sons of God, when he implants faith in the heart, and enables us to realize the blessing of adoption and its rich fruits as offered in the gospel. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John i. 12.

3. Having called and justified, he governs them by his laws, and carries forward a work of sanctification in their souls. Believers are dead to the law as a covenant, but they are not without law to God, but under the law to Christ. They have not this law as a written rule merely, in common with others, but as engraven on their hearts. "They are the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables

of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." Their duty is their delight. They find themselves bound to obey, not only as creatures depending on God for existence and daily preservation, but from the consideration of their election of grace, their redemption through the blood of Christ, and their effectual vocation. The authority of Christ is sweetened by his love, which constrains them to walk with him in all the ways of new obedience. They are his subjects not merely in name but in truth, and from choice. The kingdom of God is within them—that kingdom which is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Christ sits enthroned in their hearts, and all the powers of their minds are brought under his subjection.

4. He orders and disposes of every circumstance in their lot, so as to make it subservient to the advancement of their spiritual interests. See 1 Cor. vii. 20—26; and Heb. xii. 3—12; and Rom. viii. 28.

SECTION XV.

OUR LORD'S ADMINISTRATION AS IT EXTENDS TO ALL THINGS FOR THE BENEFIT OF HIS CHURCH.

We have seen already that our Lord executes his office as a king in the church, by his word, ordinances, and laws, accompanied with the power of his Spirit. But he does not govern his subsidiary kingdom by ordinances and office-bearers, distinct or different from the established laws of nature and the ordinary instruments of providence; but by giving these a supernatural direction for the benefit of the church. In both cases however, power is put forth by the immediate agency of the Spirit, as the Spirit of Christ, to render the means and instruments effectual for the supernatural ends proposed by them. The same Spirit who gives effect to the ordinances of his grace in the church for the salvation of sinners, directs the laws of nature and the instruments of providence in the moral world, beyond, as well as within her pale, for her benefit. Thus, in Ezekiel's vision of the cherub, the four living creatures, the symbols of the ministers of religion, and the wheels, the symbols of the in-

struments of God's moral government in the world, though, in their nature distinct, run parallel, and both contribute in their own way, so far as relates to the church, to promote one common end; and the reason assigned is, that the same Spirit who animates the living creatures, regulates the motion of the wheels. "And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go; and the wheels were lifted up over against them; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels." Ezek. i. 19, 20.

1. In exercising this power, our Lord so disposes of nations and their governments, as to remove those physical and political obstructions out of the way, which tend to retard the progress of his Gospel in the world. Even so early as the original division of the earth, we find provision made, by mediatory interference for the future settlement of the church in Abraham's family, in the land of Canaan. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people,

according to the number of the children of Israel." See also Haggai ii. 7; and Heb. xii. 26, 27.

2. In the exercise of his power over all flesh, he sometimes makes those who are strangers to religion contribute by the influence of their authority to the advancement of his work in the church. He can make the earth help the woman. The Egyptians were the instruments of feeding the infant church in the season of famine. Cyrus was raised up for restoring the Jews to their own land, and rebuilding the temple.

3. He employs wicked men, especially those in power, for the correction and trial of the church. Thus, he employed the Assyrians for punishing the ten tribes and correcting Judah for their apostasy. Nothing was further from the intention of the Assyrian monarch, than to execute God's purpose. He was prompted by no higher motive than worldly ambition. But the great Head of the church overruled his ambition for the accomplishing of his own designs with regard to his rebellious people. "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few." Isa. x. 7.

4. Having accomplished his work of correction upon mount Zion, he punishes her oppressors for their malice and cruelty. They are not the less guilty that their cruelty is overruled by the Head of the church for her good. Though He means it for good, when He permits them to persecute and afflict her, they mean it for evil, and merit punishment accordingly. Judgment begins at God's house, but it ends with the wicked. The church tastes the brim of the cup, but the wicked of the earth are made to wring out the bitter dregs of it. See Isa. li. 22, 23.

5. These judgments, executed upon nations and individuals by Christ, all lead to, and shall terminate in the general judgment. In the present world judgment is often suspended for a season, and, even when inflicted, is mitigated for the sake of the elect who are interspersed among the wicked, or perhaps still in their loins. It was for this reason Judah was restored to her own land while the ten tribes remained in captivity. Isa. vi. 13. It was for this reason too, that the Jews were respited during forty years after they had crucified the Saviour, and that, when judgment was actually inflicted, the days of their calamity were

shortened. 2 Pet. iii. 9; Matth. xxiv. 22. But, at the second coming of Christ, this reason for divine forbearance shall no longer exist; the elect being all born, converted, and separated from the wicked. Then wrath shall come upon them to the uttermost. They shall be brought before the judgment-seat, condemned, and cast into hell, where is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

SECTION XVI.

WHAT IS MEANT BY CHRIST'S DELIVERING UP THE KINGDOM.

Besides the change which will take place after the judgment in the mode of the administration of our Lord in his church, he will also cease to exercise that mediatory control he now has over her implacable enemies. In speaking of our Lord's dominion as Mediator, we noticed, that it does not only extend to the church his proper kingdom, but also to all things for her benefit. As his elect were to be gathered from the common mass of

mankind, it was necessary that his dominion should extend to all flesh; and as not only the principalities of hell, but also the powers of this world, have generally been combined against the church, it was necessary that his power should extend to both for her protection. But since at his second coming all the election of grace shall be gathered out of the world, and all principality and power, both human and angelic, put down, so as never more to be able to manage any opposition to the church, so he is to deliver up the kingdom, so far as regards them, and they are henceforth to fall immediately under the dominion of God, in his absolute character; "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." 1 Cor. xv. 24. That this kingdom is not his church, nor even his subsidiary kingdom, as a whole, appears evident from the text and context. The grant to the Mediator of the power of control over all the human and angelic enemies of the church is particularly mentioned, and the term of its duration with regard to its exercise specified, in Psalm cx. He was to reign over these enemies till

subdued under his feet, and the feet of his church. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." Now since the apostle quotes the passage in the psalm which respects his reign over his enemies, in support of his delivering up the kingdom; and since, on the one hand, he assigns their complete subjugation at the time of the end as the reason why he shall deliver it up; (ver. 24,) "when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power;" and since, on the other hand, he assigns as the reason that it shall not be delivered up till the time of the end, that these principalities and powers must first be subdued, (ver. 25,) "for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet;" we must conclude that by the kingdom itself to be delivered up, we are to understand, not his dominion in the church herself, but his dominion as extended to her human and angelic enemies, for her protection.

When Christ is said to deliver up the kingdom, even in the sense in which we have explained it, we are not to understand

it to signify the alienation of his right as Mediator, to rule over those enemies of his church at any future period; for the Father grants no right to Christ which he will recall. It only denotes the suspension of the exercise of mediatory control over them, as it shall then be no longer necessary for her protection. But could we suppose that, at any future period, the church would be attacked by these enemies, his right to exercise that control would be found to be entire. We shall only add, that it is not meant by these remarks, to deny, that Christ, as Mediator, will at the last day give in his account to the Father of his mediatory administration in the church. No; as he undertook in the character of the Father's servant, not only to ransom his church as a priest, but also to save her as a king, so in the end he shall give an account of the trust committed to him. But what we plead for is, that this is not what is meant by his giving up the kingdom, and that by the kingdom to be delivered up, we are to understand, not the church, but his subsidiary kingdom, as it respects the enemies of his church.

SECTION XVII.

THE ETERNITY OF OUR LORD'S REIGN OVER THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT.

In concluding this treatise, we propose to show that there will be no termination of our Lord's reign over the church, but that it shall continue for ever.

1. This appears from the nature of the grant made of the church by the Father to Christ. It was a grant made to him in the specific character of mediator, and of which he was to be put in possession, as the reward of his suffering unto death for her redemption. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." Isaiah liii. 10, 11. But till his second coming he shall not enter fully upon the possession of this reward, since till then the whole of his ransomed people will not be converted and saved; and can we suppose for a moment, that this reward will be wrested from him at the very period when he comes to the full possession of it, by his ceasing to be

a mediatory king, and their ceasing in that character to be his subjects? Besides, we are to take into the account the confirmation of the grant by the oath of God. We noticed, when speaking of the perpetuity of his priesthood, that God confirms no grant of privilege by his oath that shall be recalled. The very end of his swearing is to show the immutability of his counsel in regard to that about which he swears. Heb. vi. 17, 18. But as the Son was consecrated a priest for ever by God's oath, so by the same oath he is consecrated an eternal king. Ps. lxxxix. 35, 36.

2. Instead of his laying aside his royal honours at the end of time, it is only then that he is represented as coming to the full possession of them. At present he is described as acquiring for himself, by spiritual conquest, a kingdom. For this end he went to heaven to send the Holy Spirit to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. For the same purpose the Lord sends the rod of his strength out of Zion, by which he makes a willing people; and it is only at his second coming that he shall take possession of his kingdom, thus acquired. This is evidently

the import of the parable—"A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading." Luke xix. 12—15. But can we suppose that Christ as Mediator will, at the day of judgment, at once receive his kingdom, and lay aside his royal honours? In addition to this, he is represented in Scripture as arriving, at the day of judgment, at the full glory of his mediatory reign. "I charge thee, therefore," says Paul to Timothy, "before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing, and his kingdom." But can we suppose that the great king of the church shall descend from that mediatory throne which he had acquired, not only by conquest, but by blood, just when

arrived at the summit of his glory? The idea cannot be entertained for a moment.

3. This appears also from the high honours to which his people shall be exalted in heaven as the fruit of his mediatory reign. They are to inherit a kingdom; they are to reign as kings; they are to sit with Christ on his throne, even as he overcame, and sat down with his Father on his throne. But all these high attainments of the members suppose the continued reign of their head. Can it possibly be supposed, that when they come to the possession of their kingdom, he shall yield up the possession of his; that when they begin to reign, he shall cease to reign; and that when they ascend the throne, he shall descend from it? It is not sufficient to say, that though he cease to reign as Mediator, he shall continue to reign as God; for the saints are described as about to enjoy all these high honours, not immediately from their communion with him as God, but as Mediator.

4. This appears further from the tenure by which the saints in heaven shall enjoy all their exalted privileges. They shall hold them by a mediatory tenure. They shall enter heaven on his right: "In my Father's house are many

mansions; if it were not so I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you." They shall retain it by the same tenure: "They shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ."

5. The perpetuity of our Lord's mediatorial character further appears, from the perpetuity of his subordination to the Father. When the Father, in his resurrection and ascension to heaven in our nature, put all things under him, by a divine grant, for the good of the church his body, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, the Father himself was excepted. Though vested with this extensive authority, still the head of Christ as Mediator was God; "For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him." 1 Cor. xv. 27. But we are told that when all those things are subdued unto him at the end of time, and when on that account, in the sense already explained, he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father, the same subordination shall continue, which plainly implies the continuation of his mediatory office, according to which alone he is subordinate: "And when all things

shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (Verse 28.) We admit that, with an Arian and a Socinian, this argument will have no weight, since both deny our Lord's essential Deity or equality with the Father; but to a Trinitarian, we apprehend the argument now stated, in support of the perpetuity of our Lord's mediatory character, must appear conclusive. As the Son, viewed as God, is the Father's equal, so in the sense in which they are equal there can be no subordination of the one to the other; and viewed simply as man, there could be no use for bringing forward his subordination in the present argument, since in this view he is essentially and necessarily subordinate to the Godhead; the subordination mentioned in the passage under consideration can, therefore, refer to him in no other character than that of Mediator.

In fine, this doctrine is fraught with comfort to the believer, to whom every office which our Lord holds as Mediator is precious, so precious that the opposite doctrine is calculated to throw a gloom over his mind, in his meditations and anticipations with respect to

the heavenly state. It is true, that, in one view, this is no decisive proof that Christ's official character shall continue for ever; but, in another, it affords a strong presumption in its favour. We can scarcely suppose that the Holy Spirit would have inculcated so strongly, and so frequently, in the word, the sentiments of esteem for Christ, trust and delight in him, in the specific character of Mediator, and fostered and cherished the same feelings and sentiments in the hearts of them who believe, in preparing them for heaven, by his saving operations, if, upon their admission in complete human nature into heaven, they were to find our Lord divested of his official character, which they now hold so precious, and through which alone they expect acceptance with God in the present life, and to be admitted to dwell for ever in his beatific presence in the life to come. But, in this particular, their hopes shall not be disappointed; for "he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

THE END.

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