

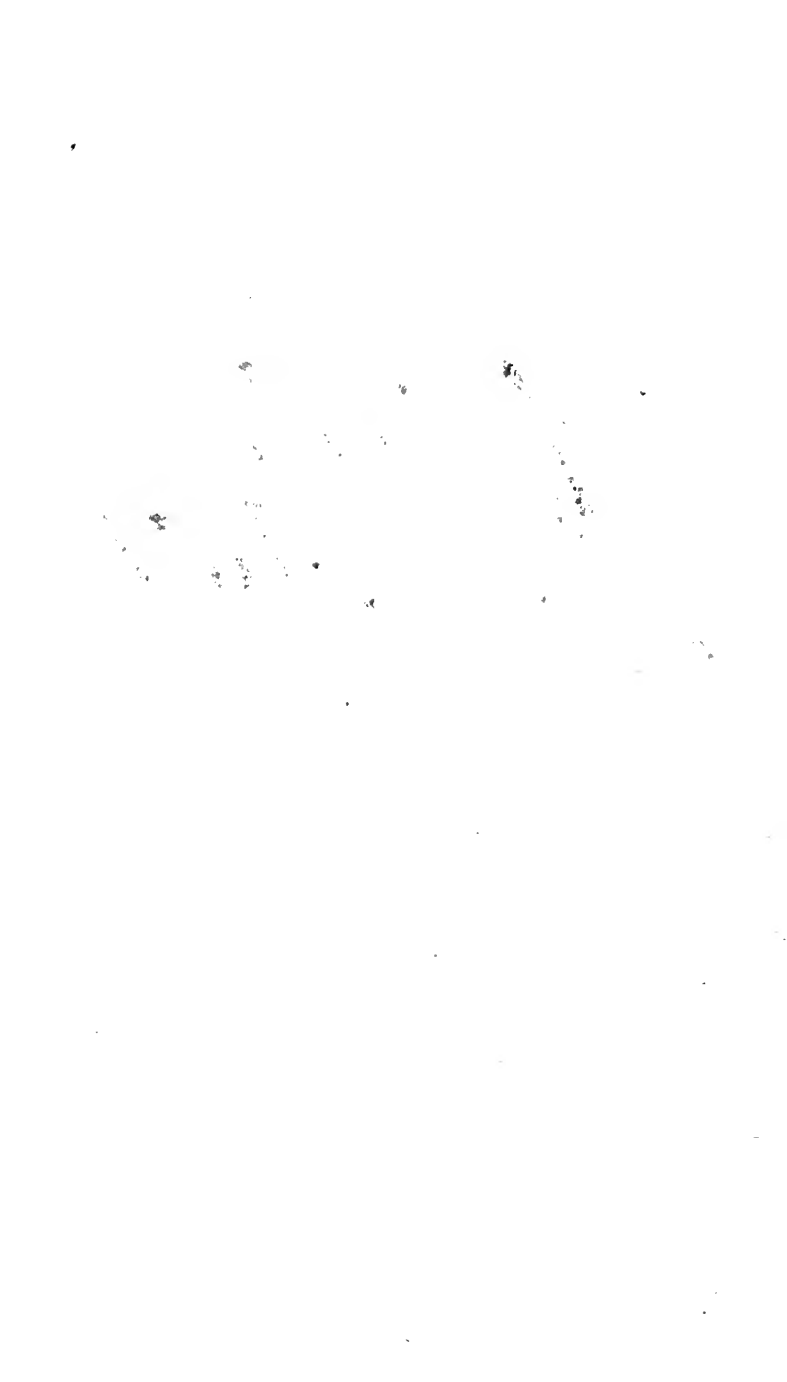


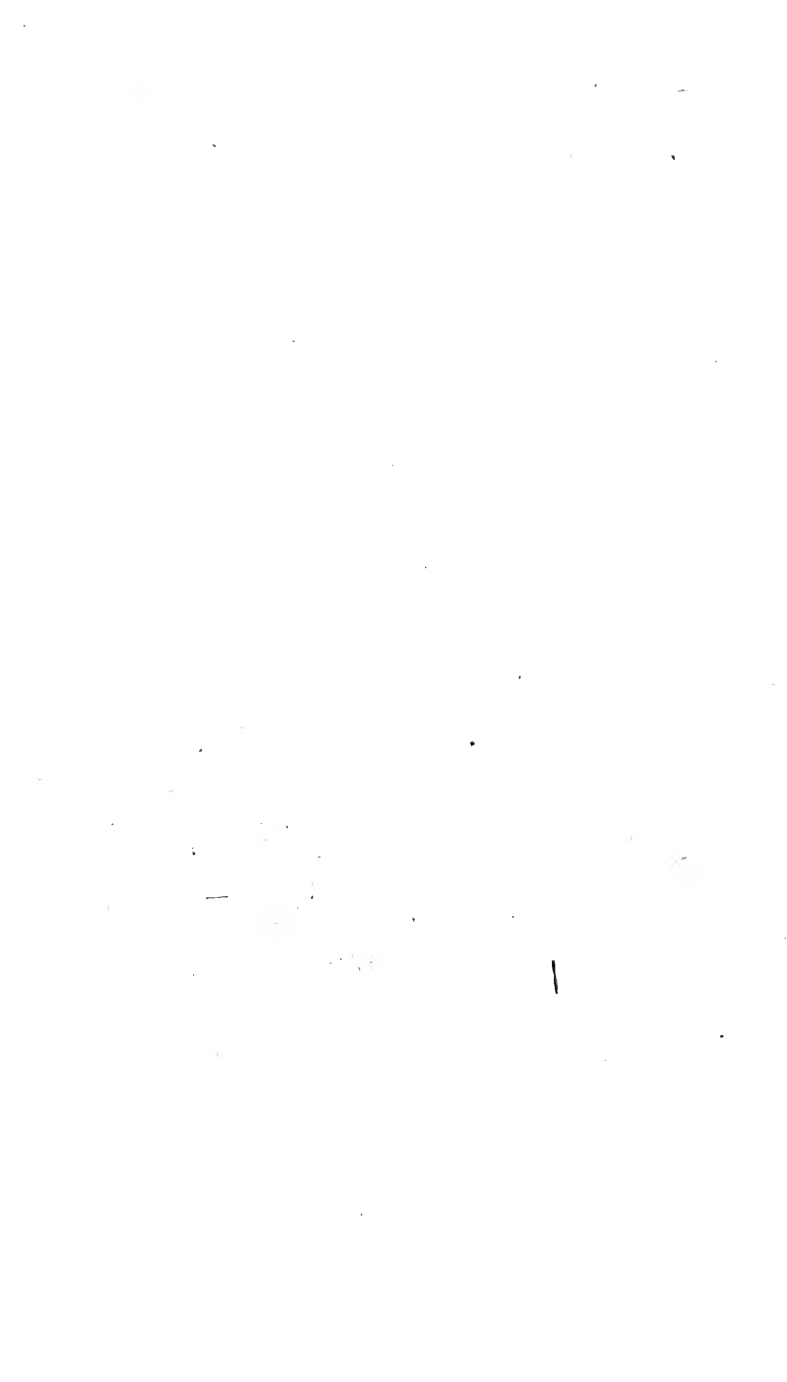
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S E R M O N S

O N T H E

Following SUBJECTS,

V I Z.

The miraculous Birth of CHRIST.	How CHRIST has given us the Victory over Death.
The Prediction of the MESSIAH.	The Inexcusableness of rejecting the Gospel.
The Character of the MESSIAH.	Different Tempers judge differently of Religion.
Of the Fulness of Time in which CHRIST appeared.	Of the Resurrection of CHRIST.
Of the Meaning of, The Name of GOD.	Of CHRIST'S Descent into Hell.
The Doctrines of Religion reasonable to be believed.	Of CHRIST'S Sitting on the Right Hand of GOD.
Unreasonable Expectations not to be gratified in Religion.	The Conversation of Christians is in Heaven.
How the Law is said to be the Strength of Sin.	Of the Spiritual Nature of the Gospel.
How CHRIST has enabled us to conquer Sin.	

By *SAMUEL CLARKE*, D.D.
late Rector of St James's, Westminster.

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S E R M O N I.

The miraculous Birth of CHRIST.

[*Preached on Christmas-Day.*]



MATT. i. 22, 23.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying; Behold, a Virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his Name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with Us.




IS a very usual Method with S E R M. I. Unbelievers;----And yet here, before I proceed, it may be proper and necessary to premise, that by Unbelievers I

would at This Time be understood to

2 *The miraculous Birth of Christ.*

S E R M. mean, *not*, men of such a disposition as
I. St *Thomas* was before his Conversion; ra-
tional and inquisitive persons, Lovers of
Truth and Virtue, men desirous to know
and to obey the Will of God, and care-
ful to keep a Conscience void of Offence
both towards God and towards Men; yet,
at the same time, sensible of the Diffi-
culties wherewith the Divine Providence
has thought fit to permit even very im-
portant Truths to be sometimes attended;
and careful, for That Reason, not to be
imposed upon, nor to receive things with-
out good Evidence, either of Reason, or
of Revelation: These, I say, are *not* the
Unbelievers I would at present be under-
stood to have in View. For concerning
such persons as these, our Saviour seems
to speak, when he says, they are *not far*
Mar. xii. *from the Kingdom of God.* But there is
34. *another* sort of *Unbelievers*, who, having
no right sense of the Liberty of Human
Actions, of the natural, and essential Dif-
ference of Good and Evil, of the Moral
Government of God over the World, of a
Judgment to come, and of a Future State
of Rewards and Punishments; do there-
fore

fore seek all possible opportunities, not of S E R M.
inquiring into, and impartially examining, I.
but of *cavilling* against the Authority of 
Christ and the Truth of his Religion, as
being the great Support and Confirmation
of these Doctrines of Nature, with the
Belief of which all Notions of Fatality
or Necessity, and all Licentiousness either
of Sceptical Opinions or of Vicious Pra-
ctice, is altogether inconsistent.


Now of *This* sort of *Unbelievers*, I say,
the *usual Method* is to attack some par-
ticular uncertain Doctrines in the *Systems*
of disagreeing Sects of Christians, and
then conclude that they have destroyed
Christianity itself: Or they set themselves
to expose particular *Weak Writers*; and
then leave it to be supposed, that *All*
Defenders of the Doctrine of Christ are
Fools: Or they pick perhaps out of *Bet-
ter Writers* *some* inconclusive Reasonings,
and *weak Arguments*; trusting it will
thence be inferred, that there is *no Strength*
in the *Strongest*: Or they represent Chri-
stianity as *relying* upon some *Foundation*,
upon which it *does not rely*; and then
conclude that it has *no Foundation* at all:

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S E R M. Or they demonstrate some *Facts* to be *no*
 I. *Proofs* of the *Truth* of the Gospel, which
 never were intended for *Proofs*; and then
 infer, that there is *no Proof* of it at all: Or
 they dress up particular *Facts* or *Doctrines*,
 in *ridiculous Circumstances*; and then re-
 present the *Things* themselves, as *Objects*
 of *Ridicule*: Or they lay *great Stress* up-
 on some very *obscure*, or more *difficult*
Prophecy; and thence infer, that *no Stress*
 is to be laid upon *Any*: Or because, in
 the nature of the *Thing*, almost *Any single*
Prophecy may possibly be *imagined* appli-
 cable, in some sense or other, to *Some*
Other person; therefore *all of them toge-*
ther, centring uniformly in *Christ* and in
Him alone, yet are not rightly in *Fact* ap-
 plied to *Him*.

THE words of *my Text* are a parti-
 cular and very remarkable *Instance* of
 Some of the *Cases* in the foregoing Ob-
 servation. It has been supposed by Many,
 that this *singular* and *miraculous* *Fact*, of
 the *manner* of our Lord's *Birth*, record-
 ed thus in the *Beginning* and *first En-*
trance of the Gospel-History, both by
 St *Matthew* and St *Luke*; and urged more-

The miraculous Birth of Christ. 5

over by St *Matthew* as an unquestionable S E R M.
Verification of an Antient and (at first ^{I.}
Sight) as remarkable a Prophecy, as any 
is to be found in the Whole *Old Testa-*
ment: It has been supposed (I say) by
Many, that *This Miraculous Fact*, thus
circumstantiated, and thus ushering-in the
whole following History of the Gospel,
must needs have been intended by the
Evangelist, as a primary and fundamental
part of the *Proof* of our Lord's divine
Commission. Which since in reality it
could not possibly be; as being a Fact which,
in the nature of things, could not *itself*
be proved, till the Truth of Christ's Mis-
sion and the Veracity of his Followers had
first been clearly established: Hence they
have endeavoured to destroy the Autho-
rity of the Sacred Writer, as insisting (at
the very Beginning of his History) upon
a *Proof*, which could not possibly be of
any Use towards the Conviction of Unbe-
lievers; and as confirming it by a *Pro-*
phesy, which they think cannot be shown
to be rightly applied, since the Words
may be capable of another Interpretation.

6 *The miraculous Birth of Christ.*


S E R M. F O R the removing therefore of This
I. Prejudice, and to clear more fully the
Meaning and Intent of my Text, I shall
endeavour distinctly to make out the *three*
following Particulars.

I. T H A T this History of our Lord's
miraculous Birth, evidently in fact *was*
not, and in the nature of Things *could not*
possibly be, intended by the Evangelist in
this place, as any *Proof*, for the Convic-
tion of Unbelievers, either of the Digni-
ty of Christ's Person, or of the Truth of
his Doctrines, or of the Reality of his Di-
vine Commission.

2. T H A T yet nevertheless, in the Na-
ture of the Thing, when a Person of such
Dignity as our Lord professed himself to
be, and with such a Divine Commission,
was to come into the World; this one
particular Distinction, the *miraculous* man-
ner of his *Birth*, was in itself a very *rea-*
sonable, proper, and not incredible Circum-
stance.

3. T H A T consequently the Sacred Wri-
ter of the *Life* of our Saviour, had *just*
reason, when assured of the Truth of the
Fact from things which *followed*, to in-
sert

The miraculous Birth of Christ. 7

sert this miraculous Circumstance into the S E R M.
Beginning of his *History*; and, in That ^{I.}
Manner and to That Purpose for which 
he relates it, had a *just Right*, and *good*
and sufficient Grounds, to *apply the Pro-*
phhecy here cited, as a Prediction of it.

1. I say, This History of our Lord's
miraculous Birth, evidently in fact *was*
not, and in the Nature of Things *could*
not possibly be, intended by the Evangelist
in this place, as any *Proof*, for the con-
viction of Unbelievers, either of the Dig-
nity of Christ's Person, or of the Truth
of his Doctrine, or of the Reality of his
Divine Commission. That it *could not*
possibly be alleged in way of *Proof* of any
of these things to Unbelievers, is most
evident for This Plain Reason, because in
the Nature of Things the Fact was *itself*
incapable of being proved, till the Truth
of Christ's Mission and the Veracity of
his Followers had *first* been established.
And that *in fact* it was *never* by the E-
vangelist *intended* as such, appears no less
evidently from hence; that though both
by St *Matthew* and St *Luke* it be laid
down as the *Beginning and Foundation* of
B 4 their

8 *The miraculous Birth of Christ.*

S E R M. their Account of the *Life* of Christ, yet
 I. in the Account they give us of his *Preach-*
 ing, 'tis never once mentioned by Either
 of These very Evangelists, or by Either
 of the Two Other Evangelists, as ever
 alleged by *Christ* in proof of his being the
 true Messiah. Nor in the Book of the
Acts, is it ever mentioned as urged by the
Apostles, in *Their Preaching* at any time
 either to *Jews* or *Gentiles*. Nor in any
 of the *Epistles* of *Paul*, or of any *other*
 of the *Apostles*, is it ever referred to un-
 der That View. It would have been *ab-*
surd to allege, in preaching to Unbelie-
 vers, a Fact which *itself presupposed* the
 Truth of Christ's Mission; and which
 could not have been proved, without first
 taking for granted the Truth of That ve-
 ry Doctrine, in Proof of which This Fact
 was to have been alleged. But the *Be-*
ginning of the *History* of the *Life* of
 Christ, is a very different thing from the
History of his *beginning* to *Preach* the
 Gospel. What happened *First* in *Time*,
 could not but of necessity be *Last* in
Proof: The *credibility* of the *Invisible*
 Miracle of his *Birth*, depending entirely
 on

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on the *Visible* miraculous Proofs, by which S E R M.
our Lord afterwards gave Evidence of *his* I.
own Commission, and by which his A-
postles ascertained *Their own* Veracity, and
the *Truth* of the Accounts they gave con-
cerning *Him*.

2. THOUGH it could not indeed be al-
leged properly, in *Proof* of the Truth of
his Doctrine to Unbelievers; yet never-
theless, in the *nature of the Thing*, when
a Person of such Dignity as our Lord pro-
fessed himself to be, and with such a Di-
vine Commission, was to come into the
World; this one particular Distinction,
the *miraculous* manner of his *Birth*, was
in itself a very *reasonable, proper, and not*
incredible Circumstance. We are taught
in Scripture, that as *the first man* and his 1 Cor xv.
Posterity, were of the Earth, Earthy; the 41.
second man was the Lord from Heaven.
And our Lord himself frequently declared
to his Disciples, that he *came down from* Joh. iii. 13.
Heaven; that he came forth from the xvi. 28.
Father, and came into the World. The
Meaning of these Expressions is explain-
ed to us in Other places; where 'tis de-
clared that he *was in the Beginning The*
Word

S E R M. *Word of God, the original Revealer of the*
 I. Will of the Almighty to his Creatures,
 long before he *was made Flesh and dwelt*
among Us, even from the Creation of the
 World: Having been (as *St Paul* expref-
 Phil. ii. 6. fes it) *in the Form of God, that is, in the*
 Mal. iii. 1. Prophetick Language, the *Angel or Mes-*
senger of the Covenant, before he took up-
on him the Form of a Servant, and was
made in the Likeness of Men, and found
in fashion as a Man, Phil. ii. 8. Now,
 This being the Case; The most *obvious*
 manner in which it might *naturally* be
 expected that fo extraordinary a Person, a
 Person of fuch Dignity as to have had
 Joh. xvii. 5. *glory with God before the World was; I*
 fay, the manner in which it was moft
natural to have expected that fuch a Per-
 fon fhould come into the World, was in
 a way *different* from *the Sons of Men*.
 It was the Appointment of Divine Wif-
 dom, for *Reafons of Government* in the
 infinite and eternal Kingdom of God over
 the Universe, that his Mercy and Com-
 paffion towards Penitent Sinners fhould
 be difpensed in a particular Method;
 through the Atonement made by the
 Blood

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Blood of Christ. In order to make This S E R M.
Atonement, and to become capable of I.
Suffering as a Sacrifice by the shedding of 
his Blood, it was necessary for the Son of
God to have *a Body prepared for him,*
Heb. x. 5. and to be *born after the Like-*
ness of Men. Chap. ii. 14. *Forasmuch as*
the children are Partakers of Flesh and
Blood, he also himself likewise took part of
the same, that through Death he might de-
stroy him that had the Power of Death,
that is, the Devil. Yet, being such a
Person as the Scripture describes him,
sent down immediately *from Heaven;* his
Birth could not *naturally,* if I may so
speak, but be, *miraculous,* as the Text
represents it. And *miraculous* as it was,
'twas yet really, in the *nature of the*
Thing, nothing *more miraculous,* except-
ing only that God has not thought fit
to do the like *continually;* 'twas *in itself,*
I say, not at all *more miraculous,* than
what we vulgarly call (without *Any*
Meaning or Signification in that Phrase,)
the Course of Nature; that is, the Course
of a *mere empty Word,* or *abstract Notion,*
which has no *Being* or *Reality of Ex-*
istence,

12 *The miraculous Birth of Christ.*

S E R M. *istence*, and consequently cannot be the
 I. efficient *Cause* of any thing.



3. THIS *miraculous Birth* of Christ, the Evangelist had *just reason*, when assured of the Truth of the Fact from things which *followed*, to insert at the *Beginning* of his *History* of our Saviour's *Life*; and, in That Manner, and to That Purpose for which he relates it, had a *just Right*, and *good and sufficient Grounds*, to *apply* the *Prophecy* here cited, as a Prediction of it.


W H E N our Lord first told his Disci-
 ples that he *came down from Heaven*, that
 he *came forth from the Father*, and *came into the World*; they did not clearly understand his Meaning; nor probably did the *Blessed Virgin* herself comprehend the *Reason* of That *miraculous Work* which God worked in *Her*. But, as St *Luke* tells us, *Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her Heart*, ch. ii. 19: And so did his Disciples, both with regard to
 This, and to *Many Other* things that Je-
 sus did and said; Which at first they
 understood not, and were afraid to ask him.
 But when *Jesus was glorified*, Joh. xii. 16.
 and

Joh. iii. 13.
 xvi. 28.

Mar. ix.
 32
 Luke ii.
 50. ix. 45.
 xviii. 34.
 Joh. viii.
 27. x. 6.

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and *Luke xxiv. 8.* then remembered they and S E R M.
understood many things that were written I.
of him, and done and spoken by him. 
Again, *Job. ii. 22.* When *Jesus* was risen
from the Dead, then his Disciples remem-
bered that he had said these things unto
them: And they believed the Scripture,
and the Word, which *Jesus* had said.
When our Lord, by his Resurrection from
the Dead, had confirmed to his Disciples
all the Miracles which he had worked,
and all the Doctrines which he had taught
in his *Life-time*; and particularly, before
his *Ascension* into Heaven, had explained
to them the manner of his *Descent* from
thence; which, among other things, in-
jured them of the Truth, and unfolded to
them the Reason, of the *Miraculousness*
of his *Birth*: Then had they just grounds
to declare the *Dignity* of his *Person*, and
to expect that *Credit* should be given by
Believers to the Accounts they had recei-
ved of this miraculous *Nativity*; though
it was what, in the Nature of the Thing,
could never properly be alleged in their
Preaching, among the Proofs they were
to urge for the Conviction of Infidels.

FURTHER:

SERM.

I.

FURTHER: When our Lord, after his Resurrection, *beginning at Moses and all the Prophets*, had expounded unto his Apostles *in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself*, and opened their Understanding, *that they might understand the Scriptures*, Luke xxiv. 27, 45; Then they saw plainly, (and any one Now, who will trace the whole Thread of the Old Testament, may plainly see,) that there is a continued Series and Connexion, one uniform Analogy and Design, carried on for many Ages by Divine Prescience thro' a Succession of Prophecies; which, as in their proper *Centre*, do *All* meet together in *Christ*, and in *Him only*; however the *single lines*, when considered *apart*, may many of them be imagined to have another Direction, and point to intermediate Events. Nothing is more *evident*, than that the *Whole Succession* of Prophecies, can possibly be applied to *None* but *Christ*. Nothing is more *miraculous*, than that they should all of them be *capable* of being possibly applied to *Him*. And whatever *intermediate* Deliverances or Deliverers of God's People, may *seemingly* or *really*

really be spoken of upon *particular* Oc-
casions; nothing is more *reasonable* than
to believe; (in the *Apostles* certainly, who
conversed personally with our Lord after
his Resurrection, nothing could be more
reasonable than to believe,) that the *Ul-
timate* and *General* View of the *Prophe-
tick Spirit* Always was fixt on *Him*, of
whom in *Some* of the Antient Prophecies
'tis *expressly* affirmed, that God's *Servant*
David shall be the *Prince* over his People
for ever; that his *Dominion* shall be an
everlasting *Dominion*, which shall not pass
away; and his *Kingdom*, that which shall
not be destroyed. The *Apostle* St *Matthew*
therefore had a *just* *Right*, and *good* and
sufficient *Grounds*, to *apply* to our Lord
the *Prophecy* cited by him in my Text.
Nor is it of any moment, to what person
Abaz perhaps might think it confined;
or in what sense even *Isaiab* himself, pos-
sibly, might understand the words. For
the *Prophets* themselves *saw* These things,
but *as through a Glass*, *darkly*; even as
the *Apostles* afterwards did, and *We* still
do, things that are yet future. For which
reason,

S E R M.
I.
~

Ezek.
xxxvii. 25.
Dan. vii.
14.

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S E R M. reason, *no Prophecy of the Scripture is*

I. (as St Peter tells us), *of any private In-*
 2 Pet. i. *terpretation; that is, it relates not to*

10. *things within the Prophet's own [ideas] personal Knowledge; For the Prophecy came not in old time by the Will of Man, but Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. So that even the Prophets themselves could do nothing*

1 Pet. i. *more, but inquire and search diligently;*
 10. *as the same Apostle expresses it: Search-*

ing what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the Sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.-----Which things, not only the Prophets, but even the Angels (says he) desire to look into. All that was possible, and all that was intended, and all that was needful to be understood by Those who lived in the Ages before our Saviour, was, that God designed by his Prophets to keep up in the world a perpetual Expectation and Reliance upon his Promises in general, that his True Worshippers should be sure finally to meet with

with an *everlasting Deliverance*; and a *Saviour*, of whose Kingdom there should be *no End*. This is what *Abraham* saw *afar off*, and rejoiced and *was glad*. And This is what *All the Prophecies* in the Old Testament most evidently *end* in, whatever intermediate Events sometimes they may occasionally *begin* with. *That Prophecy* particularly, cited here by the Evangelist in my Text, has *at least thus much* in it; what construction *soever* be put upon the Words. Whatever can be *imagined* to have been in this Prediction promised personally to *Abaz*, was fulfilled in its Season: But that the words in the Text had *principally*, if not *solely*, a Reference to some far greater and more lasting Event; cannot (I think) be doubted by any rational person, who considers the Solemn *Apostrophe* from *Abaz* to the *whole House of Judah*, wherewith they are introduced: *Hear ye now, O House of David*;-----*the Lord himself shall give you a Sign*, (that is, not a Sign to *That generation* then present; but to *Them* a *Promise* of what should *finally* be a Sign

S E R M.
I.


Is. vii. 13.

S E R M. or Evidence of God's everlasting Care of

I. his People,) *Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his Name Immanuel.* And This is still the

more reasonable to be so understood, if it be compared with what the same Prophet says concerning the same person in a chap-

ter nearly following: *Unto Us a Child is born, unto Us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder:----Of the Increase of his Government and Peace there shall be no End,-----from henceforth even for ever.*

THE Application of what has been said, is; that We who are perswaded of the Truth of Christ's *Mission*, and consequently of his *Doctrines*, must endeavour to live suitably to That Holy Religion, of which We make Profession: Always remembering, that the End and Design of the Gospel is to *Teach us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World; looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearance of the Great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Christ. And particularly that at This S E R M.
time when we commemorate his Birth, I.
we keep the Feast, not with the Leaven of
Malice and Wickedness, or of Rioting and
Debauchery; but with the unleavened
Bread of Sincerity, Soberness, and Truth.







S E R M O N II.

The Prediction of the MESSIAH.

[*Preached on Christmas-Day.*]




ISAIAH ix. 6.

Unto Us a Child is born, unto Us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his Name shall be called wonderful, Counsellour, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.



OD, the Supreme Governour S E R M.
and Lord of the Universe; II.
who *worketh all things after*
the Counsel of his Will; having
appointed, in the unsearchable Wisdom

S E R M. of his Government that the Method by
 II. which sinful men should be brought un-
 to Salvation, should be by his Son's
 appearing and suffering in the Flesh;
 thought fit, from the Beginning of the
 World, to give men at first obscure No-
 tices, and afterwards by degrees clearer
 and clearer predictions, of a Saviour who
 should come in the fulness of Time, to
 be their Redeemer, Mediator, Intercessor
 and Judge. In which whole Dispensati-
 on, as in all other Matters, when we af-
 firm that God disposes things *after the
 Counsel of his own Will*, we must always
 take care so to understand this, and other
 the like Expressions of Scripture, that it
 may signify, not what vain and presump-
 tuous *men* are apt to mean, when *They*
 talk of acting according to their *own Will
 and Pleasure*, that is, arbitrarily and
 without reason; but the meaning of this
 sort of expressions, when applied to *God*,
 who can never *please* to do any thing but
 what is best, is This only; that *his* mere
 Will and Pleasure ought abundantly to sa-
 tisfy us, that tho' *we* do not perhaps know
 in particular *what* all the reasons are, yet
in

in reality there always are in the things S E R M.
themselves the greatest and strongest reasons, II.
upon account of which every thing that 
He does, is *in itself* the best and fittest
to be done. Having therefore in per-
fect Wisdom, as Supreme Governor and
Lord of all, determined to bring sinful
Man to Salvation by this particular Me-
thod ; he opened his divine Intention at
first obscurely to *Adam*, by promising
that *the Seed of the Woman should bruise
the Serpent's Head*: And afterwards a
little further to *Abraham*, by showing
him that *in His seed should all the Na-
tions of the Earth be blessed* : Then,
with still more distinct circumstances, to
Moses ; under the numerous types and
shadows of the Law. And lastly, more
and more plainly and explicitly, as the
Time drew nearer, by full and clear Pre-
dictions of many successive *Prophets*. Un-
der all which several Dispensations, they
who obeyed the word of God, according
to the manner in which it was Then re-
spectively revealed to them, were each of
them entitled to the Benefit of the whole
Salvation ; and, notwithstanding their
C 4 different

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II.



different degrees of Knowledge, are all of them finally to be gathered together into One in Christ; so that He, to whom much is revealed, shall have nothing over; and He, to whom was revealed but little, shall have no lack; when, at the consummation of all things, they shall all meet in one great and general Assembly of the first-born which are written in Heaven; Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles; and whosoever have in all Ages, after the pattern of these great Examples, obeyed the Commandments of God as made known to them, whether by the Light of Nature, or by the Law of *Moses*, or by the Gospel of Christ.

OF all the Prophecies in the Old Testament, concerning this Method which the divine Wisdom has appointed, of bringing men to Salvation; there is none that contains a clearer and more distinct, a fuller and more particular prediction, than the words now read unto you for the Subject of our present Meditations: *Unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his shoulder; and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,*

Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. In discoursing upon which words at This Time, the Method shall be, to consider and explain distinctly the several particulars, whereof the Text consists, in the Order they lie; and from each particular so explained, to infer in its place, as we go along, what may be usefully and practically deduced therefrom.

Unto Us a Child is born: These words, as they sound in the *English*, may seem at first sight to express nothing more, than the natural Birth of some eminent person. But in the strict sense of the original; and according to the intention of the whole Prophecy, 'tis plain they must be so understood, as if they had been thus rendred; *Unto us is born The Child*, absolutely and by way of eminence; That *Child*, whom all the Prophecies from the beginning of the World, in their final intention pointed at; whom *this* Prophecy of *Ijaiab*, thro' every part of it, describes under different Characters; and whom the Text may reasonably be supposed to refer to as *particularly before-mentioned*, ch. vii. 14.

The

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26 *The Prediction of the Messiah.*

S E R M. *The Lord himself shall give you a Sign ;*
 II. *behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a*
 Son, *and shall call his Name Immanuel.*

This Birth of Christ ; as its being of a *Virgin* was a mark of Dignity more than human ; that He, who by the Will of his Father was the *Author* of Nature, might be distinguished by being born not after the *Course* of Nature ; so the *Birth itself*, his being born at all, and coming into the World as a *Child*, was an evidence of the reality of his Incarnation. He was found (saith St Paul) in *fashion as a Man*, and was made in the likeness of *Men* : The meaning is ; not in the likeness of our *nature*, in the *appearance* only, as opposed to the *reality* ; but he was made after the likeness of *other Men*, by *really* partaking of our infirm *Nature*.

IN order to *redeem* mankind after *that Method* which the Wisdom of God had from the beginning appointed, it was necessary that Christ should *suffer* ; and in order to *That Suffering*, it was necessary that he should be *born* after the likeness of Men. *Forasmuch as the children* (saith the Apostle) *are partakers of Flesh and Blood,*

The Prediction of the Messiah.

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he also himself took part of the same, that thro' Death he might destroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil;-----Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, (tempted in all points like as we are, only without sin; and capable of being touched with the feeling of our infirmities;) that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the Sins of the people; For in that He himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted, Heb. ii. 14. And from hence the same Apostle in another place, tho' There indeed he speaks figuratively concerning Christ's mystical Body the Church, yet from hence it is that the Ground of his manner of expressing himself is taken; We are members (saith he) of his Body, of his Flesh and of his Bones.

THE proper Use of this first Observation in the Text, the humiliation of Christ in his Birth, is what St Paul infers from the same observation, *Phil. ii. 5. Let This mind, the same humble mind, be in You,*
which

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ch. iv. 15.

S E R M. *which was also in Christ Jesus; who tho'*
 II. *he was in the form of God, invested with*
 *Divine Authority and Dominion, yet was*
not greedy of appearing as God (so the
words are in the Original;) but---took
upon him the form of a servant, and was
made in the Likeness of Men; and glori-
fied not Himself to be made an High-Priest,
but was glorified by Him that begat him,
Heb. v. 5; and honoured not Himself,
but was honoured by Him that sent him,
Job. viii. 54.

I T follows; *Unto Us a Son is gi-*
ven. And these words also, like those
 fore-going, must be understood absolute-
 ly and by way of Eminence: *Unto us is*
given The Son; That Son of Man, who
was so, as no other ever was, the Son of
Man; who was so, as no other ever can
be, the Son of God: That divine Person,
 who was the Subject of all the Prophecies,
 from the foundation of the World, and
 the expectation of all Nations. The
 original of the *former* character, his being
 the Son of *Man*, is that sublime descrip-
 tion which the prophet *Daniel* gives of his
 Vision, ch. vii. 13. *I saw in the Night-*
 I *Visions,*

Visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man, came with the clouds of Heaven, and came to the antient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion and glory and a Kingdom. From this prophetic description it is, that our Saviour in the Gospels is so constantly characterized by That Title of *the Son of Man*: Mat. xxiv. 30. *Then shall appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven,* (the Signal given you by the Prophet *Daniel*, the Signal of That *Son of Man* there described,) *and they shall see him coming in the clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory.* And *Job. iii. 13. The Son of Man which is in Heaven.* And in the book of the *Revelation*, ch. i. 13. the very words of *Daniel* are transcribed; *one like unto the Son of Man*; and ch. xiv. 14. *Upon the cloud one sat, like unto the Son of Man.* The other character of our Saviour, his being the Son of *God*, was given him *first* upon account of his being *born miraculously* of the Virgin by the immediate Power of God, *Luc. i. 35*; Then again, upon account of his being *raised from the dead* by
the

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Luc. i. 32.  
Mar. v. 7.

S E R M. the like miraculous Power of the Almighty, *Rom. i. 4. Acts xiii. 33.* And  
 II. lastly, upon account of his being revealed to be That divine Person, who, deriving his Being from the Father in a singular and incomprehensible manner; and having been with the Father, from the Beginning; and having had Glory with Him, before the World was; and having originally exercised the Father's Power, in the Creation of the World; and having since in all ages appeared *in the form of God*, as the Word, the Messenger, the Representative, the *Image, of the Invisible God*; at length, in the Fulness of  
 Joh. i. 14. Time, was *made Flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

UNTO *Us*, says the Prophet in the Text, is this Son of God given: unto *Us*, as it was *Then* literally understood, the *posterity of Abraham*, the Nation of the *Jews*; but, as it is *Now* distinctly revealed in the Gospel, and as it was even *Then* obscurely predicted, unto *Us Gentiles* also is he given; unto us that are *far off*,

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off, as well as to them that are *near*; unto S E R M. us *Sinners*, of all Nations and of all Ages; II. even unto *all Mankind*, who are willing  to repent, and reform their manners, and make acknowledgment of the Truth; For God *would have all men to be saved*, and wills *not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*: Nay even to *Them* therefore which never heard of him, must the Benefit of his Coming extend, according to the proportion of their Capacities unknown to us; For *the Mercy of God is, without exception, over all his works.*

T o Us is This Son *given*. It is not without reason, that the word *given* is so carefully and constantly inserted, and so great an emphasis and stress laid upon it, in almost all the Texts of both the Old and New Testament, which mention the coming of Christ into the World. The intent of it is, to express to us distinctly the respective parts, which the Father and the Son bore in the redemption of the World; that neither the One, nor the Other, neither he that gave, nor he that was willing to be given for us, should be defrauded of

S E R M. of their proper Honour. That God gave  
 II. his Son, out of his bosom; is expressive  
 to us of the *Father's Supreme Authority*,  
 and of his original, essential, and eternal  
*Goodness*: That the Son gave *himself* for  
 us, or was *willing* to be given, denotes the  
*Love* of *Christ* towards Mankind; and  
 explains the *Justice* of his being appoint-  
 ed to suffer, tho' he was an *innocent* per-  
 son; because *That* appointment, as 'twas  
 by the Will of the Father, so 'twas also  
 by his own free consent. The *first* of  
 these, *viz.* the *Supreme Authority* of the  
*Father*, is set forth in those Texts of  
 Scripture, where it is affirmed that *in*  
*the fulness of Time* God sent forth his Son,  
 Gal. iv. 4; that he saved us according to  
 his own purpose and grace in *Christ Jesus*,  
 2 Tim. viii. 9; even according to the pur-  
 pose of *Him* who worketh all things after  
 the counsel of his own Will, Eph. i. 11.  
 And indeed in the Nature of things it is  
 evident, that the Supreme Power to  
 whom the satisfaction is to be made, must  
 appoint *what* satisfaction he will be pleas-  
 ed to accept. The *Second* of these, *viz.*  
 the *original Goodness* of the *Father*, is  
 set

set forth in those Texts, where the Scripture teaches us, *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, Joh. iii. 16; and 1 Joh. iv. 9. In this was manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the World, that we might live thro' Him; and ver. 10. he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our Sins. The third particular, viz. the Love of Christ in being willing to be thus sent or given for us, is exprest in those Texts, wherein we are taught, that Christ gave himself a ransom for all, 1 Tim. ii. 6; that he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, Tit. ii. 14. And Both these together, (the Authority and Goodness of the Father in giving his Son, and the Love of Christ in being willing to be given for us,) are exprest in one, Gal. i. 4. who gave himself for us, according to the Will of God and our Father.*

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II.



THE *Uses of This particular*, are; 1<sup>st</sup>, that we acknowledge *primarily* the original essential *Goodness and Compassion* of *God our Father*, as the *first Cause and Author* of our *Salvation*; upon which account, *St Paul* frequently stiles the *Father, God our Saviour*; and that therefore we look not upon him as a *cruel and implacable Judge*; but on the contrary extoll with all thankfulness our *Redemption thro' Christ, to the praise of the glory of His Grace, who has made us accepted in the beloved, and has given us the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his own Will, Eph. i. 5.* 2<sup>dly</sup>, That in the next place we thankfully express our *Gratitude* also to our *Saviour himself*, who condescended for our sakes to become *Man*; who loved us, and gave himself for us; and washed us from our *Sins in his own blood, and has made us Kings and Priests to God and his Father.* 3<sup>dly</sup>, That from *This Great instance* of the *divine Grace and Goodness*, we learn to depend upon the same *Beneficence* for all *other good things* likewise: For *He that spared not his own*

Eph. v. 2.

Rev. i. 5.



*Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with Him also freely give us all things, Rom. viii. 32. Not, a Liberty to sin, that Grace may further abound; God forbid; But all good things, all things really profitable to our present and future Happiness. Lastly, that from this wonderful Love of God towards Us, we learn our own Obligation to love one another; 1 Joh. iv. 11. Beloved, if God so loved Us, we ought also to love one another.*

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AND thus much concerning the first part of the words, *Unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given.*

IT follows, *And the Government shall be upon his Shoulder.* The Jews, tho' they acknowledged these words were to be applied to the *Messiah*, yet they understood them of the Dominion only of a *temporal* Prince, who should subdue their enemies for them. But the opening of this Prophecy by degrees in further predictions, was such as ought to have given *Them* better Notions of this matter; and the Account *We* have in the New Testament of the accomplishment of all those

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predictions has from Us removed all appearance of difficulty in the understanding them. The true meaning of the words, is begun to be opened in the very next verse immediately following the Text, *Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever,* ver. 7. In the Prophecy of Daniel, 'tis explained a little further; ch. ii. 44. *The God of Heaven shall set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed,--- and it shall stand for ever.* And still more clearly, ch. vii. 13. *I saw in the night-visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of Heaven, and came to the Antient of days, and they brought him near before him; And there was given him dominion and glory and a Kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* This was a sufficiently plain intimation, that the Kingdom of the Messiah was not to be  
a wordly

a worldly temporal Kingdom. The Ap-  
plication of these Prophecies to *Christ*, is  
made expressly by the Angel to the Blef-  
fed Virgin, *Luk. i. 32. He shall be great,*  
*and shall be called the Son of the Higbest,*  
*-----and he shall reign over the house of*  
*Jacob for ever, and of his Kingdom there*  
*shall be no end.* What manner of Domi-  
nion this was to be, our Saviour himself  
began more clearly to explain, *Mat. xxviii.*  
*18. All Power is given to me in Heaven*  
*and Earth.* This discovered that it was  
to be a *spiritual Kingdom*, more *exten-*  
*sive*, as well as more *lasting*, than Earth-  
ly Dominions. The Principal *Acts* of  
Power in this spiritual Kingdom, are ex-  
pressed by *St Peter, Acts x. 42; He is or-*  
*dained of God to be Judge of Quick and*  
*Dead; and that thro' his Name whosoever*  
*believeth in him shall receive remission of*  
*Sins.* And the full *Extent* of this whole  
*Dominion* is set forth by *St Paul*, in those  
passages of his Epistles, where he tells us  
that *Christ sitteth at the right hand of the*  
*Throne of God, being Head over all things,*  
*exalted far above all principality, and pow-*  
*er, and might, and dominion, and every*

S E R M.  
II.  
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Heb. xii. 2.
Eph. i. 22.
Col. ii. 10.
Phil. ii. 11.
Eph. i. 21.


S E R M. *name that is named not only in This World,*

II. *but also in that which is to come; Angels*
 and Authorities and Powers being made
 subject unto him, and all things put under

his feet. To which description, the A-
 postle yet thought it necessary to add the
 following caution, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 27;

But when he saith all things are put under
him, 'tis manifest that he is excepted which
did put all things under him; And (in the
end) when all things shall be subdued unto
him, then shall the Son also himself be sub-
ject unto Him that put all things under
Him, (having delivered up the Kingdom to
God even the Father,) that God even the
Father may be all in all. Which deliver-

ing up of the Kingdom, if any one asked
 how it is consistent with those forementio-
 ned prophecies of his reigning for ever;
 the Answer is plain, that as of the Saints,
 under Christ their Head and Lord, it is
 affirmed Rev. xxii. 5, that *they shall reign*
for ever and ever; so of Christ in an in-
 finitely higher sense, even after his deli-
 vering up the Kingdom to the Father, it
 will still be true, that of his Dominion
 with and under the Father, *there shall be*

no End. And This is the full meaning of S E R M.
 That Expression, *The Government shall* II.
be upon his shoulder. 

THE remaining part of the Text, is a further Description of the *Person*, upon whose shoulder it was prophesied *This Government should be*; 'tis a further description of his Person, under four distinct Names or Characters. The *First* is; *And his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor.* The term, *Wonderful*, signifies, that the Person was to be of *Secret* and *Greater Dignity*, than the *Jews* expected: And so the word is of the same import, with that more antient intimation given to *Jacob*, when he wrestled with him, *Gen. xxxii. 29. Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my Name?* and to *Manoah*, *Judg. xiii. 18. Why askest thou thus after my Name, seeing it is secret?* The other term, *Counsellor*, signifies the *Re-* μεγάλης βουλῆς ἀγγελοῦ.
vealer of the Secret Counsel of God; For Acts xx. 27.
 so the Gospel is frequently stiled in Scrip- 1 Cor ii. 7.
 ture, the whole *Counsel of God*; the *bid-* Eph iii. 9.
den wisdom; the *mystery which has been bid* 10 11
from ages and from generations, but now is Col i. 26.
made manifest to his Saints; the *mystery* Rom xvi. 25.

S E R M. *which was kept secret since the World began, but now is made manifest: and by the*
 II. *Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the*
commandment of the everlasting God, made
known to all Nations for the obedience of
Faith. Upon This account it is, that
 Christ is called *The Word of God, the*
 Revealer of his Will, the *Angel or Mes-*
senger of his Covenant, and, in the words
 of the Text, *Wonderful, Counsellor.*

Joh. i. 1.
 Rev. xix.
 13.
 Mal. iii. 1.

T H E *Second Character is, He shall be*
 called *The mighty God, or mighty Lord.*
 The meaning of which phrase, has been
 already in good measure explained under
 that foregoing character, *The government*
shall be upon his shoulder; And the com-
plete import of it is more fully expres-
sed to us in those places of the New Te-
 stament, wherein Christ is stiled *Heir of*
all things, Lord of all or over all, Lord
both of the Dead and Living, the Prince
of the Kings of the Earth, the Lord of
of Lords and King of Kings, and, in one
 word, (by the appointment of the Fa-
 ther,) *our Judge, our Lord, and our God:*
 The Sum and Intent of all which Titles
 together, is accurately set forth by St

Heb. i. 2.
 Acts x. 36.
 Rom. x.
 12. xiv. 9.
 Rev. i. 5.
 xvii. 14.
 xix. 16.

Heb. i. 8
 Job. i. 1.
 xx. 28.

Paul

The Prediction of the Messiah.

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Paul in that most lively description, S E R M.
Phil. ii. 9. God has given him a Name II.
which is above every Name; that at the
name of Jesus every knee should bow, (every
Creature should submit to His Authority,
of things in Heaven, and things in Earth,
and things under the Earth; and that
every tongue should confess that Jesus
Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the
Father.

T H E *Third Character is, He shall be*
called the everlasting Father. Which
Phrase, as it lies in our Translation, is
very apt to be mistaken. For if thereby
be understood, that the *Son* is the *Father*;
this would be plainly *confounding the Per-*
sons of the *Father* and the *Son*, and (by
a manifest Absurdity) making *the Son* to
be *the Father of Himself*. Which man-
ner of speaking is so much the worse,
because there were in the Primitive times
certain False Teachers who did so speak,
and whose Doctrine (being of worse con-
sequence than at first sight appeared) was
severely reprov'd by the Apostles. *He is*
an Antichrist, saith St John, that denieth
the Father and the Son, 1 Joh. ii. 22. And
they

SERM. II. *they shall bring in, saith St Peter, damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, 2 Pet. ii. 1; speaking of those, who in reality denied our Saviour to have any Being at all, by making the Son to be nothing else but merely another Name for the Father. The true rendering therefore of these words of the Prophet, is, not the everlasting Father, but the Father or Lord of the future everlasting Age, the Age of the Gospel; concerning which the Apostle declares, Heb. ii. 5. that to Christ only, and not to Angels, hath God put in subjection this Age to come.*

Best Copies of
LXX.

Πατὴρ αἰώνων.

Pater seculi futuri.
Vulg.

Lastly, THE Fourth and Last Character here given to our Saviour, is, that He shall be called The Prince of Peace. The meaning of which Title, was first in some degree explained by the Angels to the Shepherds, when they sung that Hymn, Luk. ii. 14. Peace on Earth, good will towards Men; which was well answered with That Hosannab, the Disciples sung to our Saviour, ch. xix. 38. Peace in Heaven, that is, reconciliation with God. More distinctly afterwards by St Peter, Acts

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Acts x. 36, 43. God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, he is Lord of All; (that is, establishing Peace and Unity between Jews and Gentiles, under Jesus Christ their Common Lord,) that through his Name whosoever believeth in him, should receive remission of Sins. Most fully and clearly of all, by St Paul; Rom. v. 1. Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: and Eph. ii. 14. He is our Peace, who hath made Both One, that is, both Jews and Gentiles; and hath -----reconciled Both unto God in one Body by the Cross, having-----preached Peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh: and Col. i. 19. It pleased the Father-----by Him, (having made Peace through the Blood of his Cross) to reconcile all things unto himself;-----and you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet Now hath he reconciled. The Uses of this last particular are; First, Since God has graciously been pleased to send us this word of reconciliation by the Prince of Peace, that therefore We on our part be also willing to be reconciled to Him, by forsaking

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II.


S E R M. forsaking those Sins which are the cause
 II. of his displeasure; *Now then, saith St Paul, we are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God, 2 Cor. v. 20. Secondly, Having so great an Intercessor for us, as the Prince of Peace Himself, the Son of the living God; that therefore we come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, having access with confidence through the Faith of him; Heb. x. 19. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us;-----and having an High-Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true Heart, in full assurance of Faith. Thirdly, That yet we be careful to consider, that this peace and reconciliation purchased for us by Christ, is only upon condition of our future obedience: For so the Apostle adds in the words next immediately following those now cited; let us draw near-----in full assurance of faith, having our Heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure Water; that is, having our minds cleansed with that purification*

Heb. iv.
 16.
 Eph. iii.
 12.

rification from wickedness, the Sign and S E R M. Emblem of which is the Baptism of Wa- II. ter: And Col. i. 23. God hath now  reconciled you to himself, saith St Paul, if ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel. Fourthly, That having so great a Mediator as the Prince of Peace appointed us of God, we suffer no others to be joined with him by human invention. For as worshipping any other God, besides the Father Almighty, is Idolatry against God, or setting up Idols in the place of God: So worshipping any other Mediator, besides his only Son our Lord, is Idolatry against Christ, or setting up Idol-Mediators. They who worship Saints and Angels, beguile themselves of their reward, saith the Apostle, not holding the Head, which is Christ, Col. ii. 18. Lastly, Upon this particular great occasion of commemorating thankfully the Birth of the Prince of Peace, let us keep the Feast worthily and as becometh Christians; not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, or a rioting and debauchery, but with the unleavened bread of Sincerity, Soberness and Truth.



S E R M O N III.

The Character of the MESSIAH.

[*Preached on Christmas-Day.*]




G A L. IV. 4, 5.

But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law; To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons.



THE principal design of St Paul's S E R M. III. in this Epistle, is to vindicate the truth and justice of God, in abolishing the *Jewish* religion so far as concerned the *Gentile* Converts, and establishing the *Christian*

S E R M. *stian* alone in its room: against those who
 III. contended that even the *Gentile* Disciples
 were obliged to observe the law of *Moses*,
 and that the religion of *Christ* was to be
 added to That of *Moses*, and not That of
Moses to be taken away by *Christ*. Amongst
 many Arguments which the Apostle makes
 use of to confute these false Teachers, he
 begins this ivth chapter with the Similitude
 of a young Heir's being under Tutors and
 Governours, ver. 1 and 2. *Now I say,*
that the Heir, as long as he is a child,
differeth nothing from a Servant, though
he be lord of all; But is under Tutors
and Governours, until the time appointed
of the Father. Which Similitude he ap-
 plies in the 3^d verse, and in the words of
 the Text; *Even So We,* says he, *when we*
were children, We of the Jewish dispensa-
tion, were in bondage under the elements
of the world; But when the fulness of time
was come, God sent forth his Son made
of a woman, made under the law, to re-
deem them that were under the law, that we
might receive the adoption of Sons. The
 Meaning is: Before the World was pre-
 pared for the reception of the Gospel,

God thought fit to oblige men to observe ^{S E R M,} those first and more imperfect rudiments, ^{III.} which were instituted in the *Jewish* law;  But when the time was come that the *Messiah* should appear, God did by him abolish *That* institution of religion, (at least as to the Necessity of its being embraced by the *Gentiles*) and redeemed or freed men from the servile obedience thereof; requiring from them thenceforward, only That free, That manly and rational obedience, which is the duty and privilege not of Servants but of Sons; *That we might receive the Adoption of Sons.*

IN the Words we may observe, 1st, The Character of the person sent into the World; *God sent forth his Son.* 2^{dly}, His Condition and Manner of Conversation among men; *he was made of a woman, made under the law.* 3^{dly}, The Design of this his coming; it was *To redeem those that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons.* And 4^{thly}, The particular Time of his appearing; *When the fulness of time was come.*

S E R M. Iſt, HERE is the Character of the per-
 III. ſon ſent into the World; *God ſent forth
 his Son.* The Phraſe is of the ſame im-
 port, with thoſe other expreſſions we meet
 with in Scripture; *God ſo loved the world,
 that he gave his only begotten Son, that
 whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not pe-
 riſh, but have everlaſting life, Joh. iii. 16.*
 and, *God who at ſundry times and in di-
 vers manners ſpake in times paſt unto the
 fathers by the prophets, hath in theſe laſt
 days ſpoken unto us by his Son, Heb. i. 1.*
 The Meaning is: God having of old eſta-
 bliſhed ſeveral Forms of Religion among
 men, by divers ways of revelation, by
 diſcovering himſelf to the Patriarchs, by
 the delivering of the law to *Mofes*, and
 by the preaching of the prophets; and all
 theſe Methods having proved ſeverally in-
 effectual to make men truly virtuous, to
 recover God's Creation from the *Corrup-
 tion and Bondage* of Sin, and much more
 inſufficient to afford any effectual means
 of redeeming them from the *Guilt* there-
 of; he did at laſt in mercy and compaſ-
 ſion to mankind vouchſafe to afford them
 one more clear and perfect revelation of
 his

his Will, by the preaching of a person S E R M.
of far greater excellence and authority than III.
Any before; even by his *own Son*. This
expression therefore of *God's sending forth*
his Son, implies plainly these two things;
first, that the person here declared to be
sent forth into the World, was in a sin-
gular and peculiar manner the Son of
God; and *2dly*, that he was *with* God,
before he was sent into the World. *1st*,
The person here declared to be sent into
the World, was in a peculiar manner the
Son of God. Many Senses there are in
which a person may be said to be the Son
of God; and in great variety of signifi-
cation does the Scripture itself make use
of this expression. The *Angels* are styled
the *Sons of God*, Job xxxviii. 7. and *Adam*
is said to be the *Son of God*, Luk. iii. 38.
because immediately created by him:
They who are *sanctified* by the *Spirit of*
God, are called the *Sons of God*, Rom. viii.
14. because they live in obedience to his
government, and so are Members of his
Family or Household; They who shall be
thought worthy to obtain *that life which*
is to come, are called the *Sons of God*, Luk.

S E R M. XX. 36. because they are as it were anew
 III. created of God, being the Children of
 the resurrection to eternal Happiness:
 They who are appointed to any *high Office* by the special and immediate Will of God, are also called *Gods*, or the *Sons of God*, because they act in his stead, or as his Vicegerents; and in this Sense our Saviour himself uses the phrase in his Reply to the *Jews*, John x. 34. *Is it not written in your law, I said ye are Gods? If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?* These therefore and some other Senses there are, in which the Scripture gives men that great title of being *the Sons of God*. And the *reason why* any person is so called, is generally expressly added, or at least plainly included in the words; as in the instance of *Adam*; of those who shall be raised from the Dead; and of Princes, or sanctified Men and Prophets being stiled *the Sons of God*. But when the title is given to our
 Blessed

Blessed Saviour, 'tis given him either ab-^{S E R M.}
solutely and by way of eminence, or with ^{III.}
some high and particular Note of distin-
ction. 'Tis sometimes given him *absolutely*
and by way of *eminence*; as in the
Text he is called *The Son of God*; and
then 'tis plain from the manner of the ex-
pression, that 'tis to be understood in a
high and peculiar Sense: For when a
title which may be given men upon dif-
ferent respects, and frequently is so in
very different significations, according to
the occasion upon which it is conferred,
and with manifest reference to that oc-
casion; when I say such a title is given
to any particular person *absolutely and by
way of eminence*, 'tis manifest it is then
to be understood in the highest and most
excellent Sense. In *other* passages of Scri-
pture, this title is given him with some
high and particular Note of *distinction*,
as *only begotten, beloved, God's dear Son,*
his own Son, and the like: *Rom. viii. 3.*
What the law could not do in that it was
weak through the flesh, God sending his
own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and
for Sin, i. e. as the Words may more

S E R M. properly be rendred, *by being a Sacrifice*
 III. *for Sin, condemned Sin in the flesh: and*
 Job. i. 14. *The Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The Angels (as I before observed) are called the Sons of God, Job xxxviii. 7. But unto which of the Angels said he at any time with so peculiar an Emphasis, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? Heb. i. 5. This therefore is so distinguishing an expression, that it necessarily implies our Saviour to be the Son of God in a different and more exalted sense than the Angels themselves are; For in the next verse the Apostle brings Them in as his Ministers, subjected unto him, and paying honour to him; ver. 6. When he bringeth in the first begotten into the World, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him. And ch. ii. ver. 16. 'Tis said, He took not on him the nature of Angels, (which shows that it would have been a great condescension in him to have done even That) but he took upon him the seed of Abraham, i. e. the nature*

ture

ture of *Man*: But because this was writS E R M.
 to the *Jews*, among whom Christ wasIII.
 born, and to whom he first preached,
 therefore it is not said the Nature of
Men, but the Seed of *Abraham*. Further;
 even in that singular and peculiar appli-
 cation of it to *our Lord only*, there is also
 some variety: For he is so styled, on ac-
 count of his miraculous conception, *Luke*
i. 35; then, of his Office, *Job. x. 34*;
 then, of his Resurrection, *Acts xiii, 33*, and
Rom. i. 4; then, of his being appointed
 Heir of all things, and as a Son in his own
 house, *Heb. iii. 6*. But beyond all this, there
 is still something further implied in the Use
 of this Phrase: For the Text supposes,
 secondly, that he was *with* God, in the
 bosom of the Father, before he was sent
 into the World; *God sent forth his Son*;
 For though the word which we here
 render, *send forth*, be also applied in Scri-
 pture to God's sending his Prophets to the
Jews, and our Saviour's commissioning
 his Apostles to preach the Gospel; and
 so may properly signify in *general, only*
 the *appointing* a person to execute any
 office or commission, yet when it is ap-
 plied

S E R M. plied to our Saviour's *coming into the*
 III. *World*, (or coming forth from the Father
 into the World) as in the words now
 mention'd, it clearly implies, that he who
 was thus sent *into the world from God*,
 was *with God*, in the glory of the Father,
 before he was sent into the World: As
 appears both from the natural Force of the
 expression itself, and more fully from those
 parallel places of Scripture, which men-
 tion to us the same thing. *Job. xvii. 5.*
 Our Saviour prays thus to his Father, *And*
now, O Father, glorify me with thine own
self, with the glory which I had with thee
before the world was. Again *Job. iii. 13.*
No man hath ascended into Heaven, but
he that came down from Heaven, even the
Son of man which is in Heaven. And a-
 gain, *ch. xvi. 28.* he saith unto his Dis-
 ciples, *I came forth from the Father, and*
am come into the world; again, I leave
the world, and go to the Father. Which
 words his Disciples thought so plainly to
 signify his having been *with God*, in the
 glory of the Father, before he was sent
 into the World; that they immediately
 answered him, *ver. 29. Now speakest thou*
 plainly,

plainly, and speakest no parable: By this S E R M.
we believe that thou camest forth from III.
God. The Use the Scripture makes of
This consideration, of the Dignity of the
Person, by whom God has been pleased
to declare his Mercy in the Gospel; that
it was the only begotten Son of God, sent
down from Heaven to take our Nature
upon him; I say, the Use which the Scri-
pture makes of This consideration, is
This: Heb. ii. 2. If the word spoken by
Angels was stedfast, and every transgres-
sion and disobedience received a just re-
compence of Reward; How shall we e-
scape, if we neglect so great Salvation,
which at the first began to be spoken by the
LORD!

Secondly, HERE is a description of this
divine Person's condition, and his manner
of conversation in the World; He was
made of a woman, made under the Law.
He was made of a Woman, i. e. he be-
came truly and really a Man; not taking
upon him only the similitude of our Na-
ture, and appearing in the form and ap-
pearance of a Man, but being really and
truly such; subjected to all the infirmities
of

S E R M. *of humane nature, and tempted in all points*
 III. *like as we are, yet without sin, Heb. iv. 15.*

For (as the Apostle observes, *Heb. ii. 17.*)
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: For in that he
himself hath suffered, being tempted, he
is able to succour them that are tempted.
 It follows; *he was made under the law;*
i. e. he was subject and obedient to it. By
 the *law*, some understand here the moral
 law of God; and that, by our Saviour's
 being made under the law, is meant his
 performing perfect and compleat obedi-
 ence to the law of God: that so, by ha-
 ving in his own person unfinning obe-
 dience to the law of God, he might
 become the Author of eternal Salvation,
 to all those that should believe and re-
 pent; and that by having first obeyed those
 commandments himself, to which he re-
 quired obedience from others, he might
 become an example of obedience to his
 Disciples. All which, is indeed very true:
 But yet, because by *the law* the Apostle
 in

in this Epistle means generally the ceremonial law, or that part of the *Mosaick* institution which is opposed to the Christian religion, and superseded by it; and because 'tis most probable he must in this place concerning our Saviour's submitting to *that* law, which in the words immediately following 'tis said the design of his coming into the World was to redeem men from; therefore 'tis more reasonable to conclude, that, by his being *made under the law*, the Apostle intends in this place, that our Saviour was born in the nation and under the religion of the *Jews*; that he was circumcised according to the commandment of *Moses*; that he submitted to and performed the whole ceremonial law, (fulfilling even in *that* sense all righteousness;) that having perfectly obeyed the law in his Life, he might for ever abolish that part of it at his Death, and free his followers from the Servitude thereof.

3dly, HERE is the *End* and *Design* of his coming thus into the World, set forth in the last part of the words; *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might*

S E R M.
III.
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S E R M.

III.



might receive the adoption of Sons. The same phrase the Apostle again makes use of in the Epistle to the *Romans*, ch. viii. ver. 15. *Ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father; i. e.* God deals not with Us as a Master with his Servants, but as a Father with his Sons, requiring of us not any hard and burdensome service, but only a rational and sincere obedience. Our Lord came to redeem them that were under the law; *i. e.* to abrogate the burdensome ceremonies of the *Jewish* institution; That we might receive the adoption of Sons; *i. e.* that he might establish with men a New Covenant, which should be most *easy* to observe, and most *sufficient* to justify those that should observe it. Most *easy* to observe, is this Covenant of the Gospel; because its precepts are not positive and carnal Ordinances, but the great duties of the moral and eternal law of God, which are absolutely and in their own nature most acceptable to God, and most perfective of men; and 'tis most *sufficient* to justify those who shall live according to it, because

because their works shall not be judged S E R M.
with strictness and rigour, but through III.
the intercession of Christ, their sincerity shall be accepted instead of perfect obedience: In the *former* respect (its being easy to observe;) the Christian institution is called the *Law of liberty*, Jam. i. 25; and the *glorious liberty* of the Sons of God, Rom. viii. 21; and Gal. iv. 7. *Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a Son.* In the *latter* respect, namely, in respect of its sufficiency to justify those that shall live suitably to it, the Christian institution is called the *righteousness of God*, Rom. iii. 20, 21. *By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified. 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 in Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe; And, by it all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, Acts xiii. 39.* There being several great Crimes, for which no regular Expiation was allowed under the law; from which Curse, men
are

S E R M. are now by true Repentance and Amend-
 III. ment, delivered under the Gospel: Which
 is *therefore* stiled the Righteousness of
 God to men. This is the adoption, where-
 by we become Sons of God, and Heirs of
 Salvation: This is the liberty wherewith
 Christ has made us free: We are not ob-
 liged to any impossible performances, nor
 to any grievous and burdensome rites; but
 if we sincerely repent, and return to the
 obedience of God's Commands, according
 to the gracious Terms and Conditions of
 the Gospel; we shall, through the inter-
 cession of Christ, be accepted by our hea-
 venly Father. But then we must always
 remember that *without* this obedience we
 shall still be rejected, notwithstanding what
 our Saviour has done for us; nay we shall
 be condemned with so much a *severer*
 sentence, as he has afforded us greater
 means and opportunities of Salvation.
 Christ has given us the adoption and the
 liberty of Sons; but if we abuse that li-
 berty to rebel against God and disobey
 his Commandments, living vitiously and
 profanely in this present World; *it had*
been better for us not to have known the
way

way of truth, than after we have known S E R M.
it, to turn from the holy commandment III.
delivered unto us. Our Saviour has pur-
chased redemption for us upon the gra-
cious terms of Faith and Obedience; but
without this Obedience, we can have no
benefit, even of That most perfect re-
demption. Christ has suffered for us,
that we might receive the adoption of
Sons; but if we continue not to live vir-
tuously as becomes the children of God,
it will nothing profit us to have received
this adoption. They only who are led by
the Spirit of God, are the Sons of God,
Rom. viii. 14. Wherefore if we resist and
grieve that good Spirit by any vitious
practices, we have no part in him, nei-
ther will God receive us either as his Sons
or his Servants. Whosoever is born of God,
saith St John, doth not commit Sin, for
his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot
sin because he is born of God: In this the
children of God are manifest and the
children of the devil: Whosoever doth not
righteousness, is not of God, neither he that
loveth not his brother, 1 John iii. 9. A-
gain, ver. 2. Beloved, now are we the Sons
of

S E R M. of God, and it doth not yet appear what
 III. we shall be; But we know that when he
 shall appear, we shall be like him, for we
 shall see him as he is; i. e. God doth in
 This world acknowledge us as his chil-
 dren; how much more hereafter, shall he
 that thus spared not his own Son, but de-
 livered him up for us all, receive us to
 the more immediate injoyment of himself?
 But then he adds immediately, ver. 3. *E-*
very man that hath this hope in him, pu-
risieth himself even as he is pure. This is
 the only possible condition, upon which we
 can obtain the Salvation of the Gospel.
 Nay, on the contrary, we cannot escape
 being condemned to a severer punishment,
 if we neglect the offer of so great a Sal-
 vation. For if he that despised Moses law,
 died without mercy, Heb. x. 28. of how
 much sorer punishment shall he be thought
 worthy, who hath troden under foot the Son
 of God, and hath counted the blood of the
 Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an
 unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the
 Spirit of Grace?



SERMON IV.

Of the Fulness of Time in which
CHRIST appeared.

[Preached on Christmas-Day.]



GAL. iv. 4, and 5.

*But when the fulness of time was come,
God sent forth his Son, made of a wo-
man, made under the law; To redeem
them that were under the law, that we
might receive the adoption of sons.*



IT remains, that I proceed now SERM.
IV.
in the 4th and last place, to
consider the Time of our Sa-
viour's appearing in the
flesh; *When the fulness of*
time was come. Now here, By the *fulness*
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S E R M.
IV.



of time, we must understand *that* time, which God in his infinite Wisdom thought fit to appoint ; And we may consider it either with respect to God's Fore-determination ; and then it was therefore the *fulness of time*, because determined and fore-appointed of God ; or we may consider it absolutely as the fittest and most proper season ; and then it was fore-appointed by the Wisdom of God, because it was in itself the *fulness of time*. 1st, We may consider it with respect to God's Fore-termination ; and then it was therefore the fulness of time, because determined and foretold by the prophets.

ACCORDING to that antient prediction of *Jacob*, *Gen. xlix. 10.* the Messiah was to appear before the total dissolution of the *Jewish* Government. *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, till Shiloh come ; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* By the word *Shiloh*, the antient *Jewish* interpreters constantly understood the Messiah ; and the *Jews* at this day are not able to interpret it to any other tolerable Sense : Now 'tis certain, that after our Saviour's Coming ; as soon

as the gathering of the people, (or as the word may no less properly be rendred, the *obedience* of the people) was come *in* to him; *viz.* as soon as he had settled that institution of Religion, which he came into the World to establish; *Jerusalem* was destroyed, the whole nation of the *Jews* dispersed, and scattered among *all* people; and the constitution of their government intirely dissolved. Our Saviour therefore *did* appear exactly at that period of Time, which the prophecy of *Jacob* had so many ages before expressly determined. Again; the prophecy of *Malachi*, ch. iii. 1. determines the Coming of our Saviour to be before the destruction of the Second Temple; *Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare my way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come, he shall suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.* And That no less remarkable prediction of *Haggai*, ch. ii. ver. 6, 7, and 9; *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once it is a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth,*

S E R M. *and the sea and the dry land; And I will*
 IV. *shake all nations, and the desire of all na-*
 tions shall come, and I will fill This house
 with glory, saith the Lord of hosts; The
 glory of this latter house shall be greater
 than of the former; and in this place will
 I give peace. The solemn and sublime
 introduction with which this prophecy is
 ushered in, shows plainly that something
 of very great moment is therein foretold
 and promised; And the *Words* of the Pre-
 diction itself sufficiently intimate, when
 and in whom they were to be fulfilled.

The desire, or (as the word may more
 properly be rendred,) the expectation of
 all nations; is a clear and undisputed
 character of the Messiah: And as to the
 filling That House with greater Glory than
 the former, 'tis well known that That Se-
 cond Temple was very far from equal-
 ling the Glory of Solomon's, in the mag-
 nificence of its Building, or in its rich or-
 naments: And besides the Jews them-
 selves confess, that the Second Temple
 always wanted those five things, which
 were justly esteemed the great Glory and
 Excellence of the first. It wanted the U-

rim

rim and Thummim, the Ark of the Covenant, the Fire from heaven which burnt continually on the Altar, the Shecinah or visible appearance of the glory of God, and the Spirit of Prophecy. It remains therefore that the Glory wherein this Second Temple was to exceed the First, could be no other than This; that it was to be honoured with the presence of the *King of Glory*, even the *promised Messiah*; Which would indeed be a far *greater* Glory, than all the riches of *Solomon's Temple*. Accordingly our Saviour *did* appear, during the standing of that Second Temple; he was presented therein by his parents, and acknowledged by *Simon and Anna*, who praised God for him, and *spoke of him to all those that looked for redemption in Israel*; He also frequently *Taught* therein, and by his Gracious presence filled that house with *glory*; with the *Glory*, as of the only-begotten Son of God, full of *Grace and Truth*; with the *Glory of God*, manifested in the most illustrious *miracles*; with the *glorious Doctrine* of Peace and Salvation, of *Grace Righteousness and Truth*.

S E R M.
IV.
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S E R M.

IV.



And to demonstrate that this prophecy was fulfilled in *him*, and could not possibly belong to any other, God in his righteous judgment, not many years after our Saviour's Passion, suffered this Temple, at the final destruction of the City and People, to be so utterly overthrown and destroyed, that *not one stone was left upon another*, nor could it ever by any industry be built again. *Lastly*, That most clear prophecy of *Daniel*, ch. ix. ver. 24. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon the holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to anoint the most Holy;* (who in the next verse is called *by name*, Messiah the Prince;) This prophecy, I say, determines the time from the rebuilding of the city after the captivity to the coming of the Messiah, to be seven times Seventy, *viz.* Four hundred and ninety years: Exactly after which period of time, (the different computations of Chronologers in this point, being but small Niceties;) exactly, I say, after this period of time, the

History



History of our Saviour shows us that he appeared in the World. 'Tis evident therefore that the incarnation of Christ was *in the fulness of time*; that is, exactly at the time foretold and fore-determined by the Prophets. And indeed these prophecies were so plain, that about the time of our Lord's appearance, the *Jews*, and from them the *Romans*, and all the Eastern parts of the World, were in great expectation of some extraordinary person to arise, who should be Governor of the World. This made *Herod* so inquisitive and solicitous, about *him that was born king of the Jews*, St Mat. ii. 2: And this gave occasion to the impostors, *Theudas and Judas of Galilee*, (of whom we read, *Acts* v. 36.) to profess themselves to be some great persons, and to draw away much people after them. The *Jews* were at that Time *filled* with expectation of the appearance of their promised Messiah; and from thence these Deceivers took occasion to set up for themselves; But as they managed their imposture in Such manner, as to suit with the *prejudices* and *false* notions the *Jews* had then conceived of their

S E R M. expected Messiah, so they acted directly  
 IV. contrary to his *True* character ; and their  
 designs came accordingly to a deserved end.

But 2dly, T H O' it be evident that our Saviour came into the World *in the fulness of time*, viz. at the time foretold by the prophets ; yet the question may still return, *why* was *That* time determined rather than any other, and accordingly foretold by the Prophets ; for, without doubt, it was in itself *absolutely* the fittest and the properest season ; and the incarnation of our Lord was *therefore* by the Prophets fixt beforehand to that time, *because* it was the *full*, or most *proper* Season. And to This question it might be sufficient to answer, that the time of our Saviour's incarnation, as all *Other* times and seasons which the Father has put in his own power, was *therefore* the fittest, and the properest season, because it was the time chosen by the infinite and unerring Wisdom of God : But yet it cannot be denied to be an argument worthy our consideration, to inquire into the *reasons* of our Saviour's Coming into the World at such a particular time rather than any other,

so

so far as the history of the *Scripture*, which is what God has thought fit to open to us of his Divine Counsel ; and so far as the *design* itself of our Lords coming, will suggest to us. Now *Two* reasons there seem to have been more especially, of our Saviour's appearing at That time : The first is, because the insufficiency of the *Jewish* dispensation, as well as of natural religion, was then, after a long trial, become sufficiently apparent : Apparent ; not to *God*, who knows all things at Once, and makes accordingly Provision for all things from the beginning ; and who is able to judge all men with justice and equity, according to their respective Circumstances under Every Dispensation : but to *Men*, to whom the Counsel of God is opened by degrees, and by the Events of things ; to *Them*, the insufficiency of the *Jewish* Dispensation was by that Time become apparent. What *the law* could not do, saith St Paul, *in That it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for Sin condemned sin in the flesh*, Rom. viii. 3. And

S E R M.  
IV.  


S E R M. in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, the same  
 IV. Apostle all along insists on the *insufficiency*  
 of the *Jewish* institution, as an Argument  
 to demonstrate the *necessity* of introducing the *Christian*: For if that first covenant, saith he, had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second, Heb. viii. 7; and ch. vii. ver. 18, *There is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.* In the old World, when men had entirely corrupted themselves, and almost wholly lost that natural and traditional Knowledge of God, which was at first the foundation of their Religion, and the rule of their lives; God began to reveal himself to *Abraham* and the Patriarchs; and chose their Posterity to give them afterwards his Laws by *Moses*, and to make them the Standard of true Religion, and of the Worship of the One God, to all Nations. Again, when this *new* Dispensation of Providence began likewise to grow ineffectual as the former had done, through the Vanity and Superstition wherewith it was by degrees overrun; When the com-  
 mandments





mandments of God were almost wholly swallowed up by the traditions of Men, and the weightier matters of the law forced to give place to the superstitious doctrines of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; then was the time for *him* to appear, who, as the prophet *Malachi* describes him, *was to be like a refiner's fire, and like fullers soap; who was to sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and to purifie the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they might offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness*, Mal. iii. 3.

2dly, The Second reason, *why* we may suppose our Saviour appeared just at the time he did, was because the World was at that time by many extraordinary circumstances, peculiarly prepared for his reception. The great design of his Coming, (we know,) was to establish a Religion, which as it was to continue for ever without any further alteration, so it was not (like the *Jewish* dispensation) to be confined to one particular Nation or People, but to be *preached to all the nations of the earth from one end thereof unto the other: His Dominion shall be also*  
1 from

SER.M. from the one Sea to the other, and from the  
 IV. Flood unto the World's end: All Kings  
 shall fall down before him, all nations  
 shall do him Service, Pf. lxxii. 8, 11.  
 The Gospel of Christ, was to be an uni-  
 versal Religion; a light to lighten the Gen-  
 tiles, as well as to be the glory of his peo-  
 ple Israel; According to that remarka-  
 ble prophecy of *Isaiab*, ch. xlix. ver. 6;  
*It is a light thing, that thou shouldst 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 Gen-*  
*tiles, that thou mayest be my salvation un-*  
*to the ends of the earth.* Now about the  
 time of our Saviour's Birth, 'tis observa-  
 ble there was a concurrence of many  
 things in the World, to promote and fur-  
 ther the propagating of *Such* a Religion.  
 The *Romans* had then conquered almost  
 all the *known* parts of the World; they  
 had spread and settled their language a-  
 mong all the nations of their conquests,  
 and had made the communication easy  
 from one part to another. They had  
 moreover improved *moral* Philosophy to  
 its greatest height; and by having framed  
 better

better notions of God and of the nature of things, than were usual in the idolatrous Heathen World, they were in some measure prepared for the reception of the Truth. This appears plainly from the vast numbers of *Profelytes*, which were about this time converted to the *Jewish* Religion; so far converted, as to believe in and worship the One only true God, and to obey the moral Law, yet without observing the ritual and ceremonial performances of the Mosaick institution. These Profelytes are they which in the History of the *Acts of the Apostles* are stiled *devout men, worshippers of God, and men fearing God*; Of whom how great numbers there were at That time, may be seen in the 2d chapter of the *Acts* ver. 5, &c. where 'tis said *that there were dwelling at Jerusalem devout men out of every nation under heaven; Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphilia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia, about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and profelytes, Cretes and Arabians,*

S E R M. *rabians, we do hear them speak in our*  
 IV. *tongues the wonderful works of God.*



Further; the great improvement and increase of *Learning* in the World about this time, (according to that prophecy of *Daniel, Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;*) gave occasion to the *Jewish* books to be dispersed through the World: And particularly, the translating of the Bible some few Ages before the Birth of Christ, into one of the then most known and universal languages upon Earth, which had before been confined in a peculiar language to the *Jews* only; was a singular preparative to the reception of that great Prophet and Saviour of mankind, whose Coming was in that Book so plainly and so often foretold. Indeed this seems to have been the first step of God's discovering himself further than by the Light of Nature to *other* nations as well as to the *Jews*, and of his giving the *heathen also* the knowledge of his revealed laws; And remarkably instrumental it afterwards appeared to be, in the propagating

gating the Christian religion through the S E R M.  
*Gentile World.* IV.

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B U T I barely mention these things, as only brief intimations to inquisitive and considerate persons; and hasten in the last place, to draw some more universally *useful* and *practical* inferences, from the particulars of the doctrine contained in the Text. And 1<sup>st</sup>, If our Saviour came into the World precisely at the time determined and foretold by the prophets; then have we from hence an unanswerable proof of our Saviour's being the true Messias. For if our Lord appeared exactly at that time, which God by his Holy prophets had before appointed should be the time when the promised Messias, the desire and expectation of nations, was to appear; and no other person did arise *near* that time, to whom that Character could possibly belong; then have we an undeniably evidence that our Saviour *was* that Person, whom the prophets did point at and describe. And this evidence is so convictive and unanswerable, that the *Jews* at this day have no other way to elude the force of it, but  
by

S E R M. by pretending that though God had indeed foretold positively by his Prophets that the Messias should appear about that time, yet for the Sins of that nation he has deferred the *sending* of the Messiah, and the *fulfilling* of those prophecies, for above Seventeen hundred years. But there are moreover *two* peculiar circumstances, which make this argument yet more strong and concluding; the *first* is, that as our Saviour appeared exactly at the time determined by the prophets, so his *character* agreed perfectly with all the descriptions, which the prophecies had given of *That* person, whose coming was foretold. I need not inlarge upon This particularly; the Evangelists having in their gospels, with all clearness and evidence, applied to the History of our Saviour all the several passages of the prophets, which speak of the *time* and *place* of the birth of the Messiah; the *manner* of his education; the *course* of his life; the *nature* and extent of his *doctrine*; the peculiar *circumstances* of his passion and death; and That most remarkable instance of the divine power, his Resurrection


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tion from the Dead. The *Other* observable circumstance is, that as the character of our Saviour was exactly agreeable to the prophets description of the true Messiah, so it was very different *from*, and almost contrary to, the character of that imaginary Messiah whom the *Jews* expected. And This particular circumstance, is a demonstration that our Saviour had no design of imposing upon the people. The *Jews* expected a temporal prince, to appear in all the Splendour, glory and power of this world; to deliver them from their Subjection to the *Roman* yoke, and to restore again the kingdom to *Israel*. 'Tis manifest therefore that whatever Deceiver would have set up himself for the Messiah, and hoped to be owned as such by the people of the *Jews*, must have indeavoured to have appeared in such a Character, as the *Jews* expected; he must have blown the trumpet to sedition, and by gathering men after him, have indeavoured to make himself their Prince and King: And in Fact, this method we find those impostors did take, whose Attempts are mentioned, *Acts* v. 36.

S E R M.  
IV.  


S E R M. But *our Saviour*, directly contrary to the expectation of the *Jews*, was a man, with respect to all *worldly* grandeur, of no form or comeliness; a man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief; a person of seemingly mean extraction, and of greater humility: So that when some of the multitude would by force have made him King, he was content even to work a Miracle, to escape out of their hands. 'Tis manifest therefore that he had no ambition, to exalt himself among the people. Now when in such a person, whose character was entirely contrary to the humor and expectation of the people, it appeared yet manifestly, that in Him was really fulfilled every thing, that was spoken in the law and in the prophets concerning the *Messias* that was to come; 'tis no less than a demonstration that this was the very person, to whom those prophecies did expressly point. *2dly*, If our Saviour, (the person sent into the world to be the Author of our religion,) was, notwithstanding his taking upon him that humble Form, yet in reality no meaner a Person than the only begotten Son of God;



God; this may convince us of the divine S E R M.  
Authority of our Religion, and the indispen- IV.  
sable necessity of paying Obedience to its   
laws. The *Natural knowledge* of the differ-  
ence of Good and Evil, which even the  
*heathen* World was capable of attaining,  
was truly and properly a Discovery of the  
Will of God; But because this discovery  
was very obscure, and very hardly suffici-  
ent to prevail over the corruptions of  
Mens depraved Nature; therefore the  
times of that ignorance *God winked at,*  
Acts xvii. 30: But now that the *wrath of*  
*God* is clearly and expressly, and by a  
messenger of such Dignity as his own  
Son, revealed from heaven against all  
*ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;*  
now that he hath fully and distinctly de-  
clared that *he hath appointed a day in the*  
*which he will judge the world in righteous-*  
*ness by that man whom he hath ordained;*  
Now he commandeth all men absolutely,  
every where to repent. God hath now sent  
his *last* messenger to warn Men of their  
sin and danger; even his own *beloved*  
*Son*; and if they will not hear and obey  
*him,* they must expect to fail under so

S E R M. much a more severe punishment, as they  
 IV. despise a clearer revelation of the Will of  
 God, and trample under foot a more glorious messenger of his covenant. *If the word spoken by Angels, saith the Apostle; if the Mosaick law, was stedfast; and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, Heb. ii. 2 and 3? And ch. xii. ver. 25, See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; For if They escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth; much more shall not We escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven. And again, in the Epistle of St Jude; the danger of impenitent Christians under such clear means of Knowledge is represented by the Apostle under this severe similitude, ver. 5 and 6. I will therefore put you in remembrance,---that the Angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he has reserved in everlasting chains under Darknes, unto the judgment of the great Day.*

3dly, IF this *Divine person*, the Au-  
thor of our religion, notwithstanding the  
exceeding dignity of his nature, yet con-  
descended to become truly and really a  
man ; subjecting himself to all the infir-  
mities of human nature, *and being in all  
things made like unto his brethren, sin on-  
ly excepted* ; This may convince us of the  
reasonableness of our Holy Religion ;  
and of the possibility of our paying obe-  
dience to its laws. Had God sent his  
Son in great *Glory*, and in the *Form of  
God*, to reveal his Will to us by his abso-  
lute *command* only ; such an extraordinary  
Revelation, like *the Mountain that burn-  
ed with Fire*, would indeed have suffici-  
ently convinced us of the necessity of Re-  
ligion and the indispensableness of obedi-  
ence. But when this great person vouch-  
safed to become, not only the Author of  
our Religion, but in our own nature  
the *pattern* also of our duty ; this demon-  
strated to us, that our Obedience was to  
be as reasonable, as 'twas indispensable.  
For by this means we have a perfect and  
familiar example of Holiness and Obedi-  
ence set before us ; by which we plainly

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IV.  


S E R M.  
IV.

see, that God requires nothing of us, but what our Saviour himself, when he submitted to become Man, did think reasonable to practise. Indeed, we *cannot* be in all things perfect, as he, who is our pattern and example, was perfect: But to follow a most perfect Pattern, is, even to an imperfect Copier, a singular Advantage; and our Duty, is not to *equal*, but to *imitate* so far, as the infirmities of our nature will permit, with Sincerity and Constancy. We shall in our proportion, be made as like him in our *happiness* as we have been in the performance of our *duty*.





# S E R M O N V.

Of the meaning of, The Name  
of GOD.


[*Preached on Epiphany.*]



MAL. i. II.

*For from the rising of the Sun, even unto 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.*



IN discoursing upon these S E R M. V. words of the Prophet, I shall  explain distinctly the principal acceptations, or the most remarkable of those several different Senses, in which this Phrase, the

S E R M. *Name of God*, is used in Scripture; From whence in course will appear, what is meant *in general* by its being *Great among Men*. And This being explained, I shall then in the *2d* place, consider, *What That glorious Event in particular* is, which we find predicted in these sublime prophetick Expressions: *From the rising of the Sun, even unto 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, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

I. IN the *1st* place, the *Name of God*, according to the nature of the *Jewish* language, signifies sometimes *God himself*. Thus, *praising* or  *blessing* the *Name of God*, is *praising God himself*; and calling upon the *Name of the Lord*, is the very same, as calling upon the *Lord*. Something answerable to which manner of speaking, there is in many *other* instances of the *Hebrew* language, and in the *Analogy of expression* in *all* languages. Thus *Heb. viii. 1. The Throne of the Majesty in the heavens*, is, the *Throne of God*: And *Pf. cxlv. 5. I will speak of the glorious Honour*

Honour of thy Majesty, and of thy wondrous works. S E R M.  
V.

NOW when the *Name* of God, or any other phrase of the like nature, is thus made use of to signify *God himself*; 'tis plain that by his *Name* being Great among Men, is meant Their acknowledging or professing *him* to be the True God, and their Adhering to the Worship of *Him* only, in opposition to all Idolatry and False Religions. *Mic. iv. 5. All people will walk every one in the Name of His God; and We will walk in the Name of the Lord our God for ever and ever: Will walk in his Name, that is, we will continue stedfast in his True Religion and Worship; sanctifying the Lord God in our Hearts, (as St Peter expresses it,) and not being afraid of Their Terrour, not fearing Their False Gods, who fill the Minds of their Worshippers with endless Dread, and vain imaginary Superstitions. According to the same Analogy of Speech; That Precept in the Law, Thou shalt not profane the Name of thy God, is as much as to say, Thou shalt not encourage Idolatrous Practices, by letting thy children pass*

S E R M. *pass through the Fire to Moloch*, Lev. xviii.

V. 21. And in the Psalmist's expression, forgetting *the Name of God*, means, for the same reason, *falling into Idolatry*: *Pf. xliv. 20. If we have forgotten the Name of our God, or stretched out our hands to any Strange God. Nay, even mentioning the Name of other Gods, denotes, in Scripture-phrase, a tendency to Idolatry; In all things that I have said unto you, be circumspect, and make no mention of the Names of Other Gods, neither let it be heard out of thy Mouth*, Exod. xxiii. 13.

T H I S is the first and most usual Signification of this phrase, *The Name of God*; 'Tis used to denote *God himself*. And because his Name, in *This* sense, is *Then Great* among Men, when they most universally acknowledge him to be the True God, and adhere to the Worship of *Him* only; hence, in a sense still more figurative, the *Name of God* is sometimes used,

2dly, To signify his *True Religion and Worship*. Thus *Deut. xii. 5. The place which the Lord your God shall chuse out of all your Tribes, to put his Name there.*

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The Meaning is: The Place where he shall appoint his Servants, the Professors of the true Religion, to appear before him with the External Tokens of their Homage and Worship. And in *This* sense, the Name of God is *then Great* in the World; when they who profess his True Religion, and adhere to the Worship of *Him* alone, and to *That manner* of Worship which He has appointed, do Honour to this their profession, by a suitable practice in the whole course of their lives; showing forth the Effect of their religion, in the Fruits of Righteousness and true Virtue; and *letting their Light so shine before men, that Others seeing their good Works, may glorify their Father which is in Heaven.* The Apostle St Paul, in his 2 *Thes.* i. 12. uses exactly the same manner of speaking; *We pray always for you, says he, that our God would fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of Faith with Power; That the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you: His Meaning is, that the Religion of our Lord Jesus Christ may by your Practice be re-*  
commended

S E R M. commended to the World, and the excellency of it made manifest before Men. V. Again, *Rom. ii. 24.* speaking of Such as, on the contrary, *discredited* their Holy Profession by an unfuitable and unworthy behaviour; *Thou* (says he) *that makest thy Boast of the Law, through breaking the Law dishonourest thou God? For the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, through you.* The Name of God, that is, the Religion and true *Worship* of God, is reviled and ill spoken of among Infidels, upon account of the ill lives of its unworthy Professors.

3dly, IN other places of Scripture, this phrase, *The Name of God*, is made use of to express those adorable *Perfections* or *Attributes*, which are as it were the proper *Denomination* and *Character* of the divine Nature. Thus *Exod. xxxiv. 5.* *The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood there with Moses, and proclaimed the Name of the Lord: The Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed; The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth: Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and trans-*

*transgression and Sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty: visiting the iniquity of the Fathers upon the children, and upon the childrens children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.* Here the Name of God, signifies the Character or Description of God, contained in a summary recapitulation of the Divine Perfections in general. The Same, at other times, denotes more distinctly some special and particular Attribute, to which the occasion peculiarly refers. Thus *Pf. xx. 2. The Name, (that is, the Power,) of the God of Jacob defend thee.* And *Pf. ix. 10. They that know thy Name, (that is, who have a just Notion of thy Veracity and Goodness,) will put their Trust in Thee.*

AND in *These* senses of the phrase, the Name of God is then truly *Great* among Men, when, having just and worthy Notions of the Divine Perfections, and living under the continual influence of these impressions upon their Minds, they show in their whole Behaviour that they really and habitually *fear his Power, admire his Wisdom, revere his Justice, love his Goodness,*

S E R M.  
V.  


S E R M. *ness, and rely upon his Truth*: In all their  
 V. Words and Actions, acknowledging *Him*  
 to be the *only Potentate*; *Him, only Holy*;  
*Him, only Wise*; and that, absolutely and  
 strictly speaking, *there is None Good, but*  
*One, that is God.*

4thly, THERE is still *another* sense of the phrase; in which the Name of *God* signifies in Scripture the *Authority* of God, or his *divine Commission*. Thus *Exod.* xxiii. 20. *Behold, I send an Angel before thee; Beware of him, and obey his Voice; provoke him not; For my Name* (that is, my *Authority*,) *is in him.* Again, *Job.* v. 43. *I am come,* says our Saviour, *in my Father's Name,* that is, with his *Divine Commission*. In like manner the Apostles, when they were examined before the High Priest concerning their having healed a lame man, *Acts* iv. 7. *By what Power, or by what Name have ye done This?* immediately they replied, *By the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom Ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead; even by Him* (by *His Name and Power,* by *his Authority and Commission* delivered

to Us) does *This man stand here before you* S E R M.  
*Whole.* V.


AND according to *This last* sense of the phrase, the Name of God must be *then* understood to be *Great* among Men, when a just Regard and cheerful Obedience is paid to whatever appears vested with *His* Authority: When the Laws of *Nature* are obeyed, as being established by his Supreme Authority in the *Creation* of things; And the Precepts of the *Gospel* likewise, as being by *Revelation* authorized from the Same Supreme Power.

AND Thus having at large explained the principal Acceptations, or the most remarkable of those several different Senses, in which this phrase, *The Name of God*, is used in Scripture; and what accordingly is meant *in general* by its being *Great*: It remains in the

II. 2d place, that I proceed to consider, *what* that glorious Event *in particular* is, which we find predicted in these sublime Prophetick Expressions: *From the rising of the Sun, even unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles; And in every place,*  
*Incense*

S E R M. *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.* Now in this prediction there is evidently contained, 1<sup>st</sup>, Something *comminatory*, or by way of *Threatning*, with regard to the *Jews*; And, 2<sup>dly</sup>, a particular *Promise* in relation to the *Gentiles*; joined with a general Declaration concerning the State and Condition of the *Universal Church* in the future and latter Ages of the World.

1<sup>st</sup>, WITH regard to the *Jews*, there is contained in the Text, Something *Comminatory*, or in the way of *Threatning*; as is evident from the *Connexion* of the words. For the *former part* of the chapter, is a severe *expostulation* with That people, upon account of their unworthy behaviour in the Service of God: And this Complaint against the *Jews*, is immediately followed with God's declaring in the Text, that his Name should be Great among the *Gentiles*. The Advantages which the *Jewish Nation* enjoyed, were very extraordinary; in that *to Them were committed the Oracles of God.* He  
*showed*

showed his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes S E R M.  
and Ordinances unto Israel; He had not V.  
dealt so with any Other Nation, neither   
had the Heathen Knowledge of his Laws.

Answerable to these high privileges, it was reasonable to expect, that their improvements in Virtue and all Holiness, should have been proportionably Great: For to whom much is given, of Him, according to the Rule of Equity, will be much required. But so contrary to this expectation was the Behaviour of That people, that with a just Severity God complains of them by the Prophets, ver. 6. of this chapter; *If I be a Father, where is mine Honour? if I be a Master, where is my Fear?-----If ye offer the blind for Sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?-----I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, neither will I accept an Offering at your hands.* And then it follows in the words of the Text, *For from the rising of the Sun, even unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles.* The Threatning contained in This

S E R M.

V.



expostulation, is exactly the same with that of our Saviour in the Gospel; *The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a Nation bringing forth the Fruits thereof.* The Accomplishment of which Threatning upon the people of the *Jews*, both for the unparalleled manner of its execution, and for the unexampled length of the time of its continuance, has been so conspicuous; that now, near seventeen hundred years after the destruction of *Jerusalem*, they remain at this very day a living and ocular demonstration of the Truth of all the antient Prophecies which concern their State. But

2dly, THE Text contains a particular *Promise* in relation to the *Gentiles*; joined with a general Declaration concerning the State and Condition of the *Universal Church* in the future and latter Ages of the World: *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.* Notwithstanding That strong and settled Prejudice among the *Jews*, of which we find great Remains



mains even among our Saviour's own Disciples, that That Nation was always to be the Alone peculiar people of God; ye we find in the Prophecies of the Old Testament many very clear intimations, like This in the Text, that, in the days of the Messiah, the Favour of God should be extended to the *Gentiles*, and his Knowledge spread among the Nations of the Earth. *Is. lx. 3. The Gentiles shall come to thy Light, and Kings to the brightness of thy Rising: And ch. xlix. 6. 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 Ends of the Earth.* These Prophecies plainly began to be fulfilled, at the time when the Apostles were commanded to preach the Gospel to the *Gentiles* as well as to the *Jews*; and the full accomplishment of them will then take place, when the same everlasting Gospel shall either effectually prevail, or at least shall have been preached and tendred in its purity,

S E R M.  
V.  
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S E R M. among all Nations. In every place, In-  
 V. cense shall be offered unto my Name, and a  
 pure Offering. Incense, (which is the Prayers of the Saints, Rev. v. 8.) and this phrase, a pure Offering, are plainly intended to express That *spiritual Religion*, That *Worship of the Father in Spirit and Truth* according to the Gospel of Christ, which is opposed to the *carnal Ordinances* and *literal Sacrifices* of the Jews, and of which those Sacrifices and external Purifications were but Types and Figures. Hence the Christian Worship, the Worship of God *out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned*; is elegantly stiled a *Spiritual Sacrifice*, 1 Pet. ii. 5; *the Sacrifice of Praise to God continually*, Heb. xiii. 15; *the presenting ourselves a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable Service*, Rom. xii. 1. The Metaphor is exactly of the same sort, as That whereby Christians are called *The true circumcision*, the *circumcision made without hands*; as being *That in reality, in the true and spiritual Effect*, of which the *circumcision in the flesh*

## The Name of GOD.


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*flesh made with hands* was but a shadow or figurative Representation. For *circumcision*, says the Apostle, Rom. ii. 28. is not *That which is outward in the flesh; but -----circumcision is That of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.* The character therefore of the Christian Worship, set forth in the Text under the prophetick figures of *Incense* and a *Pure Offering*, is, that it consists in what St Paul calls *Lifting up Holy hands*, 1 Tim. ii. 8. *without Wrath and Doubting*; It consists in approaching God, not with the Sacrifices of *Beasts*, or Offerings of the *Fruits of the Earth*; but with the offering up of *Ourselves* to his Service, in all holiness and righteousness of Life; Approaching him with *Minds* duly sensible of the inexpressible Excellency of the Divine Majesty, with *Hands* clear from all iniquity and unjust Practices, with *Hearts* free from all Impurity and Moral Turpitude. This is the *Pure Offering*, truly acceptable unto God: And This, he foretells by the Prophet, shall in due time be

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offered

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V.  


S E R M. offered unto his Name *in every place, from*  
 V. *the rising of the Sun, even unto the going*  
 *down of the same; for my Name shall be*  
*great among the Heathen, saith the Lord*  
*of Hosts. The Promise is indeed here*  
*made particularly to the Gentiles: But*  
*from several other passages of Scripture,*  
*parallel to This, there seems reason to ex-*  
*pect, that God's Antient people also shall*  
*be converted, when once the fulness of*  
*the Gentiles is come in. Is. xlix. 22. and*  
*xi. 12. and lx. 10. Thus saith the Lord*  
*God; Behold, I will lift up my hand to*  
*the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the*  
*Nations; and they shall bring thy Sons in*  
*their arms, and their Daughters shall be*  
*carried upon their shoulders. And he shall*  
*set up an ensign for the Nations, and shall*  
*assemble the Outcasts of Israel, and gather*  
*together the dispersed of Judah from the*  
*four Corners of the Earth. And the Sons*  
*of Strangers shall build up thy Walls, and*  
*their Kings shall minister unto thee; For*  
*in my wrath I smote thee, but in my Fa-*  
*vour have I had mercy on thee. Our Sa-*  
*viour himself predicts something of the*  
 same

same nature, *Luk. xxi. 24. Jerusalem shall be troden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* And St Paul seems to intimate the same thing, *Rom. xi. 25. Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the Fulness of the Gentiles be come in.* After which Great Event, the Scripture is full of very Sublime Descriptions of a State of extraordinary Happiness to ensue. *Is. xi. 6. and lx. 18. The Wolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid;-----and a little child shall lead them. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my Holy Mountain; for the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea: And-----thou shalt call thy Walls Salvation, and thy Gates Praise:-----Thy people also shall be All righteous, they shall inherit the Land for ever.*

WHATEVER be the true Meaning of These and the like Prophecies: Whether there be a time still to come, wherein they shall be accomplished literally; Or whether they are intended only to express

S E R M. the natural and genuine *Tendency* of the  
 V. universal and sincere Practice of Chri-  
 stianity in the *present* World, and the  
*real Effect* which shall be obtained by it  
 in the World *to come*: Whatever, I say,  
 be the strict and literal Meaning of these  
 Prophecies; it becomes not *Us* to be too  
 curious and inquisitive after the particu-  
 lar *Times and Seasons which the Father has*  
*put in his own Power*; But in *general*,  
 the *Uses* we are to make of all these Pre-  
 dictions, are very obvious. In the

*1st* place, 'Tis *Our Duty*, in our whole  
 Behaviour and Practice, to promote, as  
 much as in *Us* lies, the Knowledge of  
 God, and the Interest of True Virtue  
 and Righteousness amongst Men. This  
 is contributing *Our Part*, towards the in-  
 troducing That Happy State and Consti-  
 tution of things, which is the accomplish-  
 ment of the fore-mentioned Prophecies.  
 And when we have thus done our *Own*  
 Duty, we are then to remember the Ad-  
 monition of our Saviour, *Luk. xxi. 19. In*  
*your patience possess ye your Souls*; and  
 rely upon the Providence of God, to ac-  
 accomplish

comply with the Great Events which he has S E R M. promised, in his own *Manner* and at his own *Time*. In matters of *This* nature, V. which have not a conditional dependence upon the Behaviour of *single* persons, but relate to the *General* Scheme of Providence in the Government of the World; In *These* things, I say, *the Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance*, Rom. xi. 29. The Promises of God will certainly be accomplished, and his Purpose shall not fail. But because it is not for *Us* to know beforehand, the exact *Times and Seasons* which God has appointed; the Duty therefore of every particular Christian, whatever be the Circumstances of Time and Place in which Providence has fixed him, is to take care that He himself be in the Number of those, who, *in all Holy conversation and godliness, look for, and haste unto, the Coming of the day of God*, 2 Pet. iii. 12.

2dly, ANOTHER Inference arising from the consideration of such Predictions as This in the Text, is, that we may hence learn to *justify* to ourselves the various  
Methods,

S E R M. Methods, in which the Wisdom of God  
 V. has chosen at divers times to reveal itself  
 to the World. With regard to *single persons*, to whom Providence has given very different *natural capacities*, or different *Means and Opportunities of Knowledge*, or different *Manners of Revelation*, the divine Justice and Equity consists in judging them finally according to their respective Abilities, accepting every one *according to what he has, and not according to what he has not*. With regard to *Whole Nations*, the justification of the Divine Wisdom, is his so doing what he pleases with his own, as, through a Succession of various and great Events, to accomplish *General Designs* of Mercy and Goodness. Of This, *St Paul* has given us an admirable Instance, in his account of God's setting up first the Nation of the *Jews*, and afterwards the Churches of the Christian *Gentiles*, to be the Standard of true Religion to the World; intending to finish the whole Dispensation, by having Mercy upon Both. *Rom. xi. 30. For as ye (Gentiles) in times past have*



*have not believed God, yet have Now obtained Mercy through Their (the Jews) Unbelief: Even so have These also now not believed, that through your mercy They also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them All in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon All. O the depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!*

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3dly and Lastly, THE Last Inference I shall draw from what has been said, is This. In the words *before* my Text, the reason given of God's rejecting the *Jews*, is the unworthy manner in which they had behaved themselves, while unto them were committed the Oracles of God. In the *Text itself*, the acceptableness of the *converted Gentiles* unto God, is expressed by their offering up unto his Name a *Pure Offering*. Which *Pure Offering*, denotes the *Holiness* and *real Purity* of the *Gospel-dispensation*, in opposition to the *external Ceremonies* of the *Jewish Law*. If therefore *We*, under the *greater Light*  
of

SERM. of the *Everlasting Gospel*, still live *viciously* and *corruptly*, as the *Jews* did under those *carnal Ordinances*; how much more *severe* Judgments shall we have reason to expect, than what fell even upon That People! For (as *St Paul* excellently argues, *Rom. xi. 20.*) *Because of Unbelief They were broken off, and Thou standest by Faith: Be not high-minded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural Branches, take heed lest he also spare not Thee.*





# S E R M O N VI.

The Doctrines of Religion reasonable to be believed.

[ *A Passion-Sermon.* ]



MATT. xii. 39, 40.

*An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall no Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the prophet Jonas. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whales belly ; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the Heart of the Earth.*



W H E N our Saviour first preach- S E R M.  
 ed to the Jews the Gospel of VI.  
 the Kingdom, he proved to  
 them his divine Commission  
 and the Truth of his Doctrine, not only  
 from

S E R M. from the *Prophecies* of the Old Testament, from the things written in the Law, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning him; but also by the *mighty Works* which he himself performed, as direct and immediate Evidences of his being the Promised Messiah. The *Doctrine* he taught, being a Doctrine of Purity and Great Holiness, absolutely requiring a reformation of Manners, and such an effectual Amendment of Life, as must show forth itself in the real and habitual Practice of true Virtue and Righteousness; *This Doctrine* was therefore extremely disagreeable to the *Pharisees* and Chief men among the *Jews*, who were persons of a haughty and tyrannical Spirit, covetous and ambitious, and, in order to serve the Purposes of temporal Power and spiritual Pride, infinitely zealous of all the external Forms and Ceremonials of Religion. For This reason, they hated, above all things, the Spirit with which our Saviour taught; the Spirit of Meekness and Humility, the Spirit of Goodness and Equity, the Spirit

*reasonable to be believed.*

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Spirit of Love and universal Charity. S E R M. VI.

And accordingly they set themselves, upon all occasions, to revile his Doctrine and calumniate his person. In which matter, it was no great difficulty for them to meet with Success; because the prejudiced Vulgar, who could very hardly distinguish between the *Traditions of their Elders* and the *Commands of God*, must needs be prone to look upon our Lord as an Enemy to the *One*, because he preached against the *Other*. But the *Miracles* which our Saviour worked, were *harder* to withstand: For the people could not easily be persuaded, that God would give a *Deceiver* Power to perform as *mighty Works*, as those by which the Law of *Moses* had itself been at first established. Here therefore the malice of the *Pharisees*, was to exert itself in a more extraordinary manner. And when they could not deny the *miraculous Facts themselves*, they pretended that the Power which worked them was the Power of Satan: Ver. 24th of *this chapter*, They said, he *doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub*

S E R M. *Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils.* And  
 VI. whensoever he taught, *without* working  
 some immediate Miracle; *then* they presently called upon him again, to show them a Sign: Ver. 38, *Then certain of the Scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a Sign from thee.* Thus against wilful perverseness there is No remedy. If he spake to them with so much *reason* and *goodness*, as *never man spake*; still his Doctrine wanted to be confirmed by a *Miracle*. And if he confirmed what he taught, by undeniable *Miracles*; then the *Power* which worked them, was the *Power of Satan*. For This reason, to the *Pharisees* who called upon him to show them a Sign, he gave this severe Reply in the words of the Text; *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall no Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whales belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth.* The declaration here made by our Lord, is of the  
 I same

same nature with That in the Prophet S E R M.  
*Isaiab*, ch. vii. 13. *Hear ye now, O house* VI.  
*of David; Is it a small thing for you to*  
*wearry Men, but will ye wearry my God al-*  
*so? Therefore the Lord himself shall give*  
*you a Sign; Behold, a Virgin shall con-*  
*ceive and bear a Son, and shall call his*  
*Name Immanuel.* The Jews in *Isaiab's*  
time, like the *Pharisees* in our Saviour's,  
after all the mighty works that God had  
done for them, still continued *impenitent* :  
And as often as they were called upon to  
repent, they presumptuously demanded  
*more Signs*. In way of Reproof for this  
Perverseness of theirs, and as a standing  
Declaration of God's having done, on *His*  
part, what was fit for *Him* to do; the Di-  
vine Wisdom, both in the days of *Isaiab*,  
and in the days of *Christ*, refers such per-  
sons to the *settled and universal* Evidence  
of Revelation; *viz. the miraculous Fulfilling*  
of the *Antient Prophecies* concerning  
the *promised Messias*. The Sign referred  
to by *Isaiab*, is the Birth of *Christ*; *Be-*  
*hold, a Virgin shall conceive.* That re-  
ferred to by our Saviour in the Text, is

S E R M. his Resurrection; *The Son of man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

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T H E R E is in these words *one* Difficulty; how our Lord is here said to have been *three days and three nights* in the heart of the Earth, when in the History of all the Gospels it appears, that having been buried the *first* day in the evening, and rising again the *third* day in the morning, he consequently remained in the Sepulchre but *two* whole nights, and *one* whole day. Now in order to understand this rightly, 'tis to be observed that the *Jews* in *Their* language, as *We* also frequently do in *Ours*, by the word (*day*) mean the Space of *twenty four hours*. And in *all languages* Nothing is more common, than for the Name of the *Whole* to be made use of to express a *Part*. Whatever therefore is *begun* on the *first* day, and *finished* on the *third*, may in usual and vulgar Speech (which is always the language the Scripture speaks in) be rightly said to be *three days* in doing. But *This* may perhaps seem a matter of *smaller* importance; Though, indeed, it



can never be without its Use, to show the consistency of such Texts of Scripture, as at first sight may appear not to agree together.

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*Another* Inquiry therefore, naturally arising upon these words, is, for *what reason* our Saviour continued in the Sepulchre just such a *determinate time* before his Resurrection. Now, besides that This was necessary for the *fulfilling of the Prophecies* that went before concerning him, (which is the reason alleged in the Text;) 'twas moreover necessary in the *nature of the thing itself*, that he should continue so long *a time* in the grave, to show that he was *really dead*; and he was to continue there *no longer*, that (as the Scripture expresses it) *the Holy One might not see corruption*.

THE words of the Text being thus explained; the matter of instruction therein contained, may be reduced to the following Heads.

1<sup>st</sup>, THAT the Doctrine of religion is in itself reasonable to be believed,



and sufficiently evidenced by the *standing and universal Signs or Marks of Truth*. 'Tis *supposed* in the words, that, what our Saviour here calls the *Sign of the Prophet Jonas*, was sufficient to render That generation of the *Jews* inexcusable in their Unbelief.

2<sup>dly</sup>, H E R E is a description given of wicked men, in one particular and remarkable part of their character ; that they are apt continually to require *more and more Signs*, and to tempt God without reason and without end. *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign.*

3<sup>dly</sup>, T H E declaration our Saviour here makes, plainly implies, that there are just and good reasons, why God should not gratify the unreasonable expectations of prejudiced and corrupt Minds. *There shall no Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas.*

1<sup>st</sup>, THE Doctrinē of religion is in itself reasonable to be believed, and sufficiently evidenced by the *standing* and *universal Signs* or *Marks* of Truth: 'Tis *supposed* in the words, that what our Saviour here calls the *Sign of the Prophet Jonas*, was sufficient to render That generation of the *Jews* inexcusable in their Unbelief.

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*Religion is in its Nature* a Trial or Probation of men's Hearts; and is therefore essentially inconsistent with all compulsive Motives, with *such* Motives as destroy the nature of a Trial or Probation. *Deut. viii. 2, The Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the Wilderness,-----to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no.* The Meaning is, not that God wants any information with regard to *Himself*: But he puts men in a probation-state, in order to their *Own* Benefit; that by virtuous *Actions* they may obtain an *habitual* Love of Virtue; and by labouring in the rational *Search* after *Truth*, and persevering patiently in the

S E R M. *Practice of Right*, they may be *purified*  
 VI. *and made white and tried*, Dan. xii. 10:  
 For, as the Apostle St *James* expresses it,  
*the Trying of our Faith worketh Patience*,  
 ch. i. 3. God could, if he pleased, *even*  
*out of the stones of the Street*, raise up  
*children unto Abraham*; or irresistibly  
 compel the most obdurate Sinner to obey  
 his Commandments. But This, is not  
 dealing with *Them* as *rational Agents*;  
 nor could such an Obedience be any more  
 acceptable to *Him*, than the absolute Sub-  
 jection of the *material World* to his Om-  
 nipotent Will, gives *irrational Beings* any  
 Title to the Esteem and Character of Mo-  
 ral Goodness or Virtue. Were God by  
 his Almighty Power to overrule and pre-  
 vent all Possibility of Disobedience or  
 Moral Evil, as some men fancy it would  
 be glorious for him to do; it would in-  
 deed have the contrary effect, and deprive  
 him of the Glory of all his Moral At-  
 tributes. For tho' he would still conti-  
 nue to be a Mighty Creator and All-Pow-  
 erful Lord, yet he could in no sense be a  
*Moral Governour* or *Judge* of the World,  
 nor



nor have Any Exercise of his Moral Perfections. All Religion or Virtue, consists in the Love of Truth, and in the Free Choice and Practice of Right, and in being influenced regularly by rational and moral Motives. By *These* things therefore God tries or proves men's Obedience; and under various Circumstances, and by various Methods of manifesting himself to them, he exercises their Faith and Patience and Virtue. By inducing men originally with *Reason and Understanding*, with a *natural Knowledge* of Good and Evil, and a *Conscience* of the difference between Virtue and Vice; By the Witnesses that God bears to himself in the Works of *Nature*, and by the various Dispensations of his All-wise *Providence*; in which *Visible Effects*, the Power and Government of the *Invisible God* are clearly and continually seen, *so that they*, who attend not to them, *are without excuse*: By *these* things, does God perpetually call men to religion; and hold out unto them an *universal Light*, in *all* Places and at *all* Times. And had men *no other* Discovery

S E R M. VI. of the Will of God, than *This*; yet their choosing to depart from the *natural* Law of *everlasting Righteousness*, would justly denominate them *an evil and adulterous generation* of Mankind. But *besides* this Voice of *Nature* in the visible works of God, and in the mind and conscience of every particular person; the divine Providence has moreover, in compassion to the ignorance of the Weak, and *for a Testimony* against the perverse and corrupt, in almost every Age of the World, raised up Eminent *Preachers of Righteousness*; such as was *Enoch* before, and *Noah* at the time of the Flood, and *Job* and the *Patriarchs* after it; to excite and call men to the practice of their Duty. And to the Nation of the *Jews*, he gave a *standing Revelation* of his Will; inviting them continually to Repentance by his Messengers *the Prophets*, and at last by his Son *Jesus Christ*, their promised and long expected Messiah: Manifesting his manifold Wisdom, *at sundry times and in diverse manners* of Revelation; as he had before done in the *various distribution* of the Natural

tural *Talents* of men's *rational Faculties, Capacities, and Abilities*; intending finally to judge *All* his Servants, according to what every one in particular *has, and not according to what he has not*: And in each of these various Dispensations, giving such degrees of *evidence and testimony* to the Truth, as might be a proper Tryal of good and well-disposed Minds, neither credulous *beyond* reason, nor prejudiced *against* reason, but prepared always to *receive* the Truth, and to *obey* it. Thus, to That generation of the *Jews* who lived in our Saviour's time, the proper and sufficient evidence of our Lord's being the promised *Messias*, to all such as impartially searched the Scriptures, was the fulfilling of the Prophecies that went before concerning him, and particularly That most miraculous *One* of his Resurrection from the Dead. Which was a *Sign* not possible to be resisted by Any, but by a very corrupt and *adulterous generation*; by a generation of *such* men, of such *perverse and incorrigible* Sinners, the description of whom, (which was the

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2d Particular I observed in the text,)

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the *description* of them, in one *remarkable* part of their character, is, that they are apt continually to require *more and more* Signs, and to tempt God without reason and without end: *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign.* The wickedest of men cannot bear the Thoughts of fighting openly against God; and therefore, to give some degree of Ease to their Minds, they generally take great pains to impose upon themselves, with some slight objections either against the *Being of God*, or against the *evidence of his Laws and Commands*, *The Jews*, says St Paul, *require a Sign, and the Gentiles seek after Wisdom*, 1 Cor. i. 22. The humour of the *Gentile World*, was to value themselves upon their *Logick and Philosophy*; and therefore the corrupt part of *Them* could always reject *any religious Truth*, by drawing objections against it from the *received Maxims of their Schools*. The *Jewish* nation valued themselves upon the *miraculous* things, which God had done for their Fathers; and therefore
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the corrupt part of *Them*, could always reject *any* religious Truth, by continually requiring *more* and *greater Miracles* to be worked in confirmation of it. Of This, the behaviour of That people in the *Wilderness* is a remarkable and very marvellous Instance. By a continued series of Miracles, God had rescued them from *Egyptian Slavery* and *Idolatry*, and was guiding them in the wilderness like a Flock, to the possession of the good land which he had promised to their Fathers. *Marvellous things* (as the Psalmist represents this matter in a most elegant and affectionate description, *Pf. lxxviii. 13.*) *Marvellous things did he in the sight of our forefathers, in the land of Egypt, even in the field of Zoan. He divided the Sea, and let them go through; he made the waters to stand on a heap. In the day-time also he led them with a cloud; and all the night through, with a light of fire. He clave the hard rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink thereof, as it had been out of the great depth. He brought waters out of the stony rock, so that it gushed out like*

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like the Rivers. Further, ver. 24, He commanded the clouds above, and opened the doors of heaven. He rained down manna also upon them for to eat, and gave them food from heaven. So man did eat Angels food, for he sent them meat enough. He caused the east-wind to blow under heaven, and thro' his power he brought in the south-west wind. He rained flesh upon them as thick as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the Sea. He let it fall among their tents, even round about their habitation. And again, ver. 53, He led them forth like sheep, and carried them in the wilderness like a flock. He brought them out safely, that they should not fear; and overwhelmed their enemies with the Sea. He brought them within the borders of his sanctuary, even to his mountain which he purchased with his right hand. He cast out the heathen also before them; caused their land to be divided among them for an heritage, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents. Sufficient Signs These, any unprejudiced person would judge, to convince even the most obstinate and perverse, the most evil and

reasonable to be believed.

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and adulterous generation. But so fami-
liar were these *Marvels* become to them,
that (it appears) they had no more influ-
ence upon *Them*, to bring them to true
Amendment and Reformation of Man-
ners, than the Works of *Nature*, (which
are in Truth the continual miraculous o-
perations of the omnipotent Power of the
God of Nature,) have upon *Us*. This al-
so is most *pathetically* set forth in the
same *lxxviiith Psalm*, ver. 18, *Yet for all*
this they sinned more against him, and pro-
voked the most Highest in the wilderness:
They tempted God in their hearts, and re-
quired meat for their Lust. They spake
against God also, saying, shall God prepare
a Table in the Wilderness? He smote the
stony Rock indeed, that the water gushed
out, and the streams flowed withal; but
can he give Bread also, or provide flesh for
his people? (Their Argument was exactly
the same, as that of the *Pharisees* to
whom our Lord replies in my Text:
They acknowledged that he had healed
many diseased persons here upon *Earth*;
But could he show them also a Sign from
Heaven?)


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S E R M. *Heaven?*) Further, ver. 32. of the same  
 VI. Psalm, *For all this they have sinned yet  
 more, and believed not his wondrous works:*  
 ver. 11. *They kept not the Covenant of  
 God, and would not walk in his law; But  
 forgot what he had done, and the wonderful  
 Works that he had showed for them.*  
 ver. 42, *They turned back and tempted  
 God, and moved the Holy One in Israel:*  
*They thought not of his hand, and of the  
 day when he delivered them from the hand  
 of the Enemy; How he had wrought his  
 Miracles in Egypt, and his Wonders in  
 the field of Zoan.* And again, ver. 57,  
*They tempted and displeased the most High  
 God, and kept not his Testimonies; But  
 turned their backs, and fell away like their  
 forefathers, starting aside like a broken  
 Bow. For they grieved him with their  
 hill-altars, and provoked him to displeasure  
 with their Images.* A more lively and  
 affectionate description of the perverseness  
 of incorrigible Sinners, cannot possibly  
 be given. Other Accounts of the same  
 nature, we find in the history which  
 the Old Testament gives us of the behav-  
 iour

viour of That people. When the *Egyptians* pursued after them into the *Wilderness*; *then*, as if he who had brought them out of *Egypt* with a mighty hand was not able to protect them in their journey; they said, *Wherefore hast thou thus dealt with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt*: Exod. xiv. 11. When the *Egyptians* were all destroyed, and they had nothing to oppose their progress but the solitary *Wilderness*; *then*, as if he who had delivered them from the *Host of Pharaoh*, was not able to feed them in the desert, they said, *Ye have brought us forth into this Wilderness to kill this whole Assembly with hunger*, Exod. xvi. 3. When God miraculously supplied them with Bread from Heaven; *then*, there was *nothing at all besides this manna*, Num. xi. 6: And when, by *another* miracle, he had quenched their Thirst; *then*, he smote the stony rock indeed, that the waters gushed out; but can he provide *Flesh* also for his people? Ps. lxxviii. 21. And when, by a *third* miracle, he fed them to the full with quails; for all This, they sinned yet more,

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S E R M. *more, and believed not his wondrous works,*
 VI. *ver. 32. When Moses tarried longer in the*
 *Mount than They expected; then, they*
could not live without their Leader, but
must make Gods to go before them; for,
as for This Moses, they knew not what
was become of him, Exod. xxxii. 1:
When he continued with them, and put
himself constantly at the Head of them;
then, ye take too much upon you; where-
fore lift ye up yourselves above the congreg-
ation of the Lord? Numb. xvi. 3. When
God commanded them to go up, and
take possession of the good Land which
he had provided for them; then, the peo-
ple of the land were strong, and the Cities
walled, and the children of Anak there,
and we be not able to go up against the
people, and the land is a land that eateth
up the inhabitants thereof, and we saw
Giants there, and would God we had died
in the land of Egypt, or would God we
had died in this WilderNESS; and where-
fore has the Lord brought us unto this
land, to fall by the sword? Num. xiii.
 28, &c. But when the Lord hereupon
 commanded

reasonable to be believed.

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commanded them *not to go up; then, Lo we be here, and will go up unto the place which the Lord has promised,* ch. xiv. 40.

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I SHOULD *proceed* to *Other* Instances of the unreasonable behaviour of sinful men in this respect: But the time not permitting me to finish this Subject Now, I shall at present add only a word of *application*, and so conclude.

I BELIEVE there are very few persons, who read these portions of Scripture, without censuring in their own minds the behaviour of the *Jews*, and saying within themselves, as did those whom our Saviour describes, *Matt. xxiii. 30, If We had been in the days of our Fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in These things.* But to every impenitent Sinner, in the *present* as well as in *former* times, the experience of the World, and the reason of things, and the judgment of conscience, and the Scripture of Truth says, *Thou art the man.* For all these things are *examples* unto *Us*, and they are written for our *admonition*, upon whom the ends of the World are come.

V O L. V.

K

God

S E R M. God calls *Us* to Repentance, by the continual Witness which he gives to himself in the works of Creation, in the reason and nature of Things, in the essential Differences of Good and Evil, in the voice of Conscience, in the dispensations of Providence, in his Mercies and Judgments, in the completion of Prophecies, in the Works and Preaching of Christ and his Apostles, in the Promises and Threatnings of the Gospel. And if all *These* things move men not, the Scripture declares *there shall no Sign be given to us*, but the *Sign* of the Nations who were destroyed by the *Flood*, and the Cities who perished in the Overthrow of *Sodom*. For as in the days before the *Flood*, and before the destruction of *Sodom*, men were *eating and drinking*, and *knew not* untill the Waters came and *took away* the one, and the Fire the other; *so also*, says our Lord, *shall the coming of the Son of Man be*.



SERMON VII.

Unreasonable Expectations not to
be gratified in Religion.

[*A Passion-Sermon.*]



MATT. xii. 39.

*An evil and adulterous generation
seeketh after a Sign, and there
shall No Sign be given to it, but
the Sign of the Prophet Jonas.*



OD, who is the Supreme GO-SERMON.
vernour of the Universe, shows VII.
forth his infinite Wisdom and
Goodness, in creating a Va-
riety of rational Creatures in
different Circumstances, and expecting
VOL. V. K 2 from

S E R M. from them a proportionable Use of the
 VII. Talents committed to them, according to
 their different degrees of Light and Know-
 ledge, and according to their respective
 Capacities and Abilities. To *Angels*, ha-
 ving given Knowledge and Powers far su-
 perior to those of Men; he expects of
 them accordingly an *Angelical* Obedience.
 To *Men*, having dispensed various Talents
 and various Degrees of Knowledge, at
 sundry times and in divers manners, ac-
 cording to his own good pleasure; after
 the similitude of the Great King in our
 Saviour's Parable, who, in the distribu-
 tion of Employments among his Servants,
 without injury to any one, did what he
 pleased with his own: To *Men*, I say,
 God having dispensed various Talents and
 various degrees of Knowledge, he expects
 of them a Return proportionable to what
 is given them; Not over-ruling their Ac-
 tions by the Force and Power of an ir-
 resistible Light; but trying their Obedi-
 ence by the Willingness of their Endea-
 vours to seek after Knowledge, and to
 guide themselves by That degree of Light
 (what-

(whatsoever it be) whereby his Will is in any measure made known unto them.

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IN the State of *Nature*, God made himself known to Men by the Arguments of Reason, by the Works of Creation, and by the dispensations of Providence; *having never left himself wholly without witness, but sending men rain and fruitful Seasons, and filling their Hearts with Food and Gladness; the invisible things of God from the creation of the World being clearly seen and understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead, Rom. i. 20. If the Nations of the World, forsaking this Universal Light, fall into the absurdest and most unreasonable Idolatries, and into consequently vitious and corrupt Practices of all kinds; they are evidently (as St Paul declares) without Excuse; and there is no injustice with God, if to such evil and adulterous generations of men there be no other Sign given, but the Signs of Nature and Reason and Conscience, and the perpetual universal Works of God.*

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UNDER the *Gospel*, God has made himself known to Men by the Revelation of his *Son*, confirmed by Signs and Wonders and *Miracles* of the *Ho'y Ghost*, by the Completion of *Prophecies*, and by the Analogy of the *Whole Series* of *Events* from the Beginning of the World. If under this *greater* and *clearer light* of *Revelation*, men still continue impenitent; not bringing forth the suitable Fruits of Righteousness, nor living *worthy of their holy vocation*, and as *becometh the Gospel of Christ*; the *wrath of God* is more severely revealed from *Heaven*, against all *unrighteousness and ungodliness* of Such men; and there shall no further Sign be given to such an *evil and adulterous generation*, but the Sign of the *Son of man* coming with the clouds of *Heaven*, in flame of fire taking *Vengeance* on them that know not God, and that obey not the *Gospel*.

UNDER the *Jewish* state, God manifested himself to That People by the Law of *Moses*, by the continual Preaching of the *Prophets*, and finally by the accomplishment of the whole dispensation in the

Life

Life and Death and Resurrection of Christ. S E R M.

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And when they who saw *These* manifestations of God, were not thereby prevailed upon to *bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance*, and answerable to the *Light* that was then *come into the World*; but, on the contrary, *cavilled* at our Lord's Doctrine and Miracles, and continually required *More Signs*; our Lord, with just indignation, gives them the Reply in the Text; *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall No Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the Whale's Belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the Heart of the Earth.*

IN discoursing upon which words, I have before observed, that the matter of instruction therein contained, may be reduced to the following Heads.

1st, THAT the Doctrine of Religion is in itself reasonable to be believed, and sufficiently evidenced by the



standing and universal Signs or Marks of Truth. 'Tis supposed in the words, that, what our Saviour here calls the *Sign of the Prophet Jonas*, was sufficient to render That generation of the *Jews* inexcusable in their Unbelief.

2dly, HERE is a description given of wicked men, in one particular and remarkable part of their Character; that they are apt continually to require *more and more Signs*, and to tempt God without reason and without End. *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign.*

3dly, THE declaration our Saviour here makes, plainly implies, that there are just and good reasons, why God should not gratify the unreasonable expectations of prejudiced and corrupt Minds. *There shall No Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas.*

THE *First* of these, I have already gone through; and have shown, that the
Doctrine


Doctrinē of Religion is in itself reasonable to be believed, and sufficiently evidenced by the *standing* and *universal Signs* or *Marks of Truth*. According to our Saviour's Supposition in the words of the Text; that, what he here calls the *Sign of the Prophet Jonas*, was sufficient to render That generation of the *Jews* inexcusable in their Unbelief.

THE *Second* Observeable, was, the Description here given of wicked men, in one particular and remarkable part of their Character; that they are apt continually to require *more and more* Signs, and to tempt God without reason and without End: *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign*. And This Observation I at large illustrated by That *remarkable Instance* the Scripture gives us, of the behaviour of the *people of the Jews* in their passage through the *Wilderness*; which is so distinctly recorded in the Books of *Moses*, and so frequently alluded to in the *Psalms*, and in St *Paul's* epistles to the *Corinthians* and to the *Hebrews*, as a standing Admonition and Caution to
perverse

S E R M. perverse Minds, in all succeeding genera-
 VII. tions.



I SHALL Now proceed to some *Other* Instances of the like Sort, in which the Unreasonableness of tempting God in this manner, will still further appear. In our *Saviour's time*, the *same* spirit of Perverseness, which the Scripture calls an *evil heart of Unbelief*, (meaning always by *Unbelief*, not a *reasonable Caution* in *with-holding the Assent*, but a *captious Desire* of *evading the reasons of conviction*;) In our *Saviour's time*, I say, the *same* perverse Spirit, which appeared so remarkably in the *Jews of old* in the *Wilderness*, continued *still* in the corrupt part of That Nation: So that *whatever* Method the divine Wisdom thought fit to make use of, in order to bring them to Repentance; they could *Always* render it ineffectual. *John the Baptist* came unto them, *neither eating Bread, nor drinking Wine*, Luk. vii. 33. that is, he came in the more *severe* way of *austerity and mortification*; and they said, *He hath a Devil*; that is, they charged him with being

ing *enthusiaſtick and mad.* On the other S E R M.
hand, *the Son of man is come eating and* VII.
drinking, ver. 34. that is, in the more 
familiar way of a free converſation; and
they ſaid, behold a gluttonous man and a
wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and
Sinners. The Methods of Proceeding
were *Both* of them right, in their proper
Time and Place; and *Wisdom is juſtified*
of all her children; But incorrigible men
could equally find Objections againſt *Both.*
Our Saviour therefore, in a moſt elegant
parable, compares them to croſs and per-
verſe children, whom neither Mirth nor
Seriouſneſs could pleaſe: Ver. 31. *Where-*
unto ſhall I liken the men of This gene-
ration? and to what are they like? They
are like unto children ſitting in the mar-
ket-place, and calling one to another, and
ſaying, We have piped unto you, and ye
have not danced; we have mourned to you,
and ye have not wept. When the men of
Nazareth heard what mighty works our
Lord had done at *Capernaum,* they ſaid,
Whatſoever we have heard done in Caperna-
um, do alſo here in thy own country; Luk. iv. 23.

S E R M. On the other hand, when he did Wonders in his own country, then their Answer was, *Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy Disciples also may see the works that thou doest;-----If thou do these things, show thyself to the world,* Joh. vii. 3. When our Lord had miraculously healed many diseased persons here upon *Earth*, then the Pharisees said unto him, *Master, we would see of thee a Sign from Heaven:* And when there came unto him a voice from Heaven, Joh. xii. 28. the Evangelist tells us, ver. 37. that *yet they believed not on him.* When the Chief Priests and Elders saw our Saviour crucified, they said, *Matt. xxvii. 42. He saved others, himself he cannot save; if he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him:* But when he was risen from the Dead, to the Terror of their own Soldiers, whom they had set to watch him; then they gave them money to report, that *his Disciples had come by night, and stolen him away,* ch. xxviii. 13. Thus, of tempting God, and of continually requiring more and greater

greater Signs, and of finding Means to S E R M. elude the Arguments and Motives of Re- VII. ligion, there is no End. The *Temper* from which all This proceeds, is of the *same* kind with That *Tempting of Providence*, which the Gospel emphatically represents to us in the history of *our Saviour's temptation*; Where *Satan* placing him upon a *pinnacle of the temple*, argues with him, that, if he was the *Son of God*, he might safely venture to *cast himself down* from thence: For if God owned and declared him to be his *Son*, and had so peculiar a Favour for him; *why* should not he preserve him from being hurt in his Fall? *Matt. iv. 6.* The Ground upon which incorrigible Sinners reject all the Arguments and Motives of Religion, is generally of *the like* Nature. If it be the *Will* of God, that men should *believe* and *aēt* in such or such a particular manner; *why* does not he *compel* them so to do? *why* does not he perpetually *give them Signs from Heaven*? *why* does he not *turn their hearts*, which way soever he pleases? for *Who has resisted his Will*?


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The Answer is very plain; that God does not absolutely *will* such and such things to be done, but his Will is that men should *chuse* to do them upon reasonable Motives: In which alone consists the essence of all *Virtue*, and of all *Religion*. God does not therefore by irresistible Motives *compel* men to *obey* him; because, if he did, 'twould for That very Reason be in *Them* No Act of *Obedience*. But he *tries* their Obedience, by the *proper* Instruments of *Perswasion*; and by Motives suited to the nature of *rational* and *free* Agents. Of These, *Some* love the knowledge of *Truth*; and are always ready, according to the degree of the Light afforded them, to do what is *Right*: And these our Saviour, in his parable of the Sower, very significantly compares to *Good Ground*. *Others* love *Darkness* rather than *Light*, and Arguments of Reason make no Impression upon them, and their *Hearts* are as hard as the *Nether-milstone*. To These, the exquisite *Works of Natur*, prove not the *Being of God*; the *Revelation of the Gospel*,

spel, discovers not to them his *Will*: S E R M. VII.
And should God vouchsafe them still 
Other Calls to Repentance, they would
prove equally ineffectual; *neither would*
they be perswaded, even though one rose
from the Dead. Of This we have a re-
markable Instance, *Job. xii. 9, 10. Much*
people-----came, not for Jesus sake only,
but that they might see Lazarus also, whom
he had raised from the Dead: But the
chief Priests consulted, that they might
put Lazarus also to death. These were,
in the strongest sense of the words in my
Text, *an evil and adulterous generation*;
altogether unworthy of having any fur-
ther Signs given them; and whose beha-
viour abundantly justifies our Lord's de-
claration in the following part of the
Text, (which was the

Third and Last thing I proposed to
speak to; *viz. the declaration* our Sa-
viour here makes,) plainly implying that
there are *just and good reasons*, why God
should not gratify the unreasonable ex-
pectations of prejudiced and corrupt
minds: *There shall No Sign be given to*
this

S E R M. *this generation, but the Sign of the Prophet*
 VII. *Jonas.* Now the reasonableness of this
 Proceeding, is very evident from what
 has been already said. Eternal Life, is
 the Gift of God: And the Design of God,
 (his *just* and *reasonable* Design,) is to be-
 stow this *free Gift*, upon those who by
 an habitual *Practice of Virtue*, shall have
 their Minds qualified for That Happy
 State. The *Practice of Virtue* consists,
 in the *willing Choice* of what is *good*, and
avoiding what is *evil*: And the *Time* of
 this Choice, is the *present state* of *Pro-*
bation. God could, if he had pleased, by
 giving *no free Will* to his Creatures, have
 prevented *all possibility* of *Moral Evil*.
 But then the whole *Creation of God*, would
 have been only a great *Machine*; in which
 the *Omnipotence* indeed of the Maker,
 would have appeared; but he would have
 been no *King*, no *Judge*, no *Moral Go-*
vernour; nor could have displayed *any*
 of those *more excellent Perfections*, of *Ju-*
stice, *Mercy*, and the like, in which the
Glory of the Almighty principally con-
 sists. These have *no place*, but where
 there

there are *Subjects* capable of obeying or S E R M.
disobeying. The *proper Tryal* of which VII.
obedience, is That *Freedom of Will*, which,
according as it is determined in different
Circumstances by the *reasonableness of what*
is good or the *intiments of what is evil*,
renders the *Agent* morally good or evil.
God therefore, according to his own good
pleasure, places men in all variety of
Circumstances in this probation-state;
And the Justice, and Wisdom, and Good-
ness of his Government consists in finally
judging them All with Equity, according
to their respective degrees of Light and
Knowledge. The first *Root and Founda-*
tion of Virtue, is the sincere Desire of
knowing the Will of God, and impartially
searching after the Truth: And, as a pro-
per Tryal of This disposition, the Wis-
dom of God has been pleased so to order
the *Notices* given of himself to Mankind
both by *Nature* and *Revelation*, that if
any man will do his Will, he shall know
of the doctrine; and, if he *desires not to*
practise it, even the *knowledge* of it shall
be *hid from him*: To Him that bath,

S E R M. *shall be given; and from Him that hath*
 VII. *not, shall be taken away even That which*
 he hath. By the Light of Nature, God manifests himself to men in the works of Creation; Visibly enough, to those who, as St Paul expresses it, *seek the Lord, if haply they may feel after him, and find him*: But yet at the same time in such a manner, as that vitious and ill-disposed men, *seeing, may still not see; and hearing, may still not hear*; but may go on to ascribe the most perfect works of infinite Wisdom, to *Fate, to Chance, to Nothing*. By Revelation, God has declared his *Mercy* towards Sinners: Signifying unto them, that as a Great King over numerous Nations, consistently with the Laws of his universal Kingdom, pardons, in some rebellious City, by the interposition of his beloved Son, as many as, by his Son's invitation and persuasion, return to their Duty; so also will *God*, the Supreme Governour of the Universe, accept all those, whom the Spirit of Christ, (inviting them either under the state of *Nature*, by such *Preachers of righteousness*

as was *Noah* and the *Patriarchs*; or under the *Law*, by *Moses* and the *Prophets*; or under the *Gospel*, by our *Lord himself* and his *Apostles*,) whom (I say) by *Any* of these means, the Spirit of Christ shall bring to Repentance. And the *Evidences* of this *Revelation*, (in the same manner, and for the same reason, as the Evidences of God in the Works of *Creation*,) are fitted to satisfy an unprejudiced Mind, and yet are not such as cannot be resisted. When the *Jews* demanded of our Saviour *such* a Sign, as was given to their Fathers when the *Heavens* rained down *Manna* for them to eat, *Job*. vi. 6. he would not gratify them with a *new* miracle, but gave them the true interpretation of the *antient* one: *I* am, says he, *the Bread of Life*; *the Bread of God is He which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Life unto the World*. Again, When the *Pharisees* asked of him a *Sign from Heaven*; Mat. xvi, his Answer was, *Luk*. xii. 56. *Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it, that ye do not discern this Time?* referring them

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to the *Prophecies*, which much more plainly pointed out the *Time* of his *Coming*, than ever the *face of the Sky* fore-signified the *Weather*. These *Prophecies* he fulfilled, in his *Life* and by his *Death*; by many miraculous *Actions*, and miraculous *Sufferings*. And when he was *raised up the third day*, God *shewed him openly*; not to all the people, *Acts x. 41.* but unto *Witnesses chosen before of God*, and *commanded to preach unto the people*: God here likewise doing, not every thing that *could be done*, not every thing that *unreasonable men might expect should be done*, but what he himself saw *fit and proper* to be done. According to that affectionate observation of our Saviour, *Luk. iv. 25.* *I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, but -----unto none of them was he sent, save unto-----a widow of Sarepta: And many Lepers were in Israel in the time of Elishus the Prophet, and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.* God has given us *Faculties*, to enable us to search after and to find the *Truth*; and


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he


he expects we should *attend* with an im-
parial and unprejudiced mind (which is
the proper Duty of Rational Creatures,)
to the *Light* he thinks fit to afford us,
Why, even of yourselves, says our Saviour,
judge ye not what is right? Luk. xii. 57.
They who *do* thus judge; who, with a
mind desirous to do the Will of God,
receive and embrace the doctrine of Truth;
not carelessly, credulously, and implicitly;
but with reason, with examination, with
attention, with such impartial considera-
tion and inquiry, as enables men to find
(by observation and care) what Others are
blind to, and to *be ready always to give*
a reason of the Hope that is in them;
These are the persons, whom the Scrip-
ture commends for their *Faith*; for ha-
ving the Virtue of *Faith*; in opposition
to the Vice of *Infidelity*, and to the Folly
of *Credulity*. For, *we walk by Faith, not*
by Sight, 2 Cor. v. 7. by a *rational per-*
swasion, not by *Necessity*: *Seeing* (as St Paul
elegantly describes it; *Seeing*) through a
glass (through a *descriing-glass*) *darkly,*
1 Cor. xiii. 12. not *beholding,* as in a *glass*

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S E R M. (as in \* a *looking-glass*,) with open face,  
 VII. 2 Cor. iii. 18. And This is That which  
 makes *Faith* and *Hope* to be *Virtues*:  
 For *Hope* that is seen, is not *Hope*; for,  
 what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope  
 for? But if we hope for That we see not,  
 then do we with patience wait for it, Rom.  
 viii. 25. The God of Nature, in whom  
 we live and move and have our Being, and  
 who is not far from every one of us, is  
 not visible to mortal eyes: But the Light  
 of Nature affords reasonable men, very  
 great Arguments to believe and trust in  
 him; And This, is a commendable and  
 well-grounded Faith. For *Faith* is the  
*Substance of things hoped for, the evidence  
 of things not seen*: And the commenda-  
 tion of *Moses's* patience in *Egypt*, before  
 God's revealing them himself to him,  
 was, that he endured, as seeing him who is  
 invisible, Heb. xi. 27. The Evidences of  
 natural reason and of the most demon-  
 strable Truths, do not force themselves  
 upon *All* men; But to the *impartial* and  
*attentive*, to the *unprejudiced* and *confide-  
 rate*, they appear in their full Strength;  
 and,

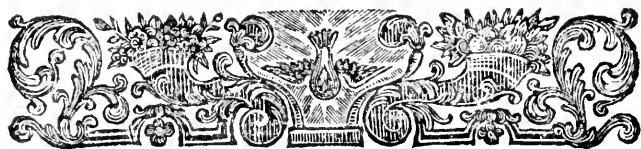
and, for That reason, 'tis an Act of *Vir-* S E R M.  
*tue* to be guided by them. For the *same* VII.  
reason, in matters of Revelation likewise;   
*Blessed*, says our Saviour, *are they that*  
*have not seen, and yet have believed*, Joh.  
xxi. 29. That is: Not, they who are  
*credulous*, and believe *without reason*; but  
they who, like the *Bereans*, are convinced  
of the Truth by *Searching* into the  
grounds of it. *The Trial of whose Faith*,  
saith St Peter, *will be found unto Praise*  
*and Honour and Glory at the appearing*  
*of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye*  
*love; in whom, though Now ye see him*  
*not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy un-*  
*speakable and full of glory*, 1 Pet. i. 7.  
This is the *character* the Scripture gives  
us of the *Virtue of Faith*, and the *com-*  
*mendation* of those who are eminent for  
having it. On the contrary, they who  
by prejudices and vicious inclinations are  
prevented from searching after the Truth,  
and, instead of attending to and examin-  
ing what is Right, seek rather for Cavils  
industriously to evade the evidence and  
conviction of it; *these* are the persons

S E R M. whom the Scripture with the greatest severity condemns for their *infidelity*, as being an *evil and adulterous generation*. The *uncircumcision which is by nature*, saith St Paul, *if it fulfil the Law, shall it not judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the Law?* Rom ii, 27.

VII.  Mat. xii. 41. And our Saviour; *The men of Nineveh,* says he, *shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here.* Persons thus resisting the Truth, our Lord, after the first and second admonition, rejected; and refused to give them any further Signs: and commanded his *Disciples* in like manner, to *shake off the dust of their feet for a testimony against them,* and not continue to *cast their pearls before swine.* God had dealt with the *Jews of old*, after the same manner: *Pf. lxxxii. 12. My people would not hear my voice, and Israel would not obey me; So I gave them up unto their own hearts lusts, and let them follow their own imaginations.* And to men in future Ages, who shall be

be found of the same temper, the Scrip-  
ture threatens that God, in just anger, shall even send them strong delusion, that they may believe a Lye, 2 Th. ii. 11. The Effect of mens being in this manner given up for their Abusing the divine patience, is thus expressed by the Psalmist. Ps. lxxviii. 60. *When God heard this, he was wroth, and took sore displeasure at Israel: So that he forsook the tabernacle in Silo, even the Tent that he had pitched among men: He delivered their power into captivity, and their beauty into the enemy's hand: He gave his people also over unto the sword, and was wroth with his inheritance.* And by our Saviour in his affectionate lamentation over Jerusalem, Matt. xxiii. 37, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee! How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.*

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SERMON VIII.

How the Law is said to be the
Strength of Sin.

[*A Passion-Sermon.*]



I COR. XV. 56 and 57.

The sting of Death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.



THE Apostle having in the SERMON
former part of this Chapter, VIII.
proved at large the truth of
the resurrection of Christ,
and the certainty of the fu-
ture resurrection of Christians; and ha-
ving from thence taken occasion to give a
full

S E R M. full and particular account of the order
 VIII. and manner of the resurrection of the
 body; he concludes his whole discourse
 with this triumphal exclamation; *So then
 when this corruptible shall have put on in-
 corruption, and this mortal shall have put
 on immortality, then shall be brought to
 pass the saying that is written, Death is
 swallowed up in victory, i. e. utterly and
 for ever; O death where is thy sting? O
 grave, where is thy victory? The sting of
 death is sin, and the strength of sin is the
 law; but thanks be to God which giveth us
 the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I shall endeavour 1st, To explain the
 words briefly, and shew in what Sense Sin
 is said to be *the sting of death, and the law
 the strength of sin.* 2^{dly}, I shall indea-
 vour to shew how and by what means
 Christ gives us the victory, over the law
which is the strength of sin, over Sin which
is the sting of death, and finally over
 Death it self; And lastly, I shall draw
 some practical Inferences from the whole.

First, I shall endeavour to shew in what
 Sense Sin is said to be *the sting of death,*
 and

and the law the strength of sin. That by Sin's being the *sting of death*, is meant that Sin is the *cause of Death*, and that 'tis Sin only that makes Death terrible, is evident. *The first mention* we find of death's being in the World, is upon *Adam's* committing the first transgression; *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*, Gen. ii. 17. And the cause of the continuance of its dominion ever since in the World, is the conformity of the rest of mankind to that of their Forefather; *As by one man sin first entred into the world, and death by sin; and so death has since passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*; Rom. v. 12. The Apostle lays it down as a maxim, that the cause of the dominion of death, is sin; and because it might be objected that since Sin is not imputed where there is no law, therefore those who lived between *Adam* and *Moses*, without any express revealed Law, should seem not to be concluded under the sentence of death; he adds, that even in *that* time, men *had* some discovery of the Will of God; So that before the delivery

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VIII.
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SERM. livery of *Moses's* law Sin *was* in the  
 VIII. World; and therefore death *did* reign  
 from *Adam* to *Moses*, even over them that  
 had not sinned after the similitude of *A-*  
*dam's* transgression; that is, who had not  
 indeed like *Adam* sinned against a positive  
 and immediate Revelation of the Will of  
 God, with an express threatning of death  
 annexed; but yet had sinned against such  
 a law, as they had sufficient reason to be  
 assured was a discovery of the Will of  
 God. The Scripture is very exceeding  
 full in this point; inculcating every  
 where, that as the knowledge of God  
 and Obedience to his commands *is* life,  
 so the immediate and necessary conse-  
 quence of Sin is *death*. *When lust has*  
*conceived, it bringeth forth Sin; and Sin*  
*when it is finished, bringeth forth death;*  
 St James i. 15. *What fruit had ye then*  
*in those things, whereof ye are now asha-*  
*med? for the end of those things is death,*  
 Rom. vi. 21. and ver. 23, *the wages of*  
*sin is death*. Moreover, as Sin is the *cause*  
 of death, so also is it *That* only which  
 makes Death it self terrible. 'Tis not  
 barely

barely the separation of Soul and Body, which is the terf̄our of death; but that separation, as inflicted *by*, and accompanied *with*, the wrath of God. Death may possibly be otherwise so far from terrible, that it may be and often *is* expected by good men with joy and comfort, as an entrance into life and happiness. 'Tis Sin only which is the horreur of death, and which gives it that sting, which makes it really insupportable even to the most distant thought. When the death of the Body is the forerunner of that death of the Soul, from which there is no hopes of release, but the wrath of God must abide on it for ever; then is it that death appears truly dreadful and terrible. This is that which makes wicked men, conscious of their own guilt, and sensible of the wrath of God hanging over their heads, so amazed at the approach and even the thoughts of death: They cannot bear to think on so affrighting a prospect, but are even overwhelmed and swallowed up with astonishment and despair: Not that they so dread death

barely

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barely and in it self, (*for they could call on the hills to fall on them, and to the mountains to cover them; they could seek death when they cannot find it, and desire to die when death shall flee from them, Rev. ix. 6.*) but 'tis the consequences of death, That sting which Sin gives it, that they are so terribly and so justly afraid of.

But to proceed: *The strength of Sin, saith the Apostle, is the law; The strength of Sin, viz. that which gives it its power and efficacy. 'Tis evident that Sin is the transgression of the law, and that where there is no law there is no transgression, Rom. iv. 15. By the law therefore is the knowledge of sin, Rom. iii. 20; or as the Apostle more fully expresses himself, ch. vii. ver. 7 and 8, I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet; But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; For without the law sin is dead: that is, the knowledge of Sin must needs be, by the knowledge and promulgation of the law that forbids it. But*  
 this




this is not all; For in this sense, by every declaration of the Will of God, by every command and prohibition, is the knowledge of Sin; and so the Gospel itself might as properly be stiled the strength of sin, as the law. Since therefore by the *Law*, the Apostle plainly means That discovery of the Will of God which was made to mankind before the Coming of Christ; and particularly that which was given to the *Jews*; in opposition to the Christian or Gospel-dispensation: 'tis certain that by its being the *strength of sin*, must be understood Something more, than barely its being the occasion of the knowledge of Sin. It remains therefore, that it must signify the making *such a* discovery of the heinous nature and guilt of Sin, as yet either not to afford a possibility of avoiding it, or not to discover any sufficient means of recovering from it. Now in what sense, and how far this may be truly applicable to the *Jewish Law*, is of some difficulty to determine: (For if the *Jews under the law* had neither any possibility of avoiding Sin, nor

S E R M. yet any sufficient means of recovering  
 VIII. from the guilt of it, it would follow that  
 people were in much harder circumstances  
 than the representations which the Scrip-  
 ture makes to us of God's dispensations  
 and dealings with them allows us to sup-  
 pose: ) I shall therefore for the clearing  
 this whole matter, and to show both in  
 what sense the Law is called the Strength  
 of Sin, and how our Saviour has given us  
 the victory over it, (which was the first  
 thing I proposed to speak to,) endeavour  
 briefly to prove these following Proposi-  
 tions. 1<sup>st</sup>, That the Original Law of  
 God requires exact, perfect, and unfin-  
 ning obedience; which since Man through  
 the weakness and corruption of his nature  
 is not capable of performing, men are all  
 thereby necessarily concluded under Sin.  
 2<sup>dly</sup>, That that Law, under which the  
*Jews* were, so far as it is distinguished  
 from, and opposed to, the Grace or Go-  
 spel of Christ; is the same with the Ori-  
 ginal Law of God, in its full force and  
 severity. 3<sup>dly</sup>, That yet God never dealt  
 with men according to the strictness and  
 rigour



rigour of that Law, but always anticipated the favour of the Gospel, and dealt with men according to the Gracious Terms of the New Covenant. *4thly*, That Our Saviour at his appearance, openly promulged and declared to all the World the less severe Terms of this Covenant of Grace, and by that means totally freed men from the fear and bondage of that rigorous Law, which was really in force untill the time of his appearing; excepting only as God was pleased to anticipate the Grace and Favour of the New Covenant, at first by the secret dispensations of his Mercy, and the obscure promises of a Redeemer to come; and afterwards, as the time of the promise drew near, by the more open and plain declarations of the prophets. *1st*, The Original Law of God requires exact, perfect, and unfinning Obedience; which since man through the weakness and corruption of his nature, is not capable of performing, men are all thereby necessarily concluded under Sin. This is evident from the consideration of the Nature of

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S E R M. *God*, and of the true and Original notion  
 VIII. of a *Law*. The Authority of *God* being  

 supreme, and the condition of his creatures absolutely dependant; Obedience entire and constant, universal and perpetual, is plainly and naturally due to his commands: The nature also of a *Law* being to require obedience; and provision for reconciliation after a violation of it, not being originally in the condition of a *Law*, but only an after-provision of Favour and Mercy; 'tis plain that originally to the *Laws* of *God*, there is due a perfect and unfinning Obedience. That therefore which the original law of *God* declares, is this; that as *God* is himself a Being of infinite purity and holiness, so he cannot be pleased with any creature, that imitates not that purity according to the utmost capacity of its nature; that as there are eternal measures of Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, which are as unchangeable as the nature of *God* and the constitution of things, so *God* cannot possibly delight in any creature that observes not these essential and fundamental laws  
 of

of his Kingdom; that therefore men who are made capable of knowing God, are bound to worship him *as* God, without giving any part of that honour to another which is due only to *him*, or paying *him* that honour which is due to him, in a way not becoming the excellency of his nature; And in brief that knowing the eternal rules of justice and equity; honesty and fidelity, temperance and sobriety, to be the laws of his Kingdom, they are bound to be true and just in all their dealings one with another with all simplicity and sincerity of mind, and to live in Sobriety, Temperance and Chastity, with all Purity and Holiness: And this they are bound to do, constantly and at all times; the original law of God assuring indeed those that obey it in all points of a reward and the favour of God; but not providing any expiation, nor pointing with any certainty at the means of reconciliation, for those who shall at any time have transgressed and incurred God's displeasure. 'Tis true the World always had great and reasonable hopes, that God


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S E R M. would be merciful to returning Sinners,  
 VIII. and accept repentance instead of perfect  
 ~~~~~ innocence; But then these hopes were not  
 founded on the Original condition of the
 law of God; but either on mens natural
 notion of the mercifulness and placability
 of the Divine nature (such as the Hea-
 then World has always depended upon;) and
 these were only probable and hopeful
 presumptions; or else on the obscure pro-
 mises made to *Adam* and the Patriarchs of
 a Messias to come, (such as the holy and
 devout men before the giving of the Law
 of *Moses* grounded their expectations of
 mercy upon;) and these were the first be-
 ginnings of the declaration of the Cove-
 nant of Grace. The Original law of
 God therefore, required perfect unfinning
 obedience; and thereby, since no man
 was able to perform it, necessarily con-
 cluded all men under Sin. 2dly, That
 Law, under which the *Jews* lived, so far
 as it is distinguished from, and opposed
 to, the Grace or Gospel of Christ; is the
 same with the original Law of God in its
 full Force and Severity. This is evident

from its retaining and confirming all the moral precepts of Nature, with exprefs promise indeed *that the man which doth these things shall live by them*, Rom. x. 5 ; but with most rigorous threatnings also, *that Cursed should be every one that continued not in all things which were written in the book of the Law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10 ; not affording any expiation for great and wilful sins past, but denouncing death without mercy against them ; nor indeed allowing any atonement even for smaller Sins, but such as plainly owed all their efficacy, to their being types of the mercy of the Covenant of grace. The same also is clear from the Apostles attributing all those severities to the *Jewish Law*, which are properly true only of the Original law of God ; and his opposing it directly to the grace and mercy of the Gospel-Covenant. *The law, saith he, is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good*, Rom. vii. 12 ; 'twas such as if it were exactly obeyed, would certainly justify a man,

S E R M. *i. e.* make him appear righteous in the
 VIII. Sight of God, and intitle him to the re-
 ward of obedience; *the doers of the law shall be justified*, Rom. ii. 13. But the corrupt estate of humane nature being such, that no man can obey this law in all points without sinning, but that in *many things we offend all, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*, Rom. iii. 23; hence the law which was ordained to the end that men obeying it might attain life and happiness, served only to their Condemnation, by working in their Consciences a Conviction of their duty which they ought to have performed, and of the Wrath of God hanging over their heads for not performing it: *The commandment, saith he, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death*, Rom. vii. 10. And upon this account (I suppose) are those so frequent expressions of the Apostle; *that the law worketh wrath*, Rom. iv. 15; *that by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God*, Rom. iii. 20; *that as many as are*
 of

of the works of the law are under the curse, S E R M.
Gal. iii. 10. *And that the law entred that* VIII.
the offence might abound, Rom. v. 20; 
that is to say, not that it was designed to
that end, but that in fact and by conse-
quence it *did* become a means of aggra-
vating sin and rendring it more exceed-
ingly criminal; 'Tis true the Law did in-
deed appoint certain sacrifices of expiation
for sin; but such as had not in themselves
Any efficacy to expiate sin, any otherwise
than as they typified that great sacrifice
which was once to be offered for the
Sins of the whole World: The Taber-
nacle was a figure for the time then pre-
sent, in which were offered both gifts and
sacrifices, that could not make him that
did the service perfect, as pertaining to
the conscience; *For the law having a sha-*
dow of good things to come, and not the
very image of the things, can never with
those sacrifices, which they offered year by
year continually, make the comers thereun-
to perfect, Heb. x. 1. Hence though
those good men who lived before the co-
ming of Christ, were indeed justified;
yet

S E R M. yet they are said to be justified, how? not
 VIII. by the works of the law, but by faith; as
 St *Paul* reasoneth in his whole fourth
 Chapter to the *Romans*; His meaning is;
 They trusted not to ritual and ceremoni-
 ous performances, but looked through the
 types and shadows of the law to the pro-
 mised Messiah, being fully perswaded that
 what God had promised he would assured-
 ly perform; and this was counted unto
 them for righteousness. Thus of *Abra-
 ham* particularly 'tis said by the Apostle,
*that he was not justified by the works of the
 law, so as to have wherewith to glory before
 God; but that he was justified by Faith:*
 and in like manner all the holy men, who
 lived under the law, did not expect to be
 justified in the sight of God by the works
 of the law, but by their faith in God, and
 trust in his promises. So the law was
 their Schoolmaster to bring them unto
 Christ; and though they knew that no-
 thing in the law could of it self avail ef-
 fectually to the forgiveness of sins, yet
 they continued with patience walking in
 the Commandments of God, and waiting
 for

for the consolation and redemption of *Israel*; and accordingly when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made *[of a Woman, made]* under the law, that he might redeem those that were under the law. The Jewish Law therefore, so far as it was distinguished from, and opposed to, the grace or gospel of Christ, was the same with the original law of God in its full force and severity; and no flesh could be justified thereby.

3dly, YET God never dealt with men according to the strictness and severity of that Law, but always anticipated the favour of the gospel, and dealt with men according to the gracious terms of the new Covenant. Thus though no flesh could be justified by the law, yet both the Patriarchs who lived *before* the law (as I have already observed,) and all Holy men who lived *under* Law, were justified; and this their justification *was by Faith*, i. e. by the terms of that new Covenant, *which in the fulness of time* was to be promulged openly and plainly to the whole world. Wherefore, though the Law appointed no

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S E R M. expiation for great and presumptuous Sins,  
 VIII. yet God always pardoned Sinners upon  
 their true repentance, (as appears in the  
 case of *David* and others;) and as the  
 times of the gospel grew nearer and near-  
 er, began by degrees to *declare* by his Pro-  
 phets, that he would do so. *David*,  
 when he had committed those crying Sins  
 of Adultery and Murder, acknowledges  
 that the severity of the law allowed no  
 Sacrifice of expiation for him; *Thou de-  
 sirest not sacrifice, else would I give it thee,  
 but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings,*  
 Pf. li. 16: Yet he hoped that upon his  
 hearty repentance, forgiveness would not  
 be impossible to be obtained at the Hands  
 of God; *A broken and contrite heart, O  
 God, saith he, thou wilt not despise,* ver.  
 17; and the event discovered that he did  
 indeed obtain it. And God afterward by  
 the Prophet *Ezekiel* declared publicly to  
 the whole people of the *Jews*, that *when  
 a wicked man turneth away from his wick-  
 edness, and doeth that which is lawful and  
 right, he should save his soul alive.* Thus  
 though the Law, strictly speaking, was in  
 force

force with its full severity 'till the appearing of our Saviour, yet God never dealt with men according to that severity, but always anticipated the Favour of the Gospel, and judged men by the terms of the Covenant of grace. The *Law* was by *Moses*, *Grace and Truth* by *Christ*.



4thly, THIS new Covenant of grace, which, before the coming of our Saviour lay hid in the secret dispensations of God's mercy, and began in part and by degrees to be discovered, first by the obscure promises of a Messiah to come, and afterwards by the more plain declarations of the Prophets; was at our Saviour's Appearance openly established, and the terms of it publickly promulged to the whole World; so as to deliver men entirely from all fear of that rigour of the Law, which the Apostle stiles *the strength of Sin*. This deliverance of men by the Gospel from the burden and severity of the Law, the Apostle in the Text calls a Victory; and This Victory our Saviour obtained for us, principally by these two things: 1<sup>st</sup>, By giving himself a sacrifice

and

S E R M. and propitiation for sins past, from which  
 VIII. men could not be justified by the Law ;  
 and 2dly, By proposing openly the gracious terms of Faith and Repentance to those who believed and were desirous to obey him. 1st, He gave himself a sacrifice and propitiation for sins past, from which men could not be justified by the law, viz. When it was not consistent with the wisdom of God in his government of the world, to let sin go unpunished, and yet he would have mercy upon sinful man, *he sent his own Son into the world in the likeness of sinful flesh, to bear our punishment, and so for sin (or as the words may most properly be rendred, by being a sacrifice for sin) condemned sin in the flesh, Rom. viii. 3.* Hence Christ is said to have *obtained redemption for us, Heb. ix. 12. to have put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, Heb. ix. 26; to have given his life a ransom for many, St Mat. xx. 28. for many; that is, for all those that should believe and obey him; as 'tis explained by St Paul, 1 Tim. ii. 6. to have bought us with a price, 1 Cor. vi.*

*to be the Strength of Sin.*

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20. *to be the propitiation for our sins,* S E R M.  
Joh. ii. 2. *and to have purchased a church* VIII.

*with his blood,* Acts xx. 28; with many the like expressions, which do all plainly signify, that Christ by his death and the shedding of his most precious blood, has made full and sufficient satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of the whole world, that is, for as many as shall out of the world flee unto him, and submit themselves to the terms of the new covenant whereof he is made the mediatur. *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your Conscience from dead works to serve the living God,* Heb. ix. 13, 14. 2dly, Our Saviour has openly proposed to all the world, the gracious terms of Faith and Repentance; of Faith, that men believe on him as the Saviour of the world and the Messiah that was to come, professing themselves subjects of his Kingdom; and

of

S E R M. of Repentance, that men turn from the  
 VIII. evil of their ways, and conform their  
 lives to the laws of that Kingdom, whose  
 subjects they profess themselves to be :  
 That they believe on him whom God  
 hath sent ; and that they live suitably to  
 that belief, with sincere endeavours to  
 obey the whole gospel, and hearty sorrow  
 and perpetually labouring after amend-  
 ment, for all their failures in that obedi-  
 ence. These are now the gracious terms  
 of the Gospel, which in the *New Testa-  
 ment* are every where preached as the con-  
 ditions of Salvation. This was the Sum  
 of *John Baptist's* preaching, who was sent  
 to prepare the way before Christ ; *Repent  
 ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,*  
 St Mat. iii. 2. with this our Saviour him-  
 self began his ministry ; *The time is ful-  
 filled, and the kingdom of God is at hand,*  
*Repent ye and believe the Gospel,* Mar. i. 15.  
 with This he concluded his charge to his  
 Disciples after his resurrection ; *Go ye into  
 all the world, and preach the gospel to e-  
 very creature ; He that believeth and is  
 baptized, i. e. he that believeth and enters  
 into*

into an obligation to live suitably to that belief, shall be saved, Mar. xvi. 15 and 16. This his Disciples after his ascension published to all the world, *preaching repentance and remission of sins in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem*, Luc. xxiv. 47. Lastly, this is the Sum of all their exhortations, contained in their epistles to the several churches which had before believed through their preaching. And because this Repentance or turning from a life of sin unto a life of righteousness, is the summ of Religion under the gospel-dispensation, therefore is it in Scripture expressed by great variety of phrases, to the different capacities and understandings of men. Sometimes it is called *turning to the Lord*, that those who by a course of sin had been enemies to God, might by forsaking their sins and following after righteousness, be reconciled to him: Sometimes it is called *Conversion*, a word of the same import with that of *turning to the Lord*: Sometimes it is called *the renewing of our minds*; Sometimes *putting on the new man*,

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S E R M. elsewhere *the new Creature*, to signify an
 VIII. entire change and reformation of life :
 and most frequently it is stiled *Regeneration*, *the new birth*, *newness of life*, and the like ; All which phrases are made use of to imply this one thing, that *those who have been dead in trespasses and Sins*, those who by any means have been engaged in a wicked course of life, must as it were by a new birth, by a thorough and entire reformation of life and manners, enter into a new course of life, and begin a life of righteousness and holiness. So careful has the Spirit of God been, that no one should be ignorant of that which is so much his necessary and indispensable Duty. Nothing is now required of us but that λογικὴ λατρεία, that reasonable service, of forsaking our Sins, and obeying in our lives and actions those commands of God, which are so reasonable in themselves, and so evidently perfective of our nature, so necessarily, approved by the minds of men, and the reason of their obligation so immediately acknowledged by the conscience, *that they may truly be*



said to be written in our hearts, Heb. viii. 10; Yet to encourage our practice, they are moreover most fully explained, most earnestly inculcated, and most strongly enforced by the most powerful motives in the New Testament. We are not now obliged to those numberless ritual performances, which in the Scripture are called weak and beggarly elements, and a burden which neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear: Our religion consists not now in such outward Ceremonies, whose observance was difficult, and their signification oftentimes obscure: But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into Heaven to bring Christ down from above? Or who shall descend into the deep to bring up Christ again from the dead? But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, Rom. x. 6, 7 and 8. that is; the Gospel-Covenant consists not of such strict, difficult terms, as are above the reach of our knowledge or our strength; but such as may easily be understood by us, and performed also by

S E R M. the assistance of Christ that strengtheneth
 VIII. us. A sincere endeavour to perform our
 whole duty, is the condition of the Gospel; and he that so desires to do the will of God, can neither want knowledge to understand his duty, nor power to perform it: He shall know of Christ's doctrine, whether it be of God; and when he comes to practise it, shall find *his yoke easy and his burden light*. In a word, the Terms that Christ by his death has purchased for us, are plainly these; that whereas by the transgression of the Original law of God, which required perfect and unfinning Obedience, all men were become guilty before God; and whereas by the addition of the Ceremonial rites and sacrifices of the *Jewish* law, which in their own nature could not avail to expiate Sin, men could not be justified from the transgressions they had committed; it is now declared by the Gospel-Covenant that whosoever believing in the name of Christ shall repent him heartily of his former Sins, and for the future endeavour with all his might to
 obey

obey sincerely, tho' not without infirmities, all the Commandments of God; shall through the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ have his sincerity accepted instead of perfect obedience, and thereby be justified from all things from which he could not be justified by the law; And this is that *justification by faith only*, which St Paul in his Epistle to the Romans so often opposes to *being justified by the works of the law*. Having thus endeavoured briefly to explain what is meant by *the Law being the Strength of Sin*; and by what means our Saviour has delivered us from it, or given us the victory over it; I should proceed now in the 2d place to consider how he *gives us the Victory over Sin which is the Sting of Death*: And this he does, by delivering us 1st from the dominion, and 2dly from the guilt and punishment of Sin. First, he frees men from that bondage and thralldom, into which Sin has reduced them; and then those who are so freed he delivers from that punishment, which must have been the necessary consequence of their being intralld to Sin.

S E R M. But the time not permitting me to enter
 VIII. upon this, I shall only draw an inference
 or two from what has been already said, and so conclude. And 1st from what has been said, we may understand why St Paul in his writings concerning the Jewish Law, always describes it as of such severity by which *no flesh could possibly be justified*: when yet 'tis plain God never dealt with men according to *that severity*: and why he so exceedingly magnifies the grace and mercy of the Gospel, notwithstanding it be evident that God always dealt with men according to *that indulgence*. Now the plain solution of this difficulty is this. The Apostle speaking of the Law, is not to be understood complexly of God's whole dispensation and dealing with the *Jews*, but of the Law properly and strictly, as it is distinguished from and opposed to the Gospel; *viz.* such as it was in itself, and such as it really would have been, if the Gospel-Covenant had never been established. For though there *was* indeed indulgence *under* the Law, yet that indulgence was not
from

from the Law, but an anticipation, as I have said, of the mercy of the Gospel. The Law itself was not therefore the less severe, because the indulgence of the Gospel extended itself backward even under the times of the Law; neither is the mercy of the Gospel to be therefore the less magnified, because it is no other than what had in effect before been indulged under the Law. For since the one was in itself really as severe as it is described, and had no indulgence but what was borrowed from and founded upon the other, there is no reason at all why this should be considered when the one is spoken of in opposition to the other; which is the state of the Apostle's argument: and therefore he most reasonably aggravates the severity of the Law, and upon the comparison most justly magnifies the mercy and favour of the Gospel: Gal. ii. 21. *If righteousness came by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.*

2dly, FROM what has been said, we may learn, that the whole design and effect of the Gospel, *was not to destroy, but*

SERM. *to fulfil the Law.* The whole design of
 VIII. all God's dispensations with mankind, is to
 prevent or destroy Sin. This the Law
 was to do originally, by requiring perfect
 and unfinning obedience: But when in-
 stead of this, it only concluded all men
 under Sin; the design of the Gospel was
 to effect the same, by requiring and by
 accepting Repentance; which being no
 other than renewed obedience, 'tis plain
 the Gospel does not destroy, but establish
 the Law. The severity indeed of the
 Law was so far to be qualified by the in-
 dulgence of the Gospel, that it might not
 be any longer the *Strength of Sin*: But
 the Gospel did not take away the obliga-
 tion of the Law, so as to be itself
 the cause and the occasion of sinning.
 The moral Law denounced a Curse a-
 gainst every one that continued not in all
 the works thereof to do them; and the
 Gospel delivers all those from this Curse,
 who by true Repentance renew their Obe-
 dience: The Ceremonial Law was an in-
 supportable burden of rites, insufficient of
 themselves to make any expiation for sin;
 and

and the Gospel, by exhibiting the true S E R M.
and sufficient expiation, has delivered all VIII.
men from the burden of this yoke. As
therefore those persons [Judaizing Christians] in the primitive times were very unreasonable, who contended that any of these ritual observations were of necessity to be kept up after the coming of Christ; so those perverters of Christianity in later ages are on the other side much more unreasonable, who contend that the moral Law has been abolished by Christ. The Gospel accepts indeed the terms, of *Faith and Repentance*; but 'tis only for the sake of the *Fruit and Effect* of them, which is *renewed obedience*. So that nothing can be more absurd, than for Christians to think themselves excused from holiness of life and those duties of religion, which as the unchangeable nature of God and of the things themselves had made the necessary requisites, so the Gospel also has made the express condition of their being acceptable to God. Our Saviour himself tells us, that *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven,*
but

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but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven. The Gospel itself speaks aloud, and tells us, that *we must deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of that great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* The Apostle St Paul, That great vindicator of the liberties of Christians, warns and perswades us, and repeats it with great earnestness over and over again; *Be not deceived; and let no man deceive you with vain words; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, and so on; i. e. no one that allows himself and continues in any one known vice; shall according to the terms of the Gospel of Christ, inherit the Kingdom of God. For, Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, saith our Saviour, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.*

Lastly,

Lastly, FROM what has been said, we may learn to reconcile the *Severity* and the *Compassion* of God; the *Severity*, in giving a Law, which required sinless Obedience; and the *Compassion* in mitigating it, by the Grace and Mercy of the Gospel; Which Grace extended itself backwards to good men under the Law; and the Severity will reach forward to the impenitent under the Gospel. *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* To conclude therefore, Let us then heartily set about the reformation of our lives, and by obedience to God's commands endeavour to walk worthy of that religion we profess, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Let us consider and admire the infinite wisdom and mercy of God, in restoring men to a capacity of attaining that happiness by the obedience of the second Covenant, which they utterly forfeited by the transgression of the first; and let us not frustrate the grace of God by the disobedience of our lives, lest there remain

S E R M.
VIII.
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SERM. main no more Sacrifice for our Sin: For  
 VIII. *if the word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him? For if we sin wilfully after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth; that is, if Christians live as those who know not God, in the Practise of any vice or debauchery whatsoever; there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, no new Dispensations; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.*



# S E R M O N IX.

How CHRIST has enabled us to  
conquer Sin.

[*Preached on Easter-Day.*]



I COR. xv. 56 and 57.

*The sting of Death is sin, and the  
strength of sin is the law; But thanks be  
to God which giveth us the victory,  
through our Lord Jesus Christ.*



WHEN he who was the desire S E R M.  
and expectation of Nations IX.  
appeared first in the World,  
it highly concerned all those  
who looked for redemption  
in *Israel*, rightly to understand the end  
and

S E R M. and design of his coming: And if we  
 IX. who live at this distance of time after  
 his appearing in the flesh, expect yet to  
 be partakers of the common Salvation  
 which he has purchased for us; it high-  
 ly concerns *Us* also to understand wherein  
 that Salvation consists, and how and on  
 what conditions he has purchased it for  
 us. The *Jews* who lived about the time  
 of his coming, misled by a partial appli-  
 cation and wrong interpretation of the  
 prophecies that went before concerning  
 him, expected *a temporal prince to appear  
 in the power and splendor of this world,  
 who should deliver their nation from that  
 slavery into which the Romans had subdued  
 them, and restore again the kingdom to  
 Israel; They expected that Jerusalem  
 should have become once again the Head  
 of the nations, and the glory of the whole  
 Earth; They expected that Messiah the  
 prince should have come to sit upon the  
 throne of David for ever, and to have  
 established a kingdom among them which  
 should have had no end. And so indeed  
 he did; though in a sense far different  
 from*

from what they expected. Nay, his Disciples themselves were for a great while so blinded with the splendor of this opinion, that they understood none of those prophecies that related to his Humiliation, Sufferings, and Death; As appears from St *Peter's* undertaking to rebuke him when he began to foretel *how many things he should suffer of the Jews*; and from his Disciples asking him even *after* his resurrection if he would at this time restore again the kingdom to *Israel*. But as he himself a little before his death witnessed before *Pontius Pilate* that good confession, *that his kingdom was not of this world*; so his Disciples, after his resurrection and ascension, began to have their eyes opened, and to understand that the design of his coming into the World was wholly Spiritual. And as at the descending of the Holy Ghost they were more perfectly instructed in the nature and end of That his Spiritual kingdom, so did they afterward in their inspired writings deliver to *us*, what they then received from that unerring instructor:  
Namely,

S E R M. Namely, that the true end and design of  
 IX. Christ's coming into the World, was to  
 deliver men, not from their Temporal  
 Enemies, but to save them from their  
 Sins. Now This he does, by delivering  
 us *1st*, from the power and dominion of  
 Sin; and *2dly*, from the guilt and pu-  
 nishment thereof. *1st*, He delivers men  
 from that Bondage and Slavery into  
 which the practice of Sin has reduced  
 them; and then those who are so freed,  
 he delivers from that *punishment* which  
 must have been the necessary consequence  
 of their being enslaved to Sin. These are  
 the two great designs which exhaust the  
 whole history of our Saviour; there be-  
 ing nothing that he either said or did,  
 which was not directed to one of these  
 great ends. *1st* then, We are to show,  
 how Christ delivers us from the *dominion*  
 or *practice* of Sin. That the service of  
 Sin is an intolerable thralldom, All who  
 are so unhappy as to be engaged in any  
 habit of Vice, do sadly experience; and  
 it may also easily be observed by others.  
 This deplorable state, it fitly described by

*Solomon*

Solomon under the person of a foolish young man, drawn away with the enticements of a Strange woman; *Prov. vii. 22.*

S E R M.  
IX.



*He goeth after her straightway as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.* This is the case of all, who are under the dominion and habit of *any Sin*; they know not whether they are going, but are hurried away blindfold with every temptation, being intangled in the snare of the Devil, and taken captive by him at his will. Hence such a state of Sin is stiled in Scripture a *yoke, burden, captivity, bondage, thraldom*, and the like; and habitual Sinners are described to be *dead in Sin*, to let Sin *reign* in their mortal bodies, to be *sold* under Sin, to be in *captivity* to the law of Sin and Death, to be *hardned* through the deceitfulness of Sin, to be such as *cannot cease* from Sin, and, by a phrase which includes all these, to be *Servants* of Sin; being constrained to obey it in the lusts thereof, even against

S E R M. the dictates of their reason and conscience; *for to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey*, Rom. vi. 16. Now That which Christ has actually done for us in order to the delivering us from the dominion of Sin, may briefly be expressed in these two propositions; *1st*, that he had made a most clear discovery of the Will of God to mankind; and *2dly*, that he has enabled them to obey the Will of God according to that discovery. *1st*, He has made a most clear discovery of the Will of God to Mankind. He has plainly and fully made known to us, the heinousness of Sin, and the necessity of Repentance; he has most exactly defined the bounds of our duty, and given us an example of the practice of it in his own life; he has more clearly revealed the great motives of Religion, and urged them upon men with much stronger advantage. To show these things at large, would be to repeat the whole history of our Saviour; and no man can read the New Testament wherein That history is contained, without



out observing that all his discourses and all the actions of his life, were directed principally to These ends: To convince men that Sin is so hateful to God, and so inconsistent with the honour of his laws, that he would not pardon it even in those whom he designed to have mercy upon, without first inflicting the punishment that was due to it, upon his only Son. To assure men, that a life of Virtue and true Righteousness, is the only and indispensable condition of *That Covenant*, wherein God has promised to save them from everlasting destruction. That therefore *unless we repent, we must perish*, Luk. xiii. 5. That *without Holiness, no man shall see the Lord*, Heb. xii. 14. That no man who continues in the practice of any known Sin, *shall in any wise enter into the kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. vi. 9. and that, however vain men may deceive themselves, no pretence whatsoever, no not of having *preached or worked miracles in the name of Christ*, shall be accepted instead thereof, *Matt. vii. 21*. Further; is it not a very Advantageous stating of

S E R M. the bounds of our duty, to have given us  
 IX. such a compleat and perfect rule of Life  
 and manners, as the Holy Scriptures cannot but be acknowledged to be? Is it not a sufficient Security against ignorance and mistake in our duty, to have such a Rule given us as contains in the plainest words all things needful for our information in all necessary truth, and for the confuting of all pernicious error; for correcting and reclaiming us from all Sin, and for our instruction and encouragement in all Righteousness? to have such a Rule, wherein our duty is set down both in general and in particulars; with great variety of expression, repeated, urged, and inculcated upon the meanest capacities, and exemplified in the lives of holy men, as patterns proposed to our imitation? The History of our Saviour's life, is a compleat example of all virtues; but more especially of Patience, Charity, and Contempt of the World: His Sermons contain such excellent and perfect rules of Morality, as have raised the admiration even of the most implacable enemies of his Religion;

Religion; and his Parables are Declarations of the nature and design of the Gospel-dispensation by such plain and easy similitudes, as the vulgar were able to bear, and those who were well-disposed were capable of understanding. The Sermons of the Apostles contain such proofs of the truth and certainty of the Christian Religion, as were necessary to the conversion of Infidels; and their Epistles are filled with the inforcements of such Christian Duties, as are necessary to the Salvation of believers; containing also Exhortations to the practice of special duties, upon particular and emergent occasions. So that every man that sincerely desires to know the will of God and to obey it, without being prejudiced with Partiality and Disputes, with Passions and Interest, may here find his duty written in such legible characters, *that he that runs may read it*: Lastly, Mens duty being thus made known, is it not a most clear and advantageous revelation of the powerful Motives and Inforcements of that duty; to be assured that there is a future

state

S E R M. state of Rewards and Punishments, where-  
 IX. in God will judge the world in righteousness, and render to every man according to what he has done in the body, whether it be good or evil; and to be assured of the certainty of that state, not by the uncertain and disagreeing conjectures of such men, as undertook to prove it probable by difficult and abstruse reasonings, but by the testimony of one, who by that convincing proof of his Resurrection from the Dead, did undeniably demonstrate that he had himself been in that invisible state?

BUT 2dly, As Christ has thus made a most clear discovery of the Will of God to Mankind, so hath he also enabled them to obey the Will of God according to that discovery. As he has provided a sufficient remedy against Ignorance of our duty, so he has likewise made a sufficient provision against our Inability to perform it: Now this he has done, 1st, By requiring easier conditions of us, than could without his mediation have been accepted. And 2dly, By graciously affording us his assistance,

assistance, to perform what he ~~so~~ requires. S E R M.

1<sup>st</sup>, He requires easier conditions of us, than could without his mediation have been accepted. 'Tis the great and peculiar privilege of the Gospel-dispensation, that whereas the original law of God required perfect unfinning obedience, and consequently men in this corrupt estate were thereby of necessity concluded all under Sin; the covenant of mercy established by the Death of Christ, has relaxed that rigour which the Apostle calls the *strength of Sin*, and reduced the condition of Salvation to such terms, as are not impracticable, nay nor indeed *grievous* to human nature, even in this present state; He has reduced it to the gracious terms of Faith, and unfeigned Repentance; a Repentance, and sincere endeavours to obey his Commandments to the best of our Ability for the time to come. But if Christians will still continue in the practice, and under the dominion of Sin, notwithstanding this way which Christ has opened for them to Salvation; 'tis their own fault and their extreme fol-

IX.



S E R M.

IX.



ly here, and will be their condemnation and misery hereafter. 'Tis true, such is the corruption of our nature and the weakness of our faculties, that we are not indeed *sufficient of ourselves to do or think any thing as of ourselves*, 2 Cor. iii. 5. But then 'tis true also, that we have a much greater Sufficiency, even that Sufficiency which is from God, as the Apostle immediately adds: which is the second thing whereby I said our Saviour enables us to obey the will of God, according to that discovery of it which he has made to us in the Gospel; he enables us, by graciously affording us his assistance, to perform what he requires of us. Though we have indeed contracted much Weakness and Impotency by our wilful degeneracy from Goodness, yet That Grace which the Gospel offers us for our assistance, is sufficient for us; *I can do all things*, saith St Paul, *through Christ that strengthneth me*, Phil. iv. 13. Though we are indeed encompassed with many and potent enemies, whose business it is to tempt us and to deter us from our duty;

duty; yet are we indued with a power, S E R M.  
 by which we are enabled to resist and to IX.  
 conquer all these temptations; *For greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world,* 1 Joh. iv. 4. *So that in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us,* Rom. viii. 37. God knoweth the frailty of our nature, and considereth how many temptations we are continually liable to; he *remembreth whereof we are made, and considereth that we are but Dust*; He knoweth our enemy's strength and our own weakness, and therefore he affords us the *continual assistance of his Holy Spirit, to supply our natural want of power.* He has promised to succour all those who sincerely desire to obey his will; and, if we be not wanting in our own endeavours, we may rely upon *him, that he will be faithful to his promise, and not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it,* 1 Cor. x. 13. Thus in order to the delivering us from the habit and power of Sin, our Saviour

S E R M. Saviour by making a most clear discovery  
 IX. of the Will of God to Mankind, and by  
 enabling them to obey the Will of God according to that discovery, has put us in our own power, if *we* for our part will but accept this deliverance, and, by the way which he has opened for us, retreat out of the bondage of Sin and Satan into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Christ has completely performed *his* office for us; *he has paid the price; he has redeemed us out of captivity:* 'Tis our part to take care that we continue not wilfully in the service of Sin, *lest we be found to do despite unto the Spirit of Grace, crucifying to ourselves the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open shame.* Now this is what Christ has done for All *those* in general, to whom the Gospel is *preached:* But then *2dly,* Those who *accept* of this deliverance from the dominion of Sin, that is, who by Repentance and true Amendment of life embrace the terms of the Gospel; those, and those only, he further delivers from the guilt and punishment of Sin: And in order to this;

*1st,*



1<sup>st</sup>, He hath vindicated the honour of S E R M. God's laws by taking upon himself the IX. punishment of their Sins; and 2<sup>dly</sup>, *He sits at the right hand of God, ready to come in the glory of his Father with his holy Angels, actually to deliver them from That punishment of Sin, which shall finally be inflicted on them that would not be delivered from the dominion of it; even on those who know not God and obey not the Gospel; i. e. who either embraced not the Gospel at all, when it was preached to them; or pretending to embrace it, yet obeyed it not.* 1<sup>st</sup>, He has vindicated the honour of God's laws, by taking upon himself the punishment of *their* Sins, who repent and embrace the terms of the Gospel. He condescended to *be made Sin for us, who himself knew no Sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21. to be made Sin for us, i. e. to be made a Sacrifice for our Sins, that we through that expiation might become subjects capable of the mercy of God. He took upon him our Nature, and was clothed in flesh, partly indeed*

SERM. deed that he might preach the Will of  
 IX. God to mankind in a nearer and more  
 ~~~~~  
 condescending conversation with them ;
 but principally, that he who in the form
 of God could not suffer, might become
 capable of suffering by being made in the
 likeness to Man. He lived a most inno-
 cent and spotless life, that he might in-
 deed set us an example that we should
 follow his steps ; but chiefly, because as
 it was required that the typical Sacrifices
 under the law should be whole and with-
 out blemish ; so it was necessary that he,
 who was to be the real expiatory Sacrifice
 for the Sins of others, should have none
 that needed expiation of his own ; *For
 such an High priest became us, who is ho-
 ly, harmless, undefiled, separate from sin-
 ners, and made higher than the heavens,*
 Heb. vii. 26. He suffered a shameful and
 ignominious Death upon the Cross, that
 he might indeed give us an example of
 patience and readiness to suffer ; but the
 principle design of it was, that he might
 put away Sin by the sacrifice of himself,
 and obtain eternal redemption for us
 through

through Faith in his Blood. His Resur-
 rection, was the demonstration of this
 Sacrifice's being accepted by God; and
 his Ascension into Heaven, was in order
 to plead the merits of his Sufferings be-
 fore God, and intercede for those, who
 according to the terms of the Gospel-
 Covenant should be capable of receiving
 the gracious benefits purchased by his
 Death: Wherefore 2dly, He now sits at
 the right hand of God, ready to appear
 in the glory of his Father with the Holy
 Angels, actually to deliver all those from
 the punishment of Sin, who have before
 been delivered by him from the dominion
 thereof. This sitting at the right hand
 of God, signifies his having subdued all
 his enemies, and his being fully instated
 in his Regal power; *All things being
 actually made subject unto him, always ex-
 cepting him, as St Paul directs, who did
 put all things under him. All power both
 in heaven and earth is now committed un-
 to him; being exalted far above all prin-
 cipality, and power, and might, and do-
 minion, and every name that is named not*
 only

 SERM.
 IX.


S E R M. *only in this world, but also in that which*
 IX. *is to come; God having put all things un-*
 ~~~~~  
*der his feet, and given him to be the head*  
*over all things to the Church. When*  
*therefore this his Mediatorial kingdom*  
*shall be finished, and the number of his*  
*Elect accomplished, then unto them that*  
*look for him shall he appear the second time*  
*without Sin unto salvation, Heb. ix. 28.*  
*Then shall he redeem his Elect from*  
*death, and ransom them from the power*  
*of the grave: Then shall the Sea give up*  
*the dead that are in it, and Death and*  
*Hell shall deliver up the Dead that are*  
*in them, and death shall be swallowed up*  
*in victory; O Death, where is thy sting!*  
*O Grave, where is thy victory! But this*  
*deliverance from the first and natural*  
*Death, shall be common both to the Just*  
*and Unjust. 'Tis the Second death that*  
*shall be properly and finally the punish-*  
*ment of Sin; and from This, the Just*  
*only shall be delivered. Whosoever be-*  
*lieveth on me, shall never die, Joh. xi. 26.*  
*that is, (as the words may more properly*  
*be rendred,) shall not die for ever. On*

the Just the Second death shall have no SERM.  
power, but they shall be priests of God IX.  
and of Christ; they shall be made com-  
pletely happy both in Body and Soul, and  
shall reign with him for ever and ever.

THE application I shall make of what hath been said, shall be only in these two brief inferences: 1<sup>st</sup>, If Christ delivers no man from the punishment of Sin, who is not first delivered from the service and dominion of it; then no man who continues in the service and dominion of Sin, can expect to be delivered from the punishment thereof. Christ *has* indeed given himself a propitiatory Sacrifice, a full, perfect and sufficient Oblation for the Sins of the whole World; but 'tis not that the whole world, or that any particular persons should absolutely and unconditionally be thereby excused from the punishment of Sin; but that all those who by true Repentance turn from Sin and become righteous, should obtain Remission and Reconciliation with God: For he did not die, that he might indulge men *in* Sin, but that he might save them  
*from*

S E R M. *from it.* Christ has indeed brought Life and Immortality to light, and opened an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God; but 'tis not that any unreformed and unrenewed nature should be made partaker of that Spiritual Happiness, or be admitted to have a share in those pure and undefiled Rewards; but that those who have broken off their Sins by Repentance; and their Iniquities by Righteousness and shewing mercy to the poor, (which is the Wedding-garment required by our Lord in the Parable,) should be entertained at the eternal Supper of the Lamb: For as impossible as 'tis for God to cease to be holy, or for the purity of the Divine Nature to be reconciled to Sin, so impossible is it for a wicked man to obtain remission whilst he continues wicked, or for a Sinner to be admitted into the kingdom of Heaven. *Be not deceived, saith St Paul, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, that is, no unrighteous per-*  
 for

son that continues in the practice of any known Sin, shall inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 9. Again, Gal. v. 21. having reckoned up the like catalogue of Sins, he adds, *of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* And Ephes. v. 6. *Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.* 2dly, If Christ delivers no man from the dominion of Sin any otherwise than by giving him a clear knowledge of his duty, and a sufficient power to perform it, then no man who makes not use of that knowledge and power to an actual performance of his duty, can be delivered from the dominion of Sin. Christ hath completely performed *his* office for us; but if *We* will not also perform what remains for *us* to do for ourselves; if we will yet chuse rather to continue in the service of Sin, than to come forth into the glorious liberty to which we are called; we must, notwithstanding

S E R M. standing all that Christ has done for us,  
 IX. continue still under the dominion of Sin,  
 and shall at last fall into the *punishment thereof*. The Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ, (which some have vainly depended upon, while they themselves continue to live in open contempt of his righteous laws,) is a false and groundless imagination: 'Tis the unalterable Nature of Things, and the Will of God; that if we expect to be made happy for ourselves, we *must* also become righteous for ourselves. Righteousness is not an outward imaginary quality, but an inward and real disposition of the heart and soul, which must show forth itself in real and substantial acts of Holiness and Piety. *Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness, is righteous,* 1 Joh. iii. 7. And St James, ch. i. 27. *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.* Let no man therefore deceive himself with vain imaginations, in hopes of being  
 accounted



accounted righteous any other way, than S E R M.  
by that which God has proposed to us in IX.  
his holy Scriptures: Let us consider how  
great things Christ has done in order to  
our Salvation; and let us shew forth our  
thankfulness for what *he* has done for us,  
by heartily setting about what he has ab-  
solutely required that *we* should do for  
*ourselves*: Let us sincerely endeavour to  
obey the Will of God as discovered to us  
in the Gospel; and then we may firmly  
hope for (and shall certainly obtain) re-  
mission, not through the merits of that  
our Righteousness which is imperfect, but  
through the redemption purchased by the  
Blood of Christ, wherein we are by that  
sincere, though imperfect Righteousness,  
made capable of having a share.





# S E R M O N X.

How Christ has given us the Victory over Death.

[Preached on Easter-Day.]



I C O R. XV. 56, 57.

*The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law; But Thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*



Proceed now to the third and last Thing I proposed, which was to show how Christ gives us the Victory over Death, which is the last enemy to be destroyed, I Cor. xv. 26. Death is either natural

S E R M.  
X.

' P 3 tural

S E R M. tural and temporal, which is the Death  
 X. of the body; or eternal, which is the  
 Death and the Destruction of the Soul.  
 In the Old Testament, Death generally signifies that *temporal* Death, which is the dissolution of the body; tho' when it is threatened as the punishment of Sin, it præfigures and includes in it *eternal* Death. Which is also sometimes expressly threatened even in the *Old Testament*; thus Ezek. xviii. 26. *When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquities, and dieth in them, for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die*; the manner of expression is very observable: If he repent not of his iniquity but *dieth* in it, *then* for the iniquity that he hath done shall he die. In the *New Testament*, Death, when 'tis threatened to Sinners, signifies almost always *eternal* Death; the Gospel containing, as a more clear discovery of life and immortality, so also a more express revelation of the wrath of God from Heaven, against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men. Now over *both* these kinds of Death, Death

tem-


temporal and eternal, Christ gives us the victory, or delivers us from the power of them: The power of *temporal* Death is universal, as the punishment threatened to *Adam's* transgression was extensive; and the deliverance from it shall be also universal; *For as in Adam all die*, all are become subject to mortality; *even so in Christ shall all be made alive*, 1 Cor. xv. 22. *Eternal* Death is the punishment of unrepented Sin, and from This all those who repent and obey the Gospel, shall be delivered by Christ.

S E R M.  
X.  
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I SHALL consider *1st* the victory that Christ gives us over *temporal* Death; and for the clearer explaining the nature of this victory, shall endeavour to show *1st*, That there shall be a resurrection of the body, and *2dly*, in what manner the body shall be raised.

1st, THAT there shall be a resurrection of the body. That the soul should survive the dissolution of the body, and be capable of receiving in a future State the rewards or punishments due to the good or evil it had done in *this* life, was clearly enough deducible from the light of nature, and


S E R M. proved by undeniable reasonings: But that
 X. the body should be again formed out of
 the dust, and reunited to the Soul, from
 which it was separated by Death, was a
 Doctrine, which as it could not be proved
 merely by reason and argument, so the
 Philosophers, who pretended to be the
 great masters of reason, looked upon it as
 the most impossible thing in nature. Some
 of them reckoned it among those things,
 which they thought were not in the pow-
 er even of their Gods themselves to effect;
 and we read of certain Philosophers, *Act.*
xvii. 18. who incountered St *Paul*, and
 when they heard of the resurrection, they
 mock'd him, saying, *that he seemed to be*
a setter forth of strange Gods, because he
preached unto them Jesus and the Resur-
rection. Yet is there nothing in any wise
 impossible, or contrary to reason, in this
 great Mystery: *For why should it be thought*
a thing impossible that God should raise
the dead? Why should it be more impos-
 sible for God to gather together the dis-
 persed parts of a corrupted body, and re-
 unite them to their former Soul, than to
 create

create matter at first out of nothing, and S E R M.
then form it into a humane body, and X.
breath into it the breath of life? Why 
should any man be so weak as to imagine,
that he, who at the creation separated the
confused mass of matter into so many dif-
ferent sorts of bodies, cannot with the
same ease at the general Resurrection se-
parate again the same confused matter,
and assign to each particular body its
own parts? If it is not difficult for him
to number the Stars of Heaven and call
them all by their names; it can be no diffi-
culty to him to keep an exact account of
all our scattered parts; and to recollect
and reunite them when he pleases. 'Twas
not therefore because the thing is in itself
at all impossible, but only because the
manner of it is a mystery not discover-
able barely by the light of nature, that the
Heathen World was utterly ignorant of
the Resurrection from the dead. The
proof therefore of this great truth must
be founded in Revelation, and sought for
only in the Holy Scriptures. And here it
must be confessed, that the *Jews* had not
a clear


S E R M. a clear and exprefs revelation of this matter: Yet were they by no means *wholly* ignorant of it; there being feveral paffages in the Old Testament, from whence the hope, of a Refurrection might very reafonably be collected. The tranflation of *Enoch* and *Elijah* into Heaven with their bodies, was an earnest of what might finally be expected, by thofe who fhould follow their example in pleafing God; and the ftrict command that *Jacob* and *Joseph* gave, not to be buried in *Egypt*, but to have *their bones carried up into the land of Canaan and laid in the Sepulchres of their Fathers*; was to many of the antient *Jews* an argument or type of their hope of a Refurrection. That the thing was not in itfelf impoffible, the inftances of fuch as were actually raifed from the dead by the Prophets, was a fig-nal proof. And *Ifaiab* xxvi. 19. *Thy dead men fhall live, together with my dead body fhall they arife: awake and fing, ye that dwell in duft: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth fhall caft out the dead.* And the vifion of *Ezekiel*, fet down
in

in the 37th Chapter of his Prophecy, tho' S E R M.
it signified indeed primarily the Restau- X.
ration of *Israel* to their own land, yet
in all probability, considering the pecu-
liar Emphasis and particularity of the de-
scription, it was intended remotely to
point at a greater and more general Re-
staurati^on; *Behold a valley full of dry
bones, and there was a noise, and behold
a shaking, and the bones came together,
bone to his bone, the sinews and the flesh
came up upon them, and the skin covered
them above, and their breath came into
them, and they lived and stood upon their
feet, and behold a great multitude.* But
that passage in the Prophet *Daniel*, tho'
by some it be, with great violence to the
Words, otherwise interpreted; is most
expres, and by the ancient *Jews* under-
stood of the Resurrection; *Dan. xii. 2
and 3. Many of them that sleep in the dust
of the earth shall awake, some to everlast-
ing life, and some to shame and everlasting
contempt; and they that be wise, shall
shine as the brightness of the firmament,
and they that turn many to righteousness,*

S E R M. *as the stars for ever and ever, and thou*
 X. *shall rest and stand in thy lot at the end*
 of the days, Dan. xii. 13. Lastly, that solemn Prophecy of Job, ch. xix. ver. 23. *Ob that my Words were now written! Ob that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the earth: And tho' after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:* These words, I say, tho' by many of the antient Jews they were interpreted concerning a future State without respect in particular to the Resurrection of the body, and by some later Interpreters are understood only of his restitution to his temporal greatness; yet because of their being introduced with so very solemn and weighty a preface, as containing somewhat of the highest moment and importance; they are by others not without great reason thought to be spoken concerning the Resurrection of the body. And that the Jews did believe, that the
 bodies,

bodies, at least of such remarkably pious S E R M.
men, should rise again, appears plainly X.
from the translation of the last Verse of 
the book of *Job* according to the Seventy,
which in their Version runs thus; *So Job
died, being old and full of days; But 'tis
written that he shall rise again with those
whom the Lord raises up.* The *Jews*
therefore had at last an obscure and inde-
terminate expectation of the Resurrection
of the body; Nay, the later *Jews* more
certain: For so one of the seven Brethren,
2 Macc. vii. 9, 11. when his hands were
to be cut off; *These, says he, I had from
Heaven, and for his laws I despise them,
and from him I hope to receive them a-
gain: For the King of the World shall
raise us up, who have died for his Laws,
to everlasting Life.* But now in the *New
Testament* this Doctrine is so clearly re-
vealed, that it may justly be wondered
how it was possible for any one that be-
lieved the Gospel at all, to doubt of the
certainty of it. Yet we read that there
were, even so very early as in the days of
the Apostles themselves, *who concerning
this*

S E R M. *this truth, did err, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overbrow*
 X. *the faith of some, 2 Tim. ii. 18. But as their opinion was so absurd as to need no confutation, so in a little time it entirely vanished of itself. I shall not therefore insist on any other argument for the proof of this doctrine, than that which the Apostle makes use of in this Chapter; which is the Resurrection of Christ: For, saith he, if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith also is vain; But now Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept, ver. 13, 14. The force of which argument is plainly this: If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is that doctrine, which the Apostles preached concerning it, erroneous and false; and if that doctrine be false, then the resurrection of Christ, which is the proof of that doctrine, must likewise be false: If therefore the resurrection of Christ be true, as he had before proved by a cloud of Wit-*
nesses

nesses at the beginning of the Chapter, S E R M .
then the Apostles doctrine, of which that X.
his resurrection was the evidence, must 
also be true; and if the Apostles preach-
ing, and the promises of God made
known by the Gospel, be true, then *shall*
the dead certainly rise again. That is: As
certain as the resurrection of Christ is true,
as certain as the Christian Religion is a
revelation credibly attested to be from
God; so certain is it, that there shall be
a resurrection of the dead: *If Christ, who*
is our Head, be risen; then shall we also
rise with him unto glory. I am the resur-
rection and the life, saith our Blessed Sa-
viour, Joh. xi. 25; and *this is the Will of*
him that sent me, that every one which
seeth the Son and believeth on him, may
have everlasting Life, and I will raise him
up at the last day, Joh. vi. 40; which last
words, that there might be no room for
doubt concerning them, are repeated *no*
less than four times in that Chapter. Now
that this promise shall certainly be fulfil-
led, God hath given us assurance by rai-
sing up *him* before-hand to be the *first-*
fruits

S E R M. *fruits from the dead: He hath appointed*
 X. *a day, in the which he will judge the*
 world in righteousness, by that man whom
 he hath ordained; whereof he hath given
 assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised
 him from the dead, Acts xvii. 31. The
 Resurrection of Christ is such an earnest
 and pledge of our resurrection, as not
 only demonstrates the possibility of the
 thing, but gives assurance also of the cer-
 tainty of it: For, that the same power
 that raised up him, can also raise up us, is
 evident; and that it will do so, we are
 assured by his promise, who raised up
 Christ to that very end, that he might
 give us assurance that he would also raise
 up us. But here some man will say, *How*
are the dead raised up, and with what
body do they come? Which is the

2d Thing I proposed to speak to, name-
 ly, the manner how the dead shall be raised;
 and to this question we may answer in the
 Words of St Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 36. *Thou fool,*
that which thou sowest is not quickened except
it die; And that which thou sowest, thou
sowest not that body that shall be, but bare
 I grain,

grain, suppose of wheat or of some other grain; But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

S E R M.
X.


From which similitude of the Apostle, we may safely collect these two things; 1st, That in the whole the same body which died, shall be raised again; 2^{dly}, That yet it shall rise with very great alterations. 1st, That in the whole, the same body which died, shall be raised again, appears in general from the Apostle's using the similitude of Corn: *For as Corn groweth not indifferently out of any ground, but there must be seed sown out of which it may spring, and therefore every sort of grain produceth Corn of its own likeness and peculiar form; So at the resurrection, the bodies of them that arise, shall not be formed indifferently out of any matter, but the bodies that die, those mortal and corruptible bodies, shall be in a figurative sense as it were the seed and material principle of those immortal and incorruptible ones, into which we shall then be quickened. Indeed whether in equity, and in order to a just retribution, it be necessary*

S E R M. absolutely in the nature of the thing, that
 X. the same Body should be raised again, we
 cannot certainly tell; because we know not distinctly how far the same body is necessary to constitute the same person. But though it cannot be proved that God is absolutely bound in justice to unite the Soul to the same body from which it was separated by death, yet that in fact he *will* do so, the expressions of Scripture concerning this matter do sufficiently intimate: When the Apostle assures us, *that the body shall rise again, and that He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies*, he does not say only that the Soul shall be again united to matter, but also that the *body* which died shall be quickened or made to live again; *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and This mortal must put on immortality*; which is not saying only that the Soul, which was before united to a *mortal and corruptible body*, shall at the resurrection be clothed with an *immortal and incorruptible one*; but that *This same body*, which is now mortal and corruptible,

ruptible,




ruptible, shall then put on immortality and incorruption. To which purpose 'tis affirmed in Scripture, that the sea shall give up the dead that are in it, and death and the grave shall deliver up the dead that are in them, and they that sleep in the dust of the earth shall bear the voice of Christ and rise: And indeed, having one example of it in the resurrection of Christ, and knowing that in all cases 'tis as easy for God to raise the same body as to frame a new one, no reason can be imagined why it should not be so. But 'tis true, the *parts* of one body may possibly be so scattered and perhaps incorporated among the parts of another body, that it shall not be possible for every particular body to arise with just the same parts, of which it consisted at the time of its dissolution: Neither is there any necessity at all either in nature or Scripture that it should do so. How far therefore each body shall consist exactly of the same matter, or what change of parts may be admitted, is a vain, empty and needless speculation; a nicety, which as it is not

S E R M. possible for us to determine, *so* neither is it
 X. necessary for us to know : *Sufficient* it is to
 all wise and good purposes, that we believe
 and affirm with *St Paul*, that as out of a
 grain of corn sown in the earth there springs
 an ear of the same kind ; *so* from a mortal
 and corruptible body buried in the ground,
 there shall be raised an immortal and in-
 corruptible one. For 2dly, Tho' in the
 whole the same body that died shall be
 raised again, yet shall it rise with very
 great alterations: *As thou sowest not that*
body that shall be, but bare grain, suppose
of wheat or of some other grain, but God
giveth it a body as it hath pleased him ; so
also is the resurrection of the dead. What
 these alterations shall be, the Apostle tells
 us in the 42, 43 and 44 Verses of this xvth
 Chapter of 1 Cor. *It is sown in corruption*
it is raised in incorruption ; it is sown in dis-
honour, it is raised in glory ; it is sown in
weakness, it is raised in power ; it is sown
a natural body, it is raised a spiritual bo-
 dy. 1st. *It is sown in corruption, it is*
raised in incorruption ; i. e. The body
 which has now in it such manifest prin-
 ciples

principles of mortality and corruption; which S E R M.
consists now of such brittle and tender X.
parts, that every the least violence disturbs and unfits them for their operations; which is now subject to so many casualties, and has its continuance depending upon the fit disposition of so many little and easily disordered parts, that 'tis a greater wonder how we continue to live a day than why we die after so few years space; *this* body shall at the resurrection be perfectly refined and purged from all the seeds of mortality and corruption; shall be made up of such parts and so constituted, as shall neither in themselves have any tendency to dissolution, nor be capable of being any way disordered and unfitted for their proper functions, in a word, shall spring up into an incorruptible and immortal substance, which shall be fitted to indure as long as the Soul to which it is to be united, even to all eternity. Again, *it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory*; i. e. That body, which at death seems so base and abject, so vile and contemptible, shall at the resurrection be transformed *into* a

S E R M. bright and beautiful and glorious body.

X.  Neither ought it at all to seem strange to us, that it should be capable of receiving so great a change; For if even in this mortal life the motions of the Soul, joy and hope, innocence and an assurance of the favour of God, can shew forth themselves with so remarkable a Vigour, and as it were with a lustre, in the countenances of men; if St *Stephen's* innocence and joyful assurance, could *make his face to appear as it had been the face of an Angel*; and *Moses's* conversing with God upon the Mount, could *make his face so shine, that the Children of Israel were not able to look upon him for the brightness and glory of it*; how much greater change must the strong and powerful operations of a glorified Soul, ravished with the beatifick vision of God, make in a subtle immortal and incorruptible body? But besides this, we are moreover assured, that Our Saviour shall also by his immediate power, even by that mighty working *whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself, change this our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*, Phil.

iii. 21. And what sort of body his glorious body is, may in some measure be gathered from the History of his transfiguration, where his face is described to have shined like the Sun, and his raiment to have become shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth could white them, St Matt. xvii. 2. compared with Mar. ix. 3. and from the description of his appearance to St John, Rev. i. 14. *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.* Such therefore shall be the glorified bodies of the Saints at the resurrection; namely, made like unto the glorified body of Christ. And this perhaps is what is intimated by our Saviour in that promise, St Matt. xiii. 43. *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father;* and in that Prophecy of Daniel, ch. xii. v. 3. *They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever;* and by the Author of the Book of Wisdom,

S E R M. ch. iii. 6, 7. *As gold in the furnace has been tried them, and received them as a burnt-offering: They shall shine, and run to and fro like sparks among the stubble: They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people; and their Lord shall reign for ever. Further, it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; i. e. that body, which is now so weak and feeble, so subject to diseases and indispositions, so slow, heavy and unactive, that it clogs the soul and retards its spiritual flights and operations; shall then become so strong and powerful, so active and vigorous, as even to be assisting to the most spiritual motions of the soul, to become every way a fit Organ and Instrument of its most exalted operations, and shall continue in that perfect health, strength and vigour for ever: For God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away, Rev. xxi. 4. Lastly, it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; i. e. That body, which is now fitted only for this animal life;*

life; which consists of such gross substance, and that in continual change, as needs perpetually to be repaired with the suitable nourishment of meats and drinks, to be sustained and kept in order with labour and exercise, and to be refreshed with such pleasures as are suitable indeed to this animal life, but are far beneath the excellent nature of the soul, and prove oftentimes hurtful and injurious to it; *This body, I say, shall at the resurrection become of a more refined and spiritual nature, shall be wholly delivered from all those wants and incumbrances which are now so necessary to the preservation of the animal life; and shall be entirely freed from all appetites to such pleasures, as are now the snares and temptations of the soul. All which, our Saviour seems plainly to intimate, in that answer of his to a captious question proposed by the Sadducees, St Luc. xx. 35. They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain That world and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more,*

S E R M.
X.
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S E R M. *more, for they are equal or like unto the*  
 X. *Angels.* Having thus explained the nature  
 of the victory that Christ gives us over  
 temporal death,

*2dly*, I proceed now in the *2d* place  
 to consider the Victory which Christ shall  
 give to all his faithful Servants over  
 that death which is *eternal*: And of this,  
 very briefly. The victory over tempo-  
 ral death shall be in some measure (as  
 has been already observed) universal;  
 For all shall rise again from the dead,  
 and all both just and unjust shall be  
 clothed with immortal and incorruptible  
*bodies* which shall never be dissolved any  
 more: But tho' there shall be no more  
 dissolution of the body, nor separation of  
 the soul, yet is there a greater destruction  
 into which they who *believe not God and*  
*obey not his Gospel shall at last fall*; and  
 that is, the second death; Rev. xxi. 8. *The*  
*fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable,*  
*and murderers, and whoremongers, and for-*  
*cerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall*  
*have their part in the lake that burneth*  
*with fire and brimstone, which is the second*  
*death.*



death. Now from *this* death, those and S E R M.  
those only shall be delivered by Christ, X.  
*who bear the Word of God and keep it ;*  
*who hearken unto the commands of God,*  
*and in their lives obey them ; They that*  
*overcome, shall not be hurt of the second*  
*death, for on them the second death hath no*  
*power, but they shall be Priests of God and*  
*of Christ, and shall reign with him for ever,*  
Rev. ii. 11. compared with Ch. xx. ver. 6.  
And of this we must understand that promise of our Saviour, St Joh. xi. 26. *whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die,* or (as the words may more properly be rendered) *shall not die for ever,* i. e. shall never fall into eternal death. That which Christ hath already done towards delivering his Servants from the power of this death, is his making provision for their deliverance from the dominion and from the guilt of Sin, of which this death is the consequence and punishment. That which still remains, and which he will yet do for them, is to acquit them publickly at the great day of judgment, and then in pursuance of that sentence of  
abso-

S E R M. *absolution; actually to instate them in his*  
 X. *Kingdom of Glory. The resurrection of*  
 the dead is only in order to that final judgment, which shall pass upon all mankind; *for God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the World in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, even our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose appearance all that are in the graves shall bear his voice, and live, and stand before his judgment-seat, and he shall judge them according to their works: The solemnity of which great day, cannot be more lively express'd, than in those prophetick words of Daniel, Chap. vii. ver. 9. I beheld 'till the thrones were cast down and the antient of days did sit, whose garment was white as the snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire; A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him, thousand thousands ministred unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened: From which place most*  
 of


of the expressions which are made use of in the New Testament to signify the Second coming of Christ, are plainly borrowed. At this great Solemnity, all those who have embraced the gracious terms of the Gospel, and through the mercy of God have by Repentance and Obedience delivered themselves from the Power and Dominion of Sin, shall by their Saviour and Judge be publickly acquitted before Men and Angels, and pronounced free from the Guilt and from the Punishment of Sin, *For whosoever shall confess me before men, saith our Saviour, i. e. whosoever shall not be ashamed of the Religion of Christ, but notwithstanding all the Discouragements he may meet with in the World, shall persist in it and obey it, him shall the Son of man confess before his Father which is in heaven, and before the angels of God, i. e. he shall acknowledge him for his true and faithful Disciple, and shall pronounce that blessed Sentence upon him, Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* The Servants of Christ being thus publickly

S E R M.  
X.  
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S E R M. lickly acquitted at the general Judgment,

X. shall in pursuance of this Sentence enter
 with him into Heaven, and be actually
 instated in his Kingdom of *glory*; and so
 shall they ever be with the Lord. *This*
 is the consummation of the Gospel-æco-
 nomy, and the *accomplishment* of the
 Kingdom of Christ: *Thus* Christ, having
 totally subdued all his Enemies, *shall for*
ever be glorified with his saints; and they
shall be before the throne of God, and shall
serve him day and night in his temple;
and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell
among them: they shall hunger no more,
neither thirst any more, neither shall the
sun light on them nor any heat: for the
lamb which is in the midst of the throne
shall feed them, and shall lead them unto
living fountains of water, and God shall
wipe away all tears from their eyes; and
they shall for ever sing that joyful song of
praise, Rev. i. 5. Unto him that loved us
and washed us from our sins in his own
blood, and hath made us kings and priests
to God and his Father, to him be glory and
dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

HAVING

HAVING thus at large explained how S E R M.
Christ gives his Servants the Victory over X.
their last enemy, which is Death, I shall 
only draw an inference *or two* from what
has been said, and so conclude. And *1st,*
If these things be so, then let us, as the
Apostle infers in the words immediately fol-
lowing the Text, *be stedfast, unmoveable,*
always abounding in the work of the Lord,
forasmuch as we know that our labour shall
not be in vain in the Lord. Our Saviour
has assured us that if we be stedfast in
our Religion, and persevere in our Obe-
dience to it, nothing shall by any means
hurt us, but *we shall be more than con-*
querors over all our enemies, even over
Death itself. *I am,* saith he, *the resur-*
rection and the life; he that believeth on
me, though he were dead, yet shall he live,
Joh. xi. 25. Now what greater encourage-
ment can any man desire than to be assured
that his *labour shall not only not be in vain,*
but that it shall also meet with a great
and inexpressible reward? And what great-
er reward can possibly be proposed, than
deliverance from death and an entrance
into

S E R M. into life eternal? If then we in earnest
 X. believe these things, as by our religion
 we profess and pretend to do, let us also
 consider them and urge them upon our
 selves; let us by frequent meditation,
 convince our selves of the truth and im-
 portance of them; and let us always so
live, as being under the power of these
 convictions. Let not the terrour of short
 and temporary evils drive *us* into Sin,
 who are convinced that the consequence
 of that sin, will be misery and death e-
 ternal; *and let not* the allurements of
 short and transitory pleasures withdraw
us from our duty, who are convinced
 that the performance of that duty, will
 be life and happiness for ever. The re-
 ligion of Christ requires nothing of us
 but what is extremely reasonable and ma-
 nifestly for our advantage, namely, *to live*
soberly, righteously and godly in this present
World; yet does it promise to obedience
 such an infinite reward, as life from the
 dead, even life eternal; and he that will
 not by such a motive be perswaded to
 be steadfast in such a religion, must have
 lost

lost all sense, I do not say only of vir-
tue and goodness, but also of his own
interest and happiness. 2dly, If Christ
has taken away the *sting of death*, and
gives us the victory over it; then good
Christians ought not to be afraid and ter-
rified at death, any more than at an ene-
my that is already conquered, and can
do them no hurt. *Christ hath both died
for us and is risen again*, and one great
reason why he did so, was to assure us
that as it was not possible for *him to be
holden of death*, so neither should we be
detained by it; *for he took part of flesh
and blood, that through death he might
destroy him that had the power of death,*
i. e. *the Devil, and deliver them who
through fear of death were all their life-
time subject to bondage*, Heb. ii. 14 and
15. Christ has made death to be nothing
else but a passage unto life eternal, to
all those who shall obey his command-
ments; Let us then sincerely indea-
vour to obey the commands of God, and
death shall have no sting, nothing that
is terrible in it. He that has either from

S E R M.

X.



S E R M. the beginning, or after true Repentance,
 X. made it the principal business of his life,
 to live soberly, righteously, and godly;
 may without fear expect the approach
 of *death*, nay even with joy and comfort
 hope for it. And this the generality of
 mankind are so sensible of, that tho' they
 desire not to *be like the Servants of God*
in their lives, yet they cannot but wish
 with *Balaam* to be like them in their
 deaths, Num. xxiii. 10; *Let me die the*
death of the righteous, and let my last
end be like his. 3dly and lastly, If Christ
 will give all his Servants victory over
 death, then we ought not to grieve im-
 moderately at the death of our friends
 who die in the Lord. *I would not have*
you ignorant, saith St Paul, concerning them
that are asleep, that ye sorrow not even
as others that have no hope; For if we
believe that Jesus died, and rose again,
even so them also which sleep in Jesus,
will God bring with him, 1 Theff. iv.
 13. If we believe that there shall be a
 resurrection from the dead, we ought
 not to sorrow immoderately for the
 de-

departure of those, who have left this wicked and miserable world, *and are gone to rest from their labours?* For so saith the Spirit of God, *Rev. xiv. 13. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.*

S E R M.
X.
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S E R M O N XI.

The Inexcusableness of rejecting
the Gospel.

[*Preached on Whitsunday.*]



H E B. ii. 3 and 4.

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?



THESE words contain an account, how utterly inexcusable all men are, who neglect the Salvation of the Gospel; either by rejecting it through Unbelief, when offered

S E R M.
XI.
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S E R M. fered unto them; or by living unworthily
 XI. of it, after they have pretended to embrace it. Many considerations there are, which highly aggravate the fault of such persons as contemptuously neglect the proposal of a Favour, which 'tis both their duty and their greatest interest to accept; and many circumstances make them more and more inexcusable, and justly to deserve the severest punishment, for their ingratitude and contempt. The intrinsic *Goodness* and *Excellency* of the *Thing itself*, which they despise and neglect; the great *value*, the *necessity* and singular *importance* of it; the exceeding great *benefit*, which, by being duly received, it would bring along with it; and the *Extreme Evils* which are consequent upon the neglect of it: The *Power* and *Aubority*, the *Greatness* and *Goodness* of the *Person*, whose Favour we make light of; our *Subjection* to him and *Dependence* upon him, as our absolute *Governour*; or our *Obligations* to him, as our greatest *Benefactor*: The *Dignity* and *Excellency* of the *Person*, by whose *interposition* the
 Benefit

Benefit is procured, and by whom it is conveyed or sent to us: The great *Difficulties* that were necessary to be underwent in order to obtain it, or the great *Cost* that was requisite to purchase it: The *Strength and Clearness* of the *Evidence*, and the *Number and Greatness* of the *Proofs*, made use of to assure us of the *Certainty* of it: All these are *Circumstances* which greatly increase our *Obligation*, to accept with *Thankfulness* the *Advantage* proposed, to make that *due Use* of it for which it was conferred, and be influenced by it in all the *Actions* of our *Lives*. And if we neglect or despise it, or behave ourselves ill and unworthily under it; all the same *circumstances* do highly aggravate our *guilt*, render us very *inexcusable*, and make us justly to deserve the severest of *punishments* for our *ingratitude* and *contempt*. To reject That, which in the nature of the *thing itself* is of the highest *Excellency and intrinsic Goodness*, is a mark of the greatest *Depravity and Corruption* of *Manners*. To despise That, which is of the last and

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S E R M. utmost *importance* to us; on the due receiving, or on the neglecting whereof, depends the greatest Happiness or the extremeest Misery our Nature is capable of; is the greatest Folly and Stupidity imaginable. To disobey the Commands of our Supreme *Governour*, whose Power is absolute, and his Authority uncontrollable; is the highest Insolence; and to oppose the Will of our greatest *Benefactor*, is the basest Ingratitude: To slight and reject a gracious proposal of Mercy, procured for us by the interposition, and conveyed to us by the hands, of a Person of the greatest Dignity and Excellency; and who was likewise in order thereunto, necessarily to condescend and submit to undergo great Sufferings and Indignities; is the highest degree of *Perverseness* possible. And to withstand and not be convinced by such Proofs, as both in Number, Strength, and Clearness, are the best and greatest Evidence that can be expected or in reason desired; is the utmost Obstinacy, and most inexcusably wilful Opposition to Truth. Now all these

these aggravating Circumstances attend the rejecting, or (which is the very same thing) the disobeying the Gospel; and they are most of them contained in these words of the Apostle; *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?* In the words,

1<sup>st</sup>, HERE is the intrinsic Goodness and Excellency of the Thing itself, which wicked men reject; intimated as a just ground why they should not escape unpunished. It is in itself or in its own Nature a *great Salvation*; a Salvation from Sin and Misery, from the Power and Tyranny of the Devil, and from the punishment of Death.

2<sup>dly</sup>, HERE is a great Aggravation of the Sin of rejecting the Gospel; in that it is a Salvation not only *great in itself*, but also

S E R M. so offered unto us by express revelation  
 XI. from *God himself.*



3dly, H E R E is the Dignity and Excellency of the Person, *by and through* whom this Salvation is proposed to us; mentioned as a further Aggravation of the Sin of rejecting it. It was *at the first began to be spoken by the Lord.*

4thly and Lastly, T H E Strength and Clearness of the Evidence, and the Number and Greatness of the Proofs, made use of to assure us of the Truth and Certainty of the Gospel; is of all others the *biggest* Aggravation, of the Guilt of those who neglect or disobey it; and that which of all other circumstances renders them the most utterly inexcusable: *God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.* The principal and most remarkable of all which Signs and Wonders, being that plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, which we *this day* commemorate; I shall therefore  
 be



be very brief upon all the former Heads. S E R M.

1<sup>st</sup>, H E R E is the *intrinsic Goodness and Excellency of the Thing itself*, which wicked men reject; intimated as a just ground why they should not escape unpunished. It is *in itself*, a *great Salvation*; a Salvation from Sin and Misery, from the Power and Tyranny of the Devil, and from the punishment of Death. Sin, in its own Nature, even separate from the consideration of its being an obstinate disobeying the revealed Will of God, is in itself utterly unreasonable and inexcusable: 'Tis acting in opposition to the known reason and proportion of things; contrary to that eternal Order and Equity, which God has established in the original constitution of Nature; opposite to the Light of Reason, the dictates of Conscience, the unprejudiced Judgment of our own Minds, the agreeing Opinion of all wise and good men, nay and even of bad men themselves too; contrary to all our natural Notions and Apprehensions, of the Attributes and Will of God; destructive to the publick Welfare and

Happi-

S E R M. Happiness of Mankind, the Health of  
 XI. our own Bodies, the Peace of our Minds,  
 and the Support of our good Name and  
 Reputation amongst wise and reasonable  
 men: 'Tis a subjecting our reason to vile  
 affections, to inordinate and brutish ap-  
 petites, to disorderly and ungoverned Pas-  
 sions; Which is the greatest and the worst  
 slavery in the world; to see and approve  
 what is good, and yet not be able to  
 prevail with ourselves to practise it; to be  
 sensible of the destructive consequences of  
 Sin, and yet, through the Strength of evil  
 Habits, continue under the power and  
 dominion of it; To feel ourselves de-  
 prived of our present Happiness, and of  
 our best hopes of all that is to come;  
 and yet continue in the practice of such  
 Vices, as are the only Causes of all this  
 Misery: This is evidently the greatest  
 Misery, and most slavish Bondage that  
 can be. Now to have a way proposed  
 to us, of being delivered from this Body  
 of Sin, into the glorious Liberty of the  
 Children of God; to have a method laid  
 before us, of being rescued from this Mi-  
 sery,

fery, and put into a way of securing both S E R M.  
our present Happiness and that which is XI.  
to come: This is the Offer of a *great Sal-*  
*vation*; This whoever shall neglect, is  
absolutely inexcusable, and justly deserves  
to fall into that Misery, from which he  
would not accept a deliverance. The  
Light of Nature itself directs us thus far,  
and that which all true Philosophy pre-  
tended to, was to convince men of the  
reasonableness and necessity of *endeavour-*  
*ing*, by all the helps of Reason and natu-  
ral Religion, to deliver themselves from  
this bondage and slavery of Sin. The  
Gospel proposes to us an infinitely more  
effectual way of obtaining this end, than  
any Philosophy under the Light of Na-  
ture was ever able to do; showing us  
most clearly the heinous Nature of Sin,  
and the dreadful Consequences of it; all  
the Obligations of our Duty in a more  
clear and particular manner, and the in-  
finite Advantage of complying with them;  
the true expiation of Sin, and the cer-  
tainty of our Repentance being acceptable  
in the sight of God, and effectual to obtain  
Pardon;

S E R M. Pardon; and affording us sufficient Helps  
 XI. and Assistances, to enable us to perform  
 what it requires of us, in order to our  
 future and eternal Happiness. This is,  
 in the Nature of the Thing itself, a *great  
 Salvation*; and the neglecting of which,  
 (even separate from the Consideration of  
 the particular Dishonour done to God by  
 rejecting an immediate Revelation of his  
 Will,) is intrinsically in itself a most in-  
 excusable Neglect, and justly deserving  
 the severest of Punishments.

BUT then *2dly*, This further Consider-  
 ation, that the Gospel is an *express and  
 positive revelation of the Will of God*, is a  
 very high Aggravation of the Sin of neg-  
 lecting *so great a Salvation*. He that  
 desires not to be delivered from the *Do-  
 minion* of Sin, and has no thirst after a  
 Life of *Righteousness*; for *That very rea-  
 son* deserves not to be saved from the pu-  
 nishment of Sin, and is in his Nature un-  
 qualified for the Rewards of Holiness.  
 But when to this choice of Wickedness,  
 there is added moreover a direct Con-  
 tempt



tempt of God; when God has declared to men his Will by an immediate Revelation, and confirmed the Obligations of Nature by his positive Command; when he has offered us Pardon upon our sincere Repentance, and vouchsafed us the Assistance of his Spirit to enable us to perform it, and promised us eternal Life upon our performance of it, and has obliged us to accept this Salvation under pain of the severest penalties; the wrath of God being now most expressly revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; After *all this*, to continue still to despise so great Salvation, is adding Rebellion to our Sin, and with a high hand exalting ourselves against God; 'tis an avowed despising and contemning his Authority, and expressly declaring that we *will not have Him to reign over us*. If therefore Sinning barely against the *Law of Nature*, was sufficient to consign men to unavoidable Destruction; how shall *We* escape, if we continue to Sin both against Nature and Revelation? If the Servant that *knew not* his Lord's

SERM. Lord's Will, was yet to be beaten with  
 XI. stripes, because he did things in them-  
 selves worthy of stripes; how much more  
 severely must They expect to be punished,  
 who do the same things in direct oppo-  
 sition to the express Will and known  
 Command of their Master? This was the  
 Reason why God punished the Sins of  
 his own people the *Jews*, with greater  
 Severity than those of the Heathen: And  
 so *Now* in like manner, whereas *the times*  
*of ignorance* God winked at, as the Apostle  
 expresses it, *Acts xvii. 30.* that is, he was  
 less strict and severe with men before the  
 Revelation of the Gospel; *Now*, on the  
 contrary, under pain of his severest dis-  
 pleasure, he peremptorily commands all  
 men every where to repent; There be-  
 ing no excuse left, nothing that can  
 alleviate their condemnation, if men, *af-*  
*ter* that the clearest Light is come into  
 the World, will still obstinately continue  
 in their works of Darkeness.

3dly, THE *Dignity and Excellency of*  
*the Person, by and through* whom this  
 great Salvation is proposed to us, is a  
 further

further Aggravation of the Sin of rejecting it. *It was at first begun to be spoken by the Lord*; that is, as the same Apostle expresses it in the foregoing chapter, *God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.* The Dignity of the Person, by whose interposition any Favour is procured, and by whom it is transmitted, shows both the Greatness and Importance of the Thing itself, and the Love and Condescension of the Original Author of it; And the neglecting it in this case, implies not only Folly, Insolence, and Rebellion, but moreover, the greatest Obstinacy also, which no Authority can prevail over; and the basest Ingratitude, which no Kindness or Condescension can overcome: Which therefore whosoever is guilty of, must be confessed most justly to deserve the severest of Punishments. This (the Ingratitude of rejecting a Mercy, offered with so much Love and Condescension, by the hands of a Person of so great Dignity,) is what

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S E R M. Our Saviour compelled the *Jews* to acknowledge, and made them condemn themselves for it with their own mouths, in the Parable of the Householder, *St Matt. xxi. 33.* *who having planted a vineyard, and let it out to husbandmen, first sent his servants to receive the fruits of it; and when the husbandmen had resisted and slain the servants, he afterwards sent his own Son to them, saying, Surely they will reverence my Son; But him also they resisted and slew:* Whereupon when our Saviour appealed to the Pharisees themselves, to judge *what it was fit for the Lord of the vineyard to do unto those husbandmen; They immediately replied, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons:* Unwarily passing a just sentence against Themselves; that for rejecting the Gospel preached by Christ himself, they deserved a severer condemnation, than their Fathers who had before rejected the preaching and admonitions of the Prophets. The same Argument is used by



the Apostle, in the words immediately S E R M. preceding the Text; *If the word, faith* XI.  
*he, spoken by Angels was stedfast, and*  
*every transgression and disobedience received*  
*a just recompence of reward; how shall*  
*we escape, if we neglect so great salvation,*  
*which at the first began to be spoken by*  
*the Lord? And ch. x. ver. 28. He that*  
*despised Moses's law, died without mercy:*  
*Of how much sorer punishment, suppose*  
*ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath*  
*trod under foot the Son of God? and*  
*ch. xii. 25. See that ye refuse not Him that*  
*speaketh: For if They escaped not, who*  
*refused him that spake on Earth, much*  
*more shall not we escape, if we turn away*  
*from him that speaketh from Heaven.*

4thly and Lastly, THE Strength and  
Clearness of the Evidence, and the Num-  
ber and Greatness of the Proofs, made use  
of to assure us of the Truth and Cer-  
tainty of the Gospel; is the highest Ag-  
gravation of the guilt of those, who ne-  
glect or disobey it; and that which of  
all other things renders them the most  
absolutely inexcusable. The Gospel was

S E R M. *at first begun to be spoken by the Lord,*  
 XI. *and was afterwards confirmed to us by them*  
 ~~~~~ *that heard him; God also bearing them*  
witness, both with signs and wonders, and
with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy
Ghost; whereof that which we This day
commemorate, was both the Foundation
of all the rest; and in itself also of the
greatest Efficacy and of the largest Ex-
tent.

THE stronger the Evidence of any Truth be, the more inexcusable is the making opposition to it. And the highest Aggravation of this crime, is, to continue to oppose a Truth, after the best and greatest Evidence has been given of it, that the Nature of the Thing was capable of. Opposition in this case, against the greatest Evidence that is reasonably to be expected, can proceed from nothing but either incurable Obstinacy and Perverseness; or a Love of some things, and a resolution not to part with them, the keeping of which is inconsistent with the acknowledgment of the Truth. And this is plainly the Case of those

those

those who reject the Gospel, after the undeniable Evidences that have been given of the Truth of it by the *Testimony of the Spirit*. Their rejecting it, cannot proceed from want of sufficient Conviction, but only from a love of Vice, and a resolution not to be reformed; which is a degree of incorrigibleness, in which there is no *hope* of excuse, and for which there remains no remedy; and which there is no hopes of amending. When clear Light is come into the World, and men still continue their works of Darknes; then it becomes evident that their wickedness proceeds not from Ignorance and want of Instruction, but from Will and Choice; they love Darknes rather than Light, and stand in open defiance to God and his supreme Authority. This is what our Saviour says of the *Jews*, St *Job*. xv. 22. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had Sin; but now they have no cloak for their Sin: If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had Sin; but now they have both seen and hated both me and my*

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S E R M. *Father.* This is the reason of his declaring to the cities of *Judæa*, that it should be more tolerable for *Sodom and Gomorrhæ* in the day of Judgment than for *Them*; because if the mighty works that were done in *Them*, had been done in *Sodom*, it would have repented in sackcloth and ashes. This is the reason of his declaring to those Pharisees, who blasphemed the Holy Spirit, that they should never have forgiveness neither in this World, nor in that which is to come; because they resisted the last and greatest means, that God would ever make use of to bring them to repentance; and not resisted it only, but reviled it also: They saw with their own eyes the clearest and strongest proofs of the Truth of the Gospel, that could possibly be given; and yet they not only withstood the Evidence of those mighty works, but also blasphemed the Holy Spirit by which they were worked. Their Crime was singular and unexampled; and their Condemnation, was likewise singular. But all others also, who reject the Gospel, are,

are, in proportion to the greatness of the Evidence they resist, and according to the degree of their Obstinacy and Wickedness in so doing, inexcusable in like manner, and Despisers of the *Testimony of the Spirit*.

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THE *Testimony* which the Spirit of God has given to the Truth of the Gospel, contains a great variety of undeniable Proofs, which St *Paul* calls *the Power and Demonstration of the Spirit*. The many large and particular Prophecies, which from the beginning of the World were dictated by the *Spirit*, concerning the Person of our Saviour, and the Nature, Success, and Effects of his Doctrine: The Conception of our Lord by the Miraculous Operation of the *Spirit*, and the manifold Wonders which attended his Birth: The Visible Descent of the *Spirit* upon him at his Baptism, accompanied with a Voice from Heaven, declaring him to be the beloved Son of God: The Miracles which he worked during the course of his Ministry, by the *Spirit of God*; as the Scripture frequently

S E R M. expresses it : His Resurrection from the
 XI. Dead, which likewise the Scripture as-
 cribes to the Power of the same Spirit,
Rom. viii. 11. and *1 Pet. iii. 18.* But above
 all, that most plentiful Effusion of the
Spirit upon the Apostles at *Pentecost* ;
 whereby they were indued with Power
 from on high, to preach the Gospel with
 Authority and Efficacy ; being enabled
 particularly to speak with tongues, and
 to do even greater Works than our Sa-
 viour himself had worked upon Earth,
 according to his Promise which he made
 to them before his departure ; These
Testimonies (I say) *of the Spirit of God*,
 contain such demonstrative Proof of the
 Truth of the Gospel, as leaves *Them* who
 reject it, capable of no excuse ; since they
 despise the *last* and *greatest* means, that
shall be, or indeed *could* be made use of
 for their conviction and reformation. This
 last Miracle in particular, the *Gift of*
Tongues to the Apostles, was of all others
 the strangest, and in its nature and cir-
 cumstances the greatest and most affect-
 ing that could be conceived. The Apo-
 stles

stles, on whom this Gift was bestowed, S E R M.
were men whose Parentage and Educa- XI.
tion were well known to all that dwelt 
in *Jerusalem*; They were known to be
illiterate and mean persons; persons whose
Employment had been laborious, and their
manner of life from the beginning, such
as afforded them neither Time nor Op-
portunities, of being skilled in the Learn-
ing and Customs of their *own* Country,
much less of having studied the languages
of other Nations. Had they been men
of a polite and learned education, brought
up in the study of their own Law, and
in the schools of the Scribes and Phari-
sees; it might have been imagined that
this their skill in foreign languages might
be the Effect of Study and Industry, of
Art and Design, in order to gain Applause
from the people, and set themselves up as
Heads of new Sects, and Teachers of po-
pular Doctrines. But so far from This
was their case, that on the contrary they
were despised and contemned by their own
countrymen for that very reason, because
being well acquainted with their Educa-
tion

S E R M. tion and manner of Life, they did not think
 XI. it possible that any Wisdom could be found
 in *Them*, or any Knowledge proceed from
 their lips. Exactly as they had formerly
 said of their Master, when he went up
 into the Temple and taught, St *Job*. vii.
 14. *How knoweth this man letters, having
 never learned? And St Mar*. vi. 2. *From
 whence has this man these things? and
 what wisdom is this which is given unto
 him? Is not this the carpenter the Son of
 Mary, the Brother of James and Joses,
 and of Juda and Simon? and are not his
 sisters here with us?* Herein therefore
 consisted the Greatness of the Miracle,
 that men of no Education spake different
 languages *perfectly*; and that they did it
immediately and at once, without any
 Time, Instruction, or Study. Neither
 was there any room for any Fallacy or
 Deceit in this matter: For this thing was
 not done in a Corner, but publickly in
 the midst of *Jerusalem*, and in the pre-
 sence of innumerable witnesses; and that
 not *once* only, but with a continued and
 permanent Effect. The Witnesses also
 that

that were present, were the best and most S E R M.
 competent Judges that could be; being XI.
 persons of different Nations, gathered together at *Jerusalem* upon account of the Feast, to whom all the languages which the Apostles spoke, were severally natural; so that they could not be deceived, or imposed upon in this whole proceeding. The Natives of *Jerusalem*, who understood not the tongues which were spoken, nor knew whether they were really any languages at all; might indeed mock, and say that *these men were full of new wine*, Acts ii. 13. but the foreigners, who heard each his own proper language, could not but be justly filled with wonder and amazement. The Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, were witnesses that the Apostles were illiterate men, and understood no language but their Mother-tongue, nor were capable of using any Art or Fraud in this matter; and the *Strangers* were witnesses, that what they uttered were true and real languages, and therefore could not be the effect of wine or madness. The Testimony therefore of Both together, made
 the

S E R M. the miracle certain, unquestionable and
 XI. manifest; and accordingly the Effect of
 it, was proportionably great. For so we
 read, *Acts* ii. ver. 41. that *the same day,*
there were converted about three thousand
Souls. This was the *immediate Effect* of
 the gift of Tongues at that very Time;
 and the *Usefulness* of it *afterwards*, was
 peculiar and more remarkable, than of all
 other Miracles whatsoever. For this en-
 abled the Apostles to preach the Gospel to
 all Nations, with such speed and incre-
 dible success, that though men of other
 Religions endeavoured to make Con-
 verts as well they, and some Sects of
 the *Jews* particularly were infinitely
 industrious and would compass Sea and
 Land to gain a Profelyte; yet the
 Preaching of the Apostles, *like the day*
spring from on high, like the morning-light,
which in a moment dispels the darkness from
under one end of Heaven to the other, pro-
 pagated the Gospel in a very few years to
 a vastly larger extent, than ever any other
 religion was propagated in the compass
 of many Ages. This gift of Tongues
 ceased

ceased indeed after some time, as other S E R M.
 Miracles did; because all these sort of XI.
 gifts were bestowed not for their own
 sake or intrinsic worth, but only in or-
 der to the propagation of the Gospel, and
 to convince men of the Truth of that
 Religion, whose principal end and design
 consisted in those gifts and graces of the
 Spirit which were to continue for ever.
 Which end being once obtained, and the
 Gospel established in the World, these mi-
 raculous gifts ceased; having been given,
 as *St Paul* expresses it, *not for them that
 believe, but for them that believe not.* But
 those gifts of the Spirit, in which consists
 the renewal of the mind of man, and
 which are the Springs of all virtues which
 make us like unto God; these are to con-
 tinue through all Ages; and are so much
 more excellent and more desirable than
 the former, as the End is better and more
 excellent than the Means. In our Savi-
 our's and in the Apostle's time, it was very
 natural to the Weakness of Men, to be
 most ambitious of such gifts, as made the
 greatest appearance, and could not but
 gain

S E R M. gain the greatest esteem and applause in
 XI. the eyes of the World : But our Saviour
 himself cautioned his Disciples, *not to re-
 joice so much at their being indued with a
 power of working Miracles, as at their
 Names being written in Heaven* : And St
 Paul afterwards took great pains to con-
 vince his hearers, *that though it was in-
 deed lawful to covet miraculous gifts, yet
 he could still show unto them a more excel-
 lent way* ; that it was a greater and far
 more desirable thing, to instruct men in
 their plain and necessary duty, than to
 work the most stupendous miracle ; *and
 that Love and Goodness, Righteousness and
 Holiness, Meekness and Charity, were things
 more excellent and valuable in themselves,
 than to be able to speak with all the
 Tongues, either of Men or Angels.* The
 reason is plain, because the one is benefi-
 cial only to *Others*, but the other to *our-
 selves* likewise ; He that works a Miracle
 or speaks with Tongues to convince an-
 other, may yet possibly himself have no
 title to the rewards of the Gospel ; but
 He that is indued with those gifts which
 are

are the end and design of the Gospel, S E R M.
and for the sake only of which all the XI.
rest were given, does thereby secure his
own Salvation, as well as promote the
Salvation of others. Let us then by
Charity and Goodness and the practise
of all virtues secure to ourselves that
which is most excellent; and then though
the gifts of Miracles, be not continued
to us, yet we shall obtain the End for
which alone those gifts have ever been
given to Others. For, he that speaks
with Tongues for the conversion of o-
thers, may (without the *Virtues* of Meek-
ness and Humility, Love and Charity,)
himself possibly become a Cast-away:
But he whose Mind is indued with those
inward Virtues, which are the *more* ex-
cellent gifts and fruits of the Spirit, has
attained that *End*, for the promoting of
which, the other *outwardly brighter* and
more resplendent Gifts, were all intended
but as *Means*.



S E R M O N XII.

Different Tempers judge differently of Religion.

[*Preached on Easter-Day.*]



I COR. i. 22, 23, 24.

For the Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.



IN the following Discourse S E R M. upon these Words, I shall ^{1st} XII. explain distinctly the several Expressions contained in the Text; and ^{2^{dly}}, I shall deduce some useful Inferences therefrom.

S E R M. I. IN order to Explain distinctly the
 XII. several Expressions made use of in the
 ~~~~~ Text, 'tis to be observed that the Doctrines therein contained, consists plainly of the *three* following Heads. 1<sup>st</sup>, That the Great and general Difference, between the Humours or Tempers of the Nation of the *Jews* on *one* hand, and the *Greeks* (who were Then the principal and most polite part of the *beathen* World) on the *other* hand, was This; That the *Jews*, in *Their* examination into the Truth of any Doctrine proposed to them, were always apt to insist presently upon some *Miracle*, upon some *Token* to be shown them, in proof of the Doctrine's coming from *God*; Whereas the Temper of the *Gentiles* was, to expect conviction by *Disputation and Argument*, according to the *Philosophy* of the Times they lived in, which was esteemed the *Wisdom* of the Age then present: *The Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom.* 2<sup>dly</sup>, That Persons of *Both* these Tempers, and that pretended to make use of *Each* of these ways of judging, were






generally extremely prejudiced against the Doctrine of the Gospel: Infomuch that the coming of Christ into the World, in the manner he did, in a mean, humble and lowly appearance, teaching a Doctrine of Morality, Plainness, and Simplicity; was both a great Disappointment to the *Jews*, who expected one that should in a miraculous and pompous manner deliver them from their Enemies; and at the same time was no less disagreeable to the then prevailing fashion and method of the *Gentiles*, who judged of Doctrines by the Eloquence, and Oratory, and Artfulness in Disputing, of Those who taught and maintained them: *We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness.* 3dly, That nevertheless, in Truth and Reality, setting aside Prejudices and Corrupt Notions, the Doctrine of Christ was accompanied with the *highest* and *most complete Evidence*, according to *Both* these *Methods* of judging: It was attended with the fullest Demonstrations of Divine Power, in the *Miracles* God worked by him; And it had all real

S E R M. marks of *Wisdom*, in its perfect agree-  
 XII. ableness to the Dictates of True and Im-  
 partial Reason: But unto them which are  
 called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the  
 Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.

1<sup>st</sup>, T H E Great and general Difference,  
 between the Humours or Tempers of the  
 Nation of the *Jews* on one hand, and the  
*Greeks* (who were Then the principal  
 and most polite part of the *Heathen*  
 World) on the other hand, the Apostle  
 observes, was This; That the *Jews*, in  
 Their examination into the Truth of any  
 Doctrine proposed to them, were always  
 apt to insist presently upon some *Mira-*  
*cle*, upon some *Token* to be shown them,  
 in proof of the Doctrine's coming from  
 God; Whereas the Temper of the *Gen-*  
*tiles* was, to expect conviction by *Dispu-*  
*tation and Argument*, in Methods answer-  
 ing to the *Philosophy* of the Times they  
 lived in, which was the Standard of *Wis-*  
*dom* of the Age then present: *The Jews*  
*require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after*  
*Wisdom.* As to the Temper of the  
*Greeks* in this matter; nothing is more

notorious in History, than that, about the Times of our Saviour and his Apostles, the things principally esteemed among them were *Oratory* and the *Art of Disputing*: *Oratory*, by which Things were set forth in a beautiful Light, adorned with proper figures, made pleasing and acceptable to the Hearers by a Variety of agreeable expressions; And the *Art of Disputing*, by which every thing could be supported with some plausible Arguments, every thing could be opposed with Some seeming Difficulties, and every Difficulty could by men of Parts and Ingenuity have Something offered in Reply to it. These Instances of Skill, in themselves, and when applied to good Purposes, were Both of them really useful and valuable. By *Oratory*, Truth and Right represented in a good View, and clothed in proper and agreeable expressions, appeared with a Greater Lustre, and made more Advantageous Impressions: And by *Skill in arguing*, Reason was taught to exert itself in its full Strength, and Truth to shine forth in its peculiar and inimitable Clear-

S E R M. *ness.* But more frequently, among vicious  
 XII. and corrupt Men, these Instruments and  
 ~~~~~  
 Ornaments of Reason were perverted to
 very wrong and contrary Purposes. By
Oratory, the *Deformity* of *unrighteous*
Practices was covered with the deceitful
 Appearance, and painted over with the
 beautiful Colours of *Just and Right* : And
 by *Skill in disputing*, the plainest *Truths*
 were *perplexed* with such *Intricacies*, and
 the grossest *Errours* concealed under such
Forms of Arguing, as altogether con-
 founded, to common Understandings, the
 Difference between Truth and Errour.
 This was what the corrupt part of the
Greeks called *Wisdom*. As to the Tem-
 per of the *Jews* ; They, having received
 their Law by Revelation from *God*, were
 never much accustomed either to Value
 in *themselves*, or to regard in *Others*, That
 nice and abstract Reasoning, which was
 all that the Gentile Philosophers had to
 depend upon ; The *Jews*, I say, never
 much attended to This sort of Learning ;
 But, whenever any Doctrine was proposed
 to them which appeared to be New, im-
 mediately

mediately they insisted, that the Author S E R M.
of it should, by working some *Miracle*, XII.
give evidence of his being sent from God. 

Thus *Job. iv. 48. Except ye see Signs and Wonders, ye will not believe: And Matt.*

xvi. 1. The Pharisees desired him, that he would show them a Sign from Heaven.

Nor were they to blame in so doing, when the Doctrine to which their Assent was expected, was proposed to them as of *Divine Revelation*; and

when their demanding such evidence, did not proceed from any unreasonable-

ness or perverseness of Temper, but from a sincere Desire of having such Satisfac-

tion, without which a reasonable Person could not justify his Assent from being

credulous and weak. But *more frequently*,

under pretence of expecting Further Satisfaction, an obstinate and malicious

Temper persisted continually in requiring more and more Signs, for no other reason

but because they resolved *not to be convinced*, being like the *Deaf Adder* which

stoppeth her ears, which refuseth to hear the Voice of the Charmer, charm he never

S E R M. *so wisely.* Which sort of persons, our Sa-
 XII. viour reproveth therefore with a very just
 and proper Severity, *Matt. xii. 39. An
 evil and adulterous generation seeketh af-
 ter a Sign, and there shall no Sign be given
 it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas:
 For as Jonas was three days and three
 nights in the Whale's belly, so shall the Son
 of man be three days and three nights
 in the heart of the Earth: The men of
 Nineveh shall rise up in judgment with
 this generation, and shall condemn it; be-
 cause They repented at the preaching of
 Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas
 is here: The Queen of the South shall rise
 up in judgment with this generation, and
 shall condemn it; for she came from the
 uttermost parts of the Earth to bear the
 wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater
 than Solomon is here. The Meaning is:
 God had given them Signs abundantly
 sufficient, to convince any reasonable and
 unprejudiced persons; wherewith if they
 would not be satisfied, he would leave
 them to themselves. And This may suf-
 fice for explication of the *first* part of the*

Text, the *General Observation* concern-
ing the *different Temper* or *Humour* of
the *Jewish* and *Gentile Nations*: *The*
Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek
after Wisdom.

2dly, THE *Second Particular* in the
Text, is the *Observation*, that *Persons* of
Both these *Tempers*, and that pretended
to make use of *Each* of these ways of
judging, were generally extremely preju-
diced against the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel*:
Inasmuch that the coming of *Christ* into
the *World*, in the *Manner* he did, in a
mean, humble, and lowly appearance,
teaching a *Doctrine* of *Morality*, plain-
ness and simplicity; was both a great
Disappointment to the *Jews*, who expect-
ed one that should in a miraculous and
pompous manner deliver them from their
Enemies; and at the same time was no
less disagreeable to the then prevailing
Fashion and *Method* of the *Gentiles*, who
judged of *Doctrines* by the *Eloquence*,
and *Oratory*, and *Artfulness* in *Disputing*,
of *Those* who taught and maintained
them: *We preach Christ crucified, unto*
the

S E R M. *the Jews a Stumbling-Block, and unto the*
 XII. *Greeks Foolishness.* The Jews thought that no other Sign was a Mark of the true Messias, but *Delivering them from their Temporal Enemies*; and that the *Power of God* could no otherwise be manifested in him, than by establishing him a *Kingdom in this World*. When therefore our Lord came in *Another* manner, preaching *humility and meekness, patience and charity*; calling them to *virtue and goodness*, instead of *Earthly Power and Dominion*: Though they were astonished at the Excellency of his Doctrine, and at the Greatness of his Works; and wondered, *whence has This man this wisdom, and those mighty works*; yet presently they say, *Is not this the Carpenter's Son? Is not his Mother called Mary? and his Brethren, James and Joses and Simon and Judas? and his Sisters, are they not all with us? whence then has this man all these things? and they were offended in him*, Matt. xiii. 15. Nay, even his *Own Disciples*, whenever he began to speak to them of his *Sufferings and Death*, immediately

mediately they rebuked him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord; This shall not be unto thee.* And when he had actually suffered, they said with a desponding heart, *We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel,* Luke xxiv. 21. And even after they were satisfied of the Truth of his *Resurrection*, yet still their antient Prejudices put them upon seeking after the same *Sign* or *Token* as before; *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel,* Acts i. 6. So that, considering how great a *Stumbling-block* This Circumstance was to the whole Nation of the *Jews*, 'twas with very good reason that our Lord pronounces, *Matt. xi. 6. Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.* As to the *Gentiles*; They, as I now observed, being used to judge of *Doctrines* by the *Eloquence*, and *Oratory*, and *Artfulness in Disputing*, of those who taught and maintained them; 'tis no wonder that the Plainness and Simplicity of the Gospel, which took no care to please and entertain them with artificial compositions,


nor

S E R M. nor to try their Parts and gratify their
 XII. Vanity with nice and subtle Disputations,
 but aimed wholly at reforming their Manners, and withdrawing them from idolatrous imaginations to the Service of the One Living and True God, in Holiness, Righteousness and Charity; 'tis no wonder, I say, that this Plainness and Simplicity of Doctrine was offensive to *Them*, as it is *Now* to *All* sorts of men who place religion in Forms and Ceremonies, and in certain Systems of Opinions of which they understand little; Nor ought it at all to seem strange, that the *Epicureans* and the *Stoicks*, Acts xvii. 18. should encounter St Paul with That contemptuous question, *What will this Babler say?* This therefore is the *Second* Observation contained in the Text; that Persons of such different *Tempers*, and that made use of such different *ways of judging*, as the *Jews* and *Gentiles* did, were yet both of them under very *Great Prejudices* against the Doctrine of the Gospel: *We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a Stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness,*

3dly,


3dly, THE *Third* and Last Observation contained in the Text, is; that notwithstanding these pretended Objections, yet, in Truth and Reality, setting aside Prejudices and corrupt Notions, the Doctrine of Christ was accompanied with the *highest* and *most complete evidence*, according to *Both* the fore-mentioned *Methods* of judging: It was attended with the fullest Demonstrations of Divine Power, in the *Miracles* God worked by him; And it had all real Marks of *Wisdom*, in its perfect agreeableness to the Dictates of True and Impartial *Reason*: *But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.* As to the *Jews*; (who, in judging of the Truth of any Doctrine, always insisted principally upon *Proofs* or *Tokens* of the Teacher's *Authority*, upon *Signs* or *Evidences* of his being *sent from God*;) To the *Jews*, I say, The numerous particular and distinct *Prophecies* which were fulfilled in the Person of our Saviour, and in Him Only; besides all such as were typical, and had any Ambiguity



S E R M. XII.  biguity in them: And the *Miracles* which he worked during the Course of his Ministry, nothing inferiour nor less conspicuous than those by which *Moses* of old proved the Truth of his Commission; These were *abundant Evidence*, in their *Own way*; Evidence, to Them who *required a Sign*; than which no greater Sign could possibly be given, of the immediate interposition of the *Power of God*. For whereas our Lord's coming in a *mean Estate*, was so great a *Stumbling-block* to them; and the principal *Sign* they expected, was his setting up a *temporal Kingdom* with *Great Power and Glory*: This, in Truth and Reality, would have been but a *small* manifestation of the Power of God, in comparison of that which has and will be shown forth by the *spiritual Kingdom* he has established. For how *poorly* would the great Promises of God made to *Abraham*, and the *Patriarchs*, and to good men in all Ages; how *poorly*, and in how *low* a sense, would those Promises have been fulfilled to *Them*, barely by giving their *Posterity*,
 Many

Many Ages after *Their* Decease, a *tempo-* S E R M.
rary Kingdom; in comparifon of That XII.
glorious accomplifhment of them in
Chrift's *ſpiritual* Kingdom, wherein *A-*
brabam, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, and all the
faithful Servants of God who have lived
in all Ages, ſhall *themſelves literally* and
perſonally inherit the Promiſes. Upon
which account, the Apoſtle to the *He-*
brews elegantly obſerves, *Heb. xi. 16.*
Wherefore God is not aſhamed to be called
Their God; For he hath prepared for Them,
(not for their *Poſterity* only, when they
themſelves were to be no more; but) *for*
Them hath he prepared a City. On the
Other hand, as to the *Gentiles*, who af-
fected to depend entirely on *Reason and*
Arguments; the Goſpel, though it deſpi-
fed the Vanity of *Oratory*, and choſe not
to recommend itſelf in the Set Forms of
artificial and perplexing *Diſputation*; (for
which cauſe it ſeemed *Fooliſhneſs* to con-
ceited Philoſophers;) yet in point of *True*
Reason, Wiſdom and Goodneſs, it approved
itſelf to be a Doctrin in All Reſpects
Excellent, and truly worthy of God:
Chriſt,

S E R M. *Christ, the Wisdom, as well as the Power,*
 XII. of God. By the *Gospel*, All the Great
 Truths of Natural Religion, discoverable
 by Reason and Argumentation; the Being
 and Attributes, the Government and Pro-
 vidence of God, the Unalterableness of
 Moral Obligations, the Immortality of the
 Soul, and the Expectation of future Re-
 wards and Punishments; all these Great
 Truths (I say) discoverable in good mea-
 sure by Argumentation and Reason, were
 by the *Gospel* more plainly and expressly
 revealed, more distinctly and clearly ex-
 plained, more strongly and powerfully in-
 forced. And the *additional* Revelation,
 of *Christ's* being appointed an *Intercessor*
 for penitent Sinners, and the *Judge* of
 the World; was an advantageous confir-
 mation of all the same Truths, and a
 most wise and proper encouragement to
 the practice of Virtue. By This means,
 a well-attested interposition of Divine
Authority, became unto All men a just
 ground of Assent to those Truths, which
 to make out by the Help of Reason only,
 was a work of Difficulty, Time, and
 Study.


Study. By This means, Instruction in S E R M. matters of Religion became very *short* XII. and *easy*, even to the Meanest Capacities.  And whereas the *Best and Greatest Philosophers* were in continual Disputes, and in many degrees of Uncertainty, concerning the very fundamental and most important Doctrines of Truth and Reason; Among those, on the contrary, who have embraced the Gospel of *Christ*, there never was the least room for Dispute about Any *Fundamental*; All Christians, at all Times, and in all Places, having ever been baptized into the Profession of the Same *Faith*, and into an Obligation to obey the Same *Commandments*. And it being notorious, that all the Contentions that ever arose in the Christian World, have been merely about the several *Additions*, which every Sect or Party, in direct contradiction to the express Command of their Master, have endeavoured presumptuously to annex, by their *Own* Authority, to *His* Doctrines, and to *His* Laws. How *much* therefore, and how *just* ground soever, has been given

VOL. V. U by

S E R M. by those who Call *themselves Christians*,
 XII. to the Reproach of *Them which are with-*
 out; yet *Christ himself*, that is, the Go-
 spel in its native Simplicity as delivered
 by *Him*, has abundantly, to all *Reasonable*
 persons among the *Gentiles*, manifested
 itself to be the *Wisdom* of God; as well
 as it appeared to be the *Power* of God,
 in Signs and Wonders unto the *Jews*.
Unto them which are called, both Jews
and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and
the Wisdom of God.

II. THE Words and Doctrine of the
 Text being thus largely explained, it re-
 mains that I conclude with drawing two
 or three useful Inferences from what has
 been said.

AND *Ist*, From hence it appears, how
 Foolish it is to endeavour, as some have
 done, to oppose *Reason* and *Revelation* to
 each other. For *both* of them, are the
 glorious Gifts of God; and *Each* of them
 establishes and confirms the Other. The
 Quibbling indeed, and vain Methods of
 Disputing, among the greater part of the
 Heathen Philosophers; were only *Shadows*

dows of Reasoning, falsely so called. But S E R M.
True Reason, is the Great Glory of Hu- XII.
mane Nature: And upon account of the 
Gospel's agreeableness to *This*, it is, that
the Apostle in the Text gives it that High
Character, of being the *Wisdom* as well
as the *Power* of God. To imagine *Rea-*
son and *Revelation* at variance with each
other, is the like absurdity, as supposing
the *Eye* to see contrary to what the *Ear*
bears, or that God should make *One* Sense,
or Faculty, to contradict *another*. Vain
men may poorly and weakly fancy, that
they can sometimes promote *One* Truth
at the Expence of *Another*: But the
Works of *God*, are uniform and con-
sistent, of a piece from One end to the
other: And what our Saviour says con-
cerning *Persons*, acting wisely and useful-
ly in *different* ways; that *Wisdom* is *ju-*
stified of *All* her Children; may equally
be applied to *Things* likewise, that *Wis-*
dom is *justified* in *All* her Dispen-
sations.

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2dly, IF the *Power and Authority*, as well as the *Wisdom* of God; that is, if *Divine Revelation*, as well as *argumentative Proof*; be a just Ground of Assent, or Evidence of Truth: Then ought we always to take great heed, least at any time we *weaken* the Strength of that Authority, by blending things of *Humane* invention with those whose Institution is *Divine*. For whereas weak men think, by means of such confusion, to *strengthen* their *Own* Authority with the mixture of *Divine*; the Real Effect, on the contrary, always is, that the things of *Divine Authority* are insensibly *weakened*, by being made less distinguishable from what is merely *Humane*.

3dly and lastly, FROM the manner in which *Christ* is here called *The Wisdom* and *The Power* of God, we may learn rightly to understand *Other* the like figurative expressions frequently found in Scripture. For as *Christ* is here stiled the *Wisdom* of God, because his Gospel is agreeable to *True Reason*; and the *Power* of

of

of God, because his Doctrine was confirmed by mighty *Works and Miracles*:

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So, in Other places, he is stiled The *Word* of God, because he is the *Revealer* of his Will to Men; and he is the *Way*, the *Door*, the *Truth* and the *Life*, because he has distinctly made known to us the Terms and Means of Salvation. And by the like figure of speech, the Sacramental Bread and Wine is stiled the *Body and Blood of Christ*, because 'tis a Solemn *commemoration of his Death*. And *Christians* are by the Apostle said to be the *Circumcision made without hands*, because they *spiritually* are, what the *Jews* were *typically* by *Circumcision*. which was *literal*. And *Praise* or *Thanksgiving* has the name of *Sacrifice* given to it, because 'tis a Signification of the same Temper and Disposition of Mind, which *Sacrifices* were intended to express, and which alone made those *Sacrifices* acceptable before God. With many other the like Instances: In which, a careful consideration of the

SERM. ground and reason of the Manner of
XII. Expression, may easily prevent Great
Misunderstandings of Many Passages in
Scripture.





SERMON XIII.

Of the Resurrection of CHRIST.


[*Preached on Easter-Day.*]



I COR. XV. 14.

*And if Christ be not risen, then is our
Preaching vain, and your Faith also is
vain.*



THE great Foundation of our S E R M.
Hope of Immortality, is the XIII.
Revelation of the Gospel; 
and the great Evidence of
the Truth of that Revelati-

on, is the Resurrection of Christ. With-
out the Revelation of the Gospel, our
Hope of Immortality, according to mens

U 4

different

S E R M. different Abilities in philosophical Speculations, had continued disputable; and, without the Resurrection of Christ, the Proofs of the Truth of the Gospel-Revelation had been finally frustrated. As therefore the Truth of the Christian Revelation, is of the greatest importance to mens Souls, *in the whole*; so the proof of the Resurrection of Christ, is of the greatest importance towards securing the Certainty of that Revelation, *in particular*. By the Light of *Nature*, the Being and Attributes of God, were certain and demonstrable; the Probability of a Future State, was great and undeniable; the expectation of God's dealing mercifully with penitent Sinners, was reasonable and hopeful. But by the Revelation of the *Gospel* only, was this great Hope *secured* to us; the Pardon of Sin declared *authentickly*, by the Authority of God; Life and Immortality brought to light by *Testimony*, as well as by rational Arguments; the Rewards and Punishments of Eternity, *distinctly* set forth; and the particular

Method

Method of the final Judgment, *affectionately* represented to us. SERM.
XIII.

IN like manner, as to the *Evidence* of the *Truth* of This Revelation; By the Prophecies of the Old Testament, it was long before predicted; By the reasonableness of the Doctrine itself, it was made very credible; By the Witness of our Lord and his Apostles, it was strongly attested; By the conviction and silencing of its Adversaries, it was confirmed and established; By many Signs and Wonders and mighty Works done by Christ in his Life, it was *for the present* proved beyond contradiction; But by this *last* Evidence only, by the *Resurrection of our Lord from the Dead*, was it for ever ascertained to all generations. For had this *last* Proof failed, all the rest must in course have fallen with it. The Prophecies would have appeared wonderful, but never fulfilled; The Doctrine would have continued reasonable, but its Author perished; The Miracles of his Life would have remained astonishing, but still confuted by his Death; His *Enemies* would have continued

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tinued to insult him, as did the *Jews*; *he saved others, himself he could not save*: And his *Friends*, that loved his Doctrine, and hoped for the Salvation of God, could *but* have joined with his desponding Disciples; *we trusted it had been he which should have redeemed Israel*. In a word; as St Paul expresses it in the Text, had *not Christ risen* again, then had *our whole Preaching been vain, and your Faith also in vain*.

THE Resurrection of Christ therefore, being a Fact of so great importance, on which the Evidence of the Truth of the *whole* Revelation finally depended; it was necessary, in the Wisdom of Providence, and in the Reason of Things, that the Proof of this great Fact should be made unanswerably strong. In the following Discourse therefore, I shall *1st* endeavour to set before you briefly, and in one view, the particulars of that great and singular Care, which was taken to make the *Proof* of the Fact undeniable, that our Saviour *did really* rise from the Dead. *2^{dly}*, I shall consider what were the *Effects* of This his
Resur-

Resurrection, with respect to *Christ himself*; and 3dly, what were the Effects of it with regard to *Us*. S E R M.
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Ist, As to the extraordinary Care that was taken, to make the *Proof* of the Fact itself undeniable, that our Saviour *did really* rise from the Dead; there was (*Ist*;) in the *first* place Notice given of it *antecedently*, by the Prophecies of the Old Testament delivered long before. *Pf. xvi. 10. Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell*, that is, in the State of the Dead; *neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see Corruption*. That This was an exprefs Prediction of our Saviour's Resurrection; the Apostles, in their application of it in the Book of the *Acts*, show by the following Argument. The words thus spoken by *David*, must of necessity be meant, either of *Himself*, or of some *Other Person*. Of *Himself*, they could not literally be meant, because it was not *true* that *He* was raised before he saw corruption. And if they were meant of any *other Person*, the *Jews themselves* (notwithstanding all their Prejudices) would readily acknowledge

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knowledge, that *That other Person* so mentioned by way of Eminence, could, according to the Analogy of the Prophe-tick writings, be *no other* than the Messiah. This Argument is strongly urged by St *Peter*, Acts ii, 29. *Men and Brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the Patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his Sepulchre is with us unto this day; That is, He did certainly see corruption: But being a Prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an Oath to him, that of the fruit of his Loins according to the Flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He, seeing This before, spake of the Resurrection of Christ, that his Soul was not left in Hell, nor his flesh did see corruption.* And by St *Paul* in the same book, ch. xiii. 36, *David* (says he,) *after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his Fathers, and saw corruption: But he whom God raised again, saw no corrup-tion: Therefore these words of the Psalmist, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption, were spoken, not*
of

Of the Resurrection of Christ.

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of *David* himself, but of the Resurrection of Christ. After This, and other antient Prophecies; there were, (2dly,) in the next place plain Notifications given by our *Lord himself*, to his Disciples before his Suffering; that they should expect his Rising from the Dead. And because it was a matter of the greatest Importance, he therefore repeated This Admonition to them several times. First, before his Transfiguration, (Matt. xvi. 21.) *From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his Disciples, how that he must suffer many things, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.* Then again, after his Transfiguration, (ch. xvii. 9,) *As they came down from the Mountain, Jesus charged them to tell no man the vision, till the Son of man be risen again from the dead.* Again, at his last going up to Jerusalem, (ch. xx. 17,) *he took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them.—The Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief Priests,---and they shall condemn him to death,----and the third day he shall rise again.* Besides which plain admonitions

S E R M. monitions to his *Disciples*, he gave some
 XIII. obscure hints of it to the *whole People*
 also; when, upon the *Jews* requiring of him a Sign, at *one* time he said unto them, (Joh. ii. 19,) *Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up*; and at *another* time, (Matt. xii. 39,) *To an evil and adulterous generation, there shall no Sign be given, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas*; For as *Jonas* was *three days and three nights in the Whales belly*, so shall the *Son of Man* be *three days and three nights in the Heart of the Earth*. The *Design and Use* of which Predictions, though not at all understood at the time they were spoken, is declared to us by the Evangelist, Joh. ii. 22, *When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them*; and they believed the *Scripture*, and the word that *Jesus* had said. And, Luke xxiv. 6, *Remember*, said the Angel to the persons which came first to the Sepulchre, *Remember how he spake unto you,---saying, the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and*
 the

the third day rise again; And they remembered his words. Further; (3dly,) in order to make the Proof of his Resurrection still more evident, the Place and Manner and Circumstances of his Burial, were by Providence directed to be particularly remarkable. Mark xv. 42, Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable Counsellor, begged his Body, and wrapped it in fine linnen, and laid it in his own Sepulchre; And this in the presence of several of Jesus's followers; who thereupon resolving to come and embalm him, were providentially directed to become Witnesses of many Circumstances attending his Resurrection. Lastly, The Method which his Adversaries themselves took, to find evidence (as they thought) of the Imposture; making the Sepulchre sure, sealing the Stone, and setting a Watch, (Matt. xxvii. 66;) was by Providence designed on the contrary, to become a strong Proof of the Truth of his Resurrection; taking away all pretense or possibility of that plausible Objection, that his Disciples came by Night and stole him away.

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T H E S E

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THESE are the principal Instances, of the Care that was taken in the Circumstances *going before* our Lord's Resurrection, to render the Proof of the Fact certain and undeniable. *After* his Rising again, the accumulative Evidence of the Truth of his being risen, is much greater, not only than what Unbelievers, but even than Believers themselves, without putting *together* the numerous Circumstances recorded in different places of Scripture, can easily imagine. (1st,) In the *first* place, an *Earthquake* terrified the *Watch*, and the Appearance of an *Angel* made them become as dead men, Matt. xxviii. 2. Then, (2^{dly},) the persons who came with a design to *embalm* the Body, saw likewise an Angel, and were told by him that their Lord was risen from the Dead, ver. 6. Immediately after this, *Jesus himself* appeared to them, and comforted them, ver. 9. To which St *John* adds this particular circumstance, ch. xx. 17. that when one of them embraced his *Feet*, rejoicing and worshipping him upon his Discovering himself who he was, he said unto

unto her, *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father.* Which words most Interpreters so understand, as if they signified, *Do not detain me Now, as if you thought I was immediately leaving you; For I shall continue with you some time, and am not presently ascending to my Father.* But I think the truer meaning of them is, *Do not expect I should continue with you Now; for 'tis expedient and necessary, that I first ascend to my Father.* And therefore he adds in the very next words; *But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. Tell them, that I am risen from the dead, never to die any more; that I am about to return to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God, to receive full Power over all things both in Heaven and Earth, and to prepare a place for you; and Then, where I am, there shall ye be also.* After This, (3dly,) he appeared to Two of his Disciples going to *Emmaus*, Luk. xxiv. 13. and talked with them, and *expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things*

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concerning himself. Then again (4thly,) he showed himself to *Peter* alone, ver. 34. and *I Cor.* xv. 5. Then (5thly,) to *St James*, ver. 7. After That, (6thly,) to *Seven* of the Apostles together, *Job.* xxi. 2. Then (7thly,) to *Ten* of Them, *Thomas* only being absent, *Job.* xx. 19. And, (8thly,) a week after, to *all the Eleven*, ver. 26. *Thomas* being present with them; whose doubting Faith he vouchsafed to confirm, by suffering him to handle him; yet at the same time pronouncing a greater Blessing upon those who should *not see*, and yet would *believe*; Not that *Credulity* or *Believing without reason*, is in any case commendable; but, that believing, upon reasonable and good evidence, things not obvious to Sense; such as are the Being of the *Invisible* God, the Rewards and Punishments of a future State which now are likewise *invisible*, and the Coming of our Saviour to Judgment though he does not presently appear; are the most valuable Acts of Religious Faith and Dependence upon God. *Lastly*, After these several more *private* appearances of our Lord to his Apostles,

be

he was seen (saith St Paul) of above five hundred brethren at once, 1 Cor. xv. 6. of whom though some were fallen asleep, yet the greater part remained alive unto that present time, when St Paul wrote this epistle to the Corinthians. And in This manner continued he for forty days together, showing himself alive after his passion by many infallible Proofs, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, Acts i. 3. After which, at mid-day, in the presence of all the Apostles, he was taken up from them visibly into Heaven, ver. 9. And they were told by Angels, ver. 11. what he also himself had before told them in his Lifetime, that in like manner as they saw him go into Heaven, so from thence likewise should they see him come, at the end of the World, with Power and great Glory, even in the Glory of his Father, and all his Holy Angels with him, to judge the Quick and Dead with a righteous and unerring Sentence, rendring to every man impartially according to his Works. Put all This Evidence now together, and let

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S E R M. it be considered fairly in One View; E-  
 XIII. vidence given by so many different *Per-*  
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sons, repeated at so many different *Times*,
 diversified with such variety of *circum-*
stances, yet all agreeing in such a perfect
 Uniformity as to the *Thing itself*. And
 was there ever more undeniable Proof
 given, of any matter of Fact in the
 World? Nevertheless, after All This, he
 appeared again to St *Stephen*, Acts vii. 55.

Acts ix. 3. And again to St *Paul*, as he himself te-
 I Cor. ix. stifies, I Cor. xv. 8. *Last of all* (says he)
 I. *he was seen of Me also, as of one born out*
 Gal. i. 15. *of due Time*. Besides all which *Cloud* of
Eye-witnesses, the Truth of our Lord's
 Resurrection continued moreover to be
 proved, by the *Miracles* which the *Apo-*
stles worked in his Name, *i. e.* through his
 Power and Authority; Also by the *Pro-*
phesies he himself delivered, both before
 and after his Suffering; The gradual ful-
 filling of which Prophecies in all succeed-
 ing times, has been and is a standing
 Proof of our Lord's being truly risen,
 and that he is invested with all Power,
 to accomplish whatever he has foretold:

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He clearly predicted, in the fullest and most distinct manner, the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the Desolation of the whole *Jewish* Nation: Which Nation should yet nevertheless continue in Being (as we see in fact it does at this day,) *till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*, Luk. xxi. 24. He foretold, that his Disciples should be hated both by *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and persecuted from one City to another. That nevertheless their Doctrine should spread over the whole Earth, and, by the mere Force of Truth and Reason, of Goodness and Charity, should prevail over all the Violence, and be established against all the Opposition of humane Authority. That after having so prevailed over all *outward* Enemies, it should, by an unaccountable corruption within *itself*, be over-run with almost a total Apostacy; the Power and Authority of *Men*, taking upon themselves to sit in the Seat of *God*; and compelling all men by Force and Violence, to submit to Doctrines of their own Invention; and turning Christ's Religion of Peace and

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S E R M. Love, of Meekness and Charity, into a
 XIII. worldly Religion of Dominion and Power,
 of Contentiousness, Hatred and Oppression. All which predictions having been already exactly and particularly fulfilled, in the plainest and most remarkable manner; give abundant reason to expect, that what still remains, shall likewise in its time be no less punctually accomplished. That when the just pleasure of God has been performed, and the Christian World shall for its great Corruptions have been justly punished by those Corruptions themselves; at length the Kingdoms of the Earth, shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and men leaving off to contend about their own vain Notions and unreasonable Pretences of Power and Dominion, shall agree in the original Simplicity of that pure and undefiled Religion, the Sum of which, our Lord himself tells us, consists in *loving the Lord our God with all our Heart, and our Neighbours as ourselves.*

THE Truth of our Lord's Resurrection being thus *attested* by such a Multitude

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tude of *Witnesses*, and *confirmed* by such a Number of consequent *Facts*, that 'tis hardly possible the first Preachers of his Doctrine should either Themselves have been deceived, or be Deceivers of Others; we may now easily Answer that obvious Objection, suggested *Acts* x. 40. *why* Christ after his Resurrection *showed himself openly, not to all the people, but unto Witnesses only, chosen before of God.* And the Reason hereof is the same, as why in all other cases God does not all that he is *able* to do, but all that is *fit and right* for him to do. There is in every *Means*, a certain *Fitness and Proportion* to the *End* it leads to; wherewith if men will not be satisfied, there are no limits to unreasonable expectations, and no bounds where groundless imaginations may stop. The Wisdom of God provided as many unquestionable Witnesses of the Resurrection of Christ, as the Nature of the Thing required; as was sufficient, to make the Fact uncontestable; as was satisfactory, to any reasonable and unprejudiced person. To work *more* miracles

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S E R M. XIII.  for the sake of obstinate and vicious Unbelievers, God was not obliged. And, if he *had* done it, the Objection would still have increased without End. For if it was not sufficient, that Christ showed himself openly to a *Number of Witnesses*; but it had been necessary that he should appear personally to the *whole* City of Jerusalem; for the same Reason it might be fancied necessary, that he should have shown himself also to the whole *Jewish* Nation: and for the same Reason, to all other *Nations* likewise; and to These, in *Every* Age of the *World*, as well as in *One* Age; and that, to *every single* Person, if one miraculous appearance was not sufficient, he might have shown himself *oftner* and with *more* miraculous circumstances; and so on, without End. Which shows plainly the unreasonableness of all *Such* Expectations; when men are not satisfied with that Evidence which is fit and sufficient in its kind.

I SHALL conclude This Head, concerning the *Evidence of the Fact* of Christ's being risen from the Dead, with only

only One Observation about the *Manner* S E R M.
of his Rising. Which is, that in more XIII.
than thirty passages of the New Testa-
ment, 'tis expressly affirmed that *God* rai-
sed up our Lord from the Dead, or that
he was raised by the Power of the *Fa-*
ther; and yet in two or three other pla-
ces 'tis no less plainly asserted, that *Christ*
raised up *himself*. Which different ex-
pressions might have seemed very difficult
to be reconciled, but that our Saviour
himself has in a most remarkable passage
upon this Subject, (as it were *on purpose*;) explained them to us with the greatest
accuracy and exact distinctness. *Job. x.*
18. No man, saith he, taketh my Life
from me, but I lay it down of myself; I
have Power to lay it down, and I have
Power to take it again; This Command-
ment, (that is, This Commission, This
Power,) have I received of my Father. I
proceed Now in the

Id place, To consider what were the
Effects of Christ's Resurrection, with re-
spect to our *Lord himself*. And they
were, *1st*, that thereby he was effectually,
and

S E R M. and in a most convincing manner, de-
 XIII. *clared to be the Son of God; Declared to*
 be the Son of God with Power, saith St Paul,
 by the Resurrection from the Dead, Rom.
 i. 4. Infomuch that even those words
 of the Psalmist, *Thou art my Son, this day*
have I begotten thee, are by the same A-
 postle, in his Sermon to the people of
Antioch, applied to this very purpose:
Acts xiii. 32. The Promise which was made
unto the Fathers, God has fulfilled (says he)
unto Us their children, in that he has raised
up Jesus again; as it is also written in the
second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day
have I begotten thee. Not that Christ
 Then began to be the Son of God, but
 that he was Then declared to be so, by a
 most powerful and effectual Proof; ha-
 ving loosed the pains of Death, and shown
 that it was not possible that he should be hol-
 den of it. 2dly, Another Effect of Christ's
 Resurrection, with regard to our Lord
 himself, was his being thereby declared the
 Judge of Quick and Dead. Acts x. 40,
 42. *Him God raised up the third day,-----*
and commanded us-----to testify, that 'tis
 He

He which was ordained of God to be the S E R M.
 Judge of Quick and Dead. And ch. xvii. XIII.

31. God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath appointed, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he has raised him from the Dead.

IF it be here asked, the appointing a day of general Judgment, being a Truth of so great importance to Mankind; why then was it not declared *Sooner* and *Universally*, in *All Ages* and to *All People*? The true Answer (I think) is, that in the Whole, the *Rule of Righteousness* and the *great Expectation of a Judgment to come*, is in all Times and in all Places the same; And yet the several *Dispensations*, or *particular Methods and Degrees* of God's manifesting these Truths to Mankind, by the Light of *Nature and Reason*, by Revelations to the *Jews and Patriarchs*, and by the *Gospel of Christ*, are and may as justly be very different, as, in other cases, 'tis lawful for God, the Author of All, to make people of different capacities and in different Circumstances. And accordingly,

S E R M. what God, when he comes to judgment,
 XIII. will *finally require* of Men under these different circumstances, will be proportionally different. For the Judge of the whole Earth, will do what is right, and with *Equity* shall he judge the Nations. *The Gospel* was preached before, says the Apostle, even in the days of *Abraham*, Gal. iii. 8. And even *the Gentiles*, which have not the Law revealed, are yet a Law unto themselves, showing the work of the Law written in their hearts, Rom. ii. 14. So that, upon the whole, God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him: For, not the Hearers of the Law are just before God, but the Doers of the Law shall be justified, ver. 13. And on the contrary, as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law,-----in the day when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, ver. 16.

Acts x. 34.

IT remains, that I proceed in the
 III^d and Last place, To consider what are the *Effects* of our Lord's Resurrection,
 with


with respect to Us. And they are; 1st, S E R M. XIII. our *Justification*. That is to say; The Resurrection of Christ from the dead, was on God's part a publick and authentick Declaration of his *accepting* the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, as an Atonement for the Sins of All that truly repent. This is the Meaning of those Passages of St Paul, where he tells us, that *Christ was delivered for our Offences, and raised again for our Justification*; Rom. iv. 25. That *We*, that is, *wicked men* both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, having been *dead in Sin*, that is, having been in a State of condemnation; *God, who raised Christ from the dead, hath quickened Us together with Him*, (has restored us to the hope of eternal life,) *having forgiven us all Trespases*; Col. ii. 13. And that, *if Christ be not raised, we are yet in our Sins*, 1 Cor. xv. 17; that is, if Christ be not risen, we have *Then* no evidence of *God's* having accepted Christ's Mediation for us; nor consequently of *our* being justified, or having our Repentance accepted; to such *degrees* and *Purposes* at least, as God has now declared that

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S E R M. it shall be accepted through Faith in
XIII. Him.



2dly, T H E *second* Effect of the Resurrection of Christ, with regard to *Us*; is our *Sanctification* or *Regeneration*: That is, our rising from the death of Sin, unto a Life of Righteousness. *Rom. vi. 4. We are buried with him by Baptism into Death, that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in Newness of Life; That having been planted together in the likeness of his Death, we should be also in the likeness of his Resurrection.* The Meaning of the Apostle is; that the Death and Resurrection of Christ, into which we are Baptized, and whereof Baptism is an Emblem, ought to be a perpetual obligation upon us, to rise from the Death of Sin unto the Spiritual Life of Righteousness and Holiness: *Col. ii. 12, and iii, 1. Buried with him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.— If ye then (saith he) be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above; For ye are dead, that is, dead to Sin, (as the same Apostle explains*

explains it, *Rom. vi. 2.*) and your Life is S E R M.
bid with Christ in God. And what he XIII.
 means by That Phrase, *bid with Christ in* 
God, is explained in the next verse, *ch. iii.*
3. When Christ, who is our life, shall ap-
pear, then shall ye also appear with him
in glory.

FOR 3dly, The Third and Last Effect
 of the Resurrection of Christ, with re-
 spect to Us, is the Assurance of Our Re-
 surrection likewise, unto Glorification.
1 Cor. xv. 20. Now is Christ risen from the
Dead, and become the first-fruits of them
that slept. And therefore This is con-
 stantly used by the Apostles, as a perpet-
 ual Argument of Consolation to good
 Christians; *1 Pet. i. 3. Blessed be the God*
and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who
according to his abundant mercy has begot-
ten us again unto a lively hope, by the
resurrection of (Jesus) Christ from the
Dead. Rom. viii. 11. If the Spirit of
him that raised up Jesus from the Dead,
dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from
the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal
bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.
 And

SERM. And 1 Th. iv. 14. *If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

BLESSED and Happy are They, *who shall be thought worthy to obtain That Life, and the Resurrection from the Dead; For from thenceforth they shall be before the Throne of God, and shall serve him day and night in his Temple; And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more Death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain: For the former things are passed away.*





SERMON XIV.

Of CHRIST'S Descent into Hell.

[Preached on Easter-Day.]



PSALM xvi. 9, 10.

Wherefore my Heart was glad, and my glory rejoiced; my Flesh also shall rest in Hope. For why? Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell; neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.



THE Afflictions and Calami-
ties which fall upon Many
men in this present State, are
of such a nature, that, were
it not for the Hopes which

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True Religion and the Knowledge of
God affords, their only Comfort would

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be

S E R M. be That expectation of *Death*, which
 XIV. *Job* thus elegantly expresses, ch. iii. 17,
 ~~~~~ *There the wicked cease from troubling, and  
 there the Weary be at Rest: There the  
 Prisoners rest together, they hear not the  
 Voice of the Oppressour: The Small and  
 Great are There, and the Servant is free  
 from his Master. But True Religion af-  
 fords virtuous and good Men a very  
 different Prospect; and teaches them to  
 expect, that, if God does not think fit to  
 deliver them out of their Troubles Here,  
 (which yet he sometimes does in a very  
 extraordinary and unexpected Manner;) yet  
 even the *Grave itself* puts not an end to  
 his Power of Redeeming them; but he  
 can and will raise them up again, to a fu-  
 ture and a better Life. So that they may  
 look upon *Death itself*, not barely as a  
 putting an end to their present Afflictions,  
 but as a *Passage* to a *Glorious and  
 Immortal State*. Wherefore my *Flesh* also,  
 says the Holy Psalmist, *shall rest in Hope:  
 For why? Thou shalt not leave my Soul in  
 Hell; neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy  
 One to see corruption.**



## Of Christ's Descent into Hell.

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THE *Psalm*, of which these words S E R M .  
are a part, seems to have been written XIV.  
by *David* in the time of some particular   
*personal Calamity*. Ver. 1. *Preserve*  
*me, O God; for in thee have I put my*  
*Trust*. The Ground of This his Trust,  
he expresses to be his *Adherence to the*  
*True Religion*, in opposition to the *Idola-*  
*try of the Nations* about him: Ver. 4, 6.  
*They that run after another God, shall*  
*have great Trouble;-----but The Lord*  
*himself is the Portion of Mine inheritance,*  
*and of my Cup*. The particular affliction,  
which he here refers to, *whatsoever* it  
was; he acknowledges, proved *beneficial*  
to him, in *fixing* his Mind *more steddily*  
upon things relating to his *spiritual estate*:  
Ver. 8. *I will thank the Lord for giving*  
*me warning; my Reins also chasten me in*  
*the night-season: I have set God always*  
*before me; for he is on my right hand,*  
*therefore I shall not fall*. And then he  
adds, in the words of the *Text*, the *Com-*  
*fort* arising to him from the *sense* of this  
*Improvement: Wherefore my Heart was*  
*glad, and my Glory rejoiced; my Flesh al-*


S E R M. *so shall rest in Hope: For why? Thou wilt*  
 XIV. *not leave my Soul in Hell; neither shalt*  
 thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.


'T IS remarkable here, that the former part of these words; *My Heart was glad, and my Glory rejoiced*; are cited, Acts ii. 26, according to the Rendring of the LXX, *My Heart rejoiced, and my Tongue was glad*. Which not only, in other words, expresses the very same sense; but shows us also what it is, that the Psalmist, in Other Passages, means by his Glory. Psal. xxx. 12, *To the end that my Glory, (that is, that my Tongue,) may sing Praise to thee, and not be silent*. And Psal. lvii. 9, *Awake up, my Glory; awake, lute and Harp; I my self will awake right early: That is; Both with my Voice, and with Instruments of Musick, will I sing Praise unto thee*.

The latter part of the words; *My Flesh also shall rest in Hope: For why? thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption*: are by Many understood to be a highly figurative expression in the Psalmist,

mist, of his earnest expectation of a *literal* and *temporal* Deliverance from the Affliction he was at present under. In like manner as *St Paul*, speaking of his own Escape from a very dangerous Persecution, calls it a deliverance from a *great Death*; 2 Cor. i. 9, *We should not trust, says he, in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the Dead: Who delivered us from so great a Death, and doth deliver: In whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.* And so likewise Those remarkable Words of *Job*, ch. xix. 25, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth; And though, after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God; Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not Another, though my reins be consumed within me: Even These words, I say, are by some Interpreters understood as a Prediction, in highly figurative and prophetic expressions, of his Restoration to his Temporal Greatness and Prosperity. But as This is a very forced Sense of the words, and, if it were*

S E R M. their *True Meaning*, would still be at  
 XIV. least the *borrowing of a Figure* from the  
 ~~~~~ Notion and Expectation of a *Resurrection*  
from the Dead; 'tis more *reasonable and*
natural to understand them in that *ob-*
vious and literal sense, wherein they are
 clearly and plainly the Expression of a
better and more certain Hope. And, for
 the same reason, the words of *my Text*
 likewise, if they are *at all* to be applied
 to the *Psalmist himself*; may with a better
 emphasis, and as a more assured Ground
 of Hope, be understood to signify his ex-
 pectation of a *Future State*, than of a
Temporal Deliverance. But indeed, in
 their *real and most proper* Sense, they are
 not applicable to the *Psalmist himself*,
 but to *Him* of whom *David* was both a
Prophet and a *Type*; The *same Spirit* of
 God, which through the *whole Period* of
 the old Testament from the Beginning of
 the World pointed perpetually to *Christ*
 through an innumerable variety of *Types*
 and *Prophecies*, *here likewise* directing
 the inspired Penman to such Expressions,
 as might be a *strict and literal* descrip-
 tion

tion of the *Resurrection* of Christ, but S E R M. could not with the same propriety be ap- XIV. plied to *David*. Thus the Apostle ob-  serves, *Acts* xiii. 36; *David*, after he had served his own generation by the Will of God, fell on Sleep, and was laid unto his Fathers, and saw corruption; But he whom God raised again, saw no corruption. And chap. ii. 29; *The Patriarch David* is both dead and buried, and his Sepulchre is with us unto This day: Therefore being a Prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an Oath to him, that of the Fruit of his Loins, according to the Flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his Throne; He, seeing this before, spake of the *Resurrection* of Christ, that his Soul was not left in Hell, neither his Flesh did see Corruption. And 'tis remarkable, by the way; that, as the fore-cited words of *Job*, which are much more emphatically descriptive of the *Resurrection* of the Dead, than of his *Restoration* to his Temporal Prosperity; are, in order to excite our more particular Attention, introduced with That extraordinary and most solemn

S E R M
XIV.  exclamation, *Oh that my words were now written, that they were printed in a Book ! that they were graven with an iron pen, and lead, in the Rock for ever !* so *This Psalm*, which contains in it so *important* a Prophecy of Christ, is distinguished by a **Michtam* * *Title* prefixed at the Head of it, which in the *Original* signifies a *Memorial engraved* on Stone or Marble for perpetuity of Ages.

BUT to proceed.

C O N C E R N I N G that *particularly remarkable* Phrase, *Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell*; 'tis to be observed, that though in our present language, the word *Hell*, in common Speech, does *Now* always signify *The State of the Damned*; yet in *This Text*, 'tis evident, it cannot be understood in *That* signification. For, that *David* was not condemned to *That Place* of Torment, is agreed on *All hands*: And that *Christ*, of whom *David* was a *Type and Prophet*, did not, by *descending into Hell*, enter into the Place appointed for the *Final Punishment* of the wicked, is very evident both from *Scripture* and *Reason*.

IN the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, SERM.
XIV. the word which we render *Hell*, frequently signifies only *The State of the Dead* in general. Thus *Pf. lxxxix. 47.* according to the Translation in our *Common Prayer*; *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see Death; and shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of Hell?* is, in our Translation in the *Bible*, *shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of the Grave?* And what *Solomon* affirms, *Prov. xxvii. 20.* that *Hell and Destruction are never full*, is plainly the very same in sense, with what in *ch. xxx. 15.* is Thus expressed; *There are three things that are never satisfied, yea four things say not, it is enough: The Grave, and so on.*

IN the *New Testament*; the word, *Hell*, sometimes signifies the *Place appointed for the Final Punishment of the Wicked*, and at other times it denotes only *The State of the Dead* in general. But This ambiguity, is in *our own* language only, and not in the *Original*: For whenever the *Place of Torment* is spoken of, the word *Hell*, in the *Original*, is always *Gehennah*: But
when

S E R M. when *only the State of the Dead in general*
 XIV. is intended, 'tis always expressed by a quite
 different Name, which though *We* render by the *same* word *Hell*, yet its signification is *at large* *The Invisible State*. Thus when St *James* says, that the
 Jam. iii. 6. *Tongue*, meaning a *wicked and profane Tongue*, is *a world of iniquity*,—*and setteth on Fire the course of Nature*, and *is set on Fire of Hell*: And when our Saviour says to the Pharisees, *Ye serpents, ye generation of Vipers, how can ye escape the Damnation of Hell?* and tells them, that when they have gained a *Profelyte*, they
 Mat. xxiii. 33. *make him twofold more the child of Hell, then themselves*: And when he admonishes
 ver. 15. his Disciples to *fear Him, who, after he has killed, is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell*; and warns them, that *who-soever shall say unto his Brother, Thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell-Fire*; and advises them, *If thy right Eye offend thee*, (that is, if the Desire of any thing as dear to thee as thy Eyes, be in danger to draw thee into Sin,) *pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that*

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one of thy Members should perish, and not S E R M.
that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell: XIV.

In all *These* Passages, I say, the word *Hell* is, in the Original, *Gebennah*; which always signifies *The State of the Damned*. But in *Other* Places, where *we*, in our Rending, still make use of the *same* word, *Hell*; the Original has a *very different* word, which signifies only *The Invisible State*, or the *State of the Dead* in general. Thus *Matt. xi. 23. Thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell*: The Meaning is; That Great and Proud City should be levelled with the Dust, and disappear utterly as Those who have been long buried in the Grave. Again: When the Rich man *in Hell, lift up his eyes, being in Torments*, Luke xvi. 23; the word in the Original denotes *at large* That *Invisible State* of the Dead in general, wherein were both *Abraham* and *Lazarus in his Bosom*, (and the *Paradise* wherein the *Penitent Thief* was to be *with our Saviour*;) as well as the *Souls of the Wicked* in their *Torments*. Again: When our Lord promises, *Matt.*

xvi.

S E R M. XVI. 18; that *the Gates of Hell should*
 XIV. *not prevail against his Church; the*
 * πύλαι
 αἰς.
 * words, (*Gates of Hell,*) properly and
 strictly rendred, signifie *The Passage to*
the Invisible State, that is, *Death:* And
 the Sense of his Promise is, that even
Death itself, (which is the utmost Ex-
 tent of all Persecution from *those who*
kill the Body, and, after *That,* have no
 more that they can do,) should never be
 able to suppress his Doctrine, and extin-
 guish his Religion in the World. Lastly;
 When 'tis declared in the Prophecy con-
 cerning the end of the World, *Rev. xx.*
13 and 14, that *Death and Hell delivered*
up the Dead which were in Them; and
 that, after the Judgment, *Death and Hell*
were cast into the Lake of Fire; 'tis very
 evident, that *Hell* in These Passages can-
 not possibly signify *The State of the*
Damned; but *That State of departed Souls*
in general, from whence All shall be sum-
 moned at the Great Day of Accounts;
 and which *State of Death,* or *Death it-*
self, after the final Judgment, shall be no
 more. And thus therefore likewise in the
 words

words of *my Text*, as they are cited out S E R M.
of the *Psalms* by the Apostle *St Peter*, XIV.
Acts ii. 27. *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in*
Hell; the True and complete sense is
plainly This; *Thou wilt not relinquish me,*
thou wilt not suffer me to continue, in the
State of the Dead; but wilt certainly raise
me up again, at thy appointed time.

FROM This explication of *all the Texts*
relating to This matter, 'tis very clear that
the *Scriptures* no where teach, that our
Lord, by *descending into Hell*, ever entred
into the Place appointed for the Final
Punishment of the Wicked. Nor is there
any thing in *Reason*, from whence it can
by any just *Consequence* be *inferred*, that it
was at all requisite for him so to do.

IT has been conceived by *Some*, that it
was needful for our Lord to go down into
the place of Torment, in order to render
his *Satisfaction* complete, by undergoing
himself the very same Sufferings, which
were due to Those for whom he made Sa-
tisfaction. But This notion is founded en-
tirely upon a Mistake. For the Satisfac-
tion of Christ, does not depend upon the
Same-

S E R M. *Sameness of the Sufferings*, but upon the
 XIV. *good pleasure of God* who ruleth over all ;
 who has been pleased to declare himself
 appeased by the voluntary condescension
 and Sufferings of our Lord, as a sufficient
 Vindication of his Supreme Authority ;
 so that he can, upon the Merit of That
 Sacrifice, consistently with the Honour
 and Dignity of his Laws, accept the *Re-*
pentance and *Amendment* of returning Sin-
 ners, and *Freely* forgive them their past Sins.
 But, besides This, Neither was it indeed
possible in the Nature of Things, that our
 Lord should *at all* undergo the Torments
 of the Wicked. For the Sting of *their*
 Punishment is the *Worm that never dieth*,
 and an endless *Despair of the Favour of*
God ; Which are things altogether impos-
 sible to have fallen upon *Him*.

O T H E R S therefore have fancied, that
 our Lord descended into *Hell*, not indeed to
suffer any thing there *himself*, but to *deli-*
ver Others out of That Place of Torment.
 But *This* also is plainly an erroneous opi-
 nion. For since the Scripture every where
 teaches, that *as the Tree falleth, so it shall*
lie ;

lie; and that, for those who die impenitent S E R M. and unreformed, there is no Redemption; XIV. 'tis certain the *Wicked*, when once condemned, are no more capable of being delivered at all. And as to *Virtuous* and *Good* men; 'tis no less certain that *the Souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no Torment touch them.* They are in Scripture represented as being in *Paradise*, or in *Abraham's Bosom*; but never as being in the *place of Torment* at all.

LASTLY, therefore, it has been supposed by *Others*, that Christ descended into the place appointed for the final Punishment of the *Wicked*, to *triumph* There over *Satan* in his *own Kingdom*. But neither is This opinion, in any wise, agreeable to Scripture. For the Devil and his Angels are not *yet* confined to the Pit of Destruction, before the day of Judgment. And if they were, yet *That* is *not* their *Kingdom*, but their *Place of Punishment*. The *Kingdom* of the *Devil*, is the Prevalency and Dominion of *Sin* in *this* World: And here Christ *triumphs* over him, by
con-

S E R M. converting men from their Sins and De-
 XIV. baucheries, from their Unrighteousness
 and Iniquities, which are the *Works of the Devil*; to the Practice of Virtue, Justice, Goodness, Temperance, Charity and Truth, which are the establishment of the *Kingdom of God* upon Earth.

UPON the *Whole* therefore, there is no sufficient Foundation, either in the *Reason* of the *Thing*, or in the *Declarations* of *Scripture*, to suppose that our Lord ever descended at all into the *Place of Torment*, into the place appointed for the final Punishment of the Wicked. But the Full Meaning, both of those words in my *Text*, *Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell*; and of all the *Other* Passages in *Scripture*, relating to That matter; is, that our Lord continued in the *State of the Dead*, in the *Invisible State of departed Souls*, during the Time appointed; but that, it not being possible for him to be holden of *Death*, he was raised again without seeing corruption.

THE *natural Inference* from which Doctrine, both of our *Lord's* overcoming
 Death,



Death, and of *good mens* being assured consequently that *They* shall overcome it also; is *That Hope* and *Comfort* to virtuous and religious Minds under all *Temporall afflictions* whatsoever, of which the Psalmist expresses his Sense in the words whereof my Text are a part. *I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand; I shall not be moved. Therefore my Heart is glad, and my Glory rejoiceth; my Flesh also shall rest in Hope. For thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of Life; In thy presence is Fulness of Joy, at thy right hand are Pleasures for evermore.*

THE Resurrection of Christ, is the Great Evidence of the Truth of his Doctrine. And a Principal Part of his Doctrine, is, the bringing Life and Immortality to Light; or, the giving us an Assurance, that, as Christ is risen from the Dead, so We also, if we imitate him in the Obedience of his Life, shall, after Death, rise with him unto Glory. The

S E R M. Condition and Circumstances of this present transitory Life are such, that, without the expectation of a future and a better State, the Satisfactions of *Life* are very uncertain and precarious, and in *Death* there is no foundation of Hope. They who enjoy the *Greatest Affluence* of the Good things of this present time, yet have them mixt with so many Interruptions, with so many Fears, with so many Anxieties and Vexations of Life, if in *These things alone* their Prospect of Happiness is terminated; that, upon the Whole, it can hardly be said, that their *Pleasures compensate* for their *Uneasinesses*: But with regard to *far the greatest part* of Mankind; what St Paul affirms concerning *Christians in particular*, that, *if in This life only* they have Hope, they are of all Men the most miserable; may, with equal Truth, be asserted generally concerning Men; if *in This life only* they have Hope, they are of All *Creatures* the most miserable. The *wisest* and *best* men therefore, even in the *Heathen World*, have, in All Ages and in All Nations, from the consideration of the

Natural

Natural reason of Things, from their idea S E R M.
of the Attributes and Perfections of God, XIV.
and from the *unequal Distribution* of things
in the *present* Life; justly and strongly ar-
gued themselves into a Belief and Expec-
tation of a *Future* and a *Better* State.
They argued, that nothing can be imagi-
ned more vain and empty, nothing more
void of all Marks of Wisdom, than the
Fabricken of the World and the Creation
of Mankind; if all This was done with-
out any further Design, than only for the
maintaining a perpetual Succession of such
short-lived Generations of Mortals, as we
at present are; to live in the utmost Con-
fusion and Disorder for a very few years,
and then Perish eternally into Nothing.
They argued, that, since This *could not*
rationally be the case, there *must* conse-
quently be a *Future State*. And if so;
then the Calamities and Afflictions, which
in This World often fall upon the Best
of men, cannot but be intended some
way for their Benefit, if not *Here*, yet cer-
tainly *Hereafter*.

SERM.
XIV.

THE *Patriarchs* of old, who, besides *this general Light of Nature*, had moreover some *particular Manifestations* of God, carried this matter still further: And though Life and Immortality was not *completely* revealed to them, yet from the *Manner* of God's dealing with them they assuredly gathered, that his Promises did not terminate in *This Mortal Life*. Accordingly, they *so* behaved themselves in *this present World*, as showed plainly that they sought a *better country, that is, an heavenly; Looking for a City which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God*. They endured by Faith, as seeing *Him who is Invisible*; and often were *tortured, not accepting Deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection*. Saying with the Psalmist in the Text, even in *Death* itself; *My Heart was glad, and my Glory rejoiced; my Flesh also shall rest in Hope; For thou will not leave my Soul in Hell, nor suffer thy Holy One to see corruption*.

AND if *This* was the Behaviour of Those who saw the Promises *only afar off*,
and

and had them revealed to them *only in Types and Figures*; What manner of persons ought *We* to be, to whom *Life and Immortality* are now clearly and distinctly brought to *Light* by the Gospel! And if we live *worthy* of the *Vocation* wherewith we are called; how gladly may we say with *St Paul*, under *Any Troubles* of life whatsoever; that *our light affliction* which is but for a *Moment*, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal *Weight of Glory*: While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen, are temporal, but the things which are not seen, are eternal.

S E R M.
XIV.





S E R M O N XV.

Of CHRIST'S sitting on the Right
Hand of GOD.

[*Preached on Ascension-Day.*]




H E B. viii. 1.

*Now of the things which we have spoken,
This is the Sum : We have such an
High Priest, who is set on the right hand
of the Throne of the Majesty in the Hea-
vens,*



IN the foregoing chapter, the SERMON,
Apostle sets forth at large the XV.
Excellency, of our Saviour's
perpetual and unchangeable
Priesthood; by comparing it
with That *mutable and successive* one a-
mong

S E R M. *mong the Jews. Ver. 23. They truly*
 X V. *were many Priests, because they were not*
 *suffered to continue by reason of Death:*
But this man, because he continueth ever,
hath an unchangeable Priesthood. Where-
fore he is able also to save them to the
uttermost, that come unto God by him, see-
ing he ever liveth to make intercession for
them. For such an High Priest became us,
who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate
from Sinners, and made higher than the
Heavens. Who needeth not daily, as those
High Priests, to offer up Sacrifice, first for
his own Sins, and then for the peoples;
but has, by One Offering of himself, for
ever perfected them that are sanctified.
The full explication of This Doctrine,
and of the Consequences of it, is the Sub-
ject of this Whole Epistle: And a brief
Summary of it, is given us in the words
of the Text; Now of the things which we
have spoken, This is the Sum: We have
Such an High Priest, who is set on the
right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in
the Heavens.

OUR Lord, *after his Resurrection, as* S E R M. XV.
we find it recorded in the *Gospels* and in
the *History of the Acts*, *showed himself*
alive to his Disciples by many infallible
Proofs, being seen of them forty days, and
speaking of the things pertaining to the
Kingdom of God; conversing with them
familiarly, opening their Understandings,
expounding to them the Scriptures, ex-
plaining to them in all the Prophets the
things concerning Himself, directing them
in what manner they should preach the
Gospel to all Nations, and promising to
be with them by the Assistance of his Spi-
rit even unto the End of the World. By
which means when they were fully in-
structed for the execution of their Office,
he departed from them, ascending visibly
into Heaven, in such a manner as is de-
scribed by St Paul under the prophetick
words of the Psalmist, When he ascended
up on high, he led captivity captive, and
gave gifts unto men: Now-----He that
descended, is the same also that ascended up
far above all heavens, that he might fill
all things. From thenceforth therefore,

S E R M. *we have (as the Text expresses it) such an*
 XV. *High Priest, who is set on the right hand*
 of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.

THE word, Heaven, when applied to the Omnipresent God; as in that expression of Solomon, *God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy words be few*; and in that compellation wherewith our Lord begins his prayer, *Our Father which art in Heaven*; The word, *Heaven*, I say, when thus applied to God, does not signify *literally* a particular place, in point of Situation; but *figuratively*, a State of Highest Dignity and Supreme Dominion. For God, being essentially present every-where, cannot be really and literally in One place more than in Another. But he can make particular manifestations of his Glory, when and where and how he pleases: And where he does This in the most conspicuous manner, That place is called, by way of Eminence, his Habitation, his Throne, his Presence. Now because the Heavens, are higher than the Earth; because Thence are derived all beneficial



beneficial Influences, upon this lower World; because *There* is the Habitation of Angels, attending upon the Commands of God; *therefore* God, who is *really and essentially* Present *every-where* alike, yet, with regard to the *Exercise of his Power* and the *manifestation of his Glory*, is to *Us* represented as being particularly in *Heaven*. And *Thither* therefore did our Lord *Jesus Christ* accordingly ascend, to the Highest place of Glory and Dignity, to the most immediate Presence of the Majesty of God, to *His* Father and *Our* Father, to *His* God and *Our* God; and is *sat down* (as the Text with great elegance expresses it) *on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens*.

THIS phrase, *The Majesty*, used thus absolutely and indefinitely, without mentioning the person to whom it belongs; is, in a very sublime and emphatical manner, expressive of the *Supereminent* Glory and Majesty of *God*. It sets forth to us in *such* a sense, the *singular* and *transcendent* Glory of the Divine Majesty;

S E R M. as that, *comparatively* speaking, there is
 XV. No other Majesty but *His*. Thus, in O-
 ther places of Scripture, when God is
 stiled absolutely and by way of Eminence,
The Holy One; The Blessed, (as *Mar. xiv.*
61. Art thou the Christ, the Son of the
Blessed?) *The Power*, (as in the verse next
 following, *Ye shall see the Son of man sit-*
ting on the right hand of Power;) *The*
Excellent Glory, (as *2 Pet. i. 17. There*
came such a voice to him from The Excel-
lent Glory;) The sense of these expressions
 is, that, *comparatively* speaking, there is
 None *Holy*, None *Blessed*, None *Power-*
ful, None *Glorious*, but *He Alone*. Good
Men, are in Scripture frequently stiled
Holy; and *Angels*, are the *Holy Angels of*
God; and yet *of him and to him alone* 'tis
 said, *Thou Only art Holy*. *Angels* and
 the *Souls of Men* are *Immortal*; and yet
 of *Him* 'tis in a most just sense affirmed,
 that *He only hath Immortality*. *Others*
 have *Wisdom* ascribed to them in their
 Degree and Order, and yet *He* neverthe-
 less is *God Only Wise*. *Others* are, in
 their rank and proportion, truly and
 justly

justly called Good; and yet Our Lord, with peculiar Emphasis and High Propriety, declares, *There is None Good, but One, that is, God.* The Scripture, without Any Scruple, calls *Temporal Deliverers, Saviours*; Nehem. ix. 27. And our Lord *Jesus Christ*, in the *spiritual* and infinitely *higher* sense, is, by way of Eminence, stiled *Our Saviour*: And yet *the Father Almighty*, (who in *St Paul's* language, *Tit. iii. 4, 5.* is *God our Saviour* which *saves us through Jesus Christ our Saviour*;) declares concerning Himself, *Isai. xliiii. 11. Besides Me, there is no Saviour.* The manner of speaking, is very *just*, as well as lofty and sublime; and 'tis useful and proper, in order to keep up in mens minds a due and awful sense of the Supreme and unapproachable Greatness of God. *Others* have *Power* ascribed to them, and *Dominion* and *Majesty*; There are, as *St Paul* tells us, *Gods many, and Lords many, in Heaven and in Earth*, 1 Cor. viii. 5. Some *falsely* so called; *Others* rightly, in *such* a sense as the Scripture gives the Title of *Gods* and *Lords*

S E R M.
XV.
~~~~~

S E R M. to *Angels* and to *Men*: Yet, for all that,  
 XV. *there is still really no other God but One*; and *The Majesty*, absolutely speaking, is *His* alone. Our *High Priest*, is set on the *right hand of the Throne*, of *The Majesty in the Heavens*.

THE term, Right Hand, when applied to God, is not to be understood *literally*, as denoting a particular *Situation* with regard to *Place*, (for God has no *Hands*, no *Shape* or *Parts*;) But it signifies *figuratively*, a *State* of High *Dignity*, *Dominion* and *Power*, next and immediately after God the Father himself. Our Saviour's being advanced to the Right Hand of God, is his being actually invested with *That Glory and Dignity*, for the *Joy* of which, when it was set before him, he willingly endured the *Cross*, (Heb. xii. 2.) *despising the Shame*, and is set down at the *right hand of the Throne of God*; That is, has overcome Death, and entered into his *Kingdom of Glory*. And therefore, in other places of Scripture, the very same Notion is set forth under the parallel expressions, that *Him hath God exalted* with

*his right hand, to be a Prince and a Sa- S E R M.  
viour ; to be Lord both of the Dead and XV.  
Living ; to be the Head of all Principa-  
lity and Power, the Head over all things  
to the Church : That he hath given him  
All Power both in Heaven and Earth, and  
put all things in subjection under his feet ;  
Angels, and Authorities, and Powers, be-  
ing made subject unto him : That he has  
appointed him Heir of all things, and, ac-  
cording to the working of his mighty Power,  
has set him far above all principality and  
power and might and dominion, and every  
name that is named, not only in This  
World, but also in That which is to come ;  
That at the Name of Jesus every knee  
should bow, of things in Heaven, and  
things in Earth, and things under the  
Earth ; and that every tongue should con-  
fess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory  
of God the Father. All which exalted  
characters, are emphatically included in  
this one figurative expression ; the right  
hand of God, the right hand of the Throne  
of the Majesty in the Heavens.*

*Lastly,*

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XV.


is likewise to be understood, not *literally*, as denoting a *particular* corporeal *Posture*; (for in *other* places of Scripture 'tis expressed that our Lord *Is* at the right hand of God, or that he *Stands* at the right hand of God;) But the word, *sitting*, is for *This reason* more frequently used in the case before us, because it implies, in its *figurative* Use and Signification, Fulness of *Possession*, and perpetuity of retaining the Glory possessed. *Heb. x. 12.* *After he had offered One Sacrifice for Sins, he for ever sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting, till his Enemies be made his footstool; For by One offering, he hath perfected for ever them that are Sanctified.* From the time of our Lord's ascending into Heaven, till his Second Coming to Judgment, there were *Many Ages* to pass over: And therefore St *Peter* in his Sermon to the *Jews*, *Acts iii. 19.* tells them, that *when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto them;*

them; whom the Heaven must receive, S E R M.  
*until the times of restitution of all things.* XV.

THE Office which our Saviour executes during this his continuance in Heaven, is signified to us in the Text under the character of *High Priest*: *We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of --the Majesty in the Heavens.* And the explanation of the Nature of *This Office*, as applied to our Lord, is the principal subject of this whole Epistle. Upon which account, the words of the Text are *thus* introduced by the Apostle: *Of the things which we have spoken, This is the Sum: We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.* As, among the *Jews*, the *High Priest* in the *Temple* entered *once* a year into the *Holy Place*, with the *Blood of Others*; so *Christ* having *once* in the *End of the World* put away *Sin* by the *Sacrifice of Himself*, it was necessary that He *with his Own blood* should *enter once* likewise into the *Holy Place*, into *That within the Veil*, having obtained *eternal redemption for us*: That is, it was

S E R M. necessary that he should ascend into Hea-  
 XV. ven, to finish and present his most ac-  
 ~~~~~ ceptable oblation before God, for the  
 propitiation of the Sins of the World. For so the Apostle interprets it: *Christ* (says he) *is not entred into the Holy Places made with hands, which are only the Figures of the True; but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*


THE first and immediate Effect of this his Appearing in the Presence of God for us, was the *Mission* of the *Holy Ghost*. Before our Saviour's Exaltation, the *Holy Ghost*, says the Evangelist, (speaking comparatively,) *was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified, Joh. vii. 39.* And our Lord himself: *I tell you the Truth, says he; it is expedient for you, that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: But if I depart, I will send him unto you; and-----he will guide you into all Truth.* Accordingly, at the Pentecost after Christ's Ascension, the Holy Ghost fell upon the Apostles in a singular and most miracu-
 lous

lous manner, beyond the Examples of S E R M.
former Inspirations. And by the conti- XV.
nual assistance and ordinary operations of 
the same Spirit, has our Lord promised
to *be with us* his true Disciples, to *be in*
the midst of them where-ever *two or three*
are gathered together in His Name, even
unto the End of the World.

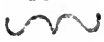
BUT further: The Scripture repre-
sents this our Great *Highb Priest*, as con-
tinually *interceding* for us at the right
hand of God, from the time of his
Ascension till his final coming to Judg-
ment. *We have an Advocate with the*
Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and
he is the propitiation for our Sins: For
our Sins; that is, for the Sins of all those
who *truly repent* and *effectually amend*
their Lives, according to the gracious
Terms of the Gospel; and who are there-
fore accordingly represented as having
washed their robes, and made them white
in the Blood of the Lamb. For persons of
This disposition, our Saviour is a perpe-
tual and effectual Advocate, to obtain per-
fect forgiveness of their past Sins, and to

S E R M. cleanse them by the perpetual assistance
 XV. of his Spirit, from all unrighteousness.
 They have an *High Priest*, not who cannot be touched with the feeling of their infirmities, but who was himself tempted in all points like as They are, yet without Sin. And he is able also, as well as willing, to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them, Heb. vii. 25. And because he thus lives for ever, and has an *unchangeable Priesthood*, therefore he is said in Scripture to be a Priest, not after the Order of *Aaron*, which was a perpetual Succession of Priests not suffered to continue by reason of death; but after the Order of *Melchisedec*, who was both *Prince* and *High Priest*, and of whom is recorded neither Predecessor nor Successor, that he might be a Type and Emblem of Him who ever liveth to make *Intercession for us*.

SOME Unbelieves there have been in All Ages, and still are, who, in opposition to this Great Doctrine of Christianity, alledge, that God being always Omnipresent


present and ready to hear the Prayers S E R M.
which every one offers for himself, there- XV.
fore there was *no need* of appointing a 
Mediator; and that God always acting,
in his own nature, according to the exact
Right and Reason of the Case; therefore
he cannot be *changed*, or have Any *Af-*
fection moved, by the interposition of Any
Intercessor whatsoever. But in This mat-
ter they greatly mistake. For if God's
being himself every where present, were
a sufficient reason why *no Mediator* should
be appointed to intercede for *Men*; it
would by the same argument be also a
sufficient reason, why men should neither
pray nor intercede for *themselves*: For
God *knows* their Wants as perfectly, even
without their ever praying for *Themselves*,
as without a *Mediator* interceding for
them. If therefore, notwithstanding God's
Omnipresence and Omniscience, it be still
reasonable to require that men should
pray for *Themselves*; in order to keep up
in their Minds a constant sense of God,
and that they may make continual Ac-
knowledgment of their Dependence upon

S E R M. him: It may in like manner be very rea-
 XV. sonable, in order to keep up in their
 ~~~~~ Minds a just sense of their own *Unwor-*  
*thiness* and of the true *Demerit of Sin*, to  
 require of them, that through such a  
*Mediator* only, as he has thought fit to  
 appoint, should they have Access to *Him*  
*who is of purer Eyes than to behold ini-*  
*quity*. And though it be indeed very true,  
 that by No intercession whatsoever, can  
 God ever be moved to act otherwise than  
 is agreeable to perfect Right and Rea-  
 son; yet in cases of *Mercy and Compassion*,  
 where the *whole* of what he does, pro-  
 ceeds from mere *Free Bounty*; 'tis evident  
 he may convey those his *Free Gifts*, in  
 what *Manner*, and upon what *Terms or*  
*Conditions*, and through what *Instruments*  
 he pleases; and may require their being  
 accepted in *that* particular *Method*, or not  
 at all. For however *otherwise* it be in all  
 such cases, where there is any Claim of  
*Justice*, or Demand of *Right*; yet un-  
 doubtedly, in Dispensations of *mere Mer-*  
*cy*, that which is true of every *Owner*  
 even among frail and mortal *Men*, may  
 with

with much greater propriety be said of S E R M.  
*God*; shall he not do *what* and *how* he XV.  
 will, with *his own*? 

THAT which remains, is, to draw two or three *practical Inferences* from the whole of what has been said.

AND 1<sup>st</sup>, From the doctrine of our Lord's sitting at the Right Hand of God to intercede continually for us, and to govern his Church by the mission of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, the Apostle's inference is very natural. *Heb. iv. 16. Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* Again, *ch. x. 19. Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (i. e. having access to God through Him,) by a new and living way which he has consecrated for us; and having an High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith. For He that spared not his own Son, Rom. viii. 32. how shall he not with Him also freely give us all things?-----Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that*

S E R M. *died, yea rather that is risen again, who*  
 XV. *is even at the right hand of God, who also*  
 *maketh intercession for us.*

2dly, IF *We follow the example of our Lord's Humility and Righteousness here upon Earth, we may hope through Him to be made Partakers also of his exaltation in Heaven. I go, says he, to prepare a place for you, and-----I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there Ye may be also. Again: To Him that overcometh, (that is, who perseveres in resisting the temptations of Sin;) unto Him will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His Throne. These Promises caused St Paul so to express himself, as if God had already raised us up together with Christ, and made us already sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. 6. The manner of expression, is highly figurative; But the literal and proper Sense of it is what he elsewhere thus explains: We have Hope, says he, as an Anchor of the Soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entreteth*

*entreteth into that within the Veil, whither S* ERM.  
*our Fore-runner is entred for us. And if* XV.  
*we have this Hope in us, then ought we*  
*accordingly to set our affections on things*  
*above, not on things in the Earth; that*  
*where our Treasure is, there may our Heart*  
*be also; that we may seek those things*  
*which are above, where Christ sitteth on the*  
*right hand of God, and where our life is*  
*hid, (that is, deposited, laid up for us in*  
*the determinations of the divine good*  
*pleasure, 'tis hid) with Christ in God:*  
*that our Conversation, (the Thoughts of*  
*our Home and final Abode,) may be in*  
*Heaven, from whence also we look for the*  
*Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who, at*  
*his coming, shall so change Us, that we*  
*shall become like him, when we shall see*  
*him as he is; and, as we have born the*  
*image of the Earthly, we shall also bear the*  
*Image of the Heavenly. By employing*  
*our Meditations in This manner, upon our*  
*Lord's State of exaltation in Heaven; so*  
*as to make it a continual Motive to us, to*  
*prepare ourselves to become finally Par-*  
*takers of that promised inheritance; we*

S E R M. shall contribute what in *Us* lies, towards  
 XV. fulfilling that Prophecy which he spake  
 before his Death, *Job. xii. 32. And I, if  
 I be lifted up from the Earth, will draw  
 all men unto me.*

3dly; Another proper and most important Use of the Doctrine before us, is as follows. If our Lord came down upon *Earth*, to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself; and if, in his State of Exaltation in *Heaven*, the Design of his continual intercession with God, and of his whole Government of the Church by his Spirit, be still always one and the same, even the putting away of *Sin*: Then from hence we may learn how great and fatal a Corruption it is of Christian Religion, for men who *live wickedly*, in a course of *Debauchery*, or in the habitual Practice of *any known Sin* whatsoever, to expect to obtain Salvation by relying *presumptuously upon the Merits of Christ*, or upon *His Intercession*, instead of *obeying his Commands* delivered in the Gospel. *The Blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God*, was shed, not to render



der men safe in unrighteous Living, but S E R M.  
 to *purge the conscience* of such as truly re- XV.  
 pent and amend, to *purge them from dead*  
*works to serve the living God*, Heb. ix. 14 ;  
 The *End* why our Lord gave himself for  
 us, being, *that he might purify to himself*  
*a peculiar people, zealous of good works*. If  
 this great End be attained ; if (according  
 to the language of St *John*) *we walk in*  
*the Light*, (that is, in the practice of true  
 virtue and holiness,) even as *God is Light*,  
*and in Him is no darkness at all* ; then in-  
 deed *the blood of Jesus Christ his Son clean-*  
*seth us from all past Sin*. But *if we say we*  
*have fellowship with Him, and (still) walk*  
*in darkness* ; (that is, continue to live  
 wickedly, and yet hope for Benefit from  
 the profession of God's true religion from  
 what Christ has either done or suffered for  
 us ;) *we lie, and do not the Truth*, 1 Joh.  
 i. 6.

4thly, and lastly : As from what has  
 been said, appears the *Reasonableness* of  
 mens applying to God through That *One*  
 Mediatour, whom *he* has appointed ; so at  
 the same Time appears likewise the *Folly*,  
 of

S E R M.

XV.



of their setting up *Other* Mediators, of their *own* invention; such as are Angels, Saints, the Blessed Virgin, and the like. For *there is One God*, says the Apostle, *and One Mediatour between God and Men*. And as departing from *the One God and Father of All, who is above all, and through all, and in us all*, is the first and highest Species of Idolatry; so another sort of the same Sin, is setting up false and imaginary Mediators, by *will-worship*, by a *voluntary humility*, as St Paul styles it, *and worshipping of Angels*; when men intrude into things which they have not seen, vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by Joints and Bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.



# SERMON XVI.

The Conversation of Christians is  
in Heaven.

[*Preached on Ascension-Day.*]



PHIL. iii. 20.

*For our Conversation is in Heaven; from  
whence also we look for the Saviour, the  
Lord Jesus Christ.*



IN discoursing upon These words SERM.  
XVI.  
of the Apostle, I shall 1<sup>st</sup> en-  
deavour briefly to show, *what*  
is the full *meaning* of this  
Phrase, of *having our Conver-*  
*sation in Heaven*; and 2<sup>dly</sup>, *what* are the  
prin-

S E R M. principal *Benefits and Advantages*, which  
 XVI. may arise to good men from This con-  
 sideration.

I. As to the Signification of the Phrase, *having our conversation in Heaven*; it may properly be understood to imply, three things.

1<sup>st</sup>, OUR *Meditating* frequently upon That Heavenly State, That Kingdom of Truth, Virtue and Happiness, which is proposed to us as the Reward and End of our Christian Warfare. To *converse* with any Person *present*, signifies *delighting* in his *Company*, or being *concerned* in his *Affairs*. To be conversant with any person *absent*, signifies holding mutual *intercourse* and *correspondence* with him; being *sollicitous* about what is *done by* him, or *happens to* him. To have our conversation in a distant Place, signifies being *much There* in our *Minds*; desiring to *have an influence* or *interest*, in what is done *There*; and judging, that What passes *There*, has an *influence* upon Us, *affects* us *nearly*, or *relates* to us more *immediately*. When therefore the Apostle affirms, as in the  
 Text,

Text, that our *Conversation is in Heaven*; S E R M. XVI.  
 his meaning is, that though *our Persons* at present dwell on *Earth*, yet our *greatest Interest and Concerns* are in *Heaven*. Like a Merchant trading in a distant *Country*; his *present Abode* may be in *foreign parts*, but his *Estate, his Family, his settled Habitation*, is at *home*; and 'tis of *much more importance* to him, what the *lasting State* of his *Affairs* is at *Home*; than what happens to him *Abroad*, with regard to such *Accidental temporary Circumstances*, as do not much affect his *main Concerns in his own Country*. Thus *Christians*, have their *great, their lasting Interest*, in *Heaven*. And though they *cannot*, they *ought not*, any more than other men, to be *insensible* of what happens to them in this *short and transitory* life, according to the *true proportion* of things, and their *real value*; yet every thing *here*, ought *chiefly* to be considered, with regard to the influence 'tis likely to have, upon our *future and eternal State*. Which right Judgment and Estimation of things, 'tis impossible men should make; unless by

fre-

S E R M. frequent and serious *meditation*, they so  
 XVI. behold the things *invisible*, as to bring them  
 ~~~~~ to make *proportionably* as strong an im-  
 pression upon the *Mind*, as *Earthly* Ob-
 jects do upon the *Senses*. Many men, like
 the Brute Creatures which have No Un-
 derstanding, seem hardly to think at all
 upon any thing, but what is *present* and
sensual. But *Reason* in general, and *Chri-*
stianity in particular, teaches us, and re-
 quires of us, to judge of things according
 to their *true* and *real Value*; and to be
 more concerned about things at present
invisible, if they be really of *greater* and
 more *lasting importance* to us, than about
 things which do *Now* more *immediately*
affect our *Senses*. St Paul, the great Bu-
 siness of whose Life was the Care of the
 Churches; thus writes to the *Corinthians*,
 when at a distance from them; *I verily*,
 says he, as *absent in Body*, but *present in*
Spirit, 1 Cor. v. 3; and to the *Colossians*,
 ch. ii. 5. *Though I be absent in the Flesh*,
yet am I with you in the Spirit, *joying and*
beholding your Order, and *the Stedfastness*
of your Faith in Christ. The Description

the

the Apostle here gives of himself, with S E R M.
 regard to the employment of his Thoughts XVI.
 upon his main Concern in *This life*; is
 what every sincere Christian ought to make
 good, with regard to his Expectations in
 the *Life to come*. Though he be *in his*
Body an Inhabitant upon Earth; and, so
 long as he continues so, ought not, after
 a Monkish, Superstitious and Enthusiastic
 manner, to neglect the Affairs of *Him-*
self, his *Family*, his *Friends*, or his *Coun-*
try; yet at the same time in *Spirit*, in
 the *bent* and *habitual disposition* of his
Mind, in the *direction* of the ultimate
View and Aim of all his Actions, he may
 properly be said to *converse*, and to *Be*, in
Heaven. Whoever *fears God* and *works*
righteousness, and lives with a constant
 Sense of Religion upon his Mind; how
 little *Time*, or how small *Abilities* soever
 he has for abstract Meditation, may yet,
 even in the midst of his worldly affairs,
 be truly said, in *This* sense, to have his
Conversation in Heaven: Because he lives
 according to the *Laws* of *Heaven*; has in
 his Mind the *Temper* of *Heaven*; and,

S E R M. by the Love of Truth, and Practice of
 XVI. Virtue, is in a continual Preparation for
 the *State of Heaven*. Nevertheless, though
 the *Practice of Virtue and Goodness* is indeed the *End* of all religion, yet frequent and serious *Meditation* is valuable as a *Means to promote That End*, and to *incourage That Practice*.

THE proper Subjects *in particular* to be *meditated upon*, as being most likely to have an *immediate Influence* upon the Course of our Lives, and to cause our *Conversation on Earth* to be effectually preparative for that in *Heaven*; are, in the *first* place, the *Nature* of God, and of his *Relation to Us*: the consideration of his being *himself* a Person infinitely *Holy*; a *Lover* of *Virtue* and all *Goodness*; a *Hater* of *Iniquity*, of *Debauchery*, and of every *Corrupt Practice*; a *Just* and *Righteous Governour* of all things; and a *bountiful Rewarder* of them who serve and obey him; *in whose Presence* there will finally be *fulness of Joy*, and *at his right hand Pleasures for evermore*.



IN the *next* place is the Consideration of Christ our *Great High-Priest*, the *Mediator of the New Covenant*; who gave himself for us, that by the *Doctrines and Example* of his *Life*, and by the *Merit and Influence* of his *Death*, he might *redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar People zealous of good works*: Who is now *sat down on the right hand of the Throne of God in the heavenly places*, to intercede for all those that truly and effectually repent: And who, *at the end of the World*, unto all them *who with patient continuance in well-doing look for him, shall appear the second time, without Sin, unto Salvation*.

THE *next* part of this Contemplation, tending to make us *hunger and thirst after Righteousness*, by having *at present* our *Conversation in Heaven*; is the consideration of the Company, by whom that region of Happiness is possess'd. The Society of *Good Angels*, who *never departed* from their first estate; and of *Good Men*, who by true Repentance are *returned* unto it. The Society of *Holy Angels*, who,

S E R M. *going in and out before the Throne of God,*
 XVI. *do always behold the Face of our Father ;*
 even the Father, of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named: And the Society of Holy Men, who, having washed their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb, are by Him presented faultless before the Presence of his Father's Glory with exceeding Joy.

THE *last* part of this Contemplation, is the consideration of the Happiness of this State itself, with regard to Ourselves. And in *This respect* indeed, *it doth not yet appear what we shall be : But we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is.* At present we see only, as through a glass, darkly ; For Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entred into the Heart of Man to conceive, the things that God has prepared for them that love him : But Then, we shall see face to face ; and know, even as we are known, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. In general only, *This* we are *Now* assured of, and a sufficient employment it is for our *Meditations* upon *This Head* ; that the
 Happi-

Happiness of Heaven, tho' the *particulars* of it are not yet revealed, is a *Great and exceeding Weight of Glory*; to which the Apostle reckons, that nothing in *this present World* is worthy to be compared, 2 Cor. iv. 17; that 'tis a *Kingdom, which cannot be moved*; a *Treasure, which neither moth nor rust doth corrupt*, and to which *Thieves do not break through and steal*: that 'tis a *Happiness pure and unmixt*; For *all tears shall then be wiped from our Eyes*; and *there shall be no more Death, neither sorrow nor crying*; *neither shall there be any more Pain*; for the former things are *passed away*: Lastly, that 'tis an *injoyment which will satisfy all our Desires*, an *employment which will improve to the utmost all our Faculties*; and, which is the *Crown of all*, will continue *for ever*; being, as *St Peter* expresses it, an *inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away*.

I conclude This Head, with the words of a most excellent Writer of our own: “ O blessed Time, saith he, when Mortality shall be swallowed up of Life, and Death and Sorrow shall be no more;--when we

S E R M. “ shall be eased of all our Pains, and re-
 XVI. “ solved of all our Doubts, and be purged
 “ from all our Sins, and be freed from all
 “ our Fears, and be happy beyond all our
 “ Hopes, and have all this Happiness se-
 “ cured to us beyond the Power of Time
 “ and Change !” Let every man who lives
 in the Practice of Any known Vice, con-
 sider seriously with himself, how for one
 morsel of meat he sells this Birthright.

T H I S is the *first* thing implied in the
 Phrase of having *our Conversation in Hea-
 ven*; meditating *frequently and seriously*
upon the Happiness of That State.

2dly; H A V I N G *our Conversation in
 Heaven*, signifies, not only meditating up-
 on the Happiness of that State, but *prac-
 tically and effectually setting our Hearts*
and Affections thereon. Speculative *Medi-
 tations* within our *own Minds*, or *moving*
Discourses and *fine Descriptions* to *Others*,
 are of no Use; unless the things *medita-
 ted upon by us*, or *described to us*, affect
 our *Hearts*, and operate in their influence
 upon our *Lives and Actions*, as *Realities*
 and not as *Imaginations*. The Persons
 Opposite

Opposite to those whose conversation is in S E R M. Heaven, (as they are described in the XVI. Verse before my Text) are those whose God is their Belly, who mind earthly things, ver. 19. By way of contraries therefore, they whose conversation is in Heaven, are Those only who mind, (not who can imagine or describe, but who mind,) that is, who in earnest attend to, as to their proper and most important Concern, the things which are in Heaven. Rom. viii. 5. They that are after the Flesh, do mind the things of the Flesh; and they that are after the Spirit, do mind the things of the Spirit. The meaning is; As worldly and corrupt Minds, are much more concerned about their Temporal, than about their eternal Affairs; so, on the contrary, Persons truly religious, though they by no means neglect the Concerns of this present Life, yet they are really more solicitous, they are more rejoiced or grieved, at the Prospect of their Eternal, than of their Temporal State. This is what St Paul exhorts us to, Col. iii. 1. If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where

S E R M. *Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: Set*
 XVI. *your Affection on things above, not on things*
upon Earth: For ye are dead, and your
Life is hid with Christ in God. Ye are
dead; that is, ye are by your Profession
in Baptism, dead with Christ; dead with
Christ from the rudiments of the World;
buried with him by Baptism, into Death;
dead, to all the vitious Desires, to all the
sinful enjoyments of the World. And your
Life (says he) is hid with Christ in God;
that is, your Hope, (as 'tis expressed ch. i.
5.) the Hope of eternal Life, is laid up
for you in Heaven, with Christ our Savi-
our; laid up, reserved for you, in the de-
terminate Counsel of God, against the day
of retribution: At which time, when Christ,
who is our Life, shall appear, then shall ye
also appear with him in Glory. The only
possible Means, by which we can in This
sense fix our Affections, by which we can
in This sense come to have our conversa-
tion habitually in Heaven; is, that we take
care, by works of Righteousness and true
Holiness, by a life of Virtue and real
Goodness, to secure to ourselves an Interest
 and

and a *Portion* There. *Lay not up*, says our SERMON.
 Saviour, *treasures upon Earth, but lay up for* XVI.
yourself treasures in Heaven; For where
your Treasure is, there will your Heart be
also, Mat. vi. 21. The words next following
 to these, are difficult to be understood;
 unless *compared* with These, by which
 their Sense and Connexion may be ex-
 plained: ver. 22, *The Light of the Body*, says
 our Lord, *is the Eye*; *if therefore thine Eye*
be single, thy whole body shall be full of
Light; *But if thine Eye be Evil, thy whole*
Body shall be full of Darknes; *If there-*
fore the Light that is in thee be Darknes,
how great is that Darknes! The Mean-
 ing is: That *True Judgment* and *Right*
Discernment of the Difference of Things,
 by which *Treasure in Heaven* is *more va-*
lued than *Treasure upon Earth*; the Re-
 wards of Virtue, than the Pleasures of
Sin; This *true Judgment*, I say, is to the
State of the Soul, what the *Eye* is to the
Guidance and Direction of the *Body*. If
 That which should be our *Guide* and our
Rule, be itself *dark*, be itself *fundamen-*
tally erroneous; how miserable must our
 Errors be!

SERM. 3dly, HAVING our Conversation in
 XVI. Heaven, signifies in the last place, according to the most strict and proper Import of the word in the Original; having our Citizenship, our *Home*, our proper *Country* and *Habitation* there. The State of *Heaven*, the *Happiness* which God has promised in the Life to come, to those who shall qualify themselves for it by the Habits of *Virtue here*; is in Scripture represented under the description of a glorious *City*. Rev. xxi. 10. *He shewed me that great City, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God; having the Glory of God, and so on.* And even the *Antient Prophets*, used from the beginning the same expressions; As appears in many passages of *Isaiab*; And *Tobit* xiii. 16. *Jerusalem, saith he, shall be built up with Saphires, and her Walls----with pure Gold.* Of this *new and heavenly Jerusalem*, the Apostle describes the *Patriarchs of old* to have been *Citizens*, while their dwelling on *Earth* was but as in a *foreign Country*: Heb. xi. 9. *By Faith, Abraham sojourned in the land of Promise, as in a strange Country; ---- For he looked for a City*

City which hath Foundations, (in the ori-
 ginal it is, *be expected* The City which hath
 The Foundations; that is, the Foundati-
 ons of *pretious Stones*, alluding to the Pro-
 phetic expressions;) *whose Builder and
 Maker is God*. And ver. 13. *These all,*
 that is, the Patriarchs, *died in Faith, not
 having received the Promises, but having
 seen them afar off; and were perswaded of
 them and embraced them, and confessed that
 they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the
 Earth; For they that say such things, de-
 clare plainly that they seek a Country, even
 a ----- better Country, that is, an heaven-
 ly; Wherefore God is not ashamed to be
 called their God; for he hath prepared for
 them a City*. And *All* who imitate the
 Obedience of these Patriarchs, in all Ages
 and in all Nations of the World, by a Life
 of Virtue and true Goodness; are in like
 manner represented in Scripture, as being
 Members of the same heavenly City. Eph.
 ii. 19. *Ye are no more Strangers and Fo-
 reigners, but Fellow-citizens with the
 Saints, and of the household of God; and
 are built upon the Foundation of the A-
 postles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself
 being*


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1 Pet. ii.
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being the chief corner-stone; In whom all the Building fitly framed together, groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord. In the present world, upon account of the transitoriness of This mortal life, we are styled Strangers and Sojourners, 1 Chr. xxix. 15; and are exhorted, as Pilgrims, to pass the Time of our sojourning here in Fear, 1 Pet. i. 17. For here we have no continuing City, but we seek One to come, Heb. xiii. 14. A city to come; that is, the New, the heavenly Jerusalem: For so St Paul tells us, Gal. iv. 26. Jerusalem which is above, is the Mother of us all; that is, our proper Home and Country. Heb. xii. 22. Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, To the general Assembly and Church of the first-born that are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of All, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant. In pursuance of which elegant Description, virtuous and good men, raised and quickened together with Christ from the Death of Sin, are, by a lively figure, said

to *fit together* (even *Now*) in heavenly S E R M.
places, in (or with) Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. XVI.
6. And to *dwell in Heaven*: Rev. xiii. 6. 
*he, (that is, Antichristian Tyranny) opened
his mouth in Blasphemy against God, to
blaspheme his Name and his Tabernacle,
and them that dwell in Heaven. To blas-
pheme them that dwell in Heaven; that is,
as 'tis explained in the following Verse, to
make War with and overcome the Saints;
to persecute the true Worshippers of God,
whose Conversation is in Heaven.*

II. HAVING thus at large explained
the *Meaning* of this Phrase, of having *our
Conversation in Heaven*; it remains that I
proceed, in the *2d* place, to consider the
Uses and Advantages which may arise to
us therefrom. And

1st, IF we take the Phrase in Either of
the *Two former* Senses, as signifying that
we *Meditate* frequently upon the Hea-
venly State, or (which is the natural *con-
sequence* of delighting in such Meditation,)
set our *Hearts and Affections* thereon; the
Advantage and Benefit of so doing, is, that
it will *continually* put us upon *preparing*
and *qualifying* ourselves, by the Practice
of

S E R M. of Virtue, for the enjoyment of That
 XVI. Blessed State. *Ecclus. vii. 36. Whatsoever
 thou takest in hand, remember the End;
 and thou shalt never do amiss.* The Great
 reason, why the World is generally so vi-
 tious; is because men seldom *meditate* up-
 on the final Consequences of Wickedness,
 and seldom seriously *reflect* upon the real
 State of their own Souls. They are like one,
 who, walking towards a Precipice, shuts
 his Eyes, and perceives not that there is
 Any Danger. *Consideration*, is the *Eye* of
 the Soul: And if this *Light* that is in us,
 be itself Darknes; if our *Meditations* be
 never fixt upon the things which can no
 otherwise be discerned but by serious and
 impartial *Meditation*; how great must the
 Darknes and Blindnes of our Minds be!
 Men upon a Bed of Sicknes, and at the
 Approach of Death, generally have very
 right Notions of this Matter; And since
 what will *Then* be True, we are sure
 cannot but be equally True *Now*; wise
 men will always endeavour, to fix those
 Thoughts upon their Minds by timely At-
 tention, and make them useful *at present*;
 which *hereafter* will fix *themselves* upon

the Mind, whether a man will or no, when perhaps it may be too late for them to be of Any Use to him. *Considerate Christians wait continually for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. i. 7. Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts; living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious Appearance of the Great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Thus did the Apostles themselves; and to This did they continually exhort Others, as in the Text; Brethren, saith St Paul, be Followers together of Me, and mark them which walk so as ye have Us for an example;-----For Our conversation is in Heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

MORE particularly. Having our conversation in Heaven, as it signifies meditating upon the Presence and Attributes of God, will naturally be upon our Minds a strong Motive and a constant Assistance, to Purity and Holiness of Life. For if hereafter we shall therefore be like him, because we shall see him as he is; at present also in proportion we cannot but imitate

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imitate him, if by serious *meditation* we accustom ourselves to live *as Seeing him who is invisible*. And therefore St *John* rightly infers, 1 *Job*. iii. 3. *Every man that hath This Hope in him, purifies himself even as he is pure.*

AGAIN: *Conversing in Heaven*, as it signifies *meditating* on the Company by whom that region of Happiness is possess'd; *an innumerable Company of Angels, and the Spirits of just men made perfect*, living together in complete and uninterrupted Love; and *Jesus himself, the Mediator of the New Covenant*, who loved us and gave himself for us All: under *This View*, it cannot but be a powerful Argument perpetually upon our Minds, to live *here* also, as preparative to That more perfect State, in mutual Love, *Forbearance, and universal Charity.*

Lastly, As it signifies *meditating* on the *Greatness and Duration of the Happiness* itself, which we shall There enjoy; it is the great Security, to preserve us from being overcome at any time by the Temptations of worldly *Prosperity*, or by the Fears of *Temporal Adversity*. *I reckon,*
saith

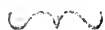
saith St Paul, that the Sufferings of this present world, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen, are temporal; but the things which are not seen, are eternal, 2 Cor. iv. 16. By This Faith, the Martyrs of old suffered themselves to be tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection, Heb. xi. 35. By This Faith, Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of Reward, ver. 25, 26. And our Saviour himself, ch. xii. 2. for the Joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at

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Rom. viii.
18.

S E R M. *the right hand of the Throne of God:*

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But



2dly, AND to Conclude. If we understand the Phrase, *having our Conversation in Heaven*, to signify in the latter Sense (according to the most *strict and proper* Meaning of the words in the Original,) *having our Citizenship, our Home, our proper Country or Habitation in Heaven*, and consequently *looking upon ourselves as Members and Subjects of That City or Kingdom which is above*: If we consider it under *This* View, the obvious Inference from hence is, that then we ought constantly to endeavour to obey the *Laws of That Kingdom*, that is, the Commandments of God; least if, during our Pilgrimage here in a *foreign Country*, we live contrary to the Laws of Heaven, we be hereafter rejected at our return, and refused admittance into our *own City*. Rev. xxii. 14. *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in thro' the Gates into the City; For without, are dogs and sorcerers, and whoremongers and murderers and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a Lie.*

a Lie. For there shall in no wise enter in-
 to it any thing that defileth; neither what-
 soever worketh Abomination, or maketh a
 Lie. And the same thing is expressed by
 our Saviour in the Gospel, *Luc. xiii. 26.*
 When ye begin to say, Lord, open unto us;
 for----- we have eaten and drunk in thy
 presence, and thou hast taught in our
 Streets; he shall say, I know you not whence
 ye are; depart from me, all ye Workers of
 Iniquity. The Laws of our heavenly
 Country, and the Customs of a vitious
 World, are contrary to each other. *Rom.*
vii. 22. I delight in the Law of God after
 the inward man; but I see another Law
 in my Members, warring against the Law
 of my mind: For the Flesh lusteth against
 the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh;
 and These are contrary the One to the O-
 ther, *Gal. v. 17.* This being the Case; it
 follows therefore, as St James concludes,
ch. iv. 4. that whosoever will be a Friend
 of the World, of the sinful and debauched,
 of the vitious and corrupt World, must
 needs be an Enemy of God: Because the
 Carnal mind is enmity against God; for it
 is not subject to the Law of God, neither

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 ~~~~~  
 ch. xxi. 27.

SERM. *indeed can be, Rom. viii. 7. For This*  
 XVI. *reason, the Apostle beseeches us, as being*  
 *Strangers and Pilgrims here, to abstain*  
*from fleshly Lusts, which war against the*  
*Soul; that is, which unfit us for our*  
*heavenly Country, the habitation of ever-*  
*lasting Righteousness and Peace, 1 Pet. ii.*  
*11: and exhorts us, not to be conformed to*  
*This World, Rom. xii. 2. but to be trans-*  
*formed by the renewing of our Mind; that*  
*is, to press forward towards the Mark of*  
*the Prize of our High Calling, forgetting*  
*those things which are behind: After the*  
*example of the Patriarchs, Heb. xi. 15.*  
*who truly if they had been mindful of That*  
*Country from whence they came out, they*  
*might have had opportunity to have retur-*  
*ned; But now they desire a better Country,*  
*that is, an Heavenly. Where, if We al-*  
*so have our conversation Now, we shall*  
*together with them be glorified likewise*  
*hereafter.*



# SERMON XVII.

Of the Spiritual Nature of the  
*Gospel.*

[*Preached on Whitsunday.*]



2 COR. iii. 17, 18.

*Now the Lord is That Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty; But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*



HE Holy Ghost having been SERM.  
poured forth upon the Apo- XVII.  
stles at Pentecost in so very  
singular and plentiful a man-  
ner, as that, *before that time,*  
'tis said, comparatively, *not to have been*  
C c 3 *given*

S E R M. given at all, Joh. vii. 39; and Those who  
 XVII. were not yet acquainted with *That day's*  
 ~~~~~  
 Miracle, are represented as not having
heard so much as whether *there was any*
Holy Ghost, Acts xix. 2. that is, whether
 there had *yet* been *any* such *plentiful Ef-*
fusion of it, as the Prophets had foretold:
 For This reason, St *Paul* in the 8th verse
 of this chapter, whereof my Text is the
 Conclusion, elegantly stiles *the Gospel*, by
 way of Eminence, the *Ministration of the*
Spirit. And from That consideration,
 through the *whole* chapter, he magnifies
 the *Doctrine of Christ*, as being more clear
 and plain, more powerful and efficacious,
 more illustrious and glorious, than the
Law of Moses. Ver. 3. *Ye are*, saith he,
the epistle of Christ, ministred by Us, writ-
ten not with ink, but with the Spirit of
the living God; not in tables of stone, but
in the fleshly tables of the heart: His
 meaning is, The Power and Efficacy of
 the *Gospel*, is as much greater than that
 of the *Law*, as can 'be expressed by *com-*
paring that which is written in a *Book*,
 with that which is imprinted inwardly in
 the very *Heart and Soul itself*. The same
 Argument

Argument he pursues, ver. 6. *God hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life; That is, The Gospel gives us those spiritual precepts, whereof the legal Ordinances were but types and shadows; (that is the meaning of their being called the letter or dead letter;) and teaches us the way to eternal life, whereas the rigour of the Law could end only in mens condemnation. And from hence he proceeds to magnify the glorious manifestation of the Gospel, by comparing it with the Glory that shined in Moses's countenance; which, though so bright that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold it, yet was but temporary and transient, and only a type or figure of that permanent glory of the Gospel, which was to continue for ever; ver. 7. If the ministration of Death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away; How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the*

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S E R M. *ministration of condemnation be glory,*
 XVII. *much more doth the ministration of righ-*
 ~~~~~ *teousness, (of justification, it should be*  
*rendred,) exceed in glory;-----For if That*  
*which is done away was glorious, much more*  
*That which remaineth (That which is*  
*Perpetual) is glorious. And hereupon he*  
*takes occasion elegantly to describe the*  
*Blindness of the Jews after our Saviour's*  
*time, in not seeing through the types and*  
*figures and imperfect notices of the Old*  
*Testament; he describes it elegantly, by*  
*comparing it to the Veil which Moses put*  
*upon his Face to conceal the Brightness*  
*of it: Ver. xiv. Their Minds (saith he)*  
*were blinded; For until This day remain-*  
*eth the same Veil untaken away, in the*  
*reading of the Old Testament; which Veil*  
*is done away in Christ: But even unto*  
*This day, when Moses is read, the Veil is*  
*upon their Heart. Nevertheless, when it*  
*shall turn to the Lord, (that is, when they*  
*shall believe in Christ,) the Veil shall be*  
*taken away. And then he sums up and*  
*concludes his whole Discourse, in the*  
*words of the Text: Now the Lord (saith*  
*he) is That Spirit; and where the Spirit*  
 of

of the Lord is, there is Liberty: But We S E R M.  
 All with open face, beholding as in a glass XVII.  
 the glory of the Lord, are changed into the  
 same Image, from glory to glory, even as  
 by the Spirit of the Lord. The words are  
 in themselves somewhat difficult, and have  
 in them several phrases very different from  
 our present manner of expressing things:  
 But the general design of them appears  
 in some measure, from the brief explica-  
 tion now given of the foregoing part of  
 the chapter, whereby they are introduced;  
 and I shall now proceed to explain them  
 more *particularly*, by considering distinct-  
 ly the several expressions in the Order  
 they lie.

THE Lord, says the Apostle, is *That Spirit*. That is, *Christ*, the *Gospel* or *Doctrine* of Christ, is *That Spirit* I have been speaking of in this whole Discourse; *That Spirit*, or *end and design* of the Law, which giveth *life*, or shows men the way to *justification*; in opposition to the *dead letter* and to the *rigour* of the law, which leads only to *condemnation*: *That Spirit* or *final intent* of the law, which is to *continue for ever*; in opposition to those

mere

SERM. mere *types and shadows*, which were soon  
 XVII. *to be done away*: That *Spirit* or full  
 Meaning and Signification of the law,  
 which is opposed to the *Veil* of ignorance  
 and *partial understanding* of it.

THE *Lord*, is that *Spirit*: The word,  
*Lord*, is used here to signify the *Gospel* or  
*Doctrin* of *Christ*, by the same figure of  
 speaking, as *St Paul* elsewhere uses, when  
 he advises *Christians* to marry *only in the*  
*Lord*, that is, to *Christians*, to such only  
 as have *received the Gospel*; and when he  
 speaks of the *dead in Christ*, *i. e.* of those  
 who died in the profession and practice  
 of the true Religion; and commands us  
 to *put on Christ*, *i. e.* to obey his Doc-  
 trine.

THE phrase, That *Spirit*, is made use  
 of to signify the *True Meaning*, and *final*  
*Intent* of the Law; because the opposite  
 words, *Flesh* and *Letter*, signify on the  
 contrary the mere *Shadow* or *Appearance*  
 of a thing, without the *real Substance* and  
*true Intention*. Thus *Job. vi. 63. It is*  
*the Spirit*, saith our Saviour, *that quick-*  
*neeth, the Flesh profiteth nothing; The*  
*words that I speak unto you, they are Spi-*  
*rit*



*and they are Life.* Again, ver. 6. of S E R M.  
 This chapter in which the Text is, *Able* XVII.  
*ministers of the New Testament, not of the*  
 Letter, *but of the Spirit*: And Rom. vii. 6.  
*That we should serve in newness of Spirit,*  
*and not in the oldness of the Letter*: The  
 meaning of which is explained, ch. ii. 29.  
*He is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and*  
*circumcision is that of the Heart, in the*  
*Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose praise*  
*is not of Men, but of God.* As therefore  
 the law of *Moses*, upon account of its  
 many ritual observances, is by a very sig-  
 nificant Figure, in several places of St  
*Paul's* epistles, called *Flesh*; so here on  
 the contrary, concerning the *Gospel* of  
 Christ, which was the End of those types,  
 'tis with no less propriety and significan-  
 cy affirmed, that *the Lord is That Spi-*  
*rit.*

IT follows, *And where the Spirit of*  
*the Lord is, there is Liberty*: Liberty, in  
 the first place, from that *Veil of ignorance*  
*and obscurity*, which remained upon the  
*Hearts*, and perplexed the *Understandings*  
 of the unbelieving *Jews*, when the Old  
 Testament was read to them: In oppo-  
 sition

S E R M. *sition to which, the Apostle argues, ver.*  
 XVII. *12 of this chapter, that We use great*  
 plainness of Speech, and not as Moses which  
 put a Veil over his Face; And upon this  
 account he stiles the Gospel, *the Mani-*  
*festation of the Truth*, ch. iv. 2. and *the*  
*Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation*, *Eph.*  
*i. 17.*

THEN, in the next place, *Liberty* from  
 the bondage of that *yoke* of Ceremonies,  
*which neither our Fathers nor We*, says  
*St Peter, were able to bear*, *Acts x. 15.*  
 Concerning which numerous and burden-  
 some rites, *St Paul* also is to be under-  
 stood, when he rejoyces that *we are now*  
*delivered from the law*, *Rom. vii. 6.* and  
 compares the *Jews*, who were under these  
 legal Obligations, to *Servants* or to *Chil-*  
*dren yet under Age*, *Gal. iv. 3.* and ex-  
 horts those, who by embracing the *Go-*  
*spel* were discharged from that *Law*, to  
*stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ*  
*had made them free, and not to be intang-*  
*led again with the yoke of bondage*, ch. v. 1.  
 Which liberty nevertheless, lest any man  
 should so misinterpret, as to think him-  
 self discharged thereby from *moral* as  
 well

well as *ritual* obligations, (which is the S E R M. absurd Use Some in modern times have XVII. made of these Texts,) he takes care to add a very exprefs caution, ver. 13. *Brethren, ye have indeed been called unto Liberty; only use not Liberty for an occasion to the Flesh: That is; Do not, under pretence of being set free from the Mosaic Observations, run into immoralities, which are Breaches of God's everlasting Law: And St Peter in like manner, 1 Pet. ii. 16. As free, yet not using your Liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, (or, as an Excuse for Immoralities,) but as the Servants of God.*

ADD to This, that by the *Liberty* which the Text affirms *is* always *There, where is the Spirit of the Lord, i. e.* wherever the Gospel prevails in Faith and Practice; is meant also a Liberty from that *Fear and Terrour*, which under the Law, could not but make men (as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* expresses it) *all their lifetime subject to bondage; till they were assured of Pardon by the reconciliation of Christ, for such things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.*

In

S E R M. In This sense it is, that St *James* uses the  
 XVII. word, when he stiles the Gospel *the perfect Law of Liberty*, Jam. i. 25. And by  
 This is easy to be understood That other-  
 wise difficult expression of St *Paul*, Rom. viii. 15. *Ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to Fear, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father*; The meaning is, we have Now, through the reconciliation of Christ, free Access to God, not as Servants to a strict Master, but as Sons to a merciful and compassionate Father. Which reconciliation itself, ought nevertheless to be always carefully so understood, not as if God was in Himself severe and cruel *before* the interposition of Christ; but that God, of his own original and eternal Goodness, freely provided for us That reconciliation *through* Christ, which his infinite Wisdom judged to be the properest Method of extending his Compassion to us.

Lastly, *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty*; not only from the Terror of *past* Sins, thro' the Redemption of Christ; but also Liberty from the *Power and*

and Dominion of Sin for the time to come, thro' the assistance of his Spirit. In This sense our Saviour uses the word, St Job. viii. 36. *If the Son (says he) shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed; free, in opposition to what is expressed in the 34th verse, Servants of Sin. St Paul in like manner, Rom. viii. 2. The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death; free, from the Slavery and Dominion of Wick- edness; delivered from the bondage of cor- ruption, into the glorious liberty of the chil- dren of God.*

THE words next following in the Text, *But we all with open Face,* are not to be understood by way of *opposition* to what went before; For *That* takes away the Clearness of the Sense: But the Connexion is, by way of explication of, or Inference from, the words immediately foregoing: *Where the Spirit of the Lord is,* where the Gospel prevails effectually, *There is Liberty;* And *We all,* or, *And therefore we all,* all true Christians, do *with open Face,* not thro' an *obscure Veil* as the Jews, but *with open face behold the glory of the Lord.*


THE

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SERM. XVII. THE phrase, *with open Face*, signifies as much as, *clearly, plainly, and distinctly*; not in *types and shadows*, not in *obscure glympses and faint representations*, not in *remote hints and distant prospects*; but with a *full and direct* view, an immediate intuition as of the *Substance and reality* of things *present and actually before us*. We behold the mystery of God in Christ, *not as the children of Israel saw the brightness of Moses's countenance thro' the Veil*, (which is what the Apostle here alludes to;) *but with open face*, as *Moses himself* is described to have seen the Lord: *Exod. xxxiii. 11. The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his Friend: And Num. xii. 8. With Him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall be behold.* Thus to Us *Christians*, the *Mystery of God's reconciliation to Sinners by the Method of the Gospel*, *the Riches of the glory of this mystery* (as *St Paul* stiles it,) *Col. i. 27. even the mystery which had been hid from Ages and from Generations; is now made plain and manifest*: so plain and open, as

to be called by way of Eminence, 2 Cor. S E R M.  
iv. 2. *The Manifestation of the Truth.* XVII.

WE all, with open Face, beholding the  
Glory of the Lord: That these words,  
the *Glory of the Lord*, are to be under-  
stood, not in the literal, but in a figura-  
tive sense, to signify the *clear and glori-  
ous manifestation of the Will of God by the  
Gospel*; is evident, as from the whole  
connexion of the Apostle's discourse in  
*this place*, so from the many *other pas-  
sages of Scripture*, wherein the Gospel is  
stiled in like manner *the riches of God's  
Glory*, Rom. ix. 23. *the riches of the Glory  
of this mystery*, Col. i. 27. *the Glory as  
of the only-begotten of the Father, full of  
Grace and Truth*, Joh. i. 14. *the Light of  
the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the  
Image of God*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. and ver. 6,  
*the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of  
God, shining in our Heart.* The words  
of that whole verse, are very remarkable;  
*God, who commanded the Light to shine  
out of Darkness*, (that is, who manifested  
his Glory originally in the first Creation  
of Things,) the same God bath shined in

S E R M. *our hearts, (has manifested his Glory*  
 XVII. *the second time no less conspicuously in*  
 *our redemption;) hath shined in our hearts,*  
*to give the Light of the Knowledge of the*  
*Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ.*  
 And these two last expressions, *Christ's*  
*being the Image of God; and the Light*  
*of the Knowledge of God's Glory, shining*  
*upon us in the Face (or in the Person) of*  
*Christ; open to us the Ground and Mean-*  
*ing, of that Similitude the Apostle inter-*  
*poses in this part of the Text,*

*Beholding, as in a Glass, the Glory of*  
*the Lord. That which he hereby in-*  
*tended to express, is, that in Christ, who*  
*is the Image of the invisible God, and the*  
*Great Revealer of his Will, we clearly and*  
*plainly behold the whole pleasure of God*  
*towards us. For, the Father, no man hath*  
*seen at any time; no man hath seen, nor*  
*can see; but the only-begotten Son, which*  
*is in his Bosom, He has declared him;*  
*and has declared him so plainly, that he*  
*who has seen me, saith our Saviour, has*  
*seen the Father, Job. xiv. 9. There is a*  
*phrase, very like to This in the Text, used*



in a *contrary* sense by the same Apostle, in his former Epistle to the *Corinthians*, ch. xiii. 12. Now (says he) *we see through a glass darkly, but Then face to face.* In which passage, *seeing through a glass*, signifies seeing *darkly or obscurely*, in *opposition* to beholding *plainly, face to face*: But here in the Text, the phrase signifies on the contrary, seeing *clearly or plainly*; and is the very same as, *beholding face to face*: *We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord.* The words in the Original, are in Both places more expressive, than in the Translation; and show plainly the Reason of this different Signification. In *one* place, the word, which we render, *glass*, signifies a *perspective-glass*; which brings distant things into the reach indeed of our Sight, but still very *obscurely, imperfectly, and indistinctly*; and does therefore very aptly and by a most proper similitude express That View of a future state, which we have by Faith and not by Sight. But now in This *other* passage in the Text, the word which we render, *glass*, signifies

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a *Mirroure* or *Looking-glass*, which on the contrary represents things *plainly and distinctly, face to face*; and therefore it no less aptly represents that clear *Light of the Knowledge of the Glory and Will of God*, which *shines* to us (saith the Apostle) *in the Face of Jesus Christ*. *We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord.*

IT follows, *Are changed into the same Image*: The meaning is, *As Christ is, by nature, the perfect Image of God*; so *We*, by communication of *Light and Knowledge* from him, and by the practice of *Righteousness* and true *Holiness*, in *Obedience to him* and *Imitation of him*, are transformed *into the same Image*. *As Christ is, by nature, the Son of God*; so *We*, by *Adoption* and by the *Fruits of his Spirit dwelling in us*, have *this Love bestowed upon us*, that *We* also, *should be called the Sons of God*. For of his *fulness* have we all received, and *grace for grace*, Joh. i. 16. That is, *Through the Fulness of those Divine Perfections, and of that Grace which was conferred upon Him*

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without

of the Gospel.

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without measure; God has communicated to Us a *proportionable* Fulness of Divine Knowledge and Virtue, according to our capacities; and *Grace*, that is, Mercy and Favour, according to the measure of the *Gift of Christ*.

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BUT more particularly; Being *changed into the same Image with Christ*, signifies Two things; *First*, being made like to him in *Holiness here*; and *Secondly*, being made like him in *Glory hereafter*. *First*, being *changed into the same Image with Christ*, signifies, being made like to him in *Holiness here*. The *Image of God* in the mind of *Man*, is *Virtue and true Righteousness*; and therefore, when the Scripture speaks of mens reforming from Vice, or improving in Virtue; 'tis a very lively description of the Excellency of their State, to express it by their being transformed into the *Image of God*, or being made after his *Similitude or Likeness*. Thus the Psalmist, *As for Me*, saith he, *I will behold thy presence in righteousness; and when I awake up after thy Likeness, I shall be satisfied with it*, Pf.

S E R M. xvii. 16. And the Apostle St Paul, Rom. xviii. 29. *Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.* That God's predestinating men to be conformed to the Image of his Son, does not here signify, decreeing concerning the *Persons*, what they necessarily should *do*; but decreeing concerning the *conditions*, what he would have *them do*; is evident from the parallel place, *Eph. ii. 10.* where the same Apostle tells us that it was, not the *persons*, but the *good works*, which God before ordained, *that we should walk in them.* Again, *Eph. iv. 23.* Exhorting men to the practice of Virtue, he *Thus* expresses himself; *Be ye renewed* (says he) *in the Spirit of your Mind*,-----after God, (after the example and similitude of God,)-----*in righteousness and true Holiness; After the Image of Him that created you; as 'tis, Col. iii. 10. Transformed by the renewing of your Mind; as he expresses it, Rom. xii. 2.*

OUR Saviour himself in his Prayer, S E R M. delivering the same Notion, speaks after XVII. the following manner, *Job. xvii. 22. The Glory which thou gavest Me, I have given Them, that They may be One even as We are One*: His Meaning is the same as That in the Text, *We beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord, (the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, as 'tis explained immediately after,) are changed into the same Image, are made partakers of his Glory, are made (as St Paul elsewhere speaks) the righteousness of God in Him.* This is the *first* signification of the phrase, our being made like to Christ in works of *righteousness here.*

2dly, BEING *changed into the same Image with Christ,* signifies also being made like him in *Glory hereafter.* Thus *1 Cor. xv. 49. As we have born the Image of the Earthy, we shall also bear the Image of the heavenly: For, when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall We also appear with him in glory: And He shall change this our vile body, that* Col. iii. 4.

S E R M. *it may be fashioned like unto his glorious*  
 XVII. *body, according to that mighty working,*  
 Phil. iii. *whereby he is able even to subdue all things*  
 21. *unto himself. St John adds another par-*  
*ticular reason, why we shall in this sense*  
*be changed into the same Image with*  
*Christ; 1 Job. iii. 2. We know, that when*  
*he shall appear, we shall be like him;*  
*For, says he, we shall see him as he is:*  
*The words are a perfect Explication of*  
*those in the Text; We all with open face*  
*beholding the Glory of the Lord, are chan-*  
*ged into the same Image.*

THE Next expression, *from Glory to*  
*Glory*, may be understood to signify the  
 manner of Communication of Christ's  
 Glory to Us, whether in the way of *Righ-*  
*teousness* here, or of *Happiness* hereafter.  
*We beholding the Glory of the Lord, are*  
*changed into the same Image from Glory*  
*to Glory; that is, by Communication of*  
*Glory to Us, from His Glory: According*  
*to that Expression of our Saviour, before-*  
*cited, Job. xvii. 22. The Glory which thou*  
*gavest Me, I have given Them; and that*  
*of the Evangelist, Of his Fulness have*

*we*

we all received Fulness, and Grace for S E R M.  
(or from) His Grace. XVII.

BUT the *more* natural and obvious Meaning of the words, *from Glory to Glory*, is, from *one degree of Glory to another*: We are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory: That is, from our Likeness to Christ in works of Righteousness and true Holiness *here*, we shall improve and go forward unto a further and more glorious Likeness to him in the Injoyment of eternal Happiness *hereafter*. And This is the *more* probable to be the true Sense of the words, because 'tis the Nature or Idiom of the *Jewish* language, to express any improvement in *degree*, by a *repetition* of the same word. Thus *Pf. lxxxiv. 7. They shall go from strength to strength*; that is, from one degree of strength to another: And *Rom. i. 17. In the Gospel, the Righteousness of God, (or the Mercy of God,) is revealed from Faith to Faith*; that is, from one degree of Faith to another; from one degree of Clearness of revelation, to another; from a less clear dis-  
penfa-

S E R M. dispensation under the *Law*, to a clearer one  
 XVII. under the *Gospel*. And Thus therefore in  
 the Text likewise, *from Glory to Glory*,  
 may well be understood to signify, *from  
 one degree of Glory to another*; from a *less*  
 degree *here*, to a *greater* and more perfect  
 degree *hereafter*.

*Lastly*, THE Apostle concludes the  
 Whole, with the addition of these words,  
*even as by the Spirit of the Lord*. The  
 meaning of which is, that all these things  
 he had hitherto been discoursing upon,  
 were accomplished in such a *manner*, in  
 so wise, so effectual, so glorious a man-  
 ner, as became the Dignity of the Great  
 Agent, and were worthy the Operation of  
 the *Spirit of God*. The *clear Revealing*  
 the *Gospel*, to be the *Spirit* and End of  
 the *Law*: The *Liberty* procured men by  
 this merciful Dispensation, from the Bur-  
 den and from the Terrour of the *Law*;  
 from the Guilt of past Sin by Pardon,  
 which is *Justification*; and from the Do-  
 minion of Sin for the time to come,  
 which is *Sanctification*: The full and  
 distinct *Manifestation* of the glorious *Pur-  
 pose*



pose of God in Christ, of bringing men through him to everlasting Salvation: S E R M.  
XVII.

The *Communication* of this Glory of Christ to Us, by our being conformed to his Image in Righteousness here, and in Glory hereafter: All These, are the Fruits of that One and the same Spirit, which worketh all in all, and distributeth Gifts to every man severally according to the Will of God: That Spirit, which inspired the Predictions of the Prophets, which worked Miracles by the Apostles, which spread the Gospel by the Gift of Tongues, which rejoices when Men embrace the Doctrine of Christ, and assists them in practising it, and supports them in suffering for it, and brings them finally unto Glory by it. As St Paul excellently argues, *Rom. viii. 10, 11.* *If Christ be in you, the Body is dead, because of Sin; but the Spirit is Life, because of Righteousness: And if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

S E R M.  
XVII.

THE Application of what has been said, is: *First*, from the true Explication of these words, *The Lord is That Spirit*, we may take occasion to observe, that in all *other* places likewise of St Paul's epistles, where the word, *Spirit*, is opposed to, *The Letter* or *the Dead letter*, to *Flesh* or *carnal Ordinances*; it always signifies the *Gospel*, or the *spiritual* and *moral* Precepts of Christ, in opposition to the *Ceremonies* of the Law of *Moses*. Which Observation is of great Use, against those who would make Religion to consist, not in the Practice of Virtue and true Righteousness, but in unintelligible mystical and enthusiastic Notions.

*Secondly*, FROM the right understanding of these next words, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty*; we may learn the true interpretation of those *many* passages, wherein the Apostle contends earnestly for the *Liberty* of Christians, or for their being *free from the Law*. In all which places, his Meaning is not, (as some in Modern times have most unreasonably argued,) that Christians are discharged

charged from any part of the Obligation of the *moral* Law, or that the Gospel-dispensation (as some Enthusiasts have imagined,) sets men *above* the confinements of common Morality: But his plain Meaning, is This only; that by the abolition of *Ceremonies*, we are discharged from the *Burden* of the Law; By the *Pardon* declared in Christ to Penitents, we are delivered from the *Terrour and Severity* of the Law; and by the Assistance of his *Grace* we are made, not *free to Sin*, but *free from Sin*, for the time to come.

*Thirdly*, IF we now *with open face behold the Glory of the Lord*, *i. e.* understand his Will *clearly and distinctly*, not in types and shadows; then ought we above all things to endeavour to walk as *children of Light*, as becometh those who have such *clear Knowledge* of their Duty, in all Holiness and righteous Conversation.

*Fourthly*, IF by *this Means* we are *changed into the same Image*, *from Glory to Glory*, *i. e.* from a Likeness with  
Christ

S E R M. Christ here, to a Likeness with him here-  
 XVII. after; then ought we always to remem-  
 ber, that by no other way can we arrive  
 at a conformity with Christ in *Glory*, but  
 by a conformity with him first in *Righ-  
 teousness and true Holiness*.

*Lastly*, IF all this be worked in us *as  
 by the Spirit of the Lord*; if all these Be-  
 nefits be the Operation of that One and  
 the same Spirit, which always works with  
 us in proportion to our own Endeavours,  
 and will not dwell in a Soul that is pol-  
 luted with Sin: Then ought we above all  
 things to take heed, lest by any vicious  
 practice we quench and grieve this good  
 Spirit of God, and drive him from us,  
 and thereby be found to have done de-  
 spite unto the Spirit of Grace.

*The End of VOL. V.*

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