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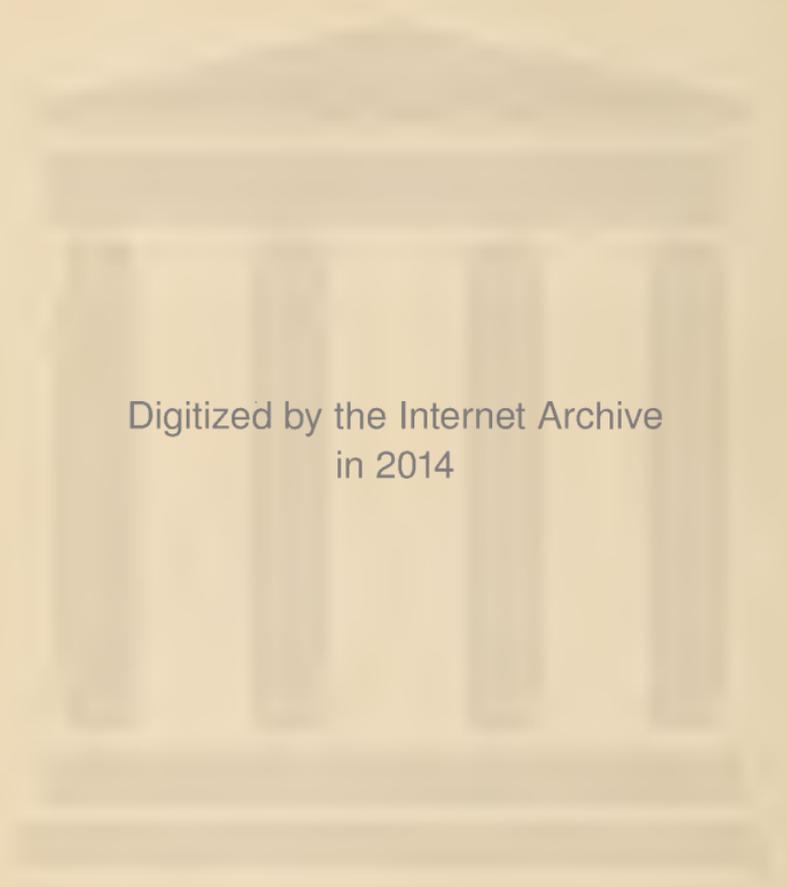
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THE WORKS

OF THE

REV. ROBERT HAWKER, D.D.

LATE VICAR OF CHARLES, PLYMOUTH.

WITH

A MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS,

BY THE REV. JOHN WILLIAMS, D.D.

MINISTER OF STROUD, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

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VILLAGE SERMONS.

THE

SERVANTS OF THE MOST HIGH GOD,

known in shewing the way of Salvation.

AN INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE.

And whithersoever Jesus entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment; and as many as touched him were made whole.--Mark vi. 56.

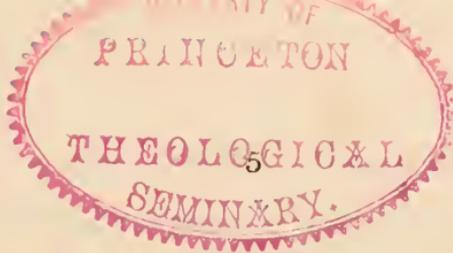


VILLAGE Sermons on true gospel principles have a peculiar recommendation to bring with them, on their very cover; in that it was not only the distinguishing character by which the day of Christ's coming was to be known; but also a blessedness was to follow, on them that received his word. For when John the Baptist sent messengers unto our most glorious Christ, with the question, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus answered and said unto them, "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." (Matt. xi. 2—6.) And in exact agreement with this account, we read in the life of Christ, while upon earth, that "He went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people." (Matt. iv. 23.) So that these divine acts of grace and mercy, both of preaching and healing, carried with them the fullest testimony to his Almighty person and character. The prophet, ages before, had drawn the features of his portrait: and in Him we behold the original. "Behold, (saith the prophet) your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense: He will come and save you! Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing." (Isaiah xxxv. 4—6.)

But we must not stop here. For the same divine Scriptures, which so plainly speak of the Lord's coming, and describe the characters by which, when come, he was to be known, do as plainly shew how the Lord testifieth the same in the hearts and consciences of his people. The precious portion, which stands for a motto to this little work, in the title page, is, among many others, in proof. "Whithersoever Jesus entered, into villages or cities, or country;" such was his Almighty influence, that he inclined the hearts of his people to bring their sick before him; and, by the same power, prompted their hearts to believe that the mere touch of his garment would impart healing; and the

effect corresponded to the hope ; for “ as many as touched him were made whole.” Observe the marked character of faith : “ As many as touched him.” As many as the Lord touched their hearts to believe ; to so many the Lord imparted grace to be healed. We have another beautiful illustration of the same kind. (Matt. v. 24—34.) A multitude thronged Christ ; but a poor woman in faith *touched* Christ. We read nothing of them ; but of her Jesus spake very blessedly. And elsewhere we read, that “ as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” (Acts xiii. 40.)

From such views of our most glorious Lord, which are given of him in the days of his flesh, methinks I would have every poor cottager, and such whose habitations are at a distance from church or chapel, and indeed in every place “ where there is a famine of hearing the word of the Lord,” (Amos viii. 11—13.) have these things always in remembrance, in this day of his power. The Lord is not confined to means ; but in all places wheresoever any of his people are situated the Lord can and will adopt methods for the manifestation of himself to them. We behold him preaching on the *mountain* ; Matt. v. 1. &c. —from a *ship* ; Luke v. 1. &c.—in the *fields* ; Luke vi. 1. &c.—in the *garden* ; John xv. 1. &c. In short, all places are consecrated by his Almighty presence : “ wherever two or three are met together in my name, (Jesus saith himself,) there am I in the midst of them !” (Matt. xviii. 20.) Let it be supposed then, that two or three of a village, or two or three of a family, among the cottagers, remote from the great congregation, were occasionally to meet together as opportunity offered, when the labours of the day were over, and more especially on the Lord’s day, that sweet day of rest ; and after, by prayer and supplication, seeking a blessing on their little assembly, were to read a portion of the word of God, and then one of the Village Sermons, might we not hope, that as it was said of Christ, upon a memorable occasion of old, so it would be said now ; “ The power of the Lord was present to heal them ? ” (Luke v. 17.) Lord Jesus ! condescend by these feeble means to make known the Almightyness of thy strength ! As far as these Village Sermons are in conformity to thy holy word, and the sovereign purposes of thy holy will, own them in the hearts and consciences of thy people. Let that sacred Scripture be felt, and made known thereby, in which it is said, “ Not by might, nor power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.” (Zech. iv. 6.)



SERMON I.

THE SERVANTS OF THE MOST HIGH GOD, KNOWN IN
SHEWING THE WAY OF SALVATION.

ACTS. xvi. 17.

The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

HERE is a short, but a very correct, and comprehensive statement, in describing the two features of character, "between them that serve God, and them that serve him not." (Malachi iii. 18.) The servants of the most high God shew the way of salvation. Knowing the plague of their own hearts, they set forth the same to others. Having themselves tasted that the Lord is gracious, they proclaim, as Paul did, that "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. i. 15.) Having been taught of God, that "salvation is in no other; and that there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved," (Acts iv. 12.) they have determined for themselves, and uniformly to hold forth the same unto others, "not to know any thing among men, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." (1 Cor. ii. 2.) They prove themselves therefore "the servants of the most high God, in thus shewing the way of salvation." They have, as children, been taught of God, as the prophet predicted; and as Christ himself interpreted it: "every man therefore (said Jesus) that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." (Compare Isaiah liv. 13. with John vi. 45.) They are come to Christ, being taught who

Christ is, by the Father. And they have discovered, that He, and He alone is "the way, the truth, and the life, and no one cometh unto the Father, but by Him." (John xiv. 6.) And thus taught, and thus sent forth by the unction of the Holy Ghost, to shew the way of salvation; they do, as they are commanded by Him that sends them, say; "Thus saith the Lord: Stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the old paths; where is the good way, and walk therein, and find rest for your souls." (Jer. vi. 16. compared with Isaiah xxviii. 12. and Matt. xi. 28—30.)

But while such men manifest, that they are the servants of the most high God, in shewing the way of salvation; they possess no power of persuasion to lead men there. They simply act in this their high calling, as those directing posts, erected in roads, to shew the traveller his path; yet cannot compel the wayfaring man to walk therein. Or perhaps the servants of the most high God, who not only shew unto us the way of salvation, but are walking therein themselves, may more aptly resemble the star which guided the wise men unto Christ, which, it is said, "went before them until it came and stood over where the young child was." (Matt. ii. 9, 10.) But neither here, no more than in the former instance, was there any power to persuade to the belief in Christ. This is the sole prerogative of God. The servants of the most high God, who shew unto us the way of salvation, though they themselves may say, as Paul said, "I know whom I have believed," (2 Tim. i. 12.) yet cannot communicate that knowledge to others. The faithful spies, Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which searched the promised land and brought down the rich cluster of grapes, and the pomegranates, and the figs, to invite by such dainties the people to go up, and take possession of the country, had no influence on the minds of others:

they only were led by the Lord to see, and know the blessedness themselves : unto their companions, they had no art of persuasion. The servants of the most high God shew the way of salvation : but they can only shew it : and go no farther. It is God only that shall enlarge Japheth, and persuade him to dwell in the tents of Shem ! (Gen. ix. 27.)

But we must not stop here. Though the servants of the most high God have no power of persuasion ; and “ a man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven ;” (1 John iii. 27.) yet they are commanded to go forth, as though all depended upon an arm of flesh, “ and preach the gospel to every creature.” (Mark xvi. 15.) And herein, from the different effects induced under the same preaching, and by the same word, is shewn the Lord’s people, from the ungodly. While to the one it proves “ the savour of life unto life ; unto the other the savour of death unto death.” (2 Cor. ii. 16.) Where the Lord gives spiritual life there will be spiritual apprehension ; and the hope of being sent to such encourageth the servants of the most high God to go forth to shew the way of salvation, because they know that the Lord hath a people in the earth, to be gathered to himself, to whom He will give grace, “ to know the joyful sound !” (Psm. lxxxix. 15.) And who shall describe the pleasing emotions of their souls, when they discover that the Lord hath sent them, hath blessed them to the souls to whom they are sent ? Paul felt this, in a very high degree, and so doth every faithful servant, sent of the Lord, like Paul ; when he can, and doth say : “ We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers ; that our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost : and ye became followers of us, and of the Lord.” (1 Thess. i. 2—6.)

Neither do we stop here. For as it is God’s work,

and not man's, and in the instance of every one whom the Lord makes "willing in the day of his power;" the servants of the most high God, in shewing the way of salvation, unto the Lord's people, depend for success upon their ministry on the sovereign pleasure of God; and not their labours; the weakest instrument hath nothing to fear, nor the greatest to boast. "We have (saith the apostle) this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (2 Cor. iv. 7.) All that are made partakers are made alike partakers in the new and spiritual life; though not all alike sensible of it. From a state of deadness, and death, in trespasses and sins, when quickened, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus, they are equally brought into this participation of "the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust! Such honour have all his saints!" (2 Pet. i. 4. Ps. cxlix 9.)

Keep these observations in view as we enter upon the subject held forth to us in the text. *First*; that the proof the preachers of the word give of their being servants of the most high God, is in that they shew the *the way of salvation*, distinguished from all subjects which have not, for their first, and ultimate object, *salvation*. And whatever doth not tend to humble the sinner, and exalt the Saviour, is not salvation. *Secondly*; That the highest and best taught servants of the most high God, can only *shew* salvation, not help to the accomplishment of it; can but *preach* it; not *offer* it. "For do I now (saith Paul) persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." (Gal. i. 10.) If the subject was not too serious to be trifled with, one might be prompted to smile, to hear the many wooings and winnings of those who offer Christ indiscriminately to all, and call upon the sinner "dead in trespasses and sins" to quicken himself, and

believe: and concerning whom the Lord saith; "Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake! to the dumb stone, Arise; it shall speak!" (Habak. ii. 10.) And *Thirdly*; keep no less in remembrance that as creation work and renewing work is of the Lord, and not of man; and all whom the Lord quickens, into a new and spiritual life, are alike quickened; the servants of the most high God, who are distinguished as such by shewing the way of salvation, have every suited encouragement to go forth "in the strength of the Lord, making mention of his righteousness, even of his righteousness only." (Ps. lxxi. 16.) And knowing, that it is the Lord that worketh in them, and by them, "both to will, and to do, of his good pleasure;" his promise is absolute, in which the Lord hath said: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please; and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isai. lv. 10, 11.) The Lord's pleasure be so, if it be his holy will, with us now!

If with these impressions on your mind, and looking to the Lord for his blessing, you will turn to the portion of Holy Scripture from whence the words of the text are taken, I shall hope, that the present season, will be a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord!

It appears, that by a vision from the Lord to the apostle Paul himself, and Silas his fellow-labourer in the gospel, they had been directed towards Philippi. They had assayed to go into "Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered them not." Here let us pause, to mark distinguishing grace. They were called by the Lord to go to Philippi, but forbidden of the Lord to go into Bithynia. And the same is now. Whence is it, that in some places the gospel is preached with the Holy Ghost "sent down from heaven;" whilst

others have not those privileges? The Lord himself explains: "I caused it to rain upon one city: and caused it not to rain upon another." (Amos. iv. 7.) And as it is in nature, so in grace. The Lord hath mystical showers for his people, while all the rest are left dry, like the fleece of Gideon. (Judges vi. 37, 38.) It should seem, that at this time, when Paul and Silas were not permitted of the Lord to go into Bithynia, there were none of the Lord's people there; for we find that about six years after, the Lord had a church there, to whom Peter sent his first Epistle. (1 Pet. i. 1.) And if there be one of the Lord's here, the Lord in his own time will find him out.

It is worthy observation also, that though the apostle had an intimation by vision from the Lord to go to Philippi, yet we are told that he and his companion were there "abiding many days," before that they had an opportunity of preaching. Speaking after the manner of men, we should have thought, that no sooner had the apostles arrived at the spot appointed them by the Lord, but the Lord who sent them to preach, would have sent his people to hear. Here we learn another profitable lesson: "My thoughts are not your thoughts; neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." (Isa. lv. 8.) "There is a set time to favour Zion." (Ps. cii. 13.) "The vision is for an appointed time; but in the end it shall speak and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it: because it will surely come, it will not tarry." (Hab. ii. 3.) No waiting soul, or seeking soul, should ever be discouraged when means of grace do not seem profitable. The Lord's time is the best time. The Lord is said "to wait to be gracious:" and the Lord's people are said to be "blessed in waiting for the Lord." (Isa. xxx. 18, 19. Ps. xxvii. 13, 14.)

At length the first among the causes for which the Lord called Paul to Philippi, appeared. A poor

woman of the name of Lydia, who earned her bread by selling purple, (not a wearer of purple, 1 Cor. i. 26.) came to the spot of Paul's preaching; she heard; she listened to what those servants of the most high God were delivering, of the way of salvation; and it is said, concerning her "whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul." Here then we behold the blessed effects, which follow, when the Lord's word, and the Lord's Spirit, work together, upon the hearts of the Lord's people. What succeeded in the after circumstances of others in Philippi, I stay not at present to notice. But the church of Christ, at this hour, hath reason to bless the Lord for sending Paul to Philippi; for we have proof of the Lord's planting his church there; and we partake in the blessedness of it from that divine epistle, which the apostle afterwards wrote by inspiration, to the church of the Philippians.

But the great enemy of souls, as now, so then, instantly takes alarm when his kingdom is in danger; a mighty opposition arose to Paul and Silas, to stop their preaching. The apostle hath stated particulars. "It came to pass (said Paul) as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying; These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation." It is highly observable, how, in all ages, the faithful in Christ Jesus have been opposed in their labours. And it is yet more highly observable, how the Lord hath overruled such opposition to his glory, and his people's happiness. When Balaam, who it appears had a head knowledge of God, hired himself out for this world's gain, to curse the people of God; the Lord compelled this wretched man to

do the reverse of what he wished; even to bless those, whom he came to curse. (See Numb. xxii. and xxiii. and xxiv. compared with Rev. ii. 14. and his awful end, Jos. xiii. 22.) When Caiaphas the high priest intended to consign our Lord to death, the Holy Ghost made him utter a prophecy of our most glorious Christ, of which he had no consciousness what he said; but which hath refreshed, and will refresh the church of God for ever. And when this damsel cried out; "These are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation;" she knew neither the Lord, nor what salvation meant; but the Lord overruled the whole for good. Paul was permitted to put an end to her soothsaying; and by exciting the indignation of her masters, for the loss of their craft, opened thereby a door, for the furtherance of the gospel.

I must not pass away from the opportunity here afforded me, in the historical part of this subject, for making a short observation, on the sad consequences which have followed, in all ages, the impudent and lying practise of soothsaying; or as it is now called *fortune telling*. It is really astonishing, that in the darkest times of our fallen nature, any person should be so credulous to believe in what those conjurors pretend to possess, of foreknowledge: and by which they pick the pockets of the unwary. The whole of the brood are of the spawn of the devil. And nothing can more decidedly shew, that both the persons who do it, and those who believe in it, are under the delusion of Satan. The very first view, which the Scriptures set forth, of the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God, is expressly summed up in these words: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John iii. 8.)

It will be time for me now, to call your more

immediate attention, to the words of the text. Spoken as they were by this damsel, and in a very different sense from what she intended; yet do they contain a most certain truth. All that are the true and faithful servants of the most high God “shew unto the people the way of salvation.” I purpose therefore, as the Lord shall enable me, in the *first* place, to define, and upon Scripture ground, what is the way of salvation. And when I have accomplished this purpose, I shall go on *secondly*, to shew you, and upon the same divine authority, how those that minister to the Lord’s people, in the preaching of salvation, prove their being servants of the most high God, by the Lord’s speaking in the word, to the minds, and understandings of his people, by his inward grace confirming their outward labours; and thus as the apostle elsewhere states it; “not handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.” (2 Cor. iv. 2.)

And before I enter upon the subject, I beg, by way of caution, to admonish all that hear me, from taking up with a mere hearsay account of salvation, or fancying that the clearest head-knowledge of all the great and leading truths of the gospel, can be in the least profitable, without an heart enjoyment. The new birth must go before any one act of spiritual life. Hence our blessed Lord’s own testimony: “Ye must be born again.” (John iii. 7.) And hence in the instance of Lydia, we are told, that “the Lord opened her heart.” And then followed: “she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul.” But without this opening of the heart, or in other words, spiritually communicating life to her spirit: though she might have heard, yea, and given credit as far as her natural understanding could have led her, to the truths Paul uttered; she would have known nothing of that

blessed assurance of Christ, when he said, "the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life." (John vi. 63.) There can be nothing more important, for those that sit under the ministry of the servants of the most high God, in shewing the way of salvation, than to guard against a mere *natural* or *rational* belief, in the great truths of God. All the saving principles of the gospel may be preached, may be consented to, and yet, without the supernatural manifestation of them in the heart by the Lord himself, leave the hearers where they found them. Hence, under the preaching of the Lord Jesus himself, "who spake as never man spake," the Pharisee unregenerate and unrenewed regarded him not. "Why do ye not understand my speech, said Jesus? Even because ye cannot hear my word. He that is of God heareth God's words. Ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God." (John viii. 43. 48.)

And let me add this one word more before we begin, for the encouragement of the little ones, who are anxious "to know the truth, that the truth may make them free." (John viii. 32.) I would have you consider, that the spiritual apprehension of divine things doth not consist in great attainments, but in spiritual life; not in what you feel, but in what Christ is. The babe in grace, by the new birth, is as truly brought into union with Christ, and an interest in all that belongs to Christ, as the oldest, or strongest believer. Hence we hear our most glorious Christ thanking the Father, for having "hid these things from the wise and prudent: [wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight. Isaiah v. 21.] and revealed them unto babes." (Matt. xi. 25.) If the Lord hath quickened you into a new and spiritual life, so that Christ is precious, and yourself in your own view loathsome; you will esteem all those "servants of the most high God, which shew unto you salvation!"

I begin now, as I proposed, under my *first* branch of discourse, to define on Scripture ground, what is meant by "the way of salvation."

And here let us, by the standard of the holy word of God, previously consider what it is *not*; before that we consider what it *is*. The very word *salvation* implies the recovery from somewhat that is lost. And this is an exact correspondence to the utterly lost, ruined, and undone estate of man by the fall. We are all lost, debased and sunken, in one universal depravity. To shew the way of salvation, therefore, must be to shew a remedy equal to our disease. Any thing short of this, however specious in appearance, can be no way of salvation. For preachers to hold forth flimsy discourses on morality is to deceive, instead of affording means of relief. Of all such, it may be said, as Job did of his false teachers; "miserable comforters are ye all: physicians of no value!" (Job xvi. 2. xiii. 4.) The servants of the most high God do not thus shew the way of salvation.

Moreover: salvation is not only the sole act of grace, for the recovery of our fallen nature by the free sovereignty of God; but the proclamation of mercy which holds it forth presupposes the persons who are the happy partakers of it are simply receivers of it, not only as undeserving, but as ill, and hell-deserving sinners, "who have sold themselves for nought; and are redeemed without money." (Isaiah lii. 3.) Our Lord's statement on this ground is striking and conclusive; "They that be whole need not a physician: but they that are sick: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Matt. ix. 12, 13.) Do men in health take medicine? Do they in part heal themselves; and then call in the medical aid to their recovery? When the church fell in Adam she fell to rise no more by any exertions of her own. And she must have

remained for ever, and to all eternity, condemned under the just law of God, without the possibility of salvation but in the Lord Jesus Christ. The servants of the most high God do not shew the way of salvation in creature help. The sinner being become the servant of sin, and the subject of sin, can do nothing to help himself. The Lord hath stated this, in his own full colours: when saying; “Can the *Æthiopian* change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.” (Jer. xiii. 23.)

But if neither of these be in the plan of salvation; the question then follows: What is? And here opens to us a subject which surpasseth the province of men, or angels, to unfold; but which the Lord himself, (as far as the vast interest the church hath in it, becomes us to know,) has rendered plain and clear to the spiritual apprehension of every redeemed and regenerated child of God. All the persons in the GODHEAD have alike engaged in it; and salvation itself, in the efficient accomplishment of it, is the sole work of the Lord Jesus Christ. By the marvellous grace of the Son of God, in taking into union with his divine nature that holy portion of our human nature, he, and he alone, became competent to the infinite undertaking as our Surety to work out our salvation. And from the dignity of his GODHEAD he gave value to all that he wrought in the manhood: and by both obtained eternal redemption for us. Every word he spake, every thought he had, every deed he accomplished; both in doing and dying; all derived efficacy from the essential and inherent GODHEAD which he had in common with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, underived in his own eternal nature. Hence as the Head and Husband of his church and people, he acted as their public Sponsor and Surety; and the salvation he wrought became a full, a com-

plete, a finished salvation; from sin, and all the tremendous consequences of sin; from death, hell, and the grave; and his righteousness their everlasting covering to all eternity. (Isaiah lxi. 10.) Such are the outlines of that salvation, which the servants of the most high God shew the way of to the church in preaching Christ. They do, as the Scriptures do, hold up, and proclaim the person of Christ, the work of Christ, the glory of Christ, the blood of Christ, the righteousness of Christ: and shewing that the whole church of Christ hath "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. i. 7.)

Let the present suffice in defining on Scripture ground, what is implied in *the way* of salvation; namely the person and work of Christ. Let us pass on to the *second* branch proposed, namely; how the servants of the most high God prove their being so, by the Lord sending them to his people, in giving their ministry an efficacy through the Lord the Spirit's teaching, in the hearts of his people.

And here the illustration might be shewn, in the work of grace wrought in the minds of the Lord's chosen, from the first act of regeneration, until all is consummated in glory. No sooner is the child of God, by the new birth, called out of "darkness into God's marvellous light;" but the whole nature is prepared for the gradual apprehension of the mighty change. The spiritual eye is enlightened, to see the hope of Christ's calling. The spiritual ear is unstopped, "to know the joyful sound. The spiritual mind which before was darkness, is now "made light in the Lord." And the spiritual feet are taught to "run the way of God's commandments:" now the redeemed and regenerated soul is set at happy liberty. In short; the man, "being in Christ Jesus, is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." (2 Cor. v. 17.)

But we must not stop here. While the servants of the most high God thus follow up their ministry, in shewing the way of salvation, where alone it is, and where only to be found; they do as fully shew that the whole is of free, rich, full, and sovereign grace. The Lord that freely gives, doth as fully provide for the cordial reception of it in the minds of his people. The hand of God the Father is in it, in "drawing the soul to Christ." (John vi. 44.) The divine operation of God the holy Ghost is in it, in convincing the heart of sin, and shewing the absolute needs-be of Christ. (John xvi. 1—15.) And the blessed manifestations of God the Son are in it, from beginning to end, in those unceasing love-tokens he sheweth, in giving them to see, and know, that his whole heart is their's, and that "He rejoiceth over them (as he saith of himself,) for good, with my whole heart and my whole soul!" (Jerem. xxxii. 41.)

And now then, what is the result of all that I have been saying? Where shall we look, to what congregation shall we go, so as to say under the preached word: "These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation?" Nay let us not look farther than our present assembly, for an answer to the question. If there hath been shewn you the way of salvation, by holding up to your view the person of our most glorious Christ, and his great and finished salvation; have you such divine teaching within, while hearing the word without, in the Spirit bearing witness to your spirit of the truths of God? Pause, I beseech you, over the solemn question, (for it is a solemn one) and do not hastily pass away from it until the Lord hath given you an answer of peace.

And let it never be forgotten by you, that the Lord, who provides the salvation, is the Giver of grace to receive it. So that it is suited in all its bearings, to

the most desperate state of the most desperate sinner. The poor man we read of in the gospel found himself one of the very characters for whom it was intended. He came to Jesus, we are told, full of leprosy, (and the poorest sinner is full of sin) and as the Lord had taught him to believe, so he found the salvation of Christ suited to his circumstances, and immediately his leprosy was healed. (Luke v. 12.) No state so lost, no case so deplorable, no misery so great, but what the salvation by Christ can be answerable unto. For "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." (1 John i. 7.)

I only add a prayer, in the offering of which I pray you to rise up, and join your spirit with mine; that the Lord who hath brought us together, on this occasion will bless us together, with the unction of his Holy Spirit! Lord! grant if it be thine holy will, that thy people before thee may have to say through thy divine teaching, that the words delivered at this time may be such as the servants of the most high God shew "in the way of salvation." And like the Samaritans, each for himself may be led to say as they did, from personal conviction—"Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know, that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world!" (John iv. 24.)

THE
KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION,
BY THE
REMISSION OF SINS,
THE
SURE PROOF OF THE GOSPEL.



“To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins.”
LUKE i. 77.

P R E F A C E.

IN presenting the numbers of these Village Sermons, so as to give sufficient variety, and yet never to lose sight of the main object intended; namely, as instrumental in the Lord's hand, by the ministry of the Lord's word, "to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus:" (2 Tim. iii. 15.) the Sermon here presented to the cottager, for himself and family, or for himself and the villagers around him, is a continuation of the same subject as before was brought them in the *first* number. In *that*, it was meant to make manifest (and on Scripture ground) that they, and they only, prove themselves to be "the servants of the most high God, which shew unto his people the way of salvation." (Acts xvi. 17.) In *this* sermon it is intended no less to prove, (and from the same authority,) that the people of the most high God do shew whose they are, and to whom they belong, in having obtained "the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins." (Luke i. 77.) This forms, therefore, the most suitable subject to follow the former; and, under the Lord's blessing, it is hoped that *both* will minister to the Lord's glory, in the promotion of the spiritual edification and comfort of the Lord's people. And what a blessed event will it be to this labour of love, if, while the servants of the most high God are enabled of the Lord "to shew the way of salvation to his people;" the people have the knowledge of salvation given them by the Lord himself, "in the remission of their sins." This will be the same testimony as the apostle declared to the church, when he said, "Knowing brethren beloved, your election of God; for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power; and in the Holy Ghost; and in much assurance." (1 Thess. i. 4, 5.)

PRAYER BEFORE READING.

GRACIOUS Lord God! we humbly beg to present ourselves before thy divine majesty, who art the high and lofty One, inhabiting eternity, having revealed thyself in thy trinity of persons, to whom we are permitted to approach in and through the mediation of our most glorious Christ. About to read thine Holy Word, and to hear the observations made on thy Holy Word in the Sermon sent into our Village; will the Lord graciously condescend to bless it to our spiritual understanding, as far as it is in agreement "to the truth as it is in Jesus;" and as it shall please our God to make it profitable to our souls, in Christ Jesus? Lord! give to us the hearing ear, the seeing eye, and the understanding and believing heart; that our little assembly may have assurance of thy presence, from an unction attending thy word, and from "the savour of thy name, being as the ointment poured forth." Blessedly suit thy mercies to the wants of thy people now before thee; that as the word of thy grace is delivered before us, in every part of it, and to the close of it, our souls may be so refreshed for the consolation, that like him of old, the secrets of whose heart were made manifest by the ministry of divine things, "we may each for ourselves fall humbly on our face before our God, and report that God is in us of a truth." (1 Cor. xiv. 25.) The Lord hear and answer prayer, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

SERMON II.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION BY THE REMISSION OF
SINS, THE SURE PROOF OF THE GOSPEL.

LUKE i. 77.

To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins.

SALVATION! what a mighty word! And taken in all its bearings, of what a vast, and infinite extension! It is far beyond that great millstone, which John in vision saw the mighty angel take up, and cast into the sea; saying, "Thus, with violence, shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." (Rev. xviii. 21.) But what is the destruction of Babylon, which is but *one* foe of the church, compared to the destruction of *all* the enemies of our God, and of his Christ—sin, death, hell, and the grave, which our most glorious Lord, in his own Almighty person, and by his own Almighty arm, wrought out, and accomplished, so that their places in Christ's eternal kingdom, "shall be found no more at all?" He hath "finished transgression, (as the prophet foretold of him) made an end of sin:" (Daniel ix. 24.) so that "the iniquity of Israel, when sought for, there shall be none; and the sins of Judah shall not be found." (Jer. l. 20.) "He hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by his gospel." (2 Tim. i. 10.) Nay, he hath not only abolished death, but "destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil." (Heb. ii. 14.) And both hell and the grave he hath vanquished; "having spoiled principalities, and

powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Coloss. ii. 15.) So that looking to him and his finished salvation as the sole cause of all our triumphs over those tremendous foes of ours, we may, and do take up the language of the apostle, and which he found in Christ, and say with him, "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." (1 Cor. xv. 55—57. compared with Hosea xiii. 14.) Oh! what a mighty word, and of what infinite extent is salvation!

But we must not stop here. Salvation, by the sole incommunicable work of our most glorious Christ, hath not only done all these things, and infinitely more, in relation to *the life that now is*; but hath secured all the promises of the *life that is to come*. God *manifest in our flesh*, by his great salvation hath recovered to his body the church all our justly forfeited inheritance, to which the church from everlasting was chosen in Christ, and to which she is now restored in Christ; and to have and to hold in Christ to all eternity. The apostle Peter, under the inspiration of God the Holy Ghost, hath very blessedly stated this, when he saith, "The God of all grace hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus." (1 Pet. v. 10). So that you observe, "eternal glory" is included in this great salvation: yea, it is the crowning point of all. It is the great and leading cause for which Christ came down from heaven, to bring all his people after him there. What this eternal glory is, I stay not at this time to enquire. Indeed we are told, that it is so inconceivably great and blessed, that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

(1 Cor. ii. 9. compared with Isaiah lxiv. 4.) But it is the thing itself, "eternal glory," that I am observing forms the crowning point of all in salvation.

And here I take occasion, by the way, to detain you with a short observation from what hath been already said. Perhaps there may be some present which have not been accustomed to consider salvation any higher than that of obtaining pardon for sin ; and have thought that if this was but once found, all that is needful is found. But our most glorious Lord Jesus Christ hath done more for his redeemed, than cleansing them from all sin by his blood ; he hath clothed them also with his righteousness : and by regeneration he hath brought them back from all the dreadful effects of the Adam-fall transgression, (into which, by man's apostacy, they were sunk, in common with the world) and restored them to that holiness and purity in which they were "chosen in him before the foundation of the world." (Ephes. i. 4—7. Gal. iii. 13. 2 Cor. v. 21. Isaiah lxi. 10.) Hence, salvation folds within its embraces, eternal life, eternal glory, grace here ; holiness, happiness, and blessedness for ever hereafter : and all in our most glorious Christ. (1 Pet. i. 3—9.)

But it may be asked ; and is the knowledge of these things attainable in the present life ? My text gives an immediate answer, by observing that the very design of a preached gospel, under the divine teaching of the Holy Ghost, is for this express purpose—"to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins !" The words themselves are part of the Song of Zacharias, which he uttered on being personally brought acquainted with this salvation. He had for awhile been struck dumb for his unbelief, when tidings were first made known to him, in the opening of the vision. And now restored by sovereign grace, he broke out in his

hymn of praise ; “Blessed (said he) be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people ; and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David.” And after proceeding in his song of holy joy on this occasion, in the enumeration of several other most interesting particulars ; among the many, this of my text stands conspicuous ; “to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins.”

Every word in the text is weighty and important. It is not enough to *hear* of this salvation, to read of it, to have it *certified*, yea, believed on, in the simple assent of the understanding only ; all these are highly interesting in their way, and very valuable. But they do not come up to the statement here made. It is the *knowledge* of it, the full and clear conviction of it, and the living in the habitual enjoyment of it, which the words express. And this is in perfect correspondence with the great events which in the latter days were to distinguish the gospel dispensation. The Holy Ghost, by the prophet Jeremiah, declared that “the covenant in those days made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah” should bear this mark, namely, “that they should no longer teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord ; for (said the Lord) they shall all know me from the least of them, unto the greatest of them.” And then follows, as the assurance of this great promise, whereby the Lord would be known ; “for I will forgive their iniquity, (saith the Lord) and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jer. xxxi. 31—34.) And to confirm the glorious truth yet more, what God the Holy Ghost said by the prophet in the Old Testament, he graciously declared by the apostle Paul under the New ; using the same terms as in the former ; and repeating the same assurance by which the divine teaching was to be known ; namely, “in

the remission of sins, and the Lord's putting them out of his remembrance for ever." (See Heb. viii. 8—12. x. 14—18.)

And that no possible mistake might arise, for whom such unspeakable mercies were specially intended; the text defines their persons, and their characters; namely, "his people." "To give the knowledge of salvation unto his people." Yes, the Lord hath a people, taken into covenant with himself in Christ. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise!" (Isaiah xliii. 21.) And speaking on this subject, to our most glorious Head, and Surety, Christ, the Lord saith, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness; and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people." (Isaiah xlii. 6.) And as if the Lord delighted that those objects and subjects of his grace should live in the enjoyment of it; in another part of the same Scripture it is added; "Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day, that I am He that doth speak; behold, it is I!" (Isaiah lii. 6.)

But the text doth not stop here. That little, but highly significant word, which is used in the close of this verse of Scripture, namely, *by*, seems to lay the whole stress of the joy of the Lord's people in the knowledge of the Lord from this very cause; their enjoyment of salvation is *by* the conscious assurance "of the remission of their sins." For how indeed, until this is known, received and realized in the soul, could it be said, as it is said of the church: "we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement?" (Rom v. 11.) How could Peter declare, as he doth declare, that what he, and the church of God in his day had believed in, and were assured of, were not "cunningly devised fables;" had they, with him, not been as he

saith he was, "eye-witnesses of his majesty?" (2 Pet. i. 16.) And how can the church of God now become heart witnesses of his majesty, but "by the knowledge of salvation in the remission of their sins?" Had a single doubt remained of the certainty, could Peter so confidently have spoken of his "looking for, and hastening unto, the coming of the day of God?" (2 Pet. iii. 12.) Could Paul, or could any one like Paul, have said, that "the hope is blessed" which hath for its contemplation "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" unless like Paul, each for himself can say, "for I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day?" (Titus ii. 13. 2 Tim. i. 12.)

Such then is the blessed doctrine contained in the words of the text: and which leads to a subject, at once beautiful and interesting. For the better apprehension of it I shall first desire to call your attention to the Scriptural statement of salvation itself, before that we enter upon that part of the subject which concerns our knowledge of it. A right apprehension of the *one*, under divine teaching, will best prepare for the due conception of the *other*; and both combined will form a very suitable subject for our present assembly. I shall then, if the Lord so please, proceed to the *second* branch intended herefrom, namely, that the comfort and encouragement of the Lord's people, in the path of grace, ariseth out of this well grounded assurance of their personal interest in it; for according to the words of the text, the preaching of the gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, is declared to be for the express purpose "to give the knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of sins." The Lord's power accompany the Lord's word, to make all his people that are here "wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

But before I enter upon the first branch of my discourse, I beg your attention to one or two particulars, for the better apprehension of it. And *first*, let it be thoroughly understood, that the knowledge spoken of in the text is wholly supernatural. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. ii. 14.) Hence, there is no capability of knowing divine things but by divine teaching: for until we are brought by regeneration, or the new-birth, into spiritual life, there are no faculties to receive spiritual instruction. And this at once explains why it is, that carnal, unrenewed men know nothing of sin, or their want of salvation. For though nothing is plainer in the Scriptures of God, than the utterly lost, ruined, and undone state of all men by the fall; yet though men read it, none so believe it as to seek redemption from it, but those that are regenerated, and spiritually taught of God. (John xvi. 8—11.)

But then let me make another observation, connected with the former; namely, though none but such as are spiritually born again, and taught of God, can obtain the knowledge stated in the text; yet as this vast blessing is wholly of God, so is it freely given to us of God. So the words express it: and so the Lord's people know. It saith; "to *give* knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of sins." This is a soul cheering consideration, to the humble and fearful, who feel the desire of salvation, but from a sense of unpreparedness, and unworthiness, are apprehensive they shall come short of it. But when we are so graciously told that it is *given*, surely, neither worthiness, nor unworthiness, can have any thing to do with the free grace of God. If any broken hearted sinner be here, under distressed circumstances, from such fears, the Lord I hope will

drive them all away. His grace, and not our merit; his glory, and not our deservings, are the standards for the Lord's manifestations of mercies to his people. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." (Titus iii. 5, 6.)

And if I detain you one moment longer, before that we enter on the subject of the sermon, and add another observation, it is but with a view of farther encouragement to timid souls; namely, to remark, that as the new birth, or spiritual life, like salvation itself, is the sole free gift of God; so in every child of God, where it is given, it is alike *given*. The babe in Christ is made as truly a partaker of spiritual life in Christ, as prophets, or apostles. The different degrees of attainment in spiritual knowledge and enjoyment of spiritual things make no difference in spiritual life. "All (as the Holy Ghost states by Peter) that have obtained like precious faith, through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, are alike made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 Pet. i. 1—4.) And most blessedly is it stated elsewhere, by another apostle: "For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body; whether we be Jews or Gentiles: whether we be bond or free: and have been all made to drink into one spirit." (1 Cor. xii. 13.) The Lord enable his people to have these things in remembrance, while we now proceed to the farther prosecution of the subject, under the distinct branches proposed.

I am *first* to call your attention to the scriptural statement of salvation itself: which will form the proper introduction to our knowledge of it.

And I begin with observing, that all the persons in

the GODHEAD, by covenant engagements, took equal part in it. Our most glorious Christ, by the union of the human nature, with the divine; thereby becoming the visible Jehovah, as the Executor, and Administrator of all the purposes intended in this vast accomplishment; did indeed, by his own incommunicable work, bring salvation; (Isaiah lxiii. 5.) but considered in this high administration, we include, no less, all the original and everlasting decrees, among the persons in the GODHEAD, formed from all eternity respecting the church. The mystical body of Christ was chosen in Christ by the Father, to be "holy, and without blame before him in love, before all worlds." (Ephes. i. 4.) And in like manner, the church was anointed in Christ from everlasting, by the Holy Ghost, to the same. The time-state therefore, in the fallen, degraded, and lost condition of the church from which the salvation by Christ became necessary, did not, for in fact it could not, counteract, or do away the eternal purposes of God, in his trinity of persons, as concerned the church. The original design of Jehovah could never be defeated. The church was chosen in Christ, was adopted in Christ, and accepted in Christ, before there was any world; and must be found so, when all worlds will be done away. But this lapsed state, in which the church is now degraded, gave occasion for the display of the great salvation by Christ. And the Lord Jesus Christ in his own Almighty person, and by his own Almighty deeds, hath done more in the recovery of his church, than all sin hath, or could have done, in her apostacy. A few leading particulars will be sufficient in point, by way of illustration.

By the Adam-fall transgression, the church, as well as the world at large, was become guilty before God. "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have

sinned." (Rom. v. 12.) The salvation therefore wrought by Christ was to do away sin, and make an end of it; and to destroy death, and bring life and immortality to light by his gospel. He was not only to do away sin, and make an end of it, but, in the destruction of death, he was also to "destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and to deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 14.) Yea, in salvation our most glorious Christ was to do more than all these. For as the church, by her fall, had lost all righteousness, he was to restore her to a better righteousness than she had lost. And thus, this one of the glorious persons in the GODHEAD accomplished, by assuming into union with his divine nature that holy portion of our's; (Luke i. 35.) and, in the double nature as our Surety, most completely and fully wrought salvation. He put away sin "by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. ix. 26.) He conquered death by his own death, when he suffered "the just for the unjust to bring us to God." (1 Pet. iii. 18.) And he brought in everlasting righteousness for his body the church, when "by the one offering of himself once offered, he perfected for ever them that are sanctified; (Heb. x. 14.) and which is "to all, and upon all them that believe." (Rom. iii. 22.)

But we must not stop here. It is not enough to contemplate the completeness of the mighty work; in order to have a clear conception of it, we must consider the church's right in it, by which all Christ did, and all Christ suffered, were to all intents and purposes virtually as much her's as if done, and sustained herself in all the persons of his people. He acted as her Head and Husband, and Surety. It was not for himself, that he bore the pains of death; for "he had done no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." (1 Pet. ii. 22.) And without an eye to his church, that he came as her glorious Representative, and Sponsor, there was

not a pain Christ endured, or a reproach offered to his Almighty person, but would have been not only unjust, but blasphemous. Oh! the blessedness of the prospect, when in contemplating this Almighty Sufferer, we contemplate his whole body the church in Him!

And to add one word more, on this soul refreshing subject, when we take into the view the infinite dignity of his person, and the infinite value and merit of his work—what an all sufficiency in both to comfort the most desponding mind of any one, and of every one, of the Lord's people, when reeking under the deep sense of sin! All that we have lost of *nature* holiness in Adam is more than compensated, in *spiritual* holiness, in our most glorious Christ. And as the rich, the full, the all-sufficient salvation, God “manifest in the flesh” wrought in our nature for us, is so truly his own, as to be his own only; so is it so abundant, that it were high treason to the majesty of heaven, to attempt by any thing of our's to add to it, or to take from it. That precious statement of God the Holy Ghost concerning his person, and concerning his salvation, stands at the very portals of every part and portion of revelation, to crown the whole. “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.” (Col. ii. 9, 10.)

From this view of salvation as it is in itself, and wholly found in the glorious person, and incommunicable work of our Lord Jesus Christ, I proceed now, as was proposed, under the *second* branch of this discourse, to shew, that the very design of the preaching of the gospel, by divine teaching, is “to give the knowledge of salvation unto his people;” and that their encouragement and comfort can only be found in this knowledge, “by the remission of their sins.”

And here, without going over again what hath been before remarked, and indeed is too plain a principle,

of the gospel, to require a moment's suspension for belief; it will be sufficient to say, that the very first step to the knowledge of salvation must be made, when by regeneration, or the new birth, the sinner is rendered capable, by a spiritual life, of apprehension both of his own sinfulness, and Christ's all suitableness, and all-sufficiency. Until I am spiritually alive, I can have no spiritual desire, or action. And when the Lord hath given me these, the Lord giveth me with them also a sense of sin, and the desire of salvation. And when once a consciousness of my utterly helpless, and hopeless state, as I am in myself, is fully revealed in my soul, then there will be an unceasing looking after Christ which nothing can satisfy, until Christ is "formed in the heart the hope of glory!" In your enquiry, therefore, for "the knowledge of salvation" make a diligent search in yourself, and your own heart, for the evidences of the new life. This blessed gift, which in every one to whom it is given, forms the beginning of a new period in a man's history, is discoverable as a *cause*, (as every other cause, more, or less, is) by the *effects*. Every faculty of the new born soul is alive to action. The eye to see spiritually; the ear to hear spiritually; and the mind, and conscience, will be engaged in the spiritual exercise of grace, as testified by acts of "repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!" Will you suffer me to recommend these heart-searching enquiries to your closest investigation? Hezekiah was well taught in this school. And when he had learnt of God "to go softly all his years, in the bitterness of his soul," as he tells us he did, he added: "O Lord! by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit!" (See Isaiah xxxviii. throughout.)

Let me call upon you to another observation. The knowledge of salvation cannot be said to be fully attained, until that there be a revelation made in the heart, personally, and satisfactorily, that we ourselves

are interested in it. In order for a clear enjoyment it is not enough simply to know these things, but "by the remission of our sins" to live upon them. When the apostle Paul would tell the church the blessedness of his own personal estate, in this particular end of his spiritual conversion towards God, he stated it thus: "When it pleased God (said Paul) who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." (Gal i. 15, 16.) Here observe the lines of different degrees of mercy: *first*, the separation from the womb of his mother in nature; *secondly*, the call of grace, or the new birth and its consequences; *thirdly*, the revelation of Christ in Paul; not simply *to* him, but *in him*; *lastly* the *effect*; all conference with the flesh done away; a sweeping destruction to all self-confidence. And such is the uniform result of all the Lord's people with whom the Lord deals, as by Paul, to reveal Christ in them.

There will be increasing views in ourselves of our own worthlessness; and increasing apprehension of the Lord's all-sufficiency.

One word more. "The knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins" in every truly regenerated and converted heart will be, under the divine unction, one assured, fixed, and certain principle. The believing soul will live upon it as men of the world live upon their property. You never find them admitting it questionable, whether it be their own or not. And the Lord's people are supposed to do the same. "We have redemption (said the apostle) through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace." (Ephes. i. 7.) We have it, and we live upon it. And to this agrees the words of the promise, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." (Isaiah xxvi. 3.)

And now let me humbly take up the words of our most glorious Christ, and ask, "Have you understood all these things?" See then that the conviction of the infinitely precious and important points, as they concern your own personal happiness, be the result of them. And do not fail to connect in your remembrance of such soul-refreshing truths, that this knowledge of salvation, by the remission of sins, is solely the Lord's gift and not your deserts. And the very preaching of the gospel is to *give* the knowledge of it unto the Lord's people. And as it is neither obtained by man's merit, nor man's attainment, so in every instance where it is given, the remission of sins is alike given. Very blessedly to this amount speaks God the Holy Ghost by John. "I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto you fathers because you have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one." (1 John ii. 12, 13) And now what shall I add, except to close all in a prayer to God for his blessing!

Gracious Lord! as the blessed Scripture we have been contemplating assures us that the ministry of thy Holy Word is to "give the knowledge of salvation unto thy people by the remission of their sins;" vouchsafe such a divine unction may be upon thy Divine Word at this time, as shall accomplish thy sovereign will to our souls' joy, and to thy glory. Let our little assembly be enabled, by thy grace, to have a spiritual and scriptural knowledge of this saving truth on our souls. And then shall we sing with the Spirit, and sing with the understanding also, the new song of salvation, which the redeemed of the Lord in all the churches of the Lord's people sing to God and to the Lamb: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory, and dominion for ever and ever, Amen!"

J E S U S

THE

RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON, PREACHED IN THE
PARISH CHURCH OF CHARLES, ON THE LORD'S
DAY MORNING, NOV. 21, 1824.

OCCASIONED BY THE

DEATH OF HIS YOUNGEST DAUGHTER, AGED 32.



ADVERTISEMENT.

IT may not be improper to state the occasion, which, under the Lord's providence, gave rise to this sermon. It pleased the Lord to remove from me, by death, three days before the Lord's day, my beloved Sarah, the youngest of my children. I found it right to be at my post of duty as usual, on the Lord's day. And when the time for the pulpit service came; after humble supplication to the Lord, that "as my day, so might my strength be;" I addressed the Lord's people to the following purport:—

I believe that my attendance here this morning was not expected by some; and may be a matter of surprize to others. Those to whom it is known, that the Lord hath made a breach in my family, by the death of my child, may have supposed that my absence would have been excusable. But it is not so with me. I dared not, that my private feeling should take place of my public labours. The Lord's cause supersedes with me every other consideration. True indeed it is, that by this event, the Lord hath made a deep wound in my heart. The incision hath been sharp and painful. And perhaps the more poignant from my age and increasing infirmities. Like an old tree of the forest over which the storms of many a winter hath beaten, my greenest branch is now broken off, and I myself am withering. But a wisdom which cannot err hath so appointed; and sure I am that in this, as in every other dispensation of the Lord to his people, a love which cannot fail, nor change, is also at the bottom: and while I bend submissively to the Lord's holy will, I hear the Lord's voice graciously speaking, in tender, but sovereign language: "Be still and know that I am God!" (Psm. xlv. 10.) It is my mercy therefore, that the Lord dries the tear of nature; and grants me the suited grace. Moreover, according to the course of years, I have but a few sabbaths more to enjoy below; every one becomes the more precious in ministering to holy things, before the Lord shall take me home to the everlasting sabbath which is above.

Added to these considerations, I trace in the records of Scripture the uniform conduct of holy men of old, in their attendance on the Lord, in his house of prayer, when under bereavements. When David's child lay dead, though during the suspense of the sickness the man of God "lay on the earth, and fasted, and

wept:" yet when the child was no more, the patriarch "arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord and worshipped." And when this change of conduct called forth the astonishment of his servants, David explained it: "While the child was yet alive, (said he) I fasted and wept; for I said who can tell, whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him; but he shall not return to me." (2 Sam. xii. 15—23.) When Job received the thundering messengers, following close upon the heels of each other; the loss of his substance, his cattle, his servants, and finally closing in the tidings with the death of his children; the patient mourner, though he felt all the workings of nature, from such accumulated sorrow, yet he felt also the supports of grace. "He arose (it is said) and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground and worshipped, and said: Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job i. 13—21.) And to mention no more. When the prophet Ezekiel received the summons from the Lord: "Son of man! behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke; yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep; neither shall thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake (said the prophet) unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died. And I did in the morning as I was commanded." (Ezekiel xxiv. 15—18.)

Beholding such illustrious examples, and animated by the grace of God; I am come forth this morning from the house of mourning to the house of praise: and for a while to forget the circumstances of the dying and the dead among men; to speak to you, and to myself of the living, and life-giving God. Indeed, I hope, that I am come unto the church of our most glorious Christ this day with a message from the Lord. And if you will open your Bibles at the place of Scripture, 11th John's gospel, 25th and 26th verses, you will behold the proclamation by the Lord himself.

S E R M O N III.

JESUS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.

JOHN XI. 25, 26.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life : he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this ?

I BESEECH you to pause over those divine words. What a sublimity there is in them ! We need not ask who is the Almighty Speaker ; for we are told. And indeed it could be no other than He, “ who is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” For what prophet, or apostle, yea, what angel or being among the whole creation of God, ever did, or ever could, assume such language, and say as Jesus did : “ I am the resurrection and the life ? ”

And here I feel constrained to pause again, and to remark, that if, while the Lord himself makes this proclamation in your *ears*, the same Almighty God, by the influence of his Holy Spirit, were to give the saving unction and belief of it in your *hearts*, I might shut up my sermon, before I proceeded farther to enlarge upon it. For if the redeemed and regenerated child of God, thus taught of God, was enabled spiritually to receive those divine truths with full assurance of faith ; to realize them in his mind, and conscience ; to live upon them day by day ; to bring them into constant exercise and use ; that they might lie down with him, and rise up with him, and be as frontlets between the eyes ; the sweet savour would lift him out of himself, and above

himself; and from all the sin and sorrow which he is the object and the subject of, from the Adam-fall transgression, and cause him to say with the apostle: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." (2 Cor. ii. 14.)

But let us take a leisurely survey, in profound meditation, of this whole proclamation of our most glorious Christ; and examine, one by one, the sublime truths, and mark their various bearings, as they have reference, first, to his Almighty person; and then from their union with Him, as they relate also to his people.

And first: of the Almighty Speaker, "Jesus said! I am!" This great *I* is he, whose being, and essence, is the sole cause of giving being to his people. For without him the whole body the church, whether in heaven or in earth, would be but as so many cyphers, so many nonentities. It is the Lord Jesus, by heading them, and standing before them, as the figure one in arithmetic, constitutes their number, and being.

Next observe what the Lord declares of himself; "I am:" that is the only One, which *is*, and which was, and which is to come. (Rev. i. 8.) Of creatures it may be said; some have been; some now are; and some may be hereafter. But of our most glorious Christ; He was, and is, and will be, the same, and unchangeably for ever. As the Lord expressed himself to the Jews: "Before Abraham was, I am!" (John viii. 58.)

But we must not stop here. The Lord proceeds, in giving this sublime statement of himself, to shew his eternal power and GODHEAD, by acts corresponding to the Almightyness of his person. "I am (he saith) the resurrection and the life." Observe; he is not only the cause of the resurrection, and the life; but he is himself *both*. All is *in* himself; as

well as *by* himself. It is not enough to say, that by the great and incommunicable salvation which he wrought he hath done all this for his people ; but that he is *himself* the whole to his people. He is himself “ the resurrection and the life.” His people were considered virtually all in him, and represented by him, when he did what he did, and suffered what he suffered, for their salvation. So that they were crucified with him, buried with him, “ were raised up together with him, and made to sit together with him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” (Eph. ii.5, 6.)

Neither is this all. For the Lord Jesus adds, that his people shall know all these things, and spiritually enjoy them, when, by the divine effects he works in their hearts, they are brought into a spiritual and scriptural apprehension of them, in their minds and consciences. “ He that believeth in me (saith the Lord) though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die.” Here again, as in the former part of our Lord’s words, his own sovereignty is asserted, and assured. *Living* in him is the cause of *believing* in him : and as the one is productive of the other, faith, or belief, in Christ will necessarily follow life in Christ. And such a life and faith become the fullest demonstration, according to the apostle’s statement, of “ being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth, and abideth for ever.” (1 Pet. i. 23.) Oh ! that this great truth, this glorious truth, was so fully incorporated in the soul of the Lord’s redeemed and regenerated family, that every child of God, which is brought into an acquaintance with the plague of his own heart, could, and did, calculate rightly his vast privileges in Christ. He would then enter into the divine enjoyment of what John calls, “ the record God hath given to his church of eternal life. For this life is in the Son :

and he that hath the Son hath life; and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." (1 John v. 11, 12. John v. 24.)

Such is the soul-animating subject proposed to our spiritual meditation in those sublime words of our most glorious Lord. My intention is, as the Lord shall be pleased to direct me, in the *first* place, to call your attention to the contemplation of the Almighty Speaker, proclaiming himself and his divine person under those distinguishing characters: "I am the resurrection and the life." And when, (if the Lord so graciously teach) we have received spiritual and scriptural apprehension of the infinite greatness of his person, so as to stand impressed with the full assurance of his eternal power and GODHEAD, under those almighty characters; we will go on in the *second* branch of the discourse to look into the divine operations of the same in ourselves, and see whether we ourselves are the subjects and objects of this belief in him; the both will form a blessed matter of discourse to revive our drooping spirits under all that we are called to the exercise of, in this sorrowful, sinful, dying world. And the question, with which our glorious Lord closed this Scripture, will be the proper close upon the present occasion for you and for me each to put to ourselves, to discover our own personal interest in the whole: "Believest thou this?"

Let me however detain you one moment, to remark to you the vast and infinite importance of the subject itself; and to observe that the apprehension of it can only be understood spiritually. The new birth, or regeneration, is indispensibly necessary for an entrance into the kingdom of grace here, as well as glory hereafter. And this is solely the free gift of God: for the gospel saith, "to as many as the Lord gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name; which were born not of

blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 13.)

And let me beg that you would take, with this observation, another intimately connected with it, before you enter upon the subject; namely, that as we are altogether passive in the first receiving of the new-birth or spiritual life; so are we in all the after-stages for the preservation of that life. He, that is the resurrection to quicken, is the source also to keep alive. Hence, our most glorious Christ is divinely suited for saint and sinner; for the *sinner* to quicken, and for the *saint*, which in time past hath been quickened, to keep alive. Christ himself is the resurrection and the life of *both*. And it is by his Holy Word, and by his Holy Spirit, the souls of the redeemed are spiritually fed and nourished, day by day. "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. iv. 4.) The Lord grant, if it be his holy will, that the precious doctrine of the resurrection may this day be realized, and become a living principle in the souls of many; that all the persons in the GODHEAD being here to confirm the Lord's word; what Jesus hath said may be fulfilled to our joy and his glory: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out: for I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John vi. 37—39.)

I begin as I proposed, namely, in calling your attention to the contemplation of the Almighty Speaker, who proclaims himself and his divine person under those sublime characters, "the resurrection and the life."

I shall not, upon the present occasion, think it necessary to dwell upon that part of the subject which connects in one and the same view, the whole three persons in the GODHEAD ; for, more or less, you know that these glorious fundamental truths of our most holy faith form a part of every sermon I preach to you. And indeed I should consider myself miserably deficient, whenever these leading points of all pure doctrine were overlooked or omitted. For while it is this holy One, the Lord our righteousness, who is the executor and administrator of the whole purposes counsel, will, and pleasure of Jehovah, in his trinity of persons towards the church ; it is the delight of the church to know, and what opens a continual source of thanksgiving from the church to each and to all to enjoy ; that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost take equal part, and are equally included in this gracious administration.

What I have to call to your attention at this time, is, the personal glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, as “ the resurrection and the life.” In which is included the personal dignity of our Lord. He was, and is one of the Holy Three which bear record in heaven. (1 John v. 7.) Hence he possessed in himself, and underived from another, all divine attributes and perfections ; and though distinct in *person* from the Father and the Holy Ghost, yet in common with the Father and the Holy Ghost, being substantially one, in all that constitutes the GODHEAD. Keeping this apprehension of our most glorious Christ in view, as we prosecute the subject, we shall discover, (if under divine teaching,) as we go along, how competent and suited our most glorious Christ is, to make proclamation of himself in this exalted manner.

I am—the Lord saith : by which is expressed his everlasting being, his eternity, and sameness of nature and essence, possessing in himself at one and the

same time, (call that time by whatsoever name you may,) past, present, and future. As if the Lord had said, *I am*, what I am now ; and *I am*, what I have always been ; and *I am*, what I shall always be ; *yesterday*, before all worlds ; *to-day*, during the whole time-state of all worlds ; and *for ever*, when there are no worlds. There is a similar passage which we meet with in the inspired writings of the prophet, (Isaiah lvii. 15.) "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy." These words are expressive of the infinity of Jehovah, and are equally applicable to each and to all the persons in the GODHEAD. And the inhabitation of eternity is a phrase peculiarly descriptive of the divine essence, as distinguished from all creatures. It doth not simply mean *dwelling* but *inhabiting* eternity ; that is, being eternity in himself : and the application of it to our most glorious Christ is very fully proclaimed in that Scripture where he is called, "the strength of Israel," (1 Sam. xv. 29.) or as the word is rendered in the margin of the Bible, "the eternity, or victory of Israel ;" in allusion to his victory over death, hell, and the grave : all which are included in the comprehension of the words of the text : "the resurrection and the life."

And from the first dawn of revelation in the several manifestations the Lord was pleased to make of himself, he assumed to himself the same distinction of character : thus to Abram, (Gen. xv. 1.) "Fear not Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." I am all these ; I myself am : not in gifts, not in graces, but *personally* so. In like manner to the same Abraham in the mount : "By myself have I sworn saith the Lord." Himself the swearer ; and to himself the oath. Compare Gen. xxii. 15, &c. all which tend to confirm the infinite greatness of him who styles himself, *I am*. And if we pass on from Abra-

ham to the days of Moses, we find the same ascription of character which the Lord there made to himself at the bush. (Exod. iii. 14.) "I am that I am." Here, as in the text, the Lord grounds all that he promiseth on the eternity of his nature. And it is somewhat remarkable in the Lord's adding to the glorious name, I am, "that I am;" as if in allusion to the fulness of time, when he would openly tabernacle among us; concerning which the angel to Mary named him, That Holy Thing. (Luke i. 35.) And his servant John so named him, "That." (1 John i. 1.)

I will beg to make a short observation on this *first* branch of the discourse before I go on to the *second*: which is to say, what a firmness of assurance such views give to our faith, in that, He that thus speaks, and promiseth such blessed things to his people, confirms the certainty of them by such testimonies of his own Almighty power to accomplish them. We have another delightful Scripture to the same purport, in one of the prophets. "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." (Isaiah xlv. 6.) It is easy to conceive how the Lord may be said to be the *first*; for the Lord had being in himself before all worlds. But how the Lord may be said to be the *last*; when the church hath eternal life given to her in Christ; and (as he saith himself) "because I live, ye shall live also:" (John xiv. 19.) will not that eternal life be commensurate to eternity? But here is the blessedness of the expression. He is both the *first*, and the *last*, by his inhabitation of eternity, which is (as I before observed,) a similar phrase for Himself. Hence therefore our eternal life derived from Him, and being in Him, proves Him to be both the *first*, and the *last*; for he claspeth in his Almighty arms, (if the expression be warrantable,) eternity with all its appendages; and

thus the whole church is folded within his embraces; and, consequently, he is both *first* and *last*.

I proceed now, as was proposed, to the *second* branch of our subject, namely, to look into the divine operations of this high character of our Lord, whether we know him in the same, as our resurrection, and life; in that we ourselves are the subjects and objects of this great privilege.

In the prosecution of this part of our subject I desire you to notice the occasion upon which the Lord so graciously expressed himself. It appears that upon the death of Lazarus (as the history records) Martha, the sorrowful sister of Lazarus, seeing Jesus, said unto him "Lord! if thou hadst been here my brother had not died. But I know that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." Upon which, the Lord Jesus said; "Thy brother shall rise again." Yes! said Martha, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." It should seem, that Martha had a notion in common with others at that time of what was supposed, but not openly revealed, of a resurrection: but not the most distant idea how this resurrection was to be accomplished; much less that the Lord Jesus was himself the sole cause of that glorious event, and indeed himself the resurrection. Jesus then made that blessed proclamation of himself in the text, and said: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

Now in order that we may enter into the clear, spiritual, and scriptural sense of this most precious doctrine, under the divine teaching; and having, (as I hope) laid down the sure foundation for the cordial belief of the same under the former branch of discourse; by shewing Christ's eternal power and God-

HEAD, and from the same authority; we shall now at once discover how truly our most glorious Christ is himself "the resurrection and the life," both in himself, and to all his people; by calling to our mind, what the Scriptures declare, and what his people are supposed to know; namely, that in all He said; in all He did; in all He wrought; in all He suffered; yea, in all that He was as Christ; He was, and is, the Head, and Husband, and Surety, of his body the church, "the fulness that filleth all in all." Hence, when he stood forth under this high character, he stood forth not as a private person, but a public head; and when the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, (as it is said he did, Isaiah liii. 6.) in the same moment, all our sins were taken from us, and charged on him. (Jerem. l. 20.) When he died on the cross, the church died in him. (Gal. ii. 20.) When "he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," from the church sin was for ever put away; and the church "sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Heb. ix. 26. Heb. x. 10.) And when he arose from the dead, the church rose in Him as their glorious Head, and Representative: and as the Holy Ghost hath graciously taught the church by Paul, Christ "being risen from the dead, is become the first fruits of them that slept." (1 Cor xv. 20.) Hence he is the sure pledge, and earnest, of the resurrection of all his people; yea, he is himself the resurrection; neither would *his* resurrection be complete without *theirs*; for where should the members be but with their head? Nay, the church is not only one with Christ, in his resurrection, but in his ascension, and return to glory. For saith the Holy Ghost by Paul, to every regenerated child of God, when quickened into a new and spiritual life in Christ; "Even (saith he) when we were dead in sins we were quickened together with Christ: (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us

up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Ephes. ii. 5, 6.) So that the regenerated church, to all intents and purposes is now in the person of her glorious Lord sitting with Him; represented by Him; and He is therefore himself, the sum and substance of all that she is, or ever will be. Oh! divine saying of our most glorious Lord, when he said, "I am the resurrection and the life!"

From this statement, the personal interest of every individual member of Christ's mystical body may, through the unction of the Holy Ghost, (1 John ii. 20.) be clearly ascertained. Are we regenerated or born again; and have we those marks of the new and spiritual life which follow the new-birth? Are we "convinced of sin, of righteousness and of judgment?" (John xvi. 8—11.) Are we dead with Christ, risen with Christ by the resurrection of grace, to a new, and spiritual life in Christ; and are we "seeking those things which are above where Christ sitteth, on the right hand of God?" (Coloss. iii. 1—4.) The Holy Ghost, by Paul, hath stated these divine truths as so many testimonies in the mind of the risen with Christ, when he saith: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ; (that is not the outward baptism of water, but inward by the Spirit:" see Acts x. 5.) "were baptized into his death: therefore 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. For if we have been planted together, in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Romans vi. 3—5.) Such, and infinitely more, is included in those divine words of our most glorious Lord, when he said: "I am the resurrection and the life."

It now only remains for every one present to put the question to himself, which our Lord did to Martha,

as if the glorious Lord had made a renewed proclamation of the same this day in this church, saying, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die! Believest thou this?" Do you, and you, and you, believe it? Oh! Sirs! the doctrine of the resurrection is a practical, experimental, soul-refreshing doctrine, and when, by the unction of the Lord, received into the spiritual mind, and understanding, and conscience, and lived upon by faith, cannot but tend to purify the heart, and induce an holy life and conversation: "that when Christ who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory!"

And now having been strengthened to deliver my message to you from the Lord; I look to the Lord for his blessing upon it. I am come forth from the chamber of the dead, to say these things unto the living; and shall now return to my house of mourning with thanksgiving in having been permitted, for this purpose, to visit the Lord's house of joy. If you do not recollect a word of what I have said; but yet shall be enabled to keep in memory what the Lord hath said, in the delightful words of the text; and the Lord should write them in your hearts; this is the burden of my prayer for you, and for myself. In them you will find a sure relief against all the sorrows of life; under bereaving providences in the death of friends; and in the prospect of your own departure: if the Lord be loosening the pins of your earthly tabernacle; if all outward circumstances are dark, and discouraging; and all inward comforts in yourself run low; let but Jesus whisper his own most blessed words to the ear of your spiritual apprehension, and all will be well. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

THE CHILDREN

OF

THE RESURRECTION.



“ And whithersoever Jesus entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment ; and as many as touched him were made whole.”—MARK VI. 56.

PREFACE.

IF the savour of His holy name, which is as the ointment poured forth, be still on your minds, whom I was permitted to proclaim before you, on the morning of the last Lord's day ; I shall be led to hope, from the good hand of my God, the gracious fragranc y will be found now. It was my mercy then to bring before you those soul-reviving words which the Son of God himself expressed, in the day of his flesh, when he said : " I am the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die ! " And it is the same Almighty Speaker, which pronounced the sentence I have to propose for your present meditation, when he called his people " the children of the resurrection." The one very blessedly follows the other, as the *effect* follows the *cause* ; yea, rather, they are combined, and form but one and the same subject. He who is the glorious *cause* cannot but produce the corresponding *effect* ; and as the Holy Ghost hath stated the doctrine by Paul ; " if Christ be risen from the dead, he is become the first fruits of them that slept!" (1 Cor xv. 20.) In calling upon you therefore to this service, I would request you to consider it but as a continuation of the former. And if, as I humbly implore, (and in which the regenerated souls present will join my supplication before the throne,) the Lord himself shall cause me to *speak*, and both you and myself so to *hear*, as to realize our personal interest in the blessed doctrine—" the children of the resurrection ;" then shall we have cause to say with one of old " my meditation of Him shall be sweet ! " (Psalm civ. 34.)

Let us pray. Oh ! Thou that art the resurrection and the life, let thy presence be intimately manifested to us this day. Raise up our drooping spirits above all the dying and dead circumstances of our fallen and degraded nature, that in beholding thee as the Source and Cause of all spiritual and eternal life, we may lose sight of what we are in ourselves, the objects and the subjects of sin, in the original and actual state of the Adam-fall transgression ;

to contemplate what we are in our first, and everlasting being and well being in thee. Lord! by thine Holy Word, and by thine Holy Spirit on that word, shining in upon our regenerated souls, communicate to us such enlarged apprehensions of thy glorious person, and of thy finished salvation, as may enable us to trace all our blessings to the fountain-head of all blessing, and to behold "the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Give us spiritually to see, and spiritually to believe, and spiritually to receive and live upon thee, the glorious Head of thy body the church, "the fulness that filleth all in all." Given to thee by God our Father; married to thy person, before all worlds; redeemed by thy blood; anointed in thee by the Holy Ghost; we contemplate with holy joy all our mercies treasured up for us from everlasting in thee, both of grace and glory. Realize all the divine truths of our most holy faith in our souls; and while we behold our completeness in our Almighty Head and Husband, may we by all the sweet and endearing characters of sonship know that we are "the children of the resurrection." Let an unction from on high be with us, in what is now before us, and so refresh us with thy blessing, that each for himself may discover that the Lord is in our midst, and that to bless. Glory to the Father, Son, and Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

S E R M O N IV.

THE CHILDREN OF THE RESURRECTION.

LUKE XX. 36.

Neither can they die any more : for they are equal unto the angels ; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

THE children of the resurrection? Yes. For He, that mighty One, whose proclamation is, "I am the resurrection and the life," no less declares his people so to be. And hence the Holy Ghost confirms the divine truth by his servants. "For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again: I will put my trust in him." And again: he quotes a passage from the prophecy of Isaiah, (viii. 18.) and makes a personal application of it to our most glorious Christ: "Behold I and the children which God hath given me!" And, as if nothing might be omitted upon a subject of such infinite moment, the gracious God the Spirit actually declares, that the very assumption of our nature had this object especially in view, and adds: "For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same: that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 11—15; with Ps. xxii. 22—25. Ps. xviii. 2.)

But we must not stop here. Interested as the church is in all that belongs to Christ, as Christ, by virtue of personal union with him, the Holy Scriptures of God not only give this statement, but the Spirit of God confirms the same, when by regeneration, and the new and spiritual life of Christ in the heart, we are brought into a spiritual apprehension and knowledge of it. For it is said, and not only said but known, "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ:" (Rom. viii. 16, 17.) And very blessed it is, when at any time by divine communications from our glorious Head, we obtain spiritual triumphs by Christ over our spiritual enemies. It was somewhat of this kind which the seventy disciples the Lord Jesus had sent forth to preach enjoyed, when they returned with joy unto him, and said, "Lord! even the devils are subject unto us through thyn name!" And do take notice of the gracious answer made by our divine Lord, to those observations: "Jesus said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold! I give unto you power to tread on serpents, and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." (Luke x. 17—20.) Here you see our most glorious Lord traceth our source of joy to its head. It is blessed when by Him, and through Him, and from Him, the Lord's people are at any time made triumphant over the temptations of the enemy. But these things are not always; devils, like lions, may by the Lord's controul be couchant to-day; but without his restraints be rampant to-morrow. But if our names; as children, are registered in Christ, here is an everlasting security, which neither men nor devils can affect.

Neither do we stop here. For as our spiritual triumphs are in Christ, by reason of our oneness and union with him; so, from the same Almighty cause, our bodies, "which are the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in us," are preserved amidst numberless temptations, arising from the inherency of sin, in this unrenewed part of our nature, from the unceasing warfare of soul and body; while "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things which ye would." (Gal. v. 17.)

This becomes a most interesting part of our subject, in respect to "the children of the resurrection;" and I beg your particular attention to it. I need not tell the spiritual part of the congregation, for it is too plain and obvious in the statements of Holy Scripture, to be insisted upon, that the whole of our nature in the church of our most glorious Christ, body, soul, and spirit, are alike, and equally redeemed by "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all." (Heb. x. 10.) And, although for wise and gracious purposes no alteration is made on the *body* by the regeneration of the *spirit*, during the present time-state of the church; for as Paul stated it many years after his being converted, he said, "I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing," (Rom. vii. 18.) yet by the indwelling spirit the body is made the medium of "offering up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. ii. 5.) Hence Paul, speaking to the church, saith: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. xii. 1.) And hence also we read in another Scripture, that "while with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x. 10.) And in allusion to the cleansing

of body, soul, and spirit, with the blood of Christ, the Holy Ghost, by Paul, enjoins the drawing near the throne on this account, "having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith; having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. x. 19, &c.)

But notwithstanding these things, the holiest of men know but too often to their sorrow of spirit, how many and grievous the interruptions of flesh and blood are to their souls in their sweet communions with the Lord. They groan, therefore, as Paul did, being burdened. They find "that when they would do good, evil is present with them." Yea, not only there is in itself a total indisposition in the body to divine things, but the animal spirits of nature sometimes, and not unfrequently, flag, and render the very attendance on ordinances and means of grace a burden. The flesh tires under the word, and induceth a frame not unlike the spouse in the Canticles, when she said, "I sleep, but my heart waketh." (Sol. Song v. 2.) Hence that blessed Scripture, in allusion to "the children of the resurrection," which throws a light over the whole subject, and both explains and shews the infinite importance of it. Speaking of the whole creation groaning, by reason of man's fall, the apostle adds, "and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body!" Here the blessed doctrine of "the children of the resurrection" begins to open to us in all its glory. For until this appointed time shall come, and he that became the resurrection and the life, by his own Almighty power shall raise up the bodies of his people, and make them like unto his own glorious body; these interruptions to the enjoyments of the

Spirit will never cease. But, in the event of this mighty change, "the children of the resurrection" are freed from them for ever.

We may, in some faint degree, form an idea of what the spirit of a redeemed and regenerated child of God would be now, if disembodied. Figure to yourselves any one of those among "the spirits of just men made perfect," which have escaped the prison of the body, and is now before the throne of God! Suppose the return of such an one in our midst this day, with whom we have mingled in times past, in this or any other house of prayer; wholly freed from this mass of flesh and corruption, which you and I now have, and which they also once had, and no longer the subject of the imperative demands of the body; how would their holy spirits uninterruptedly enter into and enjoy holy things! And how would they behold, with an holy indifferency, all those pursuits of ours, of a bodily and earthly nature, in which we are so often engaged! Would it not be with them as those who, when arrived to manhood, behold with pity the toys and amusements of children? Such, but in an infinitely higher degree, is the present state of felicity of the spirits of the redeemed and regenerated church before the throne! And to what a consummation of blessedness will this state be advanced when at the last day, the Lord shall raise up the *bodies* of his saints, to join their *souls* in glory; and when the whole man, body, soul, and spirit, formed in the image of Christ, and united to Christ, shall be fully prepared for the enjoyment of Christ; and in Him, and by him, for communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, through all the countless ages of eternity! Such then will be "the children of the resurrection."

My text, I have already observed, is, as the former, on which I lately addressed you, from the words of our most glorious Christ. And if you will open your

Bibles at that part of the Holy Scripture, where they are recorded, you will discover the occasion on which the Lord Jesus so expressed himself. It appears that certain of the Sadducees, who denied the doctrine of the resurrection, had endeavoured to confute Christ on this subject, by proposing to him a question, whether it were a real or a supposable case of a woman having seven husbands ; and the point they desired our Lord to decide was, whose wife the woman should be in the resurrection. Our most glorious Christ took opportunity from hence (as he always did on occasions of a like nature, of mere curiosity,) to call off their attention from the consideration of this woman, to attend to the more important matter, the subject of the resurrection itself. "The children of this world (said Jesus,) marry, and are given in marriage. But 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 : for they are equal unto the angels : and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." And having thus most blessedly stated these things, to answer the cavil of the Sadducees, on the subject of the married woman, he then proceeded, unmasked, to give his own divine statement, of the certainty of the resurrection. "Now that the dead (said Christ) are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not the God of the dead, but of the living : for all live unto him !" (Luke xx. 37, 38.)

There are very many and very precious things contained in those words of our most glorious Christ. I must not, however, suffer myself at this time to enlarge ; let me only by the way observe one or two striking particulars which ought not to be overlooked. The Lord saith that the children of the resurrection are "equal unto the angels," that is, they are compeers

with angels, being spiritual like them, and equally with them possessed of immortality: so that there is no capability of their dying, for they have no longer the seeds of death in them: no capability of disease, nothing which can tend to dissolution. Yea, in one sense they transcend angels; for angels, though elect angels, and as such are upheld and maintained in their immortality and holiness *by* Christ, yet they have not, as “the children of the resurrection” have, union *with* Christ. Our most glorious Lord hath stated this delightful truth with his usual tenderness, when speaking to his disciples he said, “because I live ye shall live also.” (John xiv. 19.) The life of “the children of the resurrection” is not only *by* Him, but *in* Him. By virtue of his Headship to his body the church there is an union of persons. Every individual of his mystical body is united to Christ; and Christ hath taken into union with himself the person of every individual of his mystical body; and this no angel hath, but “such honour have all his saints!”

One remark more on this subject meets us in this place; namely, that though “the children of the resurrection” when going down to the grave see corruption, and are sown *natural bodies*; yet of this no more, when risen by their glorious Head to all the felicities of eternity: for they then will come up *spiritual* bodies. How blessedly the apostle Paul, taught by the Holy Ghost, sings to this delightful song: “So also (said he) is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, 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 body.” (1 Cor. xv. 42—44.) The apostle is so taken up with the contemplation that he seems as if he knew not how to quit it. He harps upon it as if containing (and certainly it doth contain) the most harmonious

melody. Hence, my brethren, we are here divinely taught that these bodies of ours, now vile as we make them, and vile as we leave them, will be so completely changed by the Almighty sovereignty of our Almighty Lord, that they will be as fully qualified, and as fully prepared to meet and enjoy our most glorious Christ, as our spirits now are by the new birth to love and praise our God by faith, as we shall shortly in open vision, "before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Yea, those spirits of ours when disembodied, and are joined to the faithful gone before, though perfect in Christ, cannot have their full *quantum* of glory, until by the resurrection the body also shall have joined the spirit, and both then made spiritual in Him, shall have capacities suited to each other; and in Christ, and through Christ, and by Christ, shall have uninterrupted and unceasing blessedness, in the adoration and love of Jehovah, in his trinity of persons and unity of essence for evermore. John, the apostle, unable to express himself in the contemplation, broke out in the most rapturous words: "Behold, (saith he) what manner of love (as if he felt incompetent to describe it) the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not!" Beloved! now are we (that is, now we are brought to the knowledge and enjoyment of it, by regeneration) now are we the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; (that is, when by the resurrection we put on glorified bodies) but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." (1 John iii. 1, 2.)

The subject of the "children of the resurrection" is a very extensive and a very blessed one. But I cannot now bring before you the outlines of it. What I propose, as the Lord shall be pleased to direct, will be, in the *first* place, to shew who are the children,

as they are, by the original purpose and decree of God so chosen and adopted in Christ Jesus. And this view of them will at once explain how they are necessarily the "children of the resurrection," from their first and eternal connection with Him, who is Himself "the resurrection and the life."

And let me detain you, if but a moment longer, just to observe, that the blessedness contained in the very bosom of this great and leading truth of our most holy faith, is such as to endear it to the warmest affection of every regenerate child of God. The appellation of children, not only implies a perfect equality in all of that description in a family, but also of all being alike passive in the appointment. Children, born to an inheritance, are equally born, and equally obtain it as a gift. The heir of a kingdom, or the *child* of a cottage, are alike begotten to it without any act of either: and very eminently so in the heirs of grace, they are all alike declared to be born, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 13.)

And let me add farther, and especially for the comfort of the little ones, that amidst small or great attainments, "the children of the resurrection" are not considered by any thing of what they are in themselves, but wholly as they are in Christ. The Lord Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life, is equally such to all. They are buried with him, and must arise with Him, when the time arrives for their deliverance from the body of corruption, into "the glorious liberty of the children of God." This makes the everlasting security of the Lord's people, being all equally united to their Almighty Head; so that when Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, shall appear, the whole redeemed family of the Lord "shall appear with Him in glory!"

I begin with the former branch of the subject as

was proposed ; namely, to shew who are the children ; for as our Lord hath stated it, “ they are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.” And here I might enlarge, in shewing how they are children ; and from everlasting by the eternal purpose of God, “ being predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.” (Ephes. i. 5.) And hence being thus predestinated by the Father, married by the Son, and anointed in Christ by the Holy Ghost ; the whole persons in the GODHEAD concurred and co-operated in the vast design ; and the adoption character of the church is completely proved and established. All the wonderful events which followed by One of the glorious persons in the GODHEAD, even the SON, taking into union with his divine nature that holy portion of our nature, and thereby becoming the visible Jehovah ; laid the foundation for all the subsequent acts he wrought in the great work of redemption. Hence all we read, and all that is recorded in the Scriptures of eternal truth, are bottomed on this one great basis. Children *from* all eternity, and decreed to be so *to* all eternity, could not lose that sonship by the fall, neither by any corruption derived from that fall, in their nature. Children they continue, though *sinful* children ; and by sin justly exposed to divine wrath. Nevertheless their relationship could not be alienated by any after acts in time, who had been decreed and predestinated to the adoption of children, from and to all eternity. United to Christ, they were always one with Christ ; and the fall gave occasion for redemption, thereby affording the means and opportunity for the glory of Christ ; and both by death and the resurrection, raising up a greater revenue of praise to the Almighty Author of salvation than had the fall of man never taken place. Yea, this process of divine grace, as it concerns the church, must and will produce such

praise to Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, in the wonders and depths of wisdom and love and power, as are displayed, as could not have been shewn in the creation of others, and worlds without it. Hence we see the blessedness of the doctrine in the children of God being "the children of the resurrection;" and who they are, by the original purpose and decree of God, "which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began."

And from this plain and scriptural statement, who "the children of the resurrection" are, we can easily discover, through divine teaching, under the *second* branch of our subject, how they are necessarily "the children of the resurrection," and how they are known.

Their entrance into a state of grace, by the divine operation of the new-birth, manifests their adoption in Christ; and their being made partakers of the divine nature by this sovereign act of God, opens and keeps open a communicable life, from their glorious head, of all spiritual blessings during their warfare through the world. Hence in death they are not as others who have no hope, for they *sleep* in Jesus, and are "the children of the resurrection." And as Jesus died and rose again, so they, as members of his mystical body, must die and rise with him, that where he is they must be also. (Rom. viii. 29. Phil. iii. 10, 11.) And this almighty act of raising every individual of his mystical body, is for the personal honour and glory of Christ, who having been crucified in weakness declared himself to have been "the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead:" (Rom. i. 4.) and in their being raised with him are also shewn to be "the children of the resurrection."

One observation more on this branch of the subject must not be omitted, which, from its vast importance,

makes a most interesting appeal to the heart of every regenerated believer among “the children of the resurrection,” namely, that at this great day of our God, “the children of the resurrection” will arise by the sovereign power of our God, virtually the same identical persons as they died. Changed, wonderfully changed they will be from corruption to incorruption, and from mortality to immortality; but in respect to identity, precisely the same persons; that is to say, the very I that I now am, and the very you that you now are—such we shall then both be. For otherwise, if it were a *change* of person, it would be *another* person; and then it would not be a resurrection but a *creation*. I hope you see the very great blessedness that is contained in this divine truth, that “the children of the resurrection” will arise substantially in person the same. Such did our most glorious Lord; he had said to the Jews before his death: “Destroy this temple (meaning the temple of his body) and in three days I will raise it up.” (See John ii. 18. to the end of 22.) And such must it be to his people who are in all things to be conformed to his image, where they can be alike. (Phil. iii. 10.) Hence Job triumphed in this view: “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.” (Job. xix. 25—27.)

And now what is the result of all that I have been saying? Do any present feel the accompaniment of the Spirit in the ministry of his Holy Word, to believe the record which God hath given of his Son? If so, the Lord give grace to close the whole in prayer, and let us humble our souls at his footstool for his blessing.

“O Lord! the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, “give unto us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him : the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, that we may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints : and what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him on his own right hand in heavenly places.” Lord ! help us to have a spiritual apprehension of Christ’s resurrection, and our own resurrection secured in him ; that when thou shalt be pleased to bring us down to the house appointed for all living, we may “rejoice in hope of the glory of God,” perfectly satisfied from our oneness and union with our glorious Head, that “whether we live, we live unto the Lord ; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord ; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.” Amen.

THE COMBINED VIEW
OF THE
INFINITE GREATNESS
AND THE
INFINITE HUMBLENESS OF CHRIST.



“ In his humiliation his judgment was taken away : and who shall declare his generation ?”—Acts viii. 33.

PREFACE.

THE subject that we are now about to meditate is one of the most sublime in "the great mystery of godliness." It comprehends within its bosom what the apostle Peter, when taught by God the Holy Ghost, was directed to tell the church the Scriptures of the prophets did signify, from the Spirit of Christ then in them; the two great branches of all prophecy; namely, of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (1 Pet. i. 10, 11.) It will be our mercy, if while we are communing on these things, in the *outward* ministry of the word, the Lord do by us, as by his disciples, when conversing about Christ in their way to Emmaus. "Jesus himself drew near and went with them." And by the *inward* illumination of his Spirit to expound to us, "in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself;" that, like them, "our hearts may burn within us; and as we prosecute the wonderful history of his great humiliation, we may by faith hear him say—"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke xxiv. 13—32.)

Let us seek grace to pray. Infinitely great and glorious Lord God Almighty! who in the unity of thine essence, and trinity of persons, "dwellest in the light, which no man can approach unto;" we draw nigh in that "new and living way, which thou hast consecrated for us through the veil of Christ's flesh." Here alone we seek access; and here, through thy grace, we find it. Be very gracious to us at this time, if it be thine holy will, and while, under the divine teaching of thy word, and the divine influences of thy Spirit, we commune concerning the glorious person, and the glorious salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, cause "our meditation of Him to be sweet!" Give us spiritually to see, and spiritually apprehend, the infinite greatness of his person, and the infinite completeness of his salvation; and our own personal interest in both. For through thy holy Scriptures, and thy divine unction upon them in our hearts, we are persuaded that nothing short of these precious truths received into our minds, and lived upon, can give ease to our consciences, and cause us "to triumph always in Christ." Under these impressions, and grounded by sovereign grace in the hope of the gospel, we desire, gracious Lord, to enter on the sublime subject proposed to our meditation now before us; that, through thy teaching "our hearts may be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge!" (Coloss. ii. 2, 3.) Amen.

SERMON V.

THE COMBINED VIEW OF THE INFINITE GREATNESS
AND THE INFINITE HUMBLENESS OF CHRIST.

ACTS VIII. 33.

In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation?

THE whole sum and substance of the Bible is comprised in one word, and that word is Christ. For in the spiritual apprehension and knowledge of Him the redeemed and regenerated church of God have, in connexion with it, the spiritual knowledge of, and communion with “the Holy Three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are One.” (1 John v. 7.) Our Lord’s own statement, to this divine mystery, of the oneness of the sacred persons of the GODHEAD is most plain and decisive. He saith—“I and my Father are One.” (John x. 30.) And afterwards to Thomas, the Lord said: “If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.” And in like manner to Philip, Jesus said: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, shew us the Father. Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?” (John xiv. 7—11.) Hence, therefore, it undeniably follows that the revelation of the holy trinity is only in the person of Christ; and he, and he alone, is the visible Jehovah. For while we are expressly assured that the essence of the GODHEAD is invisible, inaccessible, and “dwelleth in the light which no man can ap-

proach unto ; and whom no man hath seen or can see :” it is said that the “ appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ shall shew him.” (1 Tim. vi. 14—16.) And hence by another apostle it is said : “ No man hath seen God at any time : the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” (John i. 18.) Our conclusions, therefore, are truly scriptural ; and in those Scriptures we derive authority to say, that our most glorious Christ, being the only visible Jehovah, he is the sole Executor, Administrator, and efficient Source of all the ways and works of God, as revealed to the church in all the departments of nature, providence, grace, and glory. And as his person is the only visible Jehovah : so his obedience and sacrifice is the only possible means of recovery from the Adam-fall transgression. “ Neither (as Peter stated it,) is there salvation in any other ; for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts iv. 12.)

And as I have repeatedly remarked in the course of my preaching, and now for a long series of years have gone in and out before the church, producing proof upon proof from holy Scripture on those momentous points of doctrine, in which the very life of the church in Christ is founded ; so I would, once again, call your attention in the present moment to the contemplation of the same. And there are two or three leading principles, which, from their vast importance, may well be called fundamental principles, on which the whole superstructure rests. *First*, All the persons in the GODHEAD alike concur and cooperate in this mighty salvation. For it is expressly said, “ to be to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved : while in the fulness of the times, all are to be gathered together in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are

on earth, even in Him." (Ephes. i. 6—10.) And, *secondly*, that as in the glorious person of our most glorious Christ, all salvation is founded; so all temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings are in Him. *Thirdly*, that the discovery of these things is beyond the grasp of all natural attainments: for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." (1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.) Hence the Lord Jesus is represented as thanking the Father that "He had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes." (Matt. xi. 25.) Brethren! hear what I am going to say to you! If the Lord be your Teacher, and the Lord hath brought you, in any measure, acquainted with yourself, and the plague of your own heart; and if, in the knowledge of Christ's person you have made discovery, under divine teaching, of what is contained in his humiliation, and the accomplishment of salvation to his church by that marvellous act of grace, with your own personal interest in both; you have learnt what all human learning in natural powers cannot attain, neither empires purchase. All these things are brought home to the mind and conscience and understanding; lived upon and trusted in; they fill the soul with "joy and peace in believing, abounding in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." (Rom. xv. 13.)

My text is a short but comprehensive expression of those two great hinges of the gospel on which turn all the glorious blessings of salvation. For the person of Christ, and the salvation in Christ, form the whole principles of revelation. "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." The infinite greatness of the person of Christ gave an infinite value and efficacy to all he said or did or suffered. "And who

shall declare his generation?" This surpasseth all the ability of the whole creation of God, men, or angels, to answer. It is best answered by another Scripture. "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fist: who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?" (Prov. xxx. 4.)

I am come forth this morning to call your attention to this most sublime and mysterious subject, proposed to us in the words of the text. I say, to call your attention to it, but not to attempt an explanation of it. For this belongs not to any human province. God himself, in his trinity of persons, can only be the Preacher. He that made the eye, and he that teacheth man knowledge, can only give a spiritual apprehension herein. It will be your mercy, and mine, if the Lord shall give unto us "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him."

I need not tell you, who are well acquainted with your Bibles, that the words of my text are part of the sermon Philip preached to the Æthiopian in the desert. This man had been to Jerusalem to worship, and was returning as ignorant of the Lord Jesus Christ as when he had first left his own country. He was reading in his chariot the book of the prophet Esaias, and the very chapter whence the words of the text were taken: "I pray thee, (said he to Philip) of whom speaketh the prophet this? Is it of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." A very short, but a very sweet sermon. And the Lord the Spirit, which sent Philip to preach Jesus to the Æthiopian, gave the Æthiopian grace to hear and to understand. He found Jesus in the wilderness, though he had not found him at Jerusalem.

Instantly he was baptized into the faith of Christ, "and went on his way rejoicing."

Very many blessed instructions, by the way, meet us in this account. Ordinances are of divine appointment, and are precious gifts from our most gracious God; and often followed in the use of them by his blessing. But the Lord is not confined to the means; for frequently, as in this instance, the Lord works without them to the *end* intended. It will be our wisdom always when able to use them; but not to rest in them. Many a child of God hath found Christ in the desert, when missing him at his house of prayer. And many on beds of sickness have found the power of the Lord present to heal their *souls*, when langour and disease have fastened their *bodies* to the bed of suffering. And I would farther notice, by the way, the very great grace of the Lord in sending a special messenger after this Æthiopian into the desert; though the Lord suffered him to depart from Jerusalem unedified by going there. Here mark how the Lord is unremittingly watching over his people, and "searching them out in all places whither they are scattered, in the cloudy and dark day." Sweetly our most glorious Christ thus promiseth in one Scripture, and confirms it in another. For he saith: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) It matters not *where* they are, or *how* they are. If in godless families; if in distant lands; if in the most hopeless, desperate state that sin and Satan can make them; when the hour cometh for their deliverance, *means* shall be productive of the *end*; and when this is made to correspond "they shall come which were ready to perish." (Isaiah xxvii. 13.)

But while noticing these things, having met them in our way, it was not, with an eye to them at present,

that I have called your attention to this Scripture of the text. Our meditation on these words will be to consider what vast treasures of the most sublime and mysterious truths of the gospel are folded up in them; both in relation to his person, and to His incommunicable salvation. And although our utmost researches can penetrate but a very little way into this continent of the unsearchable riches of Christ, yet there is a sweet promise for the encouragement of the humble which seek the Lord in the Lord's strength. "The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way." (Psalm xxv. 9.) Under these impressions, and animated with this hope, I shall now proceed to the consideration of the two great doctrines in the text. *First*, of His person in whose "humiliation his judgment was taken away." And, *secondly*, from the total incompetency of all created intelligence "to declare his generation," how fully and completely the salvation he wrought in his humiliation hath secured the everlasting happiness of his people. I beg it may be understood, that in the accomplishment of both these purposes which I have in view, I shall advance most cautiously over the sacred subject, taking my stand wholly on Scripture ground: and while I would wait, with reverence and godly fear, for the guidance of Him whose Almighty province alone it is "to guide into all truth," I would pray also, that both your minds and my own may be enabled to spiritualize the divine subject to the divine glory and our soul's joy; that what is brought before us may not be "in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth: comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Cor. ii. 13.)

But before we enter upon it, I would caution every truly redeemed and regenerated child of God, in whose heart the Lord hath put his fear, (Jer. xxxii. 40.) (and it can be only such, who are made capable of en-

tering into the least apprehension of the sublime subject before us;) I say, that I would caution all such humble souls that they be not discouraged, nor shrink from it on account of its greatness and mystery. It is to the humble the Lord hath engaged to make himself known. The promise of our most glorious Christ is absolute, and can never fail: "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." (Matt. xiii. 12.) Now, many of you have what at one time you never thought of, when you were living in the pursuits of the world, ignorant of the plague of your own heart, and a stranger to God and to yourselves. Look back, and consider what you then were; and compare that state with what you now are. Perhaps there are some present, that a few months, or a few years since, had any one told you, that your views of divine things would be alive at this time, you would scarce have understood what they meant. If then you are savingly quickened into a new and spiritual life, if it be only in the *desire* of your soul for Christ and salvation; will you not feel constrained to say: "What hath God wrought?" Hope then, my brother of every degree, that the Lord which hath taught you so much will teach you more. And let us enter together upon this soul-warming subject, which is now before us, with a full assurance of faith; that as Paul said for himself, so you may for yourself, that "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil i. 6.)

I begin with the Scripture statement of our most glorious Lord's humiliation, during which "his judgment was taken away." And, in order to have the clearest apprehension which our present unripe faculties are capable of sustaining, of a doctrine so infinitely sublime and mysterious, we must first behold him on Scripture ground, as proclaimed to the church,

under those eternal distinctions of character which constitute GODHEAD. That he possessed (in the unity of the Divine essence, in common with the Father, and the Holy Ghost,) all divine attributes, and perfections, is so plainly and fully revealed in every part of the word of God, as I need not dwell upon. But what, upon the present occasion, I would desire you to have in remembrance, is this : that all those powers were his own, inherent in himself, in his own essence and nature, and underived. And hence we at once see how his humiliation carried with it such sovereign value and efficacy ; as that his judgment in all the penal effects due to sin, he, as our Almighty representative, took away. For taking into union with his GODHEAD that holy portion of our nature for the purposes of salvation to his church, all that was wrought or done in the manhood derived eternal efficacy from his GODHEAD. It was in fact the divine nature which wrought in the human nature : “ for in Him, (as the Holy Ghost hath blessedly stated it by Paul,) dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD bodily.” (Coloss. ii. 9.)

It will be our mercy, under divine teaching, to have this view of our most glorious Lord always in remembrance, for these attributes and perfections form the basis of his whole character. For here it is that he graciously becomes to his church the visible Jehovah, manifesting himself through the medium of a nature like our own. And this he was, and is, before a single act had been wrought by him for his church and people ; yea, if the church never had being, our most glorious Lord speaks of glory “ which he had with the Father before the world was :” even as the Lord himself expressed it, “ the glory which I had with thine ownself.” (John xvii. 5.) All which, though too deep in mystery for any creature-understanding to apprehend, yet very blessedly ministers to show how

infinitely great must have been his humiliation, when "his judgment was taken away."

And when, from the contemplation of himself in his own underived, inherent, and essential GODHEAD before all worlds, we look through the several Scriptural relations which are given of him, when going forth in acts of creation, in common with the Father and the Holy Ghost; what sublimity at once appears in proof of his Almighty power, in the numberless Scriptures which reveal these things, all tending to declare the efficacy of his unequalled humiliation! Figure to yourself Him, of whom it is said, "who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii. 6—8.) Let this and the like Scriptures be contemplated; and then ask yourself, what must have been his humiliation, and the infinite value of it, that it took away his judgment? Is this the same Almighty person of whom, in conjunction with the other persons in the GODHEAD, those divine perfections are spoken of: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and meted out heaven with the span; and comprehend the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" (Isaiah xl. 12—17.)

From this statement it will be very obvious, that such an humiliation in One so mighty must carry with it, in every act, a dignity and an efficacy, when, as the Surety of his people, the Lord of life and glory went forth for their salvation. For what they in their poor finite nature had done in disobedience to the divine law, He, in his infinite nature, had more than compensated; because all the acts he wrought in the

human nature were to all intents and purposes the acts of his divine. Hence infinity was stamped on all. He fulfilled the whole law, "magnified, and made it honourable:" consequently, he was the law-fulfilling God; for the GODHEAD was in all he did. The law had emanated from himself; consequently, when he fulfilled, he became to his people "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believed." (Rom. x. 4.) In like manner, his becoming a sacrifice for sin gave an eternal value and efficacy to it, for his GODHEAD stamped divinity upon it. And when the regenerated child of God is enabled by grace to receive scriptural and spiritual apprehensions into his mind and conscience of his union with Christ, and his own personal interest in Christ, he practically learns, and very blessedly enjoys what the text hath said, that "in his humiliation his judgment was taken away:" for he beholds by faith the whole misery of the church taken away by the substitution of Christ in their law-room and stead; and that Christ is made of God unto all his church and people "wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption: that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. i. 30, 31.)

I come now to what I proposed under the *second* branch of our subject, namely, that from the total incompetency of all created intelligence to declare our Lord's generation, very fully and completely the salvation he wrought in his humiliation hath proved, and thereby secured, the everlasting happiness of his people.

And we may enter on this part of the marvellous doctrine with echoing to the question in the text, and saying, who that receives the Scripture statement of his eternal power and GODHEAD can declare his generation? As the Lord out of the whirlwind answered Job, and said: "Where wast thou when I laid

the foundations of the earth?" (Job xxxviii. 1, 2.) so it may be demanded, Who shall declare the generation of Christ, when he stood up from everlasting, and it was all eternity? What date have the Scriptures marked, or what have they recorded of Christ's generation, when, as it is said: "the Lord spake in vision to his Holy One, and said, I have laid help upon one that is mighty: I have exalted one chosen out of the people?" (Psam. lxxxix. 19.) Who shall declare his generation, in relation to his own personal glory, which he himself speaks of that he had with the Father "before the world was?" (John xvii. 5.) And who was present at the everlasting council to say any thing of his generation, when in the ancient settlements of eternity Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, entered into covenant and guaranteed to each other, for the fulfilment in the economy of grace towards the church? Who shall declare the generation of Him, when the church was chosen in Him, and grace given to the church in Him, "before the foundation of the world?" (Ephes. i. 4. 2 Tim. i. 9.) Who was present at that council, when the Lord of hosts is said to have been decreed in the day of the church upon earth "to dwell in the midst of his people;" and to be "sent by the Lord of hosts" for that purpose? Of what generation is it said, the Lord of hosts was sent by the Lord of hosts: and who shall declare it? (Zech. ii. 10, 11.) To all these, and similar stupendous things of a like nature, the question may be asked, but must return unanswered: "Who shall declare his generation?" And all these, let it be observed, are prior to the miraculous incarnation; for in this inquiry, we are not come down to the time-state of the church when "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us!" (John i. 14.)

But the subject increaseth in difficulties, to baffle all discovery, as we advance in the many marvellous

statements of holy Scripture, concerning the Lord from heaven tabernacling in substance of our flesh upon earth. Of what generation, suppose you, those inhabitants above thought Christ, when the first-begotten was brought into the world, and the command went forth: "Let all the angels of God worship him?" (Heb. i. 6.) Who, or what, was He, in Jehovah's view, when he said unto Him: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever?" (Heb. i. 8.) Who, or what, can the whole creation of God form of his generation; had they spiritual faculties competent to spiritual apprehension; and could they trace the concurrent co-operation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all engaged in his miraculous incarnation? I beseech you to look at those Scriptures, Heb. x. 5; Luke i. 35; Heb. ii. 14--16. And when, in the resurrection-morn, the Lord Jesus Christ shall raise up the bodies of his people by his own personal power, and for his own personal glory; when, as the Holy Ghost testifieth of him by his servant Paul, "he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, (2 Thess. i. 10.) who shall declare his generation?" Brethren! meditate on these things; give yourselves wholly to them. Behold the stupendous humiliation of our most glorious Christ! Never cease to connect with it his infinite greatness! And while, under divine teaching, you contemplate the Scripture statement of His Almighty person and character, learn to form the same conclusion as Job did, when he said: "Lo! these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him?" (Job xxvi. 14.)

It is time for me to relieve your attention: although all that I have said, or indeed all that can be said, upon a subject so infinitely great in itself, and so infinitely surpassing the utmost grasp of human understanding to explain, is but beholding objects, which are bright and dazzling, as

through a glass darkly: let me, however, say this one word in conclusion. Lit le as we can fathom the depth of mystery in His humiliation whose generation none can declare; yet one sweet and soul-refreshing thought ariseth from the both, which belongs alike to the whole of the Lord's people; namely, how completely suited such a Saviour and such a salvation is for the subjects and objects of his grace; and how completely suited they are for him! And could the poorest sinner, which Satan hath worried with his temptations, and hurried into sin, but be led by sovereign grace to know this, he would discover that his desperate circumstances are the very state for which this Almighty Lord is so divinely calculated; when from "the belly of hell, (as one expressed it,) deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of the water spouts: and when all the waves and billows of sorrow are gone over him." (Jonah ii. 2. Psal. xlii. 7.) Great God! (I would say for you and for myself,) give us, if it be thine heavenly will, a scriptural and spiritual apprehension, both of our utterly lost and helpless state by nature, and by practice; and of our complete and finished salvation by Christ. Lord! realize in our souls the knowledge of him, in whose "humiliation his judgment was taken away;" so shall we know also "the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;" and attain by Him the resurrection of the dead: that "when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory!" Amen.

THE
PERSONAL SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST
FOR THE
SALVATION OF HIS PEOPLE.

“ Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared ; though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered ; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”—HEB. v. 7—9.

PREFACE.

THE subject of the Sermon we are now about to enter upon is among the most interesting the church of Christ can be engaged in. It is no less than the beholding the Lord of life and glory "pouring out his soul unto death, and being numbered with the transgressors: and bearing the sin of many, and making intercession for the transgressors." Let us, before we pass the threshold of the subject, seek grace from the Lord to solemnize our minds and affections for the sublime meditation. We are here presented with the glorious person of our most glorious Lord, as the Head and Husband, and Surety of his church and people. It will be our mercy, if through an unction from the Holy Ghost, we are spiritually enabled to contemplate Him in those endearing characters: and never lose sight of Him that in all He did, and all He said, and in all He suffered, it was not as a private person, but as the public Head, Sponsor, and Representative of his people. Under these impressions, I would fall on my knees with you before the throne, and beg the Lord to give both you and me grace in prayer, that we may substantiate and realize those divine truths in our souls, and each for himself feel our personal interest in them—and I would say:

Gracious Lord God! in thy unity of essence and trinity of persons behold all of those that are now before thee, as we are in Christ! "Behold, O God! our shield! and look upon the face of thine Anointed!" Called of God to this Suretyship agreement, he became one with his church and people, in the eye of the law. And hath he not "magnified it, and made it honourable?" Did he not undertake, and hath he not fulfilled all righteousness for his people? Did he not die "the just for the unjust, to bring us to God?" Oh! then give us grace to behold ourselves complete in him. Give us to see him as "the Lord our righteousness;" and that of "Him are we in Christ Jesus, who of God is made to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that all our glorying may be in the Lord!" Let the present season be a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. We look up in Him for a divine blessing from the Father, in giving to us "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him." We beg of that Almighty Spirit of wisdom and revelation that by his rich anointings we may know the glorious person of our most glorious Christ, and the infinite fulness and suitableness both of his person and salvation to our own personal wants and necessities. And we beseech our most precious Christ, that as He hath promised, so we may realize, his presence in our midst to his glory and our joy: Lord, hear us in those things which may be suitable to thy holy will, and our blessedness in thee; and give us grace to ascribe to Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, all praise and glory now and for ever. Amen.

SERMON VI.

THE PERSONAL SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST FOR THE SAL-
VATION OF HIS PEOPLE.

PSALM LXXXVIII. 15.

While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted!

THERE is one word in the Bible which in itself forms a complete library; and that word is Christ, the uncreated Word. And when the redeemed and regenerated child of God, brought from the Adam-darkness of a state of nature into a state of grace, is savingly acquainted with this divine word, he is then made "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." And as the Lord the Spirit leads him on, in daily acts of faith, by living *upon*, walking *with*, and rejoicing *in*, the glorious person and the finished salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ; he is brought also to what the apostle calls "all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Coloss. ii. 2, 3.) And what tends to endear this science to the awakened soul yet more is, that in learning to know Christ, we learn at the same time to know ourselves. For in exact proportion as He is exalted in our view, and his glory is more and more manifested to our spiritual apprehension, we sink in our own esteem, and get out of love with ourselves. In the contemplation of his holiness, acting as a mirror, we contrast with it our deformity. We feel as Job felt, and say as he

said, under the deepest sense of soul humiliation, after the Lord had answered him out of the whirlwind: "I have heard of thee (said Job) by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job xlii. 5, 6.) And such will be the self-loathing of every truly regenerated child of God, under similar circumstances. There cannot but be solemn and awful apprehensions of our own fallen and sinful nature, when the spiritual eye is enlightened to see "the King in his beauty." (Isaiah xxxiii. 17.) Hence it is that the truest standard to ascertain the state of our salvation by is, when from the conscious depth of sin, the soul cries to the depths of divine mercy; and in a sense of our total insolvency we have the more intense longings of soul after the Lord Jesus Christ.

But what renders this knowledge of Christ so inestimably precious also, (himself forming, as I before remarked, a complete library in this divine study) is, that it is alike open, and alike capable, of being read and learned by every one who by regeneration is made spiritually alive to the supernatural apprehension of divine things. And while to persons of "profane and vain babblings," (as the apostle calls them, 1 Tim. vi. 20.) those mysteries of our holy faith are, and necessarily must be hidden, "the way-faring men, (as the prophet foretold of the gospel, Isaiah xxxv. 8.) though fools, shall not err therein." Hence our Lord expressed himself pleased in the apprehension of the little ones of his people on the subject, when he said: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight!" (Matt. ii. 25, 26.) And it is the perfect conviction of this great truth, in its being so plain and commensurate to the humblest capacity of the

Lord's people, when by the new birth they are made spiritually alive to God ; it is this which makes me say, so often as I do, and insist upon it, as I so often do insist upon it, and with an emphasis suited to its vast importance ; that when Christ in his glorious person is once known, and in his Almighty salvation is once fully and cordially received, and lived upon in the mind and understanding of the child of God ; we know all that we can know this side the grave. A farther apprehension to our spiritual faculties can only be obtained when we come to enter upon our future being ; of seeing Christ in open vision as He is ; " and knowing, even as we are known." Hence we find Paul compressing all that he coveted of divine knowledge in this apprehension of Christ. And although he had profited above many of his equals in study ; yet " what things were gain to me (said Paul) those I counted loss for Christ : yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him." (Philip. iii. 7, 8.)

In this knowledge of Christ, which in itself becomes a complete library to the regenerate, my text, and the subject connected with it, forms a vast volume. To you who are conversant with your Bibles, and are taught of God, you will not need my telling you that they are the words of our most glorious Christ ; indeed they could not have been spoken by any other. " While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted." None less than Emmanuel could have assumed such language. They are inapplicable to every other. And by him only as the Sponsor and Surety of his people. And had he not suffered those terrors the whole of the apostate race of Adam must have sustained them to all eternity. So infinitely momentous are the words themselves ; and so fully demonstrated have

they been in his Almighty person, that (as I said before) in him and his marvellous work of salvation we have a whole library of all divine things to read and dwell upon for evermore.

The Psalm whence the words are taken, hath this striking peculiarity in it, namely, that it not only hath reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, and him alone; but that He himself is the sole speaker from the beginning to the end. And although the whole book of the Psalms are of Him, and concerning Him, more or less, and He is the great object and the subject of all; yet secondarily and subordinately we meet with many parts in the Psalms where his church is also noticed, and becomes concerned from union with Him in what is said. But in this Psalm there is allusion to no other. All is of Him and his incommunicable work. All is of the Son of God in our nature. It contains an account of the cries of the Lord Jesus "when in the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears." And it hath this farther remarkable property, namely, that there is not a single Psalm but what contains a mixture expressive of gleams of joy in the midst of grief; but here, from first to last, every verse is full of sorrow. He seems to say, as the deep distresses of his soul encompassed him with sackcloth all around: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold! and see, if there be any sorrow, like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day of his fierce anger." (Lament. i. 12.)

I must not allow myself to go over the whole Psalm; I shall only touch upon a few of the more prominent parts of it. Let it be remembered, however, for our scriptural and spiritual apprehension of it, under divine teaching, that the sufferings and death of Christ, for his body the church, in time, were the result of the covenant engagements among

the persons of the GODHEAD, on this vast plan of grace, to the church, from all eternity. Each glorious person guaranteed to each other. The Almighty Speaker, as represented in the words of the text, undertook to take into union with his divine nature that holy portion of our nature ; and standing forth as the Head and Husband of his body the church, in that nature, deriving efficacy from his GODHEAD to bear all the iniquities of his people ; and “to do away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Hence, while accomplishing this mighty act, feeling the heavy pressure of sin while in himself he knew no sin, he cried out, under the anguish of spirit : “ While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted ! ” God the Father on his part engaged to accept the person, and to receive the work of God manifest in the flesh, as a full propitiation for the sins of his people : and by placing Christ in their law-room and stead, to consider the whole which was wrought by Christ as fully wrought and completed for the whole body of the church, as though the church had actually performed the same themselves. And God the Holy Ghost on his part engaged to render the whole effectual in all the eventful consequences to the church, in working a meetness in the souls of the redeemed, to make them happy partakers of the same ; and by forming “ Christ in their hearts the hope of glory.”

Full of those high and sublime thoughts, we behold the Son of God in our nature, at the opening of this Psalm, pouring out his soul before the Father in those strong words of sorrow : “ O Lord God of my salvation ; I have cried day and night before thee : let my prayer come before thee : incline thine ear unto my cry : for my soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that go down into the pit : I am as a man that hath no strength. Free among the dead, like the slain

that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from thy hand. Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves!" These are all strong expressions, and such as peculiarly marked the person of Christ in the days of his flesh: so that he was by way of emphasis called "the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." (Isaiah liii. 3.) We have very many parallel Scriptures to the same amount, concerning our most glorious Christ, to which I would refer. (Psalm. xxii. throughout. Matt. xxvi. 38. Psalm xl. lxix. &c.)

But without entering farther now than what the words of the text furnish, we have abundant matter for the most solemn meditation, in what the Lord Jesus, by the spirit of prophecy, stated of himself: "While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted." Every word here is big with infinite importance. First, the Almighty Speaker himself. *I!* this mighty *I*, who from the burning bush proclaimed the eternity of his nature and essence to Moses, when he said: "I am, that I am!" (Exodus iii. 14.) And it is very blessed to discover in Scripture the whole persons in the GODHEAD bearing testimony to the same. Thus the Father calls Him "his Holy One:" (Ps. lxxxix. 19.) "His beloved Son in whom he is well pleased." (Matt. iii. 7.) And no less the Son himself, (Heb x. 5, 7.) and God the Holy Ghost is said to have anointed him to the wonderful operations. (Isaiah lxi. 1.) Hence it is blessedly said of Him: "that being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Philip. ii. 5, 6.)

But this is but one feature of the Lord's portrait, as drawn by himself in the text. The next that we meet with, after describing the eternity of his own self-existent and underived GODHEAD, is of his suffering. "While I suffer thy terrors." As the Head and Surety of his church, he undertook for the sins of his people, and consequently their sufferings due to sin. So that every thing that was contained in the curse pronounced on Adam he stood forth to sustain, and actually did sustain. (Gal. iii. 13.) And as the Surety of his church, it is testified by the Holy Ghost, the accomplishment of the whole. "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb. ii. 10.)

In speaking of the terrors which the Lord of life and glory sustained, in his engagements as the Surety of his body the church, who is competent to the service? If we go over the several statements given in holy Scripture of this mysterious subject, (and on no other ground can we tread, to take a view of them,) though they form a large account, when taken in one great whole, and unless supernaturally revealed cannot be understood; yet even then, the highest taught in the truly regenerated church of Christ can go but a little way in the discovery. For as we are informed, that such is the desperately wicked state of our fallen nature none but God himself can know the full extent of it: (Jerem. xvii. 9, 10.) it must, by the clearest consequence follow, that no mind but His who is infinite can know the extent of those sufferings which he sustained, in the redemption of his church from it. Hence while we hear him say: "While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted:" we may (and indeed are taught to) contemplate the holy Burden-Bearer as having poured out upon him, as the sinner's

Surety, all the punishment justly due to sin: included both in the first death, and in the second. The "vials of wrath," according to divine justice bore upon him, and "terrors took hold on him as waters." But who shall explain those cries, when we hear him say: "Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul!" (Ps. lxxix. throughout.) Who shall fathom the depths of misery, contained in language like that, when he said: "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" (Ps. xxii. throughout.) The soul-agonies of Christ, even from the moment of his incarnation to his death, may be contemplated, or read, from the sacred records of Scripture, but cannot come within the province of any created power to conceive, much less unfold. It is remarkable that whatever the Lord meant to convey by the phrase, "I am distracted," this is the only place in the whole Bible where the word distracted is used. Indeed the inspired writers have varied their terms of expression, when speaking of Christ's sufferings, as if unable to convey any full idea. Matthew renders it that the Lord Jesus said: "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death!" (Matt. xxvi. 38.) Mark describes Him, as "being sore amazed, and very heavy!" (Mark xiv. 33.) And Luke: his "being in an agony!" (Luke xxii. 44.) But here we must rest, in point of apprehension, for we can proceed no farther.

In calling your attention, with my own, to this of all others most solemn view of our most glorious Christ; distracted, while suffering the terrors of the Lord; what I propose, in order for our better apprehension of the sublime subject, is, in the *first* place, to consider the infinite greatness of his Almighty person. The greatness, and fulness, and all-sufficiency of his mighty salvation can only be truly known under divine teaching, as we are taught under

the same divine unction his infinite nature and essence and GODHEAD; which he possesseth in common and undivided with the Father and the Holy Ghost, in all divine perfections. When I have accomplished this purpose, I shall then shew you, from the same scriptural authority, the infinite suitability of his person to the redemption of his people, when, by the assumption of our nature, he put himself in our law-room and place, to raise up his church from the ruins of the fall; in the accomplishment of which, as he personated us, and bore our sins, and carried our sorrows, he might truly say: "While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted." The Lord give grace, both to preacher and hearer, for the right apprehension of this sublime view of our most glorious Christ, that we may have a spiritual and scriptural knowledge of all things!

Let me however detain you one moment, at our entrance upon it, just to observe, that though the knowledge of those divine mysteries of our holy faith is not attainable by all the natural abilities of the wisest men; yet is it brought down to the humblest and plainest capacities (as far as a faith in them is needful,) of all that are taught of God. So that I hope that any, and that every one, born again will be led to see that he may, and will, have a spiritual sense of the words of Christ when he said: "While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted." And let me add yet more, that as the knowledge is attainable under divine teaching, so the enjoyment of a well-grounded interest in it is not only attainable, but among the birth-right and privileges of the Lord's people, when by the Holy Ghost they are enabled to consider Christ as the glorious Head and Surety of his people, in all he did and in all he suffered: and that the whole body of the church is complete in Him. The Lord enable all his redeemed ones stead-

fastly to keep in view the infinite greatness of Him who acted when upon earth as their Surety, and is now in heaven no less their glorious Head and Husband, "in whom they are raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Ephes. ii. 5, 6.)

My first proposal in the farther prosecution of the subject is, to consider the infinite greatness of His Almighty person who in the days of his flesh expressed himself in the very solemn words of the text: "While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted." And in the accomplishment of this purpose it will be proper to behold him, as in the original statement of Scripture, being in his own underived essence and nature One of the Holy Persons in the GODHEAD. For here only we find an adequate ability for the executive part of salvation which he wrought in our nature. All the persons in Jehovah are represented in the word of God as alike engaged in the gracious purposes of the covenant. And it is impossible for the church of God to have true spiritual apprehensions of the infinite greatness of salvation, but as we are brought into a saving knowledge of his Almighty person by whom alone the incommunicable work was wrought: and in Him, and through him, and by Him, the knowledge of, and communion with, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in Jesus Christ. The cordial belief of his own eternal power and GODHEAD being once received into the regenerated soul by divine teaching, we are then prepared to receive, with this fundamental truth, suitable apprehensions of the infinite greatness of his salvation.

From this divine statement in the word of God concerning the person of Christ in his *divine nature*, we are then prepared also to receive the farther statement, from the same unerring source, how his assumption of *our nature* made him the suited Surety

and Representative of his body the church. Chosen in Him by the Father before all worlds; and betrothed by him in union for ever; and anointed in Him by the Holy Ghost; the church had being in Him before all time; and he came forth to redeem her from the Adam-fall transgression; and when by sin she lay open to the just judgment of the divine law, he fulfilled that law which she had broken, and "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." And the infinity of his GODHEAD gave efficacy to all that He did or suffered in his human nature; because it carried with it eternal dignity and value through the whole. Beheld in this point of view, he could and did do away all the penal effects of sin. Both the evils of the first death and horrors of the second death his Almighty arm removed; for in the essence of the GODHEAD, an eternity of value both in greatness and duration were in every act, every word, and every thought he offered. And hence the everlasting righteousness he brought in is to all intents and purposes, the righteousness of his people. He, it is said, "was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 21.)

One word more on this first part of our subject will be needful, to give a finishing view of this mighty transaction; namely, that in the Son of God accomplishing salvation for his body the church, it was the result of covenant engagements, between the persons in the GODHEAD; whereby all the guilt and punishment due to that guilt of the church were charged on Christ, and He actually "bore our sins, in his own body on the tree when he died the just for the unjust to bring us to God." So that the perfect obedience and blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus Christ make his redeemed perfect in the divine view, not only from its perfection, but from its being a covenant transaction; whereby we are

“accepted in the Beloved.” Here are the firm, sure, and unalterable purposes of God, in his trinity of persons confirmed. So God the Father is represented in Scripture, proclaiming: “I have said, mercy shall be built up for ever.” How? It is added: “I have made a covenant with my chosen!” (Ps. lxxxix. 2, 3.) And hence, Christ is elsewhere said “to have been justified in the Spirit!” (1 Timothy iii. 16.) Oh! the blessedness and safety of the redeemed of the Lord!

So much upon the present occasion may suffice, on the first branch of our discourse—the infinite greatness of Christ’s person. We shall now be better prepared, under divine teaching, to enter upon the second point proposed, namely, to behold him in our nature personating his church and people, bearing our sins, when under the vast pressure which no created power could have sustained, the Lord of life and glory uttered the dolorous cry: “While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted!”

And here the subject of this divine appointment opens before us in all its endearing characters, in that we are taught it was our nature which wrought out the salvation of the Lord’s people, upheld and made effectual by the indwelling GODHEAD. And there is this manifested wisdom evidently made to appear in it. For as the nature of man had sinned, that nature should obey. The law of God allowed a change of *persons*, but not a change of *nature*. Man had incurred punishment. Man shall sustain it. An angel could not have made a suitable reparation; but it must be the same nature which had broken down the fence of the divine law that shall be “the Repairer of the breach, the Restorer of the paths to dwell in.” (Isaiah lviii. 12.) Moreover, as the great enemy of souls had triumphed over our nature, by this divine process, that same nature shall triumph over hell; and thus “the worm

Jacob is made to thresh the mountains, and beat them small as chaff." (Isaiah xli.) Oh! the blessedness of that victory which the church in her Almighty Head obtained over the accursed foe of God and man, when our most glorious Christ "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Coloss. ii. 14, 15.)

But how shall we acquire faculties for the apprehension of Christ's personal sufferings in the accomplishment? Certain it is from the Scripture statement, that all, and every part, summed up, in the judgment passed upon our first parents at the fall, were included in the punishment sustained by Christ, both in body, mind, and spirit. He said himself: "The sorrows of hell compassed him about; the snares of death prevented him." (Ps. xviii. 5.) But what those sorrows of hell were is impossible to be conceived. That the whole human nature of Christ was compassed with them is fully stated in various parts of Scripture. He is said to have "made his soul an offering for sin." (Isaiah liii. 10.) In another Scripture he is said to have satisfied his church "through the offering of his body once for all." (Heb. x. 14.) And that he yielded up his Spirit to God, in the act of dying, is as truly certified, when on the cross he said: "Father! into thy hands I commend my Spirit!" (Luke xxiii. 46.) All which proves that the whole human nature of Christ was exercised in those sufferings. But to what extent, to what awful length, those sufferings reached—here we cannot advance a step to explore. That he drank "the cup of trembling even to the dregs, is declared, and wrung them all out." Hence the cry in the text: "While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted." We can add nothing to these views.

We can form no adequate conception of them. Here therefore we pause, to ponder the marvellous subject for we can go no farther. Here we behold the tremendous effects of sin! And here only our deliverance!

Let us not dismiss the subject until that we have looked up again for grace to make the suitable improvements from it. How infinitely momentous must be salvation which could only be accomplished by means so wonderful! How important must it be to know that we have a personal interest in it! And how clearly, from such views, is the apostle's statement answered of the impossibility for any to escape "who neglect so great salvation!" Precious Lord Jesus! give to the souls of thine that are before thee true, scriptural, spiritual apprehensions, in the knowledge of thy person, and of our interest in thy finished salvation! While we hear the relation of thine unparalleled sorrows, give us to see our fellowship in them. While with the ear of faith we hear thee say, "While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted;" may the Holy Ghost realize in our hearts our right in thy suretyship redemption; and to know that by "thy stripes we are healed." And while we behold Thee having drunk the cup of trembling even to the dregs; and behold the whole curse pronounced at the fall drained all dry; give unto us, Lord, to take "the cup of salvation and call upon the Name of the Lord!" "Now the God of peace sanctify us wholly; that our whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!" Amen.

THE
GREATNESS OF CHRIST'S GLORY
IN THE WORK OF SALVATION,
AND THE
EVERLASTING BLESSEDNESS OF HIS PERSON.

A SERMON ON PSALM xxi. 5, 6.

P R E F A C E.

AMONG the many interesting subjects to find place in these Village Sermons, this forms one most evidently important, namely, to have true scriptural apprehensions of the person of our most glorious Christ. For it is only in the spiritual knowledge of his person, on Scripture ground, and under divine teaching, that the church can have any true spiritual apprehension of the unity of the divine essence in his trinity of persons, and of the great events included in that high administration, in Christ becoming the Surety and Sponsor for the redemption of his church and people. But when we are supernaturally taught who Christ is, we then discover from the same divine unction, (1 John ii. 20.) and according to his own divine statement, that in knowing him, “we know the Father,” and in seeing him, “we see the Father.” (John xiv. 7—9.) And by such spiritual insight in divine things we are graciously brought unto “all riches, of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Coloss. ii. 2, 3.)

The sermon here brought before the cottager hath for its object these leading designs, namely, to speak both of the person, and of the glory of Christ in his salvation. Let us enter upon the perusal of it in prayer; that being brought under divine teaching, “we may know the things which are freely given to us of God; and not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” (1 Cor. ii. 12, 13.)

O Lord God! the great and glorious God! “glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders!” vouchsafe to testify thy divine presence, in the unity of thy GOD-HEAD, and trinity of persons, that our souls at this time may have true spiritual apprehension of “the love of God our Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost.” About to contemplate the glo-

rious person of our most glorious Christ, and the greatness of his glory in salvation, we entreat our God to go before us, and to follow us, while attending on this divine Scripture, that our “meditation of Him may be sweet.” Lord! unveil his beauties, his glories, his mightiness, his suitableness, his all-sufficiency, to our view, and make every heart of thy redeemed present in love with him and his great salvation! until, like the children in the temple under divine influence, our spirits are constrained to say, as they said, “Hosanna to the Son of David! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! hosanna in the highest!” And we implore grace from the Giver of all grace, that we may, each for himself, have such a personal apprehension of our oneness and union with Christ as to behold our interest in Christ; that in all he did and wrought and suffered in the infinite work of salvation, he did the whole, not as a private person, but as the public Head and Representative of his body the church. Blessed and Almighty Teacher! whose divine acts in the covenant of grace are to glorify Christ, and to take of his and shew unto his people; give such an unction at this time of his complete and finished salvation in our minds and consciences, as may bear our spirits up above sin and all the consequences of it; and cause us to participate with one of old, and to say as he did: “Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ!” Amen.



SERMON VII.

THE GREATNESS OF CHRIST'S GLORY, IN THE WORK OF SALVATION; AND THE EVERLASTING BLESSEDNESS OF HIS PERSON.

PSALM xxi. 5, 6.

His glory is great in thy salvation : honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him. For thou hast made him most blessed for ever !

THE charter of grace carrieth one most prominent distinction of character, in marking more or less every book, every chapter, through the Bible, both of the Old Testament and the New, with the adorable name of our most glorious Christ. For as the divine glory, (in the final event of every administration through all the departments of nature, providence and grace,) is manifested in Him as the visible Jehovah, so the close of all will centre in his Almighty person. The Holy Ghost hath stated this by his servant the apostle, in that comprehensive Scripture ; for speaking of the good pleasure of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, which he hath purposed in himself, he adds : “ that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ ; both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in Him.” This mighty Him ! Emmanuel ! “ God manifest in the flesh ! ” (Eph. i. 10. 1 Tim. iii. 16.)

Indeed, it is one of the most plain and obvious truths in the whole volume of Scripture, namely, that God's glory is, and must be, the first and ultimate end of all things. For God's glory is himself ; his essence, his nature, his very being. The attributes

and perfections of Jehovah, in his trinity of persons and unity of essence, are not as so many emanations issuing from God, such as distinguish the actions of creatures, and which in them are so many *effects*, flowing from some *cause*. Not so in reference to the divine nature: his attributes are himself. The divine glory in the divine perfections is eternally the same, and would have been the same, whether the Lord had gone forth in acts of creation, or had not. What a divine distinction of character is here! Hence we read, that when it pleased Jehovah to call into being creatures, whether angels or men, and raise up worlds demonstrative of his Almighty power, the ascription of praise ran in these words: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things and for thy pleasure they are, and were created." (Rev. iv. 11.)

But when from the world of nature the Lord leads us on to the contemplation of the world of grace, we rise into a higher contemplation of the divine glory, in discovering the manifestations Jehovah hath made of himself in his trinity of persons, in the display of this glorious attribute of grace. Grace itself is one among the many of Jehovah's incommunicable perfections, or, (as was said before of glory) is God himself. But if God will (as that God hath to our unspeakable joy) make a manifestation of this divine attribute, to the creatures whom he hath chosen as the objects and subjects of his love; it shall be done in a way and manner which shall illustrate his own glory. Yea, the Lord hath prepared and appointed a whole eternity for the display of it, and which is not too long for the purpose in duration; that "in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." (Eph. ii. 7.)

And what tends to endear it a thousand times more to the highly favoured objects of his love is, in that it is made known through a nature like our own, for it is all in the person of our most glorious Christ; and it is accompanied with this most precious of all distinctions, in that it is said to be “to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved!” (Eph. i. 6.)

But we must not stop here. The method Jehovah hath been pleased to adopt for the fullest display of grace, in our being accepted in the Beloved, is not confined to our being freed from sin, and all the tremendous consequences of sin induced by the Adam-fall transgression: grace comes from and riseth to, an infinitely higher Source, from the manifestation made of it to the church in Christ before sin, or Satan, and when there was no world, and will continue in its blissful operations when all worlds are done away. That was the greatest instance of grace, when One of the sacred persons in the GOD-HEAD took into union with himself that holy portion of our nature whereby our union with Christ, and communion with Christ, hath foundation, for all the gifts of grace here, and glory hereafter. And I detain you to pause over the marvellous subject, and to consider with me, the vast and incalculable blessedness of it. For this was for objects infinitely above our deliverance from sin; for this glorious purpose in Christ was before there was either sin or transgression in our nature; it had, among other inconceivable blessings, to bring up the church from the moment of her being chosen in Christ, into a capability of holiness in Christ. For as that portion of our nature which the Son of God took into union with himself, was “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;” so the church in her first being in Christ, and before

she had any other in nature, was "holy in Christ, and without blame before God in love." (Eph. i. 4.) Here was grace in the highest possible degree; and grace that was before we had any thing to do with this world, or the things of the world, and to accomplish far higher purposes. Every step we take in this mysterious subject may well constrain us to say with the apostle: "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!" (Rom. xi. 33.)

And the text which I have just read to you, as the foundation of my present sermon, had we spiritual apprehensions enlightened to advance any length into the deep mysteries contained in it, would call forth the same exclamation with increasing astonishment, as we waded farther into the ocean of its fulness; but with our present limited faculties we can but just skim the surface; and even here, when supernaturally led by the Lord, we frequently lose ourselves in the stupendous contemplation. "His glory is great in thy salvation; honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him; for thou hast made him most blessed for ever."

It were to lose time in bringing before you any testimonies from Scripture, by way of shewing to whom these sublime words refer, and of whom they are spoken. They can be applied to none other but to Him "who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." (Phil. ii. 6, 7.) He, and He alone, it was, and is, of whom these glorious truths are said; whose works of salvation are beyond conception great; and whose person, of such inherent dignity and power, as shew him to be "most blessed for ever."

You will perhaps be enabled, under divine teaching,

to enter more fully into a scriptural and spiritual apprehension of the sublime truths contained in this portion of the word of God, if you look at the Psalm from whence they are taken, from the opening of it, and observe how they are introduced for the church's meditation. The inspired writer found his mind led out to celebrate the glories of Christ's person, and the triumphs of his salvation; and under these impressions he begins the Psalm in an hymn of thanksgiving to Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, for the victories of our Lord over sin, death, and hell. "The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord! and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!" I admire the comprehensiveness of expression when ascribing salvation to Jehovah, for in his trinity of persons the whole co-operated in the vast design; and when, as had been agreed upon in the heavenly council, One of the glorious persons, assuming our nature, and becoming the visible Jehovah, had accomplished the blissful purpose, well might it be said, in this salvation "how greatly did he rejoice!"

But the Psalm proceeds. "Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips; for Thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness; Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head. He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever." All these are so many beautiful expressions to one and the same purport, namely, of the great Mediator's glory in his person and work. The heart's desire of Christ for his Father's honour, and his people's welfare, began from everlasting, when, as he tells us himself, he was "set up, and as one brought up with Jehovah; and his delights were with the sons of men." (Prov. viii. 30, 31.) And had I power to describe unto you, according to the many statements of Scripture, of the longings and desires of our adorable

Lord, when, as soon as he had, in common with the Father and the Holy Ghost, finished the works of creation, he looked forward for the time to arrive, when, according to the settlements in eternity, he would become incarnate, to finish the works of redemption; how his heart's desire was *then* to redeem his church from the fall, and both *then* and *now* to recover them by his grace. Could I describe, or could you and I know, or even conceive, the thousandth, or ten thousandth part of his manifestations of love, in the quickening of sinners, and the comforting of saints, and building up his people in their most holy faith; what endless volumes might be furnished of Him, and his desires towards his church, who hath so loved her as to die for her, and "to wash her from her sins in his most precious blood!" Well might he be said to be crowned with pure gold, when, in his *ascension*, he entered the gates of heaven, having obtained eternal redemption for us! (Ps. xxiv. 7. Rev. xix. 12.) And well may every poor sinner, saved by his Almighty grace, put the crown of his own personal salvation on his glorious head, when by *descending* in the power of his Holy Spirit, he makes that sinner "willing in the day of his power." (Ps. cx. 3.)

Then follow the words of the text: "His glory is great in thy salvation; honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him; for thou hast made him most blessed for ever." The *first* sublime subject presented to the church in this Scripture, is of salvation, and the glory of it, and which is alike ascribed to Jehovah, in his trinity of persons. "His glory (that is, Christ's glory) is great," in Jehovah's salvation. This, according to the order of the words in the text, is the first branch in the subject to be attended to. *Secondly*, we are called upon to contemplate the personal glory of our most glorious Christ: "honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him." And the *third*

point is a very interesting point, as it relates to the church, namely, “for thou hast made him most blessed for ever;” or, as the words are rendered in the margin of the Bible, ‘thou hast set him to be blessings.’ And yet still stronger is the original; for the word is plural, ‘blessedness,’ set him to ‘be blessedness;’ that is in the abstract, ‘blessedness itself,’ for such is Christ. It is not enough to say, that he shall bless the people; for it is not in one, or two, or ten thousand instances of his giving blessing, for he is himself all blessedness; for the Scripture saith: “men shall be blessed in him;” (Ps. lxxii. 17.) for without him nothing, however seemingly blessed it may appear, is any blessing at all. Hence speaking of him in the Psalms, ‘blessedness is the man,’ for so it is in the original, the word is plural. (Ps. i. 1, and xxxii. 1, 2. &c. &c.) The Lord be with us in going over those *three* distinct branches of the subject; and his unction eminently felt and enjoyed by all his redeemed ones present! Amen.

But before I begin, I would desire that both you and I may have it impressed upon our minds, that as all that is said in the text is said of God, and not of man, we may not presume to mingle any thing of the creature with the glory of the infinite Creator. Remember all the way through, and never lose sight of it, that it is *his glory*, and not our’s, which is great in his salvation; and as such, we all that are made partakers of this unspeakable mercy are merely receivers only, and alike receivers. The great ones have nothing to bring, and the little ones nothing to offer: “for what hast thou which thou didst not receive?”

And let me add this one thought more, namely, that as His glory is the first and ultimate end of this salvation, salvation itself is alike suited to the most desperate case of the most desperate sinners. And it forms the strongest, and best, of all possible argu-

ments of persuasion, under God's grace, to work upon the mind of any one that is made sensible of his own totally lost and helpless state by nature, namely, that as God's glory is the first object proposed by salvation, God is more concerned for the promotion of his glory than any of his people can be for their happiness. The Lord impress these great truths upon our minds at this time, while under the hope of his divine unction upon his word, and by his word, I enter upon the several branches of the text, according to the order stated :

And *first*, as I proposed, *the glory of Christ is great in Jehovah's salvation.* And that the whole persons in the GODHEAD were alike concerned and took equal part in the great covenant of grace, is evident from all the relation we have of it in holy Scripture. For while from the unity of the divine essence the act of one of the glorious persons in the GODHEAD is virtually the act of the whole ; (for the GODHEAD is One in substance and cannot be divided) yet are we taught to be on the look out for the respective acts of each towards our persons, as we are in Christ ; and to watch the leadings and endearing love-tokens of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in the very many and gracious manifestations daily shewn to us in Christ. Every part of Scripture teacheth us to contemplate God our Father as He by "whom the the whole family in heaven and earth is named." (Eph. iii. 14, 15.) And every portion in like manner in the word of God which treats of the person of our most glorious Christ, as relating to his church, speaks of him specially and particularly as the Head and Husband of his people, who, by marrying and redeeming his whole mystical body, hath shewn his personal acts of grace towards them, as the Father hath his by naming them. (Isaiah liv. 5.) And no less God the Holy Ghost hath shewn, and doth shew, his equal

part of affection to the church, by the glorious acts of anointing the church in Christ, before all time, and regenerating them from the Adam-fall transgression and sealing them in Christ to all eternity. And under this branch of my subject, I cannot but hope that every truly regenerated child of God knows this, and lives in the enjoyment of it from day to day, in that personal knowledge of and communion with each and all, in what John calls "fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John i. 3.)

But these divine truths are so obvious, and so fully stated in Scripture, that I need not enlarge upon them; I will only, upon the present occasion, request your attention to one scriptural proof farther, that the salvation of our most glorious Christ is Jehovah's salvation, and alike the joint act of the Holy Three in One which bear record in heaven; and that is to the statement which the Holy Ghost hath given by Paul, of Christ's delivering up the kingdom to God, when all the triumphs of his salvation are completed. Speaking of this finished work of our most glorious Christ, when all his enemies he hath brought under his feet, he saith, "then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; and when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power," that is, when all the purposes of his mediatorial kingdom shall have been fully answered; the salvation of the church from sin, and all its awful consequences, being finished; hell subdued, and all things which offended destroyed by his Almighty power out of his kingdom; the judgment day passed; the wicked shut up in their own place; and the righteous in Christ shining forth as the sun in the glory of God: then shall God, the Holy Three in one, receive the mediatorial kingdom from the hands of our Christ; and though he will then, and for ever, continue the same glorious Head of his body the church "the

fulness that filleth all in all," yet the purposes of redemption being for ever complete, and nothing more needed in the destruction of sin and evil, the manifestation of God in his trinity of persons to the church, as the church is in Christ, will be unceasingly and eternally, and "God will be all in all." (1 Cor. xv. 24—28.) Well therefore might the salvation of our most glorious Christ be called Jehovah's salvation; and the glory of our most glorious Christ be said to be great in the accomplishment of it.

I proceed now to the *second* branch I proposed in this subject, and to which the text in order leads, namely, of the personal glory of our most glorious Christ: "honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him." And here I entreat your closest attention. The Lord the Spirit take both speaker and hearer under his divine guidance! and I venture then to hope we shall be led to discover, that the honour and majesty of our Almighty God and Saviour became the prior motive in all the events connected with the church. His glory the first and predisposing cause; and the salvation of the church the effect.

From a great variety of passages in the word of God on this sublime subject, we are taught to conclude that infinitely higher ends than hath relation to the church were in the purposes of Jehovah, when in the divine council it was decreed that One of the Holy Three should take into union with himself a medium of visibility; among the many portions which might be named, I shall, upon the present occasion only select one, namely, that very blessed part in the seventeenth chapter of John's gospel, where our Lord thus speaks to the Father: "And now, O Father! glorify thou me with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (verse 5.) Now observe, that as these words are expressed in a way of prayer, the glory he speaks of could not

mean his essential glory of GODHEAD, for this each person in the Holy Trinity had alike in common; it was not in the one to give, neither the other to receive; each possessed it in the inherent, underived self existence of the GODHEAD. Neither could it be the glory arising from the work of redemption, as the Mediator, for Christ speaks of the glory which he had with the Father "before the world was;" hence the conclusion is clear, it was his own personal glory; a glory in the union of the double nature, and before an act of mediation had been wrought; and a glory so truly personal as belonged to Christ alone; a retiring into Jehovah, in his trinity of persons; and Jehovah glorifying the person of Christ "with himself;" the words are express to this purpose: "glorify thou me with thine own-self." Surely here is somewhat infinitely higher than any thing connected with the church!

But this is not all, though no doubt it is the highest and most sublime. For it must be observed also that "honour and majesty is laid upon Christ," in that, by virtue of this assumption of a nature like ours into union with the GODHEAD, the Lord of life and glory had personal honour and majesty in becoming the medium of all communication to creatures; and thus rendered the GODHEAD in a certain degree visible, whose very essence and nature without it would have been impossible to have seen. (1 Timothy vi. 16.) And hence all creation found a source of communication from the Creator to the created; for it is said, "all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Coloss. i. 16, 17.) Here again we discover somewhat of the personal glory of Christ, beside that which ariseth from his headship to his church.

Neither is this all. For added to these glorious considerations, it were to invert the very order of

things, and lessen to our apprehension the idea the Scriptures give us of the GODHEAD and eternal excellency of Christ, to suppose that the assumption of that holy portion of our nature into the divine was principally for the church, and for her welfare. Whereas the reverse of this was the case; the church was formed for Christ, not Christ for the church. The church in herself, and without an eye to Christ, is nothing. All the members of Christ's mystical body are but as so many cyphers without him. By this mighty One standing at her head, she derives entity and number, without which, the whole world form nothing numerical in being. All which considerations, unitedly taken together, serve to demonstrate somewhat of the personal glory of Christ, such as the text describes: "honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him."

The *last* particular I have to notice, according to my proposal on this subject, is the concluding clause: "for thou hast made him most blessed for ever." And this is the natural result of the two former; for our most glorious Christ must be indeed not only most blessed in himself, but blessedness to his people. He is the all in all to his people, in time and to all eternity. In his person, the very heaven of heavens to the whole body the church. In his fulness, the sum and substance of all blessedness, "for they are complete in him." He hath undertaken to do all that grace can do, (and that is saying a great word) for his people here. And he himself will be their glory in the world to come. It is not enough in our contemplation of his blessedness to say, that all gifts and graces; our happiness, our holiness, will be given to us by him, to constitute our felicity in heaven; but it is He himself, which is, and will be, our heaven, our home, our everlasting portion. The most capacious faculties ripened in glory will be

filled from him, in the ocean of his fulness; yea, he saith himself, "he that overcometh shall inherit all things;" (Rev. xxi. 7.) and in Him, as our inheritance, we truly possess all things!

And what shall we say more? nay, what can we want more? let me fold up a long discourse with a short conclusion. You see then, if the Lord be your teacher, some few faint outlines of Him whose glory is great in Jehovah's salvation; how glorious he is in himself, "honour and majesty laid upon him;" and how immense is his blessedness to his people, for "he is most blessed for ever!" See to it that he is your salvation, your glory, your portion, and that you look for these things nowhere beside, for they can nowhere else be found. And as I would be very jealous over mine own heart on these eternal concerns, so I would affectionately recommend to all the Lord's people, to exercise the same jealousy over their's. I would desire to find nothing satisfying until I find Christ in it; and sure I am nothing will be unsatisfying, how unpromising soever it may be in itself, when I can eye Christ in the dispensation. His conscious presence will be the sweetener of every natural bitterness; and the love-tokens of his favour, in every event of life, the heightener of all joys. Precious Lord Jesus! I would say for myself, and all thy redeemed ones, vouchsafe thy favour which is better than life itself, and let the sweet "savour of thy name be as the ointment poured forth!" Amen.

THE
EVERLASTING DISTINCTION
BETWEEN NATURE AND GRACE,

ILLUSTRATED ON SCRIPTURE AUTHORITY,

*IN THE STATEMENT OF THE CHILDREN OF THE BONDWOMAN
FROM THE CHILDREN OF THE FREE.*

A SERMON, PREACHED ON THE MORNING OF THE LORD'S DAY, IN THE
CHURCH OF CHARLES, PLYMOUTH, MARCH 20, 1825.

P R E F A C E.

IT may not be improper to state in this place the general plan of these sermons for the use of cottagers, diversified as the subjects are, and read as they may be, detached and apparently unconnected with each other, yet there hath been a design, from the beginning, of connecting the whole into one plan of progressive usefulness, if followed up in the order in which they are placed. Hence the first sermon is intended to set forth what is to be expected in the labours of the gospel ministry: so that if it be asked, what are faithful ministers supposed to preach? the answer is, “the servants of the Most High God shew unto the people the way of salvation.” And the *second* follows up this preaching, in shewing how the people may be ascertained, that the preaching they hear, and the Lord’s blessing upon it, is the truth as it is in Jesus; namely, that “the people have the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.” Having thus paved the way for the apprehension of right preaching, and the blessed effects following it, the *third* sermon leads to the Source of all saving knowledge, in the contemplation of Him, whose glorious person and whose finished salvation is endeared to the church under that sublime character in which he hath proclaimed himself “the resurrection and the life.” To this succeeds, what is so intimately connected with it, the event, in which the church is included in this high administration; and which therefore the *fourth* Sermon states in that most blessed doctrine, namely, “the children of the resurrection.” The *fifth* and *sixth* sermons are chiefly of the person of Christ; and the *seventh* treats of his unequalled sorrow, when accomplishing the salvation of his people. The *eighth*, which we are now about to enter upon, is directed to set forth, under Scripture information, the everlasting difference between the “children of the bondwoman, and the children of the free.” Let us seek grace from the Lord, to render our attention to it profitable. Blessed Lord God! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, look upon every one of thine which are now before thee; and as the children of the free woman, give them clear marks of their adoption character; that we may none of us feel the spirit of bondage again to fear, but may know the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, “Abba, Father!” And so sweetly accompany the word to our spiritual understanding, that as we prosecute the wonderful subject of distinguishing grace, our hearts may feel our personal interest in the same; and the Holy Spirit may bear witness to our spirits “that we are the children of God.” Graciously confirm those divine truths to us, as we sit under thy word; and may many a one of thy redeemed find cause to say, the Lord is here! We ask this and every other mercy in His name who is “the mercy promised;” and to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we desire to ascribe everlasting praises. Amen.

SERMON VIII.

THE EVERLASTING DISTINCTION BETWEEN NATURE AND GRACE.

GALATIANS IV. 22—24.

For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh: but he of the free-woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory

AND what is an allegory? It is simply no more than a parabolical method of conveying instruction, by familiar illustrations of terms suited to popular apprehensions; in relation to holy Scripture it is the explaining divine truths by human figures; it was a plan very generally used in the eastern part of the world; and our most glorious Lord, in the days of his flesh, in accommodation to the time and custom then being, so much did he condescend to deliver his instructions in the audience of the people in this way, "that at one time without a parable spake he not unto them." (Matt. xiii. 34.)

The subject before us in the words of the text is of the same kind. Under the similitude of an allegory, the Holy Ghost hath been pleased to bless the church with explaining to us the two covenants, illustrated in the historical relation of Sarah and Hagar, as recorded in the book of Genesis, chapters xvi. and xxi. We can never be sufficiently thankful to God the Holy Ghost for giving himself the spiritual meaning of those records; for never, untaught of God, could it have entered into the mind of man, that matters of so important a nature were veiled under that covering. We might, and should no doubt, have read the his-

tory of both again and again, as the different characters are there stated in the Holy Scripture, and have considered the whole an interesting memoir in the family of the patriarch Abraham, in that early age of the world; but to have supposed that it had so vast a reference to ourselves, and that in the son of Sarah was intended to shew the election of grace; and in the son of the bond-woman Hagar was meant what the apostle calls "the rest:" (Rom. xi. 7.) such a spiritual apprehension of the subject, untaught of God, would have been for ever impossible, (as indeed it is now, without the same divine instruction,) and must have been unknown.

We shall be the better prepared, under the Lord's anointing, to enter into clearer apprehensions of the subject, if we first gather into one point of view the several parts of the history itself, before we look into what the Holy Ghost, by Paul, calls an allegory, as illustrative of the two covenants: the children of the bond-woman under the covenant of works; and the children of the free in the covenant of grace. And the Lord, the Almighty Giver of this allegory, grant an understanding in all things.

The history opens with the words of the text. "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise: which things are an allegory." Abraham had *many* sons; we read of no less than *six* in one verse of Scripture. (Gen xxv. 1, 2.) But the great object the Holy Ghost had in view in teaching this allegory to the church being to illustrate distinguishing mercy in election, the Lord refers only to the son of Sarah, and the son of Hagar; the *one* representing the children of grace, and the *other* the children of nature; the seed of Hagar the covenant of works, the seed of

Sarah that of salvation ; the *former* the law, the *latter* the gospel. The two sons of Abraham were happily made choice of for this purpose, as setting forth in the persons of Ishmael and Isaac, the two distinct heads of each family. And this is similar to what, by the same servant, Paul, the Holy Ghost afterwards stated to the church of the Corinthians, under the headship of Adam, and of Christ : “ The first man is of the earth, earthy ; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy ; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.” (1 Cor. xv. 47.) The doctrine is the same in both. Adam, though when he came out of the hands of his Maker he was an holy being, yet that holiness was nothing more than *natural* holiness, he had no *spiritual* holiness, “ but was of the earth, earthy ; ” and when he fell he lost all that natural holiness, and entailed on all his seed his own sunken and degraded nature : “ As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy.” In like manner Christ and his seed have a distinct relationship from that of Adam and his seed : “ For as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.” The children of promise have a being in Christ, and a well being in Christ, from everlasting ; and though in the Adam-fall transgression, they, as well as all Adam’s fallen, helpless race, are involved in the same condemnation ; yet from their original and eternal adoption character in Christ, when they are regenerated and quickened into their spiritual life in Christ, they are brought to the spiritual apprehension of their relationship to Christ, “ and cry, abba, Father ! ” (Gal. iv. 6.)

In the illustration of this leading doctrine of our most holy faith, God the Holy Ghost hath been graciously pleased by this allegory to give us his own divine statement of it. As was Ishmael, the son of the bond-woman, so are all the children of bondage,

in every generation of the world; they are all children of nature only, and can rise no higher than nature; they never had, neither can they have, any inheritance in Christ; they have no spiritual grace given to them in Christ, as the children of the promise have, before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.) They were never chosen in Christ, neither predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to the Father himself, "according to the good pleasure of his will;" neither accepted in Christ before the world began. (Eph. i. 4—6.) All they had, and all they have, and all they can have, is necessarily limited to the gifts of nature; and from having no union with Christ, they possess no capability of having communion with Christ; and from being children of the bond woman, in that alliance they continue, and cannot have any heirship "with the son of the free." On the other hand, Isaac was a child of promise before he was conceived in the womb, (Gen. xvii. 19.) and being chosen in Christ, grace was given to him in Christ, and eternal life, with all the blessed properties connected with it, given to him in Christ; by which the recovery from the Adam-fall transgression became secured to him, and all the seed of Christ with him; and all the promises of God "which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus," confirmed and rendered unalterably fixed in that "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." (1 John v. 11. 2 Cor. i. 20. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.)

In the farther prosecution of this subject, my intention is, as the Lord shall be pleased to enable me, to follow up the few observations which I have already made, and (on Scripture ground) state some other of the very blessed things connected with this dispensation of the Lord, in his marked distinction between nature and grace, under the following bearings:—I shall *first*, according to my usual plan in speaking to you

on divine truths, bottom the whole where the Lord himself hath bottomed his sacred purposes in relation to the church, by shewing you how the pleasure of Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, hath been revealed in this "mystery of godliness." I shall then, *secondly*, take up the subject under these two distinct branches of the children of the bond-woman, and the children of the free; that under the Lord's teaching, the Lord's people may be clearly led to see, and in that spiritual sight to bless God for the discovery, that "they, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."

Let me only before I enter upon it drop a word or two to the children, and especially to the *little* children, that they be not alarmed, as if the subject was involved in difficulty to understand, and above their comprehension. To a truly regenerated child of God, under the unction of divine teaching, nothing is more simple and plain, and nothing more comfortable and refreshing; and although it is indeed beyond all the learning of this world's wisdom, for the greatest abilities in *nature* to apprehend a single point of what is *spiritual*, yet the Lord Jesus assures his church, that while "these things are hidden from the wise and prudent, they are revealed unto babes." (Matt. xi. 25.)

And I would add another observation for the children of the Lord's family to take comfort from, and especially the *little* ones of the family, namely, that they be not discouraged from giving their earnest attention to this subject, from an idea that they have not minds so capacious as others of the Lord's people seem to have, for receiving the "deep things of God." Do not say so; for by regeneration and the new birth, the spiritual faculties of the Lord's children of the free-woman are all equally made alive to the knowledge of that life, in

the truths themselves ; though, like children in nature, they are not all of equal age, or equal stature. You should remember that a babe just born is as truly alive as one arrived to manhood ; and that new birth and spiritual life in Christ gives an equal right in Christ, if not of equal knowledge and understanding. It is said of sheep, that amidst the largest flock the lamb will know its own dam by smell, and the dam will know, by the same instinct, her own lamb ; be this as it may, I stay not to determine ; but sure I am, as Jesus knoweth his own sheep, and calleth them all by name, and they follow him, so the lambs of his fold are drawn to him by that divine attraction, far greater than all creature instinct, which He himself hath marked, of the Father and of himself, and hath promised. (John vi. 44. xii. 32. and vi. 37.)

And let me add another observation for the encouragement of the *little* ones. A largeness of capacity or attainment, even in spiritual knowledge, is not an higher proof of our life in Christ, and our well-being in Christ, than in one of humbler apprehensions ; and for this plain reason, because it is not what our views of Christ are, so much as Christ's views of us, which constitutes our relationship to Christ. In glory itself our happiness and our blessedness will not arise from our attainments ; but the Lord's manifestations of himself to us. All we are, and all we have, and all we ever shall be, or have, is from what we are, and what we have, and shall be everlastingly receiving from Christ ; we shall then be, as we are now, still vessels of receiving ; and each and every child of promise will have a capaciousness equal to his utmost desires, to make him everlastingly blessed, and holy, and happy, in beholding Him who is alike to all the one Almighty object of all our glory.

And while I say these things by way of preface to our entering on the subject, for the comfort of the

little ones of the Lord's family, I entreat that all and every one, before whom I speak, will not have their minds discouraged from the study of this divine doctrine, concerning the son of the bond-woman and the son of the free, from an apprehension that by reason of sin they would conclude themselves to be among the children of the *bond-woman*. Let it be always remembered that the gospel is preached to sinners, as sinners; neither doth the foulest state of sin, and under the most deplorable circumstances of sin, prove that such are of the children of the bond-woman. There is a vast and essential, yea, an everlasting difference between being in the *service* of Satan, and being the *children* of Satan. Many of God's dear children, yea, all of them by nature, have lived more or less in Satan's service, and some of them long worn his livery, done his drudgery, and worked for his wages; but when the Lord hath awakened them by his grace, and called them from darkness to light, they have been enabled to run out of Satan's kingdom, and thereby proved that they were, and are, not of "the children of the bond-woman, but of the free." Let the most distressed sinner in the most desperate state of sin, therefore, take comfort from hence; and should the Lord in rich, free, full, sovereign grace and mercy, recover any precious soul this day from the fangs of hell, through the foolishness and poverty of preaching, with what holy joy and thanksgiving to God shall we bless the Lord for this sweet allegory, when seeing the truth of it realized in rescuing a child of promise "out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will!" (2 Tim. ii. 26.)

I now enter on the subject, as I proposed, by *first* shewing you the bottom and foundation on which the whole doctrine rests, in the purpose, counsel, will, and pleasure of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, as

revealed to us in the Scripture concerning "this mystery of godliness."

The revelation which God hath been pleased to make of himself on this the momentous truth, begins with the statement of himself concerning the unity of his divine essence, and trinity of persons. "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." (Deut. vi. 4.) Here is Jehovah's own declaration of himself, and consequently not liable to error, and in it we may discover a plain conclusion, that in the oneness of the divine essence here is implied a plurality of persons; for while it is said the Lord our God is one Lord, the word *Lord* is singular, and *God* is plural; the *former* expresseth the unity of Jehovah, and the *latter* God being plural, plainly shews that in the divine essence there is no more than one; yea, the very charge given to Israel, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord," saith as much, for it would have been unnecessary to have charged Israel to remember that one is one, if that had been all intended; but as in the word God, which is plural, the Israelite might have lost sight of the oneness, from the plurality of persons, he is therefore charged to have always in remembrance that the *Alehim*, that is God, being in persons more than one, he should hold with the unity of the GODHEAD, while adoring God no less in his trinity of persons. And what is this precious Scripture but to the same amount as that the Holy Ghost in after ages gave the church by John, when he said, "for there are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One." (1 John v. 7.)

Next to the spiritual and scriptural apprehension of this foundation truth of all revelation, the subject proceeds to the statement of the gracious acts of the holy Three in One, in relation to the church. A covenant "ordered in all things and sure" was

ordained by God in his trinity of persons ; and one of the Holy Three engaged in what in Scripture language is called the fulness of time, to take into union with himself an holy portion of our nature, in which he might become the visible Jehovah to his church and people, and accomplish all the purposes decreed from everlasting, in all the departments of nature, providence, grace, and glory. Hence we find that this Almighty One was set up from everlasting ; hence in Him the church was chosen from everlasting ; hence though this election of grace, according to fore-views and fore-appointments in the divine counsel before all worlds, was to come, like all the other sons and daughters of Adam, during this time-state upon earth, into the same fallen sinful state as the whole race of men ; yet from their election-union in Christ their glorious Head, security was made for their recovery in the person, and by the great salvation accomplished for them through our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this stupendous plan, which could originate only *in* Jehovah, and be wrought only *by* Jehovah, the holy Scripture gives a farther statement in the outlines of the covenant entered into from everlasting by the Almighty contracting parties ; when each glorious person in the GODHEAD undertook to accomplish certain gracious acts toward the church chosen by the Father in Christ before all worlds, which should bring home the church to eternal glory, through the redemption in Christ Jesus, when all worlds were done away, and one vast eternity as had been before all time now remained ; in which the church in Christ should be happy, and blessed, and holy, for ever. Hence the election of grace being all *chosen* by the Father, *adopted* by the Father, and *accepted* by the Father in Christ, (Eph. i. 4,—6.) were *united* to the person of Christ, *redeemed* by

Christ, and *saved* with an everlasting salvation in Christ, (Isa. liv. 5. Hosea ii. 19, 20. Isa. xlv. 17. Eph. i. 7.) and *anointed* in Christ by the Holy Ghost, and *regenerated* by the Holy Ghost, from the Adam-fall apostacy; and “sealed unto the day of redemption.” (2 Cor. v. 5. Eph. ii. 1. Eph. iv. 30.)

Before I proceed to the *second* branch I proposed, in this subject, I would only detain you with a short observation from what hath been already offered, under the *former*; namely, to say, that as the spiritual knowledge of these sublime truths can only be spiritually taught, and spiritually learnt, it will be your special happiness to have a personal acquaintance with the Holy Three in One, in those things by what John calls (through the unction of the Holy Ghost) “fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” (1 John i. 3.)

I now proceed to the consideration of the *second* branch of the subject under the special bearing of the doctrine, namely, the distinct and irreconcilable difference between “the children of the bond-woman, and of the free.”

And I begin this part with observing, that, according to the statement of Scripture, the original root and stock of the opposite families began *from* everlasting, and must continue *to* everlasting. No alteration can take place; no alliance can be formed between principles so opposite. The seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent are as hostile to each other as the most opposed elements in nature. Fire and water, cold and heat, light and darkness, can never be combined. What the monarch saw in vision, concerning the image of “the iron and the clay,” which could not coalesce, is in reality verified, in the totally opposite principles of the children of the bond-woman, and the children of the free. “For what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” (2 Cor. vi. 15.)

Hence, as the origin of each family ariseth out of principles so opposite, their progressive state becomes marked uniformly, from beginning to end, with the same repugance, and total separation to each other. The children of the free-woman, being from everlasting the children of promise, have union with Christ, and communion with Christ their spiritual Head, in all things which pertain to life and godliness. Neither doth their apostacy in Adam affect their interest in Christ, or cut off their relationship amidst all their delinquency; for what began in eternity, and was destined to last to all eternity, could not be defeated by the events of time. The church of Christ, in all her defilements in Adam, both by original and by actual sin, was and is still the church of Christ; and though adulterous, was and is no less his wife. - Hence Paul blessed God for the church, that God "had from the beginning chosen his people to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth: whereunto he called the church by the gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thes. ii. 13, 14.) And hence (and which is the grand and infinite cause of all) by virtue of this everlasting union *with* Christ, and eternal life *in* Christ, every child of promise, notwithstanding his being by nature, from the Adam-fall transgression, "dead in trespasses and sins," hath a capability of being quickened into this new and spiritual life, from that spiritual life and grace he had given to him in Christ Jesus, "before the world began." (2 Tim. i. 9.) And this is very blessedly stated by the Holy Ghost himself, through Paul. "For 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. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans viii. 29, 30.)

On the other hand, the son of the bond-woman never had, and never can have any communication of spiritual life from Christ, for there never was any union between them. And as it was by Ishmael, so was it, and is the state of all like Ishmael who spring from the same stock. "He who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh." He had no more than the mere *natural* life of flesh. Hence there was nothing in him capable of *spiritual* apprehension. And this incapability runs through the whole of the bond race, from generation to generation. If you consult the history through all ages, you will find the same uniformity. In the succeeding family to that of Abraham we have the same truth illustrated in the instance of Jacob and Esau: these two persons were not only brothers, but twin-brothers: they not only lay in the same womb, begotten by the same father; but lay at the same time together in the same womb. Yea Esau was the eldest, and according to birthright he was according to the patriarchal custom the priest of the family. But what was the ordination of God concerning these two brothers? Hear the Lord's decision: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth: it was said, the elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Malachi i. 2, 3.) "What shall we say then?" (said the apostle Rom. ix. 11, 14.) And if you are so disposed, you may say the same. But what is the silencing answer to such sayings? "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right!"

But what shall be said to those things we behold in life, where we see many making a profession of godliness, as though of the seed of the free-woman, but in the after circumstances of their life prove, that they had all along been of the children

of the bond-woman? The answer is at hand in the word of God. Appearances are nothing. Where there is not the work of regeneration there can be no evidence of any child of promise. We read in the Scriptures of truth of some "who were once enlightened, and had tasted of the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and had tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." (Heb. vi. 4, 5.) But in these there is not one feature of the child of the freewoman. They are said to "have been once enlightened." Yes! enlightened in head knowledge, like men studying some art or science; so an head knowledge of divine things, but no heart influence. They are said also to have "tasted of the heavenly gift." Yes, like children tasting medicine, and so nauseate it as to spit it out. And "partakers of the Holy Ghost." Here seems somewhat more plausible; but in reality not so. Partakers of the Holy Ghost, not in grace, not in the new birth, not in any saving knowledge, but simply partakers in the ordinary means of grace, as Chorazin and Bethsaida were of old. (Matt. xi. 21.) And the taste they are said to have had of "the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come"—both these are no more than mere *outward* privileges, which belong alike to the children of the bond-woman, and of the free. All are without a single mark of grace to denote the spot of God's children. Nothing short of regeneration proves the children of promise. Hence therefore the conclusion from the whole is, that there is a total dissimilarity in their origin, connections, manner of life, and both in their state and prospects of the life that now is, and that which is to come, between "the children of the bond woman, and the children of the free." In conclusion, therefore, it becomes an important question to each and every one present; to which

family do I belong? All present must be classed under one family or the other : for there is no middle state. There is nothing neutral in this warfare. The Lord Jesus himself saith : “ He that is not with me is against me.” (Matt. xii. 30.) And as there is no proof of belonging to the children of the free-woman but by regeneration, or being born again, let nothing satisfy your mind but this infallible evidence. Training, education, attendance on the several means of grace, very profitable as they are rendered through divine teaching to the children of promise, yet are they in themselves nothing to mark the bond children from the free. Let a wolf be taken while a cub from its mother’s den, and fed and trained up with lambs, yet is it a wolf still ; and in the after stages of life will shew its original relationship to the wolf by its wolfish nature. Such are all the children of the bond woman : educate them, train them, bring them under the continual means of grace, catechise them, make them read the Scriptures, hear sermons, cram them with all the trammels of religion until that they are full to the mouth in creeds and prayer-books, yet without a change of heart, without a new nature, there will be no removal from the old stock. The Ishmaels can never become Isaacs, no more than the Isaacs can become Ishmaels : as is the root, so are the branches ; that solemn Scripture decides it, “ they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God.” (Rom. ix. 8.)

What shall I add, except a prayer to God, that while, ere long, an everlasting separation must take place between the different seeds of the children of promise and the children of bondage ; and the word of God shall separate between the precious and the vile, and cast out the bond woman and her son ; we may find grace to bless the Lord for his unspeakable mercy, and say with Paul, “ so then, brethren, we are not children of the bond woman, but of the free ” Amen.

J E S U S,

TOUCHED WITH

THE FEELING OF OUR INFIRMITIES.



BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON, PREACHED THE FIRST
LORD'S DAY MORNING AFTER EASTER, THE 10th APRIL, 1825,
IN THE CHURCH OF CHARLES, PLYMOUTH.

P R E F A C E.

PROSECUTING the same divine subject, which, under the Lord, first gave being to *The Village Sermon Society*, and which interests the spiritual faculties of the Lord's regenerated ones, with increasing earnestness, as we increase in the knowledge of the Lord himself; the sermon on which the new born cottager is here invited to meditate, is what in its operation meets him continually more or less in his daily walk of life, namely, the person of our most glorious Christ; and the grace of Christ, as revealed in the thousand, and ten thousand instances, by which the Lord manifests his unceasing attention and watchfulness over his people, and the sympathy of his heart, in making every case of their's his own. These are among the most endeared and endearing thoughts which ought to occupy our constant meditation. And the awakened mind of the Lord's family, when brought by sovereign lead ings into an holy familiarity with these things, will derive therefrom a sanctity to render the objects of time and sense daily less attracting. "Having (as the apostle describes it) our conversation in heaven," from communion with the Lord of heaven, and his gracious revealings of himself to our hearts; we shall as Paul did, "be looking for the Saviour;" that when a life of faith shall be swallowed up in open vision, him, whom we have long known by the visits of his love, and the sympathy with which he hath entered into all the feelings of our infirmities, "we shall see as he is, and know even as we are known." Let us enter on the perusal of it with prayer.

Will it please our gracious Lord God, by the manifestation of his divine presence, and the communion of his divine influences to the souls of his redeemed now before him, to testify what the prophet was directed to declare should be the name of the spiritual city from that day of the gospel: "The Lord is there." We hope and trust that the desire of our souls is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. And if the lighting down of thy glorious arm is felt in our little assembly, in the grace of our

Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God our Father, and the fellowship and communion of the Holy Ghost, very blessed will be the effects flowing from the united source of all our mercies, from Jehovah in his trinity of persons. Precious Lord Jesus! do thou who art touched with the feeling of our infirmities, take up the persons and the concerns of all thine here at thy footstool; knowing as we do know, by divine teaching, that our God and Saviour is more disposed to give all we need, than we are to ask or receive; we feel a confidence, amidst all that we are the subjects of in leanness of soul, that our adorable Lord for his own glory will not suffer our unworthiness to prevent the gifts of his goodness; and in our darkest hours this consideration bears us up, that Jesus knows all, loves all, and hath the suited blessing for all. Resting therefore on the promises of our God, which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus, though *we* cannot plead, *thy* mercies are the same; and though we are nothing, thy word stands unalterably sure, for the fulfilment of all that is suited for the divine glory and thy people's welfare, in that it is said by our God himself: "It shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear." Graciously, O Lord God, realize this divine assurance in our souls at this time, in what we are now about to engage in, and let each of thine find grace to give personal testimony to the truth of thy holy word, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SERMON IX.

JESUS TOUCHED WITH THE FEELING OF OUR INFIRMITIES.

HEBREWS IV. 15.

Touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

THE spiritual church of our most glorious Christ hath been lately called upon during our solemn services of the present holy season, to go through some of the affecting scenes in our Lord's history which relate to his sufferings and death in the accomplishment of our salvation. We have followed him by faith in spiritual meditation into the garden of Gethsemane, to the hall of Pilate, and beheld him taken from prison and from judgment, and through the whole process of his agonies, and death, and resurrection, seen him as the Head and Surety of his church obtaining eternal redemption for us. And if (as I would fain hope through grace) the Lord the Spirit, by his divine unction, hath realized these sublime mysteries to our spiritual apprehensions, and made them living principles in our hearts, the sweet savour of them will always remain uppermost in our affections, and be as the perfume of "the ointment poured forth."

There is one feature however in the person and character of our glorious Lord, connected with these holy mysteries, which while going through the solemn services of his sufferings we could do no more than merely glance at. Indeed, we could not at that time have our minds directed to ought beside himself; our whole souls were necessarily absorbed in that one

contemplation; but this will now become a very suited sequel to the interesting subject. The feature of Jesus to which I refer, and as spoken of in the words of the text, which I have just read to you, is the personal affection and tenderness of our all lovely and all loving Christ to his body the church: he is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." This opens to a soul-refreshing view of our most glorious Lord; and unless you have been in the habit of attending to it, and are familiarly acquainted with it, you will hardly conceive to what an extent it reacheth in the various and diversified exercises of the Lord's people.

And it should be observed, that the sympathy and tenderness, or as the Scripture expresseth it, the being "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," is of such a nature as in Christ's GODHEAD alone could not (I speak with all possible reverence) have been ascribed to him. The very nature and essence of God, not having body, parts nor passions, renders it impossible for him to be moved with *feelings* like those of manhood. Known unto God are all his works, and consequently all the infirmities of his creatures; and this knowledge is alike possessed by all the persons in the GODHEAD; but the being *touched* with the *feeling* of our infirmities without a similarity of nature, appears as a matter impossible. And hence it is expressly stated by the Holy Ghost, that in order our most glorious Lord should be rendered capable of this feeling, he should take into union with himself, that holy portion of our nature, and which he did when "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." (John i. 14.) For thus the Scripture speaks: "Wherefore 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." (Heb. ii. 17, 18.)

And here by the way, and before we proceed farther, I would pause, and call upon you to behold with me one of the most interesting views which the gospel holds forth to us of our most glorious Lord. In this combined contemplation of God and man in one person, we discover the infinite greatness and suitability in which the Lord Jesus comes home endeared to every state and circumstance of his people. From the almightiness of his GODHEAD, he is an ever-living fountain of fulness that his body the church can need in time or eternity; and by his assuming that holy portion of our nature into union with the GODHEAD, there is not only a channel and medium opened for communication from him to his people, as an Head to his members; but also, by that very nature he possesseth, what is expressed in the words of the text, an ability of being "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." Hence, therefore, by *feeling* as well as by *knowledge* our most glorious Christ is so blessedly suited for every state and circumstance of his people, that all the members of his mystical body in all their varied and multiplied situations, cannot fail of finding ample resource in him for every time of need. What an endless subject of the most sublime and soul-cheering contemplation doth this one feature of our lovely and all loving Lord open to our spiritual apprehension!

But we must not stop here. For this contemplation of our Christ, God and man in one person, not only enables him both to *know* our wants, and to *feel* for our infirmities, but all the blessings he bestows upon us, coming to us as they do in and through a nature like our own, are softened and humanized, (if the expression be allowable) in so blessed a manner, that

though they are incapable of description, yet they produce "a joy unspeakable and full of glory." God alone, without this medium of manhood, were he to manifest himself to us, though in a way of love, would be overwhelming to our faculties in the present state of grace; yea, in our future world of glory we are taught that all manifestations can only be in and through him, our most glorious Christ, as God and man, the visible Jehovah. (1 Tim. vi. 16.) How very blessed then is the consideration that both in the life that now is, and in that which is to come, all the revelations of God in his trinity of persons, will be in and through our Christ. We shall have communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in all things that our then full ripened faculties are capable of sustaining for everlasting blessedness, holiness, and glory; but all in him, and through him, and by him, whose union with our nature will reveal the whole through that nature, and render the whole undescribably sweet and precious. And as our Christ is both God and man, his eternal power and GODHEAD will cause all his communications to be as he is himself, eternal and unchangeable, impossible to be ever diminished or exhausted; and we shall be everlastingly receiving them in and through that holy portion of our nature united in the person of Christ to God, suited to our apprehension; "for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. v. 30.)

You perceive therefore from this short preface, if I have expressed myself rightly and scripturally to your spiritual apprehension on the subject, and the Lord hath accompanied his own word to your heart, what a contemplation I am come forth this morning to bring before you from those *seven* words in my text; the sublime mysteries folded up in them, though far beyond the utmost grasp of our highest taught minds, yet in the mere surface furnish matter for the most

heartfelt joy. And our attention, as far as the Lord shall be pleased to enlighten our understanding to the apprehension, not only will form a very suitable accompaniment to the solemn views the Holy Ghost hath lately brought before us; but will form the suited subject for every day and moment of our lives: for what can be calculated to arrest our attention with equal affection and delight as to look at him who is both unceasingly looking on us, and is “touched with the feeling of our infirmities!”

The whole portion of Scripture from whence my text is taken is most blessed. “Seeing then (saith the apostle) that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession; for we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.” It is the middle clause of these words I have more particularly at present to call to your attention; for though every part and portion of the whole passage is most sweet, and would furnish out subject for many discourses, yet the limits of a single sermon will not allow me to call in more than what the text proposeth to our meditation. And sure I am, if the same Almighty God the Spirit which gave the church this Scripture, will open and explain it to our spiritual understanding, we shall find enough in the bosom of it to suit the wants of all his people, and to make the present season a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

You will observe the method of speaking which is adopted in the words made use of; they are put in a negative manner, by way of confirming yet more strongly a *positive* truth. Speaking of

our most glorious Christ it is said, for “we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” The two *nots* brought together, first of his person, we have *not*, and then the second of his power, he *cannot*; this is a more decided way of confirming the truth here intended to be asserted, than if it had been simply once spoken, he *can* and *doth* feel for our infirmities. It was a very ancient method of discourse this, and frequently used by the sacred writers; thus, in this very epistle, when God the Holy Ghost by his servant the apostle, had given through the whole of the first chapter the most glorious relation of the person of our Lord, and the infinite merit of his work, at the opening of the second chapter he puts the question as in the mouth of the church, struck with the awfulness of refusing to regard the Lord and his ministry, and saith: “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation!” Here is a similar mode of reasoning, a question asked without an answer, yea, it is stronger than all answers, for the words carry with them a conviction that the question is unanswerable; for *none can escape*. Our adorable Lord adopted the same plan in the days of his flesh, when he put the question: “What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Mark viii. 36, 37.) The words admit of no reply, they answer themselves, the man is ruined for ever amidst all his gain:—so does the text: our most glorious Christ is “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.”

What I propose in the farther prosecution of the subject is, in the *first* place, to consider (though briefly) the origin and foundation of those sublime truths in those ancient settlements of eternity between the almighty persons in the GODHEAD, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. For, as I have often observed to

you, and I trust you that are spiritually taught are daily living in the enjoyment of it, all we have, and all we ever shall have, ariseth from the everlasting love, counsel, will, and pleasure of Jehovah in his trinity of persons; and in return, the daily actings of our faith are blessedly called forth in communion with each and with all, in and through the divine mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. When I have stated this as the fundamental doctrine of our most holy faith, I shall then through grace request your attention to the subject proposed to us in the text, namely, "Jesus touched with the feeling of our infirmities." And if the Lord (as I hope the Lord will) be your Teacher and mine this day, the contemplation of this sympathy of our most glorious Christ to our state and circumstances, will tend to call up all the finer feelings of our regenerated nature, and open a source of unceasing consolation and support amidst all the dying and distressed exercises of our present fallen state.

But before I enter upon it, indulge me to drop a word or two, as may best correspond to the different situations which for the most part mingle in the congregation. While my text of Scripture is proclaimed, methinks I would have every sinner that hears it, and who is brought into acquaintance in any degree with the plague of his own heart, however conscious that he hath nothing in himself to recommend, but yet is out of love with himself, to look off from self, and to look wholly unto Him of whom such gracious things are said. If Jesus be indeed touched with the feeling of our infirmities, then must it undeniably follow, that he *knows* the precise state of every individual case for whom he feels; so that there can be no sinner so desperately reduced by sin, as to surpass the power of his feeling, any more than of his knowledge. Blessedly is it said in one Scripture: "for he knoweth our frame,

and remembereth that we are dust." (Psalm ciii. 14.) And in another: "wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." (Heb. vii. 25.) And what is the uttermost? Nay, what is it not? stretch your imagination to the greatest extent of the horizon, in heaven or earth, if there be any bound to that thought, then is it not the uttermost, for the thought will reach farther. Hence the beauty of this Scripture lies in this, that the uttermost in which Christ saves, is himself, without bottom and without shore. Oh! what a thought for every convinced sinner, in Christ's feeling and Christ's power!

And while I say thus much by way of recommendation of my subject, as suited to the most desperate degree of all that feel their sinful state, let me observe at the same time, how very sweetly it calls upon all who in times past have tasted that the Lord is gracious, but are now cast down and discouraged by reason of what passeth in themselves, of coldness, and deadness, and leanness of soul; but what an instant relief would all such find, if instead of calculating your state by what you are, you would consider what Jesus is; if instead of counting upon *your* feelings, you would count upon *his*; and fold up the words of my text in your bosom continually, (to take out and read as wanted,) Jesus is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." And if he feels for you, will he not relieve you? nay, is not your very present state in his appointment, as well as in his knowledge and feeling; and thus purposely to give occasion the better to minister to his glory, and your happiness? his promise is to this express amount: "For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul." (Jer. xxxi. 25.)

And let me detain you with one observation more, before we enter upon the subject. Let it be remembered that Jesus is not limited for this, his gracious

sympathy to his people's infirmities, when in ordinances *only*; for the same is unweariedly manifested to his whole mystical body, under *all* their circumstances. How many of the Lord's people are there in the moment I am speaking, pining after ordinances, who have enjoyed the Lord's presence in them in times past, and are now kept from them! how many more by reason of sickness, and a variety of other preventing providences, cannot attend them! Yea, what numbers of the Lord's hidden ones, who never have had an ordinance to go to; but whose lot is cast in lauds of darkness, "where (as the prophet speaks) there is a famine, not of bread and water, but of hearing the word of the Lord!" (Amos. viii. 11.) And is Jesus less touched with the feeling of their infirmities on these accounts? Doth he not enter into all their interests, with an equal love to all? Is he present with us, and not with them? when himself declaring his divine sovereignty in demanding the acknowledgement of that truth: "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?" (Jer. xxiii. 23, 24.) The Lord give grace to his people to have these things always in remembrance; and never to lose sight of Jesus being "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," whether in ordinances or without them. All providences, means of grace, dispensations of sickness or health, yea the very persecutions his people sustain, are all so calculated as to minister the better to this great end, the Lord's manifesting his feeling for them. It is not enough to say that Jesus knows all, feels for all, but that he appoints all. He that fixeth the bounds of his people's habitations, no less arrangeth all events concerning them, and metes out every thing that is to be in their lot by measure. Blessedly the Lord includes the

whole, when singing to his church, "a vineyard of red wine, he saith, I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." (Isaiah xxvii. 2, 3.) The foot cannot be bruised or trodden upon, but the head must feel. He saith himself, "whoso toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye." (Zech. ii. 8.) "Jesus is touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

But it is time to begin my subject as I proposed, with *first* considering the ground work of the whole, as concerning the church, when in those ancient settlements of eternity the Holy Three in One, which bear record in heaven, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, formed the whole purposes of grace and salvation; in doing which I shall at this time be very brief, for these fundamental points, more or less, constitute the chief subject of my preaching. It will be therefore at present enough to say, that under these *two* statements the glorious doctrine is confirmed, namely, *first*, in the revelation given by Jehovah himself in his trinity of persons in the Scriptures of truth, of each divine person taking equal part in the gracious transaction; and then, *secondly*, in the revelation to the heart of the people; every regenerated child of God being by that principle of new and spiritual life rendered capable of enjoying it, and to know the blessed reality of the whole, by the in-comings of love to their souls in the personal manifestations of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the goings forth of their spirits to the holy Three in One, in acts of faith, and love, and adoration, and praise.

In relation to what Jehovah hath revealed of himself in his trinity of persons, if we bring them into one view, we can and do distinctly discover each glorious person in his acts of grace towards the whole church in Christ, chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and regenerated by the Holy Ghost. These

gracious manifestations define the persons in the GODHEAD, as stated by Scripture testimony, and no less shew at the same time that the whole is the result of the joint love of the One holy and undivided Jehovah. Hence the acts of faith, and love, and praise, in the souls chosen and redeemed and regenerated by such distinguishing mercy, will be found, more or less, in daily communion; yes, there is not a truly saved and regenerated child of God, but being by that divine work of grace brought into a new and spiritual life, hath personal communion with the Father, Son, and Spirit, in and by Jesus Christ. I stay not to particularize; but sure I am, as the divine manifestations of the GODHEAD, in whose joint name we are blessed and sanctified, are unceasing, so must they awaken the souls of the objects of such distinguished bounty, to corresponding affections towards the joint Authors of them. And thus the spiritual church of Christ hath through the Spirit what John calls "fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John i. 3.)

I proceed now to the *second* point proposed, and which is indeed the leading doctrine in the text, namely, Jesus "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." Now in order to a clear apprehension of this most precious truth, the sympathy of Jesus to the sorrows and afflictions of his people, we must have it strongly impressed upon our minds, and this can only be done by divine teaching, that all the infirmities under which we labour are the effects of our present fallen state. We should never have known what infirmities mean, had not the Adam-fall transgression induced such things; but when sin entered into the world, and death by sin, the whole of our nature, like the world at the deluge, became overspread with every evil and sorrow. Very blessedly is it that He who came to put away sin by

the sacrifice of himself, came no less to carry our sorrows; and by a process of grace which none but God could have formed, and none less than God could have executed, he hath hushed all our complaints and soothed all our pains, by participating in our feelings, and endearing himself to our tenderest affection, by assuring us that he knows what our frame is, by his own; and in our nature, which he hath taken into union with his GODHEAD, he takes part in all that concerns us.

We shall have a more clear apprehension of this most precious truth, if we take into our view of the subject, the infinite ability of our most glorious Lord to these acts of grace, in the contemplation of the essential, inherent, self-existent, and underived GODHEAD of Christ; which gives infinity to every word, and thought, and deed, of all he exerciseth in a fellow-feeling of his human nature, towards his people. It is from the in-dwelling GODHEAD in the manhood by which the gracious and sovereign works are wrought; for otherwise the motive to come to him, under all our infirmities, for grace to help in time of need, would be done away. The sweet persuasive argument is, that he not only is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" but as the Scripture blessedly states it, "for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. ii. 18.) He is said to have taken that holy portion of our nature on purpose that he might be merciful, and in such a way as that nature gave him a fellow-feeling for, and which an angel's nature could not have done. (Heb. ii. 16.) And it was precisely the same nature as ours, yet without sin; and it was our whole nature, flesh and blood as we are, as is very blessedly shewn by his own declaration after he arose from the dead: it is said that when he first shewed himself to his disciples, on the day of his

resurrection, "that they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit; but Jesus said unto them, why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? and they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb; and he took it and did eat before them." (Luke xxiv. 37—43.) Such palpable proofs that it was the identical body which had been nailed to the cross, and had died and was buried, and now gave testimony of living, by eating of the common food for the sustenance of nature, could have no fuller demonstrations of reality. And therefore the feeling of our infirmities with which he is touched, is in our nature, a body precisely as our own; not his GODHEAD, but his manhood, which gives capability of knowing and feeling by experimental testimony what passeth in others of the same nature by his own: and here is the unspeakable blessedness of this soul-comforting doctrine. In the union of both natures, as God and man in one, the infinite power of his GODHEAD furnisheth infinite efficacy to every one of his divine intentions; and his human nature as man, furnisheth means for the exercise of his fellow-feeling: and it is our mercy hereby, that he is not only suited, but everlastingly entering into a oneness and participation of all our infirmities.

And I would only add under this particular of the suitability and disposition of our most glorious Christ to the being "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," that he is as much now concerned for our infirmities, though in heaven, as when he was upon earth, for his change of place hath made no change in his nature, neither in his love. He is now as truly

man as he is truly God; and as he is by both the glorious Head of his body the church, so in himself and his nature being everlasting, is he in his feelings: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

If I have been happy enough to establish by this scriptural statement, the blessed truth itself, and shewn you, by infallible testimony, that Jesus is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and that these gracious and endearing feelings of our Lord are the result of the ancient engagements of all the persons in the GODHEAD, nothing will remain to finish our subject but the accompaniment of the Holy Ghost in his divine teachings, to lead out our hearts, and the hearts of all that hear these things, to know what personal knowledge you have, that such tender manifestations of Christ have been, and now are, in your experience: this is the important result, as it concerns us in our individual circumstances. In whatever point of view the subject be considered, the consciousness of this tender sympathy of our Lord to the feeling of our infirmities meets every case, and suits all the situations however diversified of his people. It is impossible that any sinner can be so desperately driven by the enemy of souls, or the corruptions of his own nature, (where the Lord hath given a sense to feel sin,) but may find comfort that Christ is "touched with the feeling of his infirmities." None so hopeless, none so helpless, as to preclude either Christ's commiseration, or Christ's power to deliver. Nay, we find in Scripture history, where instances of the utmost discoveries of grace have been made, at a time when there hath been the greatest outrages of sin; and the Lord Jesus hath shewn that he was then touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was displaying the richest tokens of good, when his people were manifesting the greatest unworthiness.

And while these views will tend, under grace, to keep the most wretched sinner from desponding, they are most highly calculated to comfort the Lord's afflicted and tried ones, in the hour, and from the power of temptation. The children of God, who are taught of God, have reason to blush with what bondage frames they too often go to Christ, forgetting that he knoweth their frame, and is touched with the feeling of their infirmities. Could I look to him with doubt, as if he knew not my sorrows, who cannot but recollect what were once his own, when "the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief?" Can Jesus overlook my conflicts, while knowing his own? Can Jesus forget his agony in the garden and on the cross? Did he in the days of his flesh offer strong crying and tears, and was heard in that he feared, and will he be insensible to my supplications and groans under the various exercises of life? And was Jesus so attentive to his whole body the church, many years after his death, as to appear to John to comfort him, and others through him, under the prospect of theirs, and to assure him and them that he had "the keys both of hell and death," that they might not fear either: and is he less regardful now? Oh! how truly blessed it is to know these things, and to live in the faithful enjoyment of them. Let us close all in prayer, in entreating our adorable Lord that as he knoweth what our nature is by his own, and takes part with us "in all our afflictions being afflicted," we may have grace never to lose sight of Him in this most endeared and endearing character, but to carry about with us the precious Scripture now before us: "Jesus is touched with the feeling of our infirmities!"

J E S U S,

THE

ETERNAL LIFE OF HIS PEOPLE.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON, PREACHED LORD'S
DAY MORNING, APRIL 10, 1825, IN THE PARISH
CHURCH OF CHARLES, PLYMOUTH.

“ These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God ;
that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the
Son of God.”—1 John v. 13.

P R E F A C E.

THE cottager and his little circle will do well, if so disposed of the Lord, to read the whole chapter from whence the text, and the sermon borrowed from it, is taken, before he enters upon the perusal of this discourse; and then uniting in prayer, under the same divine unction, to seek the Lord's blessing on the Lord's word. It will form a very blessed introduction to the subject proposed to us in the text, in contemplating the eternal life the church hath in her glorious Head and Husband, if we are taught, by this sweet chapter, the certain victory by which, through faith in Him, the church overcometh the world. Our own fallen, helpless nature, and the exposure to which the church thereby in all her members is open to sin and Satan, the world and the flesh, can find no defence nor security but in and from Christ. But while, under these circumstances, the Lord the Spirit which teacheth us the awfulness of our ruined estate, no less opens to us the glory and suitableness in Christ, and our completeness in Him; this brings us into a rich assurance by faith, so as to be "more than conquerors through him that loveth us." Let us beg of God so to fortify our hearts, that "receiving, not the spirit which is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, we may know the things which are freely given to us of God."

Infinitely great and gracious Lord God Almighty! we pray for grace to approach thy throne in his adorable name who is the Lord our Righteousness, that in Him, and through Him, and for His sake, the presence of our God in his trinity of persons may be sensibly known, and felt in our spiritual apprehensions, in this ordinance we are now entering upon. Vouchsafe, Lord, such divine manifestations of each glorious person of our God, as are set forth in the Scriptures of eternal truth, that we may most blessedly enjoy, through the Spirit's influence, "fellowship with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ." Cause our hearts to rejoice for the consolation which is in Christ Jesus. Let the word of our God dwell in us richly in all wisdom; and while by the outward ministry of the word, the great truths of our God are brought before us, grant the inward illumination of thy grace, that as this Scripture states so we may find, "from believing on the Son of God we may have the witness in ourselves."

Under thy divine unction we would now look up for thy divine teaching, trusting that so blessed an opportunity will be given to us at this time, while assembling together in thy name, and for thy praise, and our spiritual enlargement in the glorious truths of our God, that like the patriarch of old we may be constrained to say with him, "Surely the Lord is in this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" Amen.

SERMON X.

JESUS THE ETERNAL LIFE OF HIS PEOPLE.

1 JOHN v. 11, 12.

And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life ; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

IT was my province the last Lord's day in the morning (and I hope my profit also) to call your attention to that sweet and endearing feature of character which marks our most glorious Lord, namely, the sympathy in which he enters into and takes part in all that concerns his people. And I took occasion therefrom to remark, in the infinite greatness and suitability of our Lord, how very blessedly in the compound of his double nature, God and man in one person, he comes home recommended to our warmest affections, in being "touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

It will now form a subject intimately connected with it, (and if the savour of his name be still fresh in your recollection on that point, as the ointment poured forth) the enquiry wherefore it is that our most glorious Christ is such ; and why it is that his mercies flow to us through a nature like our own. I confess that it forms an essential part in my creed, and I would fain persuade myself that it doth no less in yours, that what the church of Christ is in Christ now in time, such she hath been from all eternity ; she was chosen in him before the world, and she will be in him to all eternity, when the world is done away. And it is of all other considerations, as it refers to

the church, the highest and best, that the whole of the body the church, equally including every individual member of that body, were alike known, loved, and beheld in Christ, by all the persons in the GODHEAD from everlasting.

This is most blessedly assured to the church by Christ himself, when as set forth in his well known name of Wisdom, he is described in the book of Proverbs as standing in the top of high places, by the way, at the gates, and at the entry of the city, and calling upon his people to attend to him, promising them that love him, "to fill their treasures, and to give them durable riches and righteousness." And then he adds, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old: I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.—Then I was by him as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men." (Prov. viii. 1—21.) Observe in these words how Christ first states the eternity of his nature; and observe also how he speaks of Jehovah in his trinity of persons possessing him as Mediator, in "the beginning of his ways, as set up" the glorious Head of his church, "from everlasting." Then having spoken of himself as one brought up with the Lord Jehovah, and the delight of Jehovah in his covenant headship and character, he then takes in the church as in the same view, and expresseth his delight in the sons of men: "rejoicing (saith he) in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men." Not merely habitable earth, as distinguished from the water, for this prospect of Christ he had before said was, "or ever the earth was, when there were no depths, when there were no fountains abounding with water; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor

the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world." But his allusion of "rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth," was that habitable part in which the Lord himself would tabernacle, when he as "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us;" and his delights were for ever with his people. And what a beautiful and unanswerable testimony the whole forms, that the glorious Head of his church, and his members, have been in the unceasing contemplation of Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever; to whose infinite and comprehensive mind, inhabiting eternity, past, present and future, form but one object.

And were it not for launching out too far into the depths of this vast ocean, while the limits of a sermon confine me to skim the surface of the borders only; I should find it no difficult matter, under divine teaching, to shew that as the church was in Christ, and personated by Christ before all worlds, so grace was given to the church in Christ before all worlds; and all the ordinations of Jehovah concerning the church, in the time-state of her being, were in effect formed before, "according (as the apostle states it) to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. iii. 11.) Our redemption in Christ, our justification by Christ, our holy calling to Christ, with all the other events included in that high administration of grace manifested to the church by the Holy Three in One since creation, and the fall in Adam, were to all intents and purposes done in the divine mind before. Nothing can be new to him whose eternity of being constitutes one eternal *now*. All his ordinations are like the Almighty Author himself: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." (Heb. xiii. 8.)

And hence it is when by regeneration, or the new birth, the church and every individual of the church,

is brought into that spiritual life in Christ, which the church, as well as the whole race of men lost in Adam by sin, there is at once a capability given of receiving all communicable blessings of a spiritual nature. (Eph. i. 3.) And when the redeemed and regenerated child of God is thus brought forth into this newness of life in Christ, and is daily enabled by grace to live upon his inheritance, he enjoys by faith such fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, as experimentally to *know* what unrenewed men can only *hear* of, or *read*, that blessed sympathy of Christ, which is described in being "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." And all such can, and do, value the sweetness of that Scripture with which the apostle blessed the church, when he said, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." (Rom. xv. 13.)

On the other hand, until this act of spiritual life is wrought, there is not a possibility even for one in the election of grace to perform a single action, or exercise a single thought of faith in Christ; and hence it is that even the first rudiments of that divine learning, "which maketh wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus," are above the reach of all human faculties: the principles themselves were never learnt, neither can be learnt in nature's school. (1 Cor. ii. 14.) True, indeed, mere natural men may hear them, and by the dint of natural reason may by head knowledge understand them; but the spiritual apprehension is impossible to be attained by any, while unregenerate and "dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. ii. 1—5.) Hence Paul's statement of the renewed life, and the proof thereby of our election, in hearing and receiving the gospel in the love of it, which he gave the church of the Thessalonians, is suited to every church of Christ in all ages. "Know-

ing (said he) brethren beloved your election of God ; for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." And the apostle proceeded to give a farther statement in shewing the effects : " Ye became followers of us, and of the Lord ; having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost : so that ye were ensamples to all that believe, and from you sounded out the word of the Lord," &c. (1 Thes. i. 4—8.)

My text, and the subject connected with it, becomes a beautiful illustration of those divine principles : if you will consult your Bibles at the place where the words are written, you will perceive that God the Holy Ghost had been speaking most blessedly of the testimonies to the truths of God which the regenerated believer had in himself when taught of God. " He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself ; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." Then follows the text. " And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life ; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life ; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

Every word in this divine Scripture is big with infinite importance. The thing itself is called a *record*, yea, God's record ; and though here it is, in a way of personal application, said to be the Father's gift to the church in his Son, yet that all the persons in the GODHEAD are alike concerned is stated in a verse before, when it is said, " For there are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One." Hence, eternal life is alike the gift of the whole GODHEAD, and alike given testimony to by record. And what is eternal life ? Here we pause. The

receiver of eternal life in Christ is not capable of defining it; but we are taught by its very name that it is not liable to be lost or changed, for it is eternal, and in Christ. And Jesus himself most blessedly confirms this, in that he saith, "Because I live, ye shall live also." (John xiv. 19.) And what I beg may be particularly kept in your remembrance, from its connection with what was stated before, namely, that what the church is now in Christ she always was and always will be in Christ; hence this eternal life was given to the church in Christ "before the world began." (Titus i. 2.) Hence, therefore also, as the words of the text goeth on to proclaim, "he that hath the Son hath life;" he always had it in Christ, for though by our Adam-fall in nature we lost *communion* with Christ in the knowledge and enjoyment of it; yea, on our part enmity against God took place in our hearts by the temptations of the devil; yet that eternal life which was given us in Christ being in Him, and not in our own keeping, we could not lose it: having the Son, in him we had life.

But now the contrast in what follows: "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life." He cannot have it, for he hath not the Son of God, in whom alone "is the life and the light of men." (John i. 4.) And having no *union* with Christ, there can be no *communion* with Christ: hence we find the Lord Jesus giving this statement in all his preaching to the Jews, who despised Christ, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." (John viii. 43—47.) Pause over these words of Christ, for they are indeed most solemn. They are like the pillar of the cloud which stood between the camp of Israel and the camp of the Egyptians; to the Egyptians, a cloud of darkness, and the shadow

of death; to the Israelites a lamp of light and of life. (Exod. xiv. 19, 20.) They that have nothing treasured up in Christ of life eternal, are not within the possibility of being quickened from the death of sin in which our whole nature is involved in the Adam-fall transgression, unto a life of righteousness; for the only source of recovery being in Christ, they are utterly void of Christ, and incapable of receiving from him; they "are from beneath, whereas Christ saith, I am from above; ye are of this world, I am not of this world." (John viii. 23.)

The division of our subject is prepared to our hands; here is God's record, his Magna Charta, the charter of his grace. "He hath given to us (saith John) eternal life; he hath given it freely, fully, and for ever; and this without purchase, without merit, nay, against all demerit or unworthiness whatever, in the objects of this free gift; and this record brings with it the united testimony of all the persons in the GODHEAD. I shall *first* request your attention to two or three leading particulars, in relation to this fundamental article of our most holy faith; when I have finished this part of my discourse, I shall then desire, under the *second* branch, that you will accompany me to that sweet and endearing declaration, in which the text expresseth the soul-reviving truth of the divine record, which all the persons in the GODHEAD unitedly attest, that "this eternal life is in Christ, and that he that hath the Son hath life." These distinct points will form the sum and substance of what I have at this time to propose to you.

But before we enter upon either, I would wish it might be impressed upon the mind of all that hear me, as far as the outward ministry can reach, that sinners of the greatest and most desperate circumstances cannot consider themselves as precluded from a participation in the unspeakable mercy, on account of worth-

lessness; since neither merit can recommend, nor transgression shut out; for the blessing is wholly the free gift of God. And I would desire to add to this observation another closely connected with it, namely, that while regeneration, or the new birth, instantly brings the soul so blessed into immediate possession; the not having yet received it becomes no argument whatever that you never may, for Scripture gives many examples of some called in old age, and even at the "eleventh hour," and who were made equal with them "who had borne the burden and heat of the day."

And while I premise these things, I would beg no less to observe, that the knowledge of having had given to us eternal life, and this life in Christ alone, is of such vast and infinite importance to attain, and so clearly attainable by all the regenerate, that I hope no one who feels sensibly alive to his everlasting interest will go away before he is satisfied on the point. In the verse following my text the apostle saith, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." So then, if through grace I believe in Christ, that belief is knowledge, and that knowledge keeps alive the belief. The Lord grant such belief!

And let me just add this one observation more, before we proceed to the subject. Should it be asked, how is this knowledge and the belief obtained? the answer is at hand; he that gives eternal life in Christ, gives to every receiver grace to know and to believe you are made partaker by the same Almighty power that gives the blessing. How are you made partaker of the most ordinary blessing? Doth the sun wait to shine until you desire it? Doth the dew & fall at man's bidding? May we not say in the same

words as the Lord did to Job, out of the whirlwind, "Hath the rain a father? out of whose womb came the ice?" (Job xxxviii. 28, 29.) The Lord grant, if it be his blessed will, that so much of the dew of his favour may at this time be upon our present assembly, that we may discover all is of God; and as the new birth brings us into the enjoyment of this eternal life in Christ, so every one that is new born in Christ may know that he is born "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 13.)

I am *first* to request your attention to God's record, in some two or three leading points concerning his gift of eternal life in Christ, as the fundamental article of our holy faith. And here I do not think it necessary to go into all the several particulars; it will be sufficient upon the present occasion to observe, that this gift of eternal life, and which is in Christ, is the gift of all the persons in the GODHEAD. Eternal life is said to have been given by God the Father; and there can be no question but that in the original purpose, council, will, and pleasure of Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, eternal life with all its appendages was the gift of God the Father. But that God the Son took equal part in this act of grace is as evident, for he saith himself, speaking to the Father on the subject, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (John xvii. 2.) Now had not eternal life been in Christ and by Christ, this could not have been said. And it is through the Eternal Spirit that all the offerings in Christ, and through Christ, are made. Hence therefore, the Holy Three hath ascribed to each and to all, the gift of eternal life given to the church. And had you time, or would the limits of a sermon admit enlargement, I might go on to shew that the very portion of our nature, that "holy thing" so called,

(Luke i. 35.) in which this eternal life is said in my text to have been, was the joint work and operation of the Holy Three in One.

But besides the consideration of the thing itself in the joint act of the almighty Giver, it is infinitely important to have a proper conception of the everlasting state of security and blessedness, arising from the right of eternal life which the church possesseth in Christ. For as nothing on the part of the possessors of this unspeakable privilege gave birth to it, so nothing in them can deprive of it. Eternal life, the gift of God, is of God, and can neither be promoted by their good, nor obstructed by their evil: hence in the fall, though by the apostacy of our nature we lost the privilege of communion, the church never lost her relationship *to* Christ, and her interest *in* Christ. Even as it is in the natural affinities of life, the father with the child, the husband with the wife, and the like, the unworthiness of one or of the other doth not destroy the relationship, however it may intermit communion, the bond of union still continues; so the church with Christ. Sinful and adulterous as the church hath proved by the fall, she is no less Christ's church; hence we find the Lord Jesus speaking of her, and speaking to her: "They say (saith the Lord) if a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and she become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord! Turn, O back-sliding children! saith the Lord, for I am married unto you; and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion." (Jer. iii. 1—14.)

I would proceed now in conformity to what I proposed under the *second* branch, to the consideration of that sweet and endearing doctrine of the text,

namely, that the gift of eternal life to the church is in Christ; and “that he that hath the Son hath life.” And here, as in the former part of the subject, we are taught to trace the source of eternal life, with all the blessings arising out of it, as coming from the united love of the holy Three in One to our persons, as we are in Christ: for Christ himself, that is God in our nature, God and man in one person, with all that is connected in the gracious dispensation, is the gift of God. And hence the Lord Jesus in the days of his flesh, when conversing with the woman of Samaria, ascribed to her ignorance of his person the inattention she seemed disposed to shew him: “If thou knewest (said the Lord) the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water!” (John iv. 10.) A similar expression to the words in the text—“eternal life.” All is treasured up in the person of Christ: and from that union of God and man in Christ, through the medium of his *human* nature, he communicates to his members by his *divine*, eternal life with all its blissful properties. And hence it is said in that blessed Scripture the Holy Ghost hath given to the church by Paul, “your life is hid with Christ in God: when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” (Col. iii. 3, 4.)

And it is from this hidden life which the whole mystical body of Christ hath in Christ, and hath had in Christ from everlasting, (by which, as Jude beautifully and blessedly describes it, being sanctified by God the Father, they are preserved in Jesus Christ, and called) the communication of life from the glorious Head to the members is made in every instance, when “the set time to favour Zion is come.” (Ps. cii. 13—16.) And as the whole of all blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, originate in the one

source and fountain of God himself, in the unity of his essence, and trinity of persons ; so each glorious person in the GODHEAD makes a revelation of himself in this sovereign act of grace, when the sinner, dead by the Adam-fall transgression in trespasses and sins, is brought into the new life of Christ in God. Here we prove the blessed truth of what the apostle hath said (and which was just glanced at before) in this chapter, that “there are Three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ; and these three are One.” For in this record of life given in Christ, we can and do “set to our seal,” having received this testimony, “that God is true,” (John iii. 33.) for the Father hath given us this life in Christ. We know and are sure, when quickened together with Christ by regeneration, that the spiritual life is communicated to us from Christ. And no less than God the Holy Ghost, by his divine influences, opens and keeps open a never-ceasing energy of life and action, by manifesting both the person, and taking of the things of our glorious Head, and shewing to us ; “directing our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.” (John xvi. 14. 2 Thess. iii. 5.) Thus the gift of eternal life is in Christ ; and possessing Christ we possess eternal life in him. “He that hath the Son hath life.”

And whence is it that they that have not the Son have not life, but because from having no union with Christ there can be no communion in what belongs to Christ ; for the life in Christ is a supernatural life, a spiritual, an eternal life : whereas such never had any more than a natural life in Adam. So that having no spiritual faculties alive to receive spiritual and eternal life, and being spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, flesh and blood cannot receive spiritual apprehensions. And this becomes the key in the Spirit’s hand to open to the regenerated people of God the

mysteries of the gospel. It is this which at once explains why those whose profession of religion is merely natural, cannot have the least conception of things which are supernatural. And this discovery once received into the mind of one taught of God, leads to a farther, namely, why men unrenewed, whether professor or profane, are actuated by the bitterest prejudices against the doctrines of distinguishing grace: all of this description, however diversified by different shades of their patched up righteousness, uniformly agree in this; and like the son of Hagar the Egyptian, are found mocking. (Gen. xxi. 9.) And hence it is that I am so very frequently admonishing the true spiritual church of Christ, to be continually looking for the renewings of the Spirit. (Titus iii. 5—7.) It is a sure and an infallible way of enjoying divine truths, when we can and do realize them in our hearts by the divine unction, and when, as the apostle speaks, “if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Gal. v. 25.) This is what our glorious Lord referred to when he said, “abide in me, and I in you,” (John xv. 4.) by which Jesus evidently intended to shew that this abiding in him and he in us, would be the unceasing cause of living to him, and walking with him; and as one of old said, “all my springs are in thee.” (Psalm lxxxvii. 7.) This is a very blessed life of faith on earth, which now brings the soul who is the happy partaker of it sometimes into the very suburbs of heaven; and constrains the soul not unfrequently to cry out with the apostle, and say, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” (2 Cor. ix. 15.)

And now in conclusion, suffer me to ask, What is the result of all that I have been speaking? Who hath found in our congregation an unction accompanying the word? What savour of Christ’s person, and Christ’s salvation, hath been upon you? True it is,

indeed, the record that God hath given to his church is eternal life ; and equally true it is that this life is in his Son, and in him only ; for salvation is in no other, “for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts iv. 12.) And how blessed, how inexpressibly blessed is the record in the text, to all that are spiritually taught to know this, and live upon it : “he that hath the Son hath life.” And how tremendously awful the record to all that have it not, “he that hath *not* the Son of God hath *not* life :” and as John the Baptist on a similar Scripture in his sermon added, “he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John iii. 36.) And evidently for this plain reason, namely, because if the curse pronounced on the fall be not taken away from the sinner’s conscience, by his union with Christ, and salvation by Christ, it abides in all its dreadful consequences, and the sentence is already registered : “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness !” (Rom. i. 18.) And now as we are about to separate, and going away from each other, the blessing of the Lord accompany his people to their respective habitations ; that while men of the world from the world seek their chief good, we may say with Peter, “Lord, to whom shall we go ? thou hast the words of eternal life ; and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God !” (John vi. 68, 69.) Precious Lord Jesus confirm thy word to all of thine now before thee ; that we may know the record that God hath given to us eternal life, that this life is in Christ, and having Christ we have eternal life, and in him all things. Amen.

THE
UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST.

A SERMON, PREACHED IN THE CHURCH OF CHARLES, ON THE
LORD'S DAY MORNING, AFTER AN ABSENCE OF A FEW
WEEKS IN VISITING OTHER CHURCHES.

“ And whithersoever Jesus entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment : and as many as touched him were made whole.”—Mark vi. 56.

PREFACE

I WOULD affectionately recommend the cottager, before he enters upon the perusal of this sermon, to read the whole of the chapter from whence the text is taken, namely, the *third* chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians. Under the unction of the Lord the Spirit, so divine a portion of the sacred word will form the best preparation to the regenerated child of God for entering into a spiritual apprehension of the glorious person, and unsearchable riches of Christ; and of realizing in the heart the saving enjoyment of both, by the Lord the Spirit "taking of the things of Christ and shewing them unto him." And I would beg to accompany what is here offered in prayer, that while the Lord's people are sitting under the word, the Lord himself will draw near in the word, as he did by his disciples of old, when they "drew near the village, and talked unto them by the way, and opened to them the Scriptures." (Luke xxiv. 27, 28.) I would say

Gracious Lord! we are about to contemplate thine unsearchable riches; and we know Lord that all that infinite and boundless treasury which is in thyself, is not for thyself, but for thy people. Thou art all in all; in almightiness, fulness, suitableness, and all-sufficiency! Be very bountiful Lord to our souls at this time, and make it a season of refreshing from thy presence. Say as in the days of old, "I will be as the dew unto Israel!" Lord, descend in our midst, as "the showers upon the grass that tarrieth not for man, neither waiteth for the sons of men!" Thou knowest, Lord, that in ourselves we have nothing to recommend, nor merit to deserve, nor grace to prepare; but it is our mercy that thou beholdest our need of thee, as the best recommendation; and our sense of our own poverty, the most suited state for pouring out of thy riches: and as our deservings are not the standard by which our most glorious Lord disposeth of his manifold gifts; so our unpreparedness for receiving them hinders not the enjoyment of the blessing; for "the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." Grant, therefore, that in the unsearchable riches of Christ, all thy children, all thy redeemed ones, may find a suited supply for every case. In thee, and by thee, and for thee, give each and all richly to enjoy communion and fellowship with the whole persons in the GODHEAD, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. To all the deadness and dying circumstances which we feel in ourselves, give such a lifting up in the sovereignty of thine almighty power, that we may hear, by the spiritual ear of faith, the soul-reviving words of our glorious Lord, saying, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Amen.

S E R M O N XI.

 THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST.

EPH. iii. 8.

The unsearchable riches of Christ.

WHEN I last spake to you from this place, in taking leave of you for a short season as was then intended, (and through the divine mercy as it hath proved, in bringing me here again,) in taking leave of you, I commended the whole church, with my dear fellow labourer in the ministry, and myself, to the Lord, and to your prayers. And if I remember right upon that occasion, of a farewell among other things, I ventured to make use of the words of the apostle which he addressed to the church of the Thessalonians: (2nd Epistle i. 11, 12.) “Wherefore also (said the apostle) we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and 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, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

And I feel confident that this hath been, and still is, most graciously accomplished by our most blessed God, who is a prayer-awakening, a prayer-hearing, and a prayer-answering God in all ages of his church. For all that Jehovah in his trinity of persons hath done, all that He is now doing, and all that He will to all eternity do for his people, is but “the fulfilling

the good pleasure of his goodness." For indeed there could be no other predisposing cause; all must necessarily be the effects of his own heart. He saith himself, (Isaiah xlvi. 10.) "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." And I take occasion before I go farther to entreat every regenerated spiritual child of God, to seek for grace, to have such views of the divine favour always in remembrance: you should daily call to mind in the contemplation of sovereign love, that it is the Lord's good pleasure to bless the church in himself. And that the first and predisposing cause of all is "his own holy will." Our glorious God hath this in view as the leading point of action. And the conviction of this delightful truth cannot fail to bring with it lasting consolation to the soul; because we learn herefrom, that our most glorious Lord is more concerned for his own glory in the salvation of his chosen, than his chosen can be for themselves in their own happiness.

It was under these impressions, I left you a few weeks since; and am now through the good hand of my God upon me, brought back among you again. And in opening a new campaign, in the church militant here below, (how long or short soever it may be I know not, but cheerfully leave at His disposal "who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;") I have only to renew the proclamation of the church's warfare, which for nearly half a century ago in this church, the Lord then enabled me to do, and under one form or other, he hath graciously held me up ever since, to preach among you "the unsearchable riches of Christ." *

And unsearchable they are, and may well be called,

* The first sermon I preached in Charles Church was, Nov. 22, 1778. And the text was, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ." (2 Cor. v. 20.)

for they are unfathomable, boundless, bottomless, endless, infinite ! An ocean that hath neither ground nor shore. For such is the glorious person of our most glorious Christ, and such his immensity in salvation, that even in a life of faith, when once the child of God is brought by regeneration into a capability of contemplating divine subjects, new beauties and glories are continually opening before him, in beholding the bright constellations in the firmament of Scripture : not unsimilar to what we are taught to believe of modern discoveries in the planetary system, which are continually unfolding. Such, but in an infinitely higher degree, are the enlarged and enlarging revelations of our most glorious Christ. And could the child of God, renewed by grace, be supposed capable of living a thousand or ten thousand years in the body, under the divine teachings, somewhat of the person and glory of Christ would be daily opening to his ravished view, to call up his intellectual faculties to adoration, love and praise : which, like the other mercies of God, “are new every morning : great is his faithfulness !” (Lament. iii. 23.) And think then, what must be the fulness of glory which will break in upon our immortal souls in that day, when, as John saith, “We shall see him as he is : and know even as we are known.”

Figure to yourselves, what of this kind may have taken place since we last saw each other in this church, in the souls of those, among the redeemed of the Lord, which have been taken home from the church below, to the church above. Nay, suppose the instance of any one that hath escaped the prison of the body this morning, and instead of mingling with the church on earth, hath joined the church triumphant in glory ! Think how vast the change ! When John in vision beheld our glorious Lord, as we read in the book of the Revelations, ch. i. 17. he

tells us, that "he fell at his feet as dead!" But then it should be recollected, that John was at that time still in the body. And while the soul is cased in a tabernacle of sinful flesh and blood such must always be the effect. But when the spirit of a regenerated child of God is disembodied, and enters into the joy of the Lord, all fear is done away. "Herein (saith the same apostle) is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." (1 John iv. 17.) The state and suitability of the redeemed soul for heaven is very blessedly described in the last verse of the seventeenth Psalm: "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness; that is, thine image." By which is meant, not so much our likeness to Christ and the image of our most glorious Lord impressed on us; though this is most certainly and blessedly included in it; but to see God in Christ; to see Him in our nature, who is "the image of the invisible God." (Colos. i. 15.) I shall be satisfied in seeing Him thus. This is the first and great *cause* of our being satisfied. And our likeness to Him, which will add to this felicity, this will be the *effect*. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we all with open face," thus seeing Him as He is, "are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.) And all this is in exact agreement with our Lord's own words: "Father! I will, that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me," (John xvii. 24.) "Such honour have all his saints!" (Psalm cxlix. 9.)

The subject of my sermon this morning is "the unsearchable riches of Christ." It might be profitable to

observe what the preacher of this sublime contemplation, the apostle Paul, said of himself in way of contrast to his divine Master, in calling himself less than the least of all saints. That I, said Paul, that little contemptible I, should preach among the gentiles, "the unsearchable riches of Christ." But how profitable soever it might be to enlarge upon this humbleness of mind, in so great an apostle; yet I cannot spare a moment now to talk of Paul, when I have before me such a divine and glorious object and subject to dwell upon, in the person and riches of our most glorious Christ. Those five words of my text would exhaust as many millions of years to preach upon: and when both time and language had expended all their resources of description, still the riches of Christ would be found the same, undiminished, unsearchable. For whether we consider the infinite nature of his person, self-existent, eternal, underived; who is one with the Father over all, God blessed for ever; or whether we consider the possession he hath of all divine attributes, which constitute GODHEAD; all are alike unsearchable, and as the Psalmist describes, "there is no end of his greatness." (Psalm cxlv. 3.)

What I propose, in the farther prosecution of this subject, is in the *first* place, to consider the glorious person himself, of whom such things are said: for if his riches be unsearchable, what must be his person? Then, *secondly*, to this will succeed some short and limited views, (and short and limited they must necessarily be) of the immensity of his riches made over to his people. And from the contemplation of both, I hope under the Lord's teaching such a spiritual apprehension will be excited, as may "comfort our hearts, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and

of Christ: in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Colos. ii. 2, 3.)

But before I enter upon it, just let me beg all before whom I speak to pause, and consider with me how infinitely suited an Almighty Saviour of such inconceivable fulness must be, to answer all the wants and circumstances of a nature like ours, which by sin, both original and actual, is universally needy, and wretchedly poor, in every individual of the children of the Adam-fall apostacy. Surely if there be one here present, who is sensible of his emptiness and bankruptcy before God, there can be nothing farther necessary, to make him rich indeed, than to be made equally sensible of the infinite provision that there is in those unsearchable riches of our most glorious Christ, to impart of his fulness, "and grace for grace." And the encouraging language of Christ is, "I will cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures." (Prov. viii. 21.)

Let not this important point however be overlooked, as we enter upon the subject of Christ's fulness and our emptiness; that to have a true spiritual sense and apprehension of both, must be from divine teaching. We can neither know our misery, nor Christ's riches, in a way of personal discernment, but by an unction from the Lord. It will be our mercy therefore, as well preacher, as hearer, to sit alike at the feet of Jesus, while we contemplate his unsearchable riches, spiritually to apprehend the things themselves, and "to hear the gracious words which proceed out of his mouth." For you will bear with me while I say, that the unsearchable riches of Christ, are not only so infinite in themselves, as not to be wholly discoverable because they are unsearchable, but not one of them spiritually considered, can be known, by all the powers of nature. And for this plain reason. The things themselves are super-

natural; and can only be learnt supernaturally, and taught supernaturally. (Isa. liv. 13. Johu vi. 45.) Hence therefore, it will be our mercy if this day the Lord brings both him that is about to speak, and those that hear, under his own divine teaching, that “we may know the things which are freely given unto us of God: not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” (1 Cor. ii. 12, 13.)

One word more before we begin the discourse on Christ’s unsearchable riches: and let me hope this one word more, by way of preparation, under the Lord, for a right apprehension of this important subject, will be as kindly accepted as it is kindly meant. I trust that that class of hearers, which I have now in view, in this previous admonition, will not take in offence what is intended affectionately. And it is earnestly to caution against a mere hearsay belief, in being satisfied with a *rational* knowledge of these things, while destitute of *spiritual* enjoyment. It is not the clearest conviction to be assured that in Christ there are unsearchable riches, if we are not benefited thereby. The richest feast will not satisfy hunger if not partaken of. The warmest garment will not screen from the cold unless put on. Neither will the natural consent of the understanding minister to any good in the view of Christ and his infinite fulness, until the glorious truth of the things themselves is known spiritually, received spiritually, and lived on spiritually, by spiritual communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. The Lord the Spirit give to all his people a true scriptural apprehension, both of the person and the unsearchable riches of Christ, that as in him “dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD bodily, we may see ourselves complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power! Amen.”

I begin the subject as I proposed, in tracing the account here given in the text to its source: for in order to have a right apprehension of the unsearchable riches of Christ, we must first have a right apprehension from the same scriptural testimony, and under the same divine teaching, of Christ's person. And his own inherent self-existing, eternal and essential power and GODHEAD, can be the only certainty of his possessing unsearchable riches. It is from hence we must enter upon our subject and prove their reality. From this point therefore I would commence, and I beseech you to hear me patiently.

If we take the both Testaments of holy Scripture on this momentous point into one subject, as one complete *whole*, we may safely mark this down as the sublime contents: Jehovah's design in the creation of worlds, and the forming a church, had his own glory in view for the manifestation thereof, as the first and ultimate end of all. This is expressed in many Scriptures: let a few suffice in proof. "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." (Prov. xvi. 4.) "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise." (Isa. xliii. 21.) "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. iv. 11.) And the apostle closeth up a long and beautiful chapter upon this sovereignty and good pleasure of Jehovah, in those sublime words: "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." (Rom xi. 34, &c.)

Passing on warily, and with profound veneration, over the sacred inclosure of holy Scripture on this

enquiry, we may next observe what evidently appears in Jehovah's display of wisdom for his own glory, that he was graciously pleased to accomplish this by the manifestation of himself in his trinity of persons, in and by the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord here testified, that his glory should be made known by the riches of his grace; and so displayed, that "in the ages to come, he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us, through Chr Jesus." (Eph ii. 7.)

In the accomplishment of this vast purpose, the time-state of the church was opened in the works of creation; and while "the heavens" at their being made, "declared the glory of God, and the firmament shewed his handy work," at the formation of man there appears to have been a council of the Holy Three in One, when "God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness." (Gen. i. 26.) So that here the first footsteps of Jehovah in his trinity of persons are traceable, in the carrying on "the eternal purposes which Jehovah purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. iii. 11.) And thus the creation of our first earthly father was made in the likeness of his image who is the image of the invisible God; and as it is said elsewhere, "the first man is of the earth earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." (1 Cor. xv. 47.)

But as the infinite subject opened more and more in the sacred word of inspiration, those footsteps of Jehovah in his trinity of persons became plainer developed; and all the ministrations of divine worship, both by sacrifice and offering under the law and the gospel, all pointed to the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ the visible Jehovah; and the whole manifestly declared what the apostle expressed in that comprehensive Scripture, "that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, Jehovah might gather

together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." (Eph. i. 10.) Here at once was displayed in the glory and greatness of his person, somewhat for the mind to lean upon in forming conceptions, though not of the immense extent to which it reacheth, included in what the apostle calls "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

And what becomes the culminating point to crown all, and which the sacred inclosure of holy Scripture opens and unfolds to us is this ; that in the person of Christ, the church hath a double relationship to secure her personal interest in all those unsearchable riches of Christ ; namely, in that he is not only her glorious head and husband from all eternity, but also hath been and is, her Saviour and surety, to redeem her from all the iniquities of the Adam-fall transgression into which she hath been involved in the present time-state of her warfare. Here it is in the miseries of our fallen state, that the most ample opportunity is afforded for the manifestation of the riches of grace. And the thousand and ten thousand cases which daily occur, from the church's passing through this waste and howling wilderness, affording continual scope for the Lord's tenderness and sympathy to his people ; that the person of our most glorious Christ comes home endeared to the heart of every individual of his mystical body : so that we can and do say, as the church of old did to the Lord, "thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey." (Ps. lxxvi. 4.)

I come now to shew, after contemplating the infinite greatness of his person, how those immense riches, which from their very nature, like himself are *unsearchable*, are made over to his people, and become suitable to all and to every state of his whole body the church, as their several and diversified circumstances shall require.

But although I have proposed to give some short

views and statement on this part of the discourse, yet I know not where to begin; and certainly, (when speaking of what is unsearchable in itself) the subject can have no end. Comprehensively considered it may be said, that all the church hath or can have in time, or in eternity; all that her everlasting circumstances required before all worlds, of eternal life treasured up in Christ for her; all that she can possibly stand in need of during the whole of the present state; and all that she will need to all eternity when there are no worlds; every portion is in Christ, and not a portion out of Christ. For such is not only the infinite fulness of Christ, but the infinite suitability of Christ, that in all spirituals, temporals, and eternal, he is the church's treasury, "the fulness that filleth all in all:" so that no case, no state, no circumstances, no want can be known or conceived, for which the unsearchable riches of Christ are not provided. All the dimensions of divine glory, grace, mercy, peace, comfort, consolation, all are in him. And the whole blessedness of the church is in the knowledge and spiritual enjoyment of these things in him. Hence the apostle saith, "of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; that according as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." (2 Cor. i. 30, 31.)

I do not, for indeed I cannot, enter into particular situations, either in relation to the church at large, or the special and personal cases of individuals; for these must be referred both into the divine teaching of the Lord's making his people to know and feel their wants and misery, and the Lord's all-sufficient fulness and suitability to supply them. But what an assemblage of all that is blessed and encouraging is it, to contemplate our most glorious Christ, in his *humiliation*, reaching down to the very borders of hell to save his chosen; in his *exaltation* ascending far

above all heavens that he might fill all things ; angels, principalities and powers being made subject unto him : and in the everlasting *continuance* of his dominion and authority, the prophet bore testimony ages since when he said, “ His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace ; of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end ! ” (Isa. ix. 6, 7.)

But what I hope the spiritual church of Christ will, above every other consideration, take with them, while contemplating this boundless subject, is, the assurance that for the participation in those unsearchable riches of Christ, all the persons in the GODHEAD concur to the spiritual realization of them in every heart. If you or I are led to the spiritual knowledge of the person, and to the enjoyment of the riches of Christ, it is God the Father who hath manifested his grace in those divine acts for that purpose. Jesus himself hath said, that “ no man knoweth who the Son is but the Father ; ” and that the very “ coming to Christ ” can only be “ by the drawing of the Father. ” (Luke x. 22. John vi. 44.) And no less is the hand of Christ in this great work, for as the knowledge of the Son is by the Father’s teaching ; so the knowledge of the Father is by the Son ; and “ to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. ” And from the same authority we learn, that it is among the gracious acts of God the Holy Ghost, the church in all her numerous members, and diversified circumstances, is made blessed and happy, in the possession of Christ himself and his unsearchable riches, when that Almighty God “ takes of Christ, and shews unto his people. ” (John xvi. 16.) Hence that most precious prayer put up for the church by the apostle, when he said : “ The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. ” (2 Thes. ii. 5.)

It is time for me to relieve your attention, and let me do it, by asking every one that hears me, what unction have you felt at this time, under the word? what spiritual apprehensions have you of the person of our most glorious Christ? And who among you is the better for the unsearchable riches of Christ? It will be a blessed application of the discourse, if from a deep sense of our leanness, and poverty, the Lord shall have shewn us where that leanness and poverty may find the fullest resources of supply; and while feeling in ourselves all that is wretched, we discover in the Lord every thing that can make us happy, and “Christ be formed in our hearts the hope of glory!” God, of his infinite mercy, bless the word to your heart and mine, and manifest at this time that “the gospel hath been preached unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven!” Amen.

THE
FELLOWSHIP OF THE MYSTERY

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON, PREACHED IN THE
CHURCH OF CHARLES, PLYMOUTH, ON THE LORD'S DAY
MORNING SUCCEEDING THAT ON WHICH THE
FOREGOING WAS DELIVERED.

And whithersoever Jesus entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him, that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole. Mark vi. 50.

PREFACE.

THE sermon here brought before the cottager will be found it is hoped, under divine teaching, a suited accompaniment to the former. Having briefly called upon him to the contemplation of "the unsearchable riches of Christ," it is but following the steps of the apostle to attend also to what he hath immediately subjoined in the same chapter, namely, the consideration of the church's fellowship both with Him and them. And although it is called, as well it may be called, "the fellowship of the mystery," yet to the spiritual church of Christ, when opened and explained by God the Holy Ghost, it is rendered plain, as far as is needful to all spiritual apprehension, like the prophet's vision on tables, "he may run that readeth it." (Hab. ii. 2.) I would therefore beg of that Almighty God who teacheth his people to profit, to be intimately present with both him that reads and him that hears, that this our gospel may come unto us "not in word only, but also in power."

Gracious Lord! we would look up unto thee at this time, and while adoring the High and Lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, in the unity of thy divine essence and trinity of persons, humbly beg that our minds may be brought under thy divine unction, "to know the things which are freely given unto us of our God." O Lord! let this divine fellowship which the church hath in our glorious Head and Husband, however mysterious and hidden from the world, be unfolded and made known unto us in all its endearments. And let nothing satisfy our awakened souls but the assurance of our own personal interest in it; that under the same Almighty Instructor we may be enabled each for himself, to say; "truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." This will be to realize the promise of our God in our own souls; and not only *to hear* of the infinite fulness of our most glorions Christ, but *to receive* of the unsearchable treasures of Christ, as He hath said, "yea, durable riches and righteousness." Shine in Lord upon thy holy word, and at the same time shine in our hearts also, to give us "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." For then shall we be like the church of old, in sitting "under thy shadow with great delight, and thy fruit will be sweet to our taste." Lord, we already feel confidence in the expectation of a season of refreshing from thy presence; our hearts are comforted and knit together in love. Our God will give us all riches of the full assurance of understanding, "to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Amen.

S E R M O N X I I .

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE MYSTERY.

EPH. iii. 9.

“ And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery.”

THE person of our most glorious Christ is the whole mystery of the gospel. For, as the Holy Ghost testifieth by the apostle Paul, “in him dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD bodily.” (Colos. ii. 9.) And it is only as far as we have a true, scriptural, and spiritual apprehension of the infinite dignity, and essential being, of the person of Christ, that we can have a right knowledge of the unity of the divine nature in his trinity of persons. Our Lord’s own statement of this is most blessed and satisfactory. For when speaking to his disciples Thomas and Philip, on this sublime mystery, the Lord said: “If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. And he that hath seen me hath seen the Father!” (John xiv. 7—9.)

And it may be farther observed, that not only our knowledge of the Holy Three in One must be founded in our knowledge of the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also the real knowledge of ourselves; as the church *in* Christ, can only be discovered by our knowledge *of* Christ. The church’s being, and well being, and everlasting being, is from being bound up in the bundle of life, Christ. Her *original state*, before the foundation of the world, was from being chosen in Christ: her *adoption*, was then in Christ:

her *acceptation* also then in Christ : and all these were eternal acts towards the church in Christ, before all time ; and cannot be done away through all the periods and events of time, nor, when time shall be no more. These sovereign decrees had their source in the everlasting love of God, in his trinity of persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost ; and being founded in Christ, they are made everlastingly sure in Christ : both in his glorious person and work, “ who is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever ! ”

I am well aware, that these sublime mysteries of the formation of the church, in her glorious head and husband from everlasting, are not so much contemplated and cherished by the Lord’s people as they ought. And I think it to be a subject very much to be lamented. For sure I am, the truly redeemed and regenerated child of God loseth much thereby, of soul refreshing consolation. True indeed, when first the Lord is beginning the work of grace upon any of his chosen ones, the awakenings by the Lord the Spirit, to a deep and alarming apprehension of sin, become so distressing to the guttily conscience, that a deliverance from the wrath to come is the sole consideration that then occupies the heart, and the cry of the soul goeth no farther, than in words like the convicted jailor at Philippi : “ What must I do to be saved ? ” (Acts xvi. 30.) And a blessed cry it is, when put into the heart by grace : for it is sure of being answered in mercy. But in the after stages of the life of God in the soul, when having found peace in the blood of the cross the child of God is brought into fuller views of salvation, it is a sad matter, and which cannot but of necessity induce great leanness in spirit, that any of the Lord’s people should sit down satisfied with those attainments, when the Lord opens larger discoveries of the church’s interest in Christ. And what rich discoveries the holy Scriptures make, and the

Holy Spirit unfolds and brings home to the heart, when we are led to see, that the very cause, for which we have redemption *in* Christ, is from our original and eternal relation *to* Christ; and that all and every blessing coming to the church *from* Christ, ariseth out of the love and favour of Jehovah in his trinity of persons towards the church *in* Christ, "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

For my own part I do not blush to say, that when at any time through grace I am enabled to connect present mercies with the Lord's original purposes, and trace up to the fountain head, that my everlasting being *in* Christ is the source of all my interest and manifestations *from* Christ; such spiritual and scriptural testimonies, in every renewed instance of divine love, form the sweetest and most delightful seasons of my life. And sure I am, that I should lose the chiefest part of every blessing, were I to lose sight of my Lord's presence and love in that blessing; be the blessing what it may. But when Jesus graciously grants me some renewed love-visit and token of his favour; and with the mercy gives me to see that all these flow from himself, and come from that everlasting covenant "ordered in all things and sure;" the assurance of "the fellowship of this mystery" adds a tenfold blessedness to every enjoyment; and becomes a pledge, and earnest, of what ultimately will follow, of "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!"

If the savour of his name, which is as the ointment poured forth, be still in its divine fragranciness on your spiritual senses, from what was brought before you last Lord's day morning, both of his glorious person and of his unsearchable riches, I shall feel encouragement to hope, that the subject I desire now to lay before you, and which indeed ariseth out of it, and is part of the same, will not fail, under the unction of

the Spirit, to have the same effect. "The fellowship of the mystery" is among the most precious desigus of the gospel; and, taken in all its bearings, includes what the apostle elsewhere terms "the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ!" (Colos. ii. 2.)

In the prosecution of this subject I shall endeavour, under the well-grounded hope of divine instruction, to bring before you from the Scriptures of eternal truth, *first*, some few outlines of the mystery itself; I say some few outlines only, for the subject taken in all its vast extent, is not the province of any created power to unfold. The mystery of the trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence; and the mystery of "God manifest in the flesh;" both these divine contemplations are proposed for the *spiritual* faith of the redeemed and regenerated child of God to *receive*; but not for *natural* reason to presume to *scan*. And, blessed be our most gracious God, we have so many beautiful illustrations of the stupendous doctrine, as, under the Lord's teachings, are enough "to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." When I have finished this first branch of the discourse, I shall beg your attention to the *second* part included in it, namely, "the fellowship of the mystery." And this will from a most interesting contemplation, to call up all the awakened faculties of the spiritual church of Christ; and which, when realized in the soul, by the word, and by the Spirit, to know our own personal interest in it; (as Paul stated it) "to know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings;" the consciousness of a fellowship (that is, a partnership) in Christ's merits, and finished salvation, from an union with his person; such an apprehension *from* the Lord, will induce unceasing praises *to* the Lord, and give "a joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiv-

ing the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls." The Lord's blessing accompany his word.

Let it be remembered, as we enter upon the subject, that in it is proposed to our meditation one of the most sublime, and at the same time one of the most simple and important doctrines of holy Scripture. It is of all others the most sublime : and no less when the minds of the Lord's regenerated ones are brought more immediately under the Lord's enlightenings, the most simple. And I should not have ventured upon it, but under the clearest scriptural conviction, that while to men of unrenewed nature (be their faculties of mere reason untaught of God what they may) this whole subject must ever be a stumbling block, and perfectly unintelligible—to the soul born of God the whole is clear, and rendered blessed. And even the humblest of the Lord's people, however in natural things unable to reason, yet in spiritual apprehension he can, and doth "receive with meekness the ingrafted word which is able to save his soul." Like the infant of *nature*, at his mother's breast, unable to reason on the properties of his food, but by life and growth proves the wholesomeness of it : so the child in *grace*, having "tasted that the Lord is gracious," manifests the reality of his spiritual state and health in receiving ; and as a new born babe, "desires the sincere milk of the word that he may grow thereby."

And I would desire to add to the observation I have now made, one remark more, for the better entering upon the subject ; namely, that the spiritual apprehension of it is wholly from the Lord. The apostle in the passage from whence the text is taken saith, that the proclamation of the unsearchable riches of Christ was to "make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery." Hence we learn, that this spiritual sight is *given* to the Lord's people,

and doth not arise from their study. No worth, nor application on their part: for "the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." (Prov. xvi. 1.) Hence also we hear the Lord Jesus in his divine statement concerning spiritual knowledge, thus comforted his disciples: "Unto you (said Jesus) it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but to them (speaking of the unregenerate) it is not given." (Matt. xiii. 11.) And very blessed is it to know this, and to connect with it the assurance that this gracious gift is *given* to the whole family of grace alike. It is not in *spiritual* things, as by the Lord's appointment and ordination it is in *natural*. In the faculties of nature, some greater, some less. But there needs neither capaciousness, nor larger apprehension, in one, more than another, for the enjoyment of spiritual life in Christ. As the glorious head of his body the church, the whole members have alike their being, and well being in him. But in respect to the common principles of natural knowledge, there is, as we know, great diversity. This consideration, when opened to the spiritual church by divine teaching, becomes a subject of very great comfort to the humble ones of the Lord.

And suffer me to say this one word more. As this "fellowship of the mystery," in all its fulness, blessedness, and eternal properties are wholly *of* the Lord, and *from* the Lord, and *to* the Lord; so doth "the manifold wisdom of God" become strikingly manifest and conspicuous, in that it is displayed, and hath in all ages been displayed, as suited to any, and to every circumstance, yea, and among the most desperate cases of the church, under the Adam-fall transgression. The fellowship of the mystery is never more graciously shewn, than when by the secret workings of the Lord in the instance of such as have lived without God, and without Christ in the world, they

are brought into an acquaintance with the plague of their own hearts; and are led in a way they know not how, to state a of self-aborrence and self-loathing. This is among the clearest evidences, however the persons themselves at the time are unconscious of it, in confirmation of "the fellowship of the mystery." I would desire that these observations might be in our remembrance, as we prosecute the subject. And under such impressions, I would pray, that both preacher, and hearer, may have our minds exercised to the spiritual attention of it; and that "we may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost!"

I begin as I proposed, with the *first* branch of our present subject; namely, to bring before you, some some few outlines of the mystery itself, before that we consider the very great blessedness of "the fellowship of his mystery."

In this vast scheme of grace, the Scriptures of God teach us, that the whole persons in the GODHEAD took an equal part, and thereby each glorious person comes home endeared to our spiritual and intellectual faculties, to whom is due equal adoration, love, and praise to all eternity. There is somewhat very blessed, as well as gracious, in this wonderful condescension of Jehovah, to make himself known, (as far as our apprehensions are capable of knowing) the nature and essence of God. From hence, under divine teaching, we are led to discover, that Jehovah hath being in a way and manner peculiarly his own: that is to say, that in the unity of the GODHEAD there is a trinity of persons. And in consequence is separated at an infinite distance from the mode both of nature and being of all creatures which he hath been pleased to call into existence. How beautiful and sublime are those words of the Lord, on this subject, by his servant the prophet; as if challenging the church to the contemplation of his transcendant and undescrib-

able greatness : “ Behold ! the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold ! he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All nations before him are as nothing : and they are counted unto him less than nothing and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God ? or what likeness will ye compare unto him ? ” (Isaiah xl. 15—18.) How very blessed is it thus to contemplate his infinite majesty ! For observe, this contemplation is not for what God hath done for his church ; or for what God is now doing, or will do for his church ; but it is for what God is in himself, and his own eternal greatness, abstracted from all his works or his creatures. And let us not dismiss this view of our God, before that we have considered yet once again his infinite condescension, that so great and glorious a being to whom nothing can be added, and from whom nothing can be taken, should come forth from his invisibility to reveal himself to his creatures : and by such a marvellous process of grace as he hath done by this mystery. And let me desire you to pause a moment longer, over this stupendous contemplation ; and to ask your own heart, whether such apprehensions of Jehovah doth not excite in you the most profound humiliation, reverence, and godly fear ? and if so, I would say, is not this a token of grace, when we can, and do, adore God, for what he is in himself, independent of his goodness towards the children of men ?

But we must not stop here. Our next view of this sublime contemplation will be to consider what the Scriptures have stated, that though Jehovah in himself in his trinity of persons is so infinitely great and glorious, eternal, immortal, invisible, yet hath he been pleased to make such a manifestation of him-

self, under the endearing names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in covenant transactions of grace, as enables the church to enter into a clear, scriptural apprehension of this divine mystery. God the Father is revealed, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family, the whole election of grace, in heaven and earth is named. God the Son, by assuming that holy portion of our nature, both married our nature, and in the obedience and sacrifice he offered, did away the whole penal effects of the fall. And God the Holy Ghost, by his anointing the church in Christ before all worlds, and during the time state, undertook to regenerate, and hath in every member of Christ's mystical body regenerated, and renewed all, and every one, in the spirit of their mind; these distinct acts, and yet all resulting from the one undivided Jehovah, have made manifest "the mystery of godliness;" and brought the church into a blessed frame of apprehension, concerning "the manifold wisdom of God;" and of those "eternal purposes" which Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, "purposed before all worlds, in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is very blessed to be enabled to trace our mercies to their source, and to see that however mysterious the subject is to the unregenerate, to the Lord's people there is a revelation of it. All is centered in the person and salvation, completely and wholly finished in the blood and righteousness, of our most glorious Christ. "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the GODHEAD bodily: and the church of God is complete in him." (Coloss. ii. 9, 10.)

Let us now proceed to what was proposed under the *second* branch of our subject, namely, to consider "what is the fellowship of the mystery," which, as the apostle saith, hath been hid from ages and generations, but is now made known to the church to shew the "manifold wisdom of God."

And here, without attempting to compass a large tract of holy Scripture on this sublime subject, (which the limits of a sermon forbid) it will be sufficient for my present purpose to observe that the fellowship into which the church is brought, by her union with her glorious head and husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, opens and keeps open an interest and partnership in all that belongs to Christ, as Christ. The Holy Ghost, by Paul, confirms all this at once, when saying: "without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim. iii. 16.) For by this taking into union with himself that holy portion of our nature, all the mystical members of his body became united to his person, and obtained fellowship and communion in all that he said or did, as the Christ of God. Hence, all those divine and soul-refreshing Scriptures which confirm the blessed truth:—"For thy Maker is thine husband, the Lord of hosts is his name: and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: the God of the whole earth shall he be called." (Isaiah liv. 5. Jer. iii. 14. Hosea ii. 19, 20, &c.) And hence also from this union with Christ, being chosen before all worlds, the church was designed in the covenant of grace, formed between the persons in the GODHEAD in the ancient settlements of eternity, to be the partner with Christ and in Christ for evermore.

But we must not stop here. In this vast plan of Jehovah in what is here called in this Scripture, "the manifold wisdom of God," it was not considered enough in the divine counsel, for Christ to bring the church into fellowship with him as her glorious head and husband only; she was to know him in another relationship, as her Redeemer and Saviour; and in this also to have "fellowship in the mystery" of which the text speaks. And here opens another vast volume of mystery, to which the fall of

the church ministered, and for which in the recovery of the church by the sole undertaking and incommunicable work of salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ, the whole of redemption is founded. By virtue of which the whole church of God became interested in all that concerned her glorious head and husband. In all Jesus wrought the church had fellowship. In all Jesus suffered the church was in him. When he died, she was considered in covenant promises dead to sin. And when he arose from the dead, in his triumphs over death, the church was included. In his ascension, her return to her original state in Christ was secured. And as the church was thus raised up together with him, so now, even now by faith, until actually brought into open and real possession by sight, she is "made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Eph. ii. 4—6.) Here then is "the fellowship of the mystery hid in God from the beginning of the world, but now made manifest to the saints." (Col. i. 26.) And the whole founded in the person, and completed in the finished salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ: in which the church hath fellowship from her everlasting union with him, being "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. v. 30.)

One point more remains to be considered in this delightful contemplation of our most glorious Christ, and the church's partnership and interest in him, and that, as far as concerns every member of Christ's mystical body, a most important point indeed; namely, our personal knowledge and enjoyment of the same. This is what the apostle Paul above all other considerations thought the most essential in this "fellowship of the mystery;" and for the excellency of the knowledge of which, he counted all other things but loss. "That I may know him (said Paul) and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his

sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." (Phil. iii. 7—10.) And allow me to say, that what the apostle so highly estimated, from a perfect conviction of its infinite consequence is, or ought to be, in the same value to every regenerated child of God: "for it is by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of the spirit." (Isaiah xxxviii. 16.) So that the great secret of this "fellowship of the mystery," known only to the child of God, but hidden wholly from the world, is at once the simplest, and yet the deepest in divine teachings. And mark what I am going to add: every truly regenerated person, unto whom the Lord hath given a real sense and feeling of his utterly lost estate by nature, accompanied with a spiritual apprehension of Christ's person and Christ's sufferings for sin, as doing away sin by the sacrifice of himself; so that the humbled soul beholds him ruined in himself, but saved with an everlasting salvation in Christ: here is the truest evidence of "the fellowship of the mystery," and the most perfect assurance, like Paul, that all such are brought, by the divine unction of the Spirit as he was, when with him we can, and do, count all things but loss, both righteous self, and sinful self, "to win Christ, and be found in him."

And now, with what hopes of being spiritually taught of God concerning this "fellowship of the mystery," am I to close my sermon? A mystery, yea, a depth of mystery, as all the ways and works of God must needs be to all his creatures: yet it is the privilege of the Lord's people, to be taught of the Lord: for it is said, "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant." (Psalm xxv. 14.) And the apostle John declared that the great object for which, under the Holy Ghost, he wrote to the church, and above every other consideration with him, for which he held forth to them

the glorious person of our most glorious Christ, whom he called *eternal life*, was, that they might have fellowship together: and “truly (said John) our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ!” Hence this fellowship of the whole body the church, with Christ the almighty head, and with each other as members, is the very life of all spiritual communion; and where this is, the joy of the Lord’s people is full; yea, their cup runneth over. (1 John i. 1—4.) I only add a prayer, that the Lord, in his infinite grace, will realize those divine truths in the souls of his people!

Lord! (I would say, for myself and all the Lord’s chosen ones,) bring us into the daily apprehension of those blessed realities. Give us such a personal knowledge of our oneness with thee, and interest in thee, that we may be living in the enjoyment of all those promises by which we are taught to expect the manifestation of all the persons in the GODHEAD to our souls, otherwise than unto the world! It is among the gracious assurances of our God, that thy people shall have “the fellowship of this mystery.” Yea, our adorable Lord Jesus hath said, and left it upon record, for our daily asking the unspeakable blessing: “I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you! If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him. And the Holy Ghost shall abide with you for ever!” Lord, we would humbly say in answer, “do as thou hast said!” for here we shall find “the fellowship of the mystery,” and know in our hearts and in our souls that the Lord is with us of a truth! Glory to the Holy Three in One, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, now and for ever. Amen.

THE
LORD'S PEOPLE
THE LORD'S PORTION.

A SERMON, FOUNDED ON DEUTERONOMY xxxii. 9.



“The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.”
PSALM cxxxv. 4.

P R E F A C E.

THE prosecution of this humble work is designed, under the Lord's teaching, to bring the villager by a regular pursuit of divine things, into the spiritual apprehension of the Lord's love and grace, and his own personal interest therein. Hence, from the first awakenings of the new birth to the full formation of Christ in the heart the hope of glory, those Sermons are so arranged that the gradation is imperceptibly carried on through the conviction "of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," according to our Lord's own statement of the doctrine, until the redeemed and regenerated child of God is advanced into an holy familiarity with all the persons in the GOD-HEAD; "of fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Jesus, through that unction from the Holy One by whom we know all things." The sermon here presented to the cottager is on this ground, and the spiritual apprehension of it, under the Lord's favour, cannot fail to call up into action all the regenerated faculties of the child of God, and to give "a joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls." I pray Him of whom we are about to speak, to be most graciously present with us at this time. The Lord, whose portion the people are, testify his delight in them by giving to all his a saving apprehension of the glorious truth. And while the Lord so condescendingly vouchsafeth to acknowledge them as his; the same all-bountiful Lord give grace to all his chosen to say and acknowledge Him as our Lord. I would say for myself and all his redeemed present, "Remember us, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people; O visit us with thy salvation, that we may see the good of thy chosen; that we may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, and glory with thine inheritance." Amen.

SERMON XIII.

 THE LORD'S PEOPLE THE LORD'S PORTION.

DEUT. xxxii. 9.

For the Lord's portion is his people ; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.

THERE is somewhat so very gracious, so endearing, and blessed in these words, as cannot be fully valued, because in the present unripe state of our being they cannot be fully known. It is a great thing for a redeemed and regenerated child of God to say, (and which indeed when savingly called by sovereign grace, every child of God ought to say,) "The Lord is my portion!" (Lam. iii. 24.) But it is an infinitely greater thing when the Lord saith that we are his ; for this is the *cause*, the other is the *effect*. The Lord's choosing the church becomes the motive for the church choosing the Lord ; according to that most sweet and certain truth, "we love him, because he first loved us." (1 John iv. 19.) And hence the Lord gives this statement by his servant the prophet, "I will say, It is my people ; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." (Zech. xiii. 9.)

And what tends to endear yet more this wonderful grace in the Lord towards his church and people is, that all the persons in the GODHEAD alike concur in it. Jehovah in his trinity of persons is known and made known by such acts of love as fully demonstate the counsel, will, and pleasure the Lord takes therein : it is all personal. God the Father hath made his people his own, by choosing and adopting every one

of them in Christ, from everlasting; it is "of Him the whole family in heaven and earth is named." (Eph. iii. 15.) And no less God the Son by marriage and by union hath made the church his own; not only by taking that holy portion of our nature into oneness with his divine, for his *personal* headship with his church; but bringing up after it every individual of his *mystical* body, through that medium, to be his inheritance. Hence he hath said by the prophet, "and I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies; I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord." (Hos. ii. 19, 20.) And equally thus we find in Scripture God the Holy Ghost spoken of as making his people his inheritance, by dwelling in them and making their bodies his temple. Hence the apostle Paul speaks to the church on this delightful subject, as of a matter that they were all well acquainted with. "What, (said he) know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God; and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. vi. 19.) How very gracious is the Lord by such personal acts to testify the glorious truth; and by such endearing proofs of love, in the Holy Three in One, to invite his people to the continual enjoyment of the Lord in personal communion.

And there is this farther beauty in the words of the text, in speaking of this love of God in his trinity of persons to his church, namely, that the Lord makes use of such terms as shall be perfectly understood by his people: he calls them "his portion, his lot, his inheritance;" all expressive of one and the same thing. For what is a portion, or lot, or inheritance among men? none can be at a loss to know; namely, that which a man lives upon. Well then, saith our gracious, condescending God, as you know what it is to

live upon your possessions, so will I upon mine : you are my property, my right, my inheritance ; and the grace I bestow upon you shall revert back unto me in praise. Hence the Lord calls his church his garden in which he delights to walk. (Song vi. 2.) He speaks at another time of his church as " a vineyard in a very fruitful hill." (Isaiah v. 1.) And by these and every other love-token which can demonstrate affection, the Lord conveys to his people the interest he takes in them ; and as it is expressed in other Scriptures in confirmation : " for the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure." (Psalm cxxxv. 4. So again Psalm cxxxii. 13, 14.) " For the Lord hath chosen Zion ; he hath desired it for his habitation ; this is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it."

But very blessed as such views are to demonstrate in what an affectionate manner the Lord takes delight in his church, as men over their inheritance ; the subject riseth infinitely higher, when it be considered that the Lord's portion in his people extends to purposes to which no inheritance among men can bear the smallest resemblance. The Lord's choice of his church is for union and communion with himself ; and this no inheritance among men can bring to the possessors. Where the Lord gives a blessing to the good things of his providence, which he bestoweth upon his people, and sweetens and sanctifies our lot in the earth with " the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush ;" we sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to our taste. Nevertheless, when the Lord takes his inheritance into a nearness and dearness of communion with himself ; and we have what the apostle calls, " fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ ;" here we are brought in Christ as unto the bosom of God ; and realize that Scripture in which the Lord hath said ;

“This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise.” (Isaiah xliii. 21.)

Neither is this all. For as the Lord hath raised for himself in all ages a revenue of praise from his inheritance, in the riches of his grace, and will continue to do the same during the whole time-state of the church upon earth; so when this life is over, and the church is brought home to her eternal rest, the Lord's inheritance will be the Lord's glory in an endless succession for evermore. To this sure testimony Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, hath alike borne witness. And in proof that the inheritance in grace and the inheritance in glory is one and the same, equally the portion of the holy Three in One, the Father is expressly called “the Father of glory;” (Eph. i. 17.) the Lord Jesus Christ is called “the Lord of glory;” (James ii. 1.) and the Holy Ghost is called “the Spirit of glory.” (1 Pet. iv. 14.) And when Jehovah in his trinity of persons shall have translated his inheritance from earth to heaven, who shall calculate the everlasting revenue resulting from millions of glorified beings, made holy and happy to all eternity in Christ, reflected back upon the whole GODHEAD, as the inheritance of Jehovah for evermore?

We shall be the better enabled to enter into the beauties, as well as into a clearer apprehension of the marvellous love, manifested in the words of my text, if we observe with what a world of tenderness the Scripture itself is introduced. Moses the man of God had just finished a very long and most divine sermon in the ears of the Lord's people, on the Lord's love towards them, and his unremitting watchfulness over them; and here in this chapter he closeth it with a song of praise; he even calls upon the inanimate parts of the creation to listen to the rehearsal: “Give ear, O ye heavens, (said Moses) and I will speak;

and hear, O earth the words of my mouth! My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the name of the Lord, ascribe ye greatness unto our God!" Observe, he calls the wonderful subject of Jehovah's love, *a doctrine*, and the receiving of it into the soul as the *droppings of rain*, and the *distillation of the dew*: these are both beautiful similitudes, and highly descriptive of the thing intended. For as the rain cometh down from above unasked, unsought for, and without any worth or preparation on the part of man, such is the grace of God which bringeth salvation. And as the dew which descends silently, unperceived as it falls, and the showers upon the grass, which make the fields fertile and bring forth; so both dispensations are received into the renewed heart, and become productive in the Lord's people, to publish the name of the Lord. And the grand and predisposing motive of the divine benignity is summed up in the words of my text, "for the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." What I propose in the farther prosecution of this subject is, in the *first* place, to consider how plainly it is set forth in Scripture, that while "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein," (Psalm xxiv. 1.) the Lord hath a people which he hath chosen unto himself, who are alike the objects and subjects of divine love to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. When I have briefly given in before you the scriptural statement of this leading truth of our most holy faith, I shall then go on to shew you, and from the same divine authority, some few (and it can be but a few) of the very blessed consequences resulting from this sovereign grace of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, in which the whole church of God are alike

interested, being in the several members of Christ's mystical body, the one complete inheritance of Jehovah; the righteousness in which they are considered, from their union with Jesus Christ, "being unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference." (Rom. iii. 22.)

Let me only before I begin the subject, beg every one that hears me to take with him those observations, namely, that this inheritance of the Lord's is wholly from himself, and to himself, and for himself and his own glory. All we have, and all we are, and all we shall ever be, springs out of his own holy will and pleasure, "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. iii. 11.) And as the highly favoured objects and subjects of this love are altogether passive in the original ordination of this sovereign will and pleasure of Jehovah, so are they in all the after circumstances which follow. Grace hath no respect to merit or to demerit in the creature, for it would cease to be grace if it had. The language of the Lord is, "I will love them freely!" I appeal therefore to the awakened conscience of every soul who feels an earnestness to partake in such unspeakable mercies, whether any consideration can be farther necessary to endear the subject to the spiritual mind and conscience? Very blessedly the apostle follows up the argument when he saith, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence." (1 Cor. i. 27, 28.) The Lord's teaching accompany at this time his holy word. Amen.

I now begin the subject as I proposed under the

first branch of the discourse, namely, to shew that the Lord hath a people which he hath chosen for himself and for his own inheritance; and which are the alike portion of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, Father son, and Holy Ghost. It is very blessed when we can, and do, under divine teaching, trace our mercies to their source; and in contemplating the everlasting love of God to his church and people, as chosen in Christ before all worlds, discover the whole persons in the GODHEAD alike engaged in this sovereign act of grace. The Holy Ghost, by Paul, hath beautifully expressed this great truth, and at the same time comprehended the joint love of the Holy Three in One in this sovereign grace, in a short Scripture of two verses: "We are bound (saith he) to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord; because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. ii. 13, 14.) Here therefore we behold the gracious act of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, towards the people which from everlasting he chose for "his portion, his lot, his inheritance." And although the time-state of the church by means of the Adam-fall transgression, alienated the church from her love of God, yet not God's love to his church. Chosen as she was, originally and eternally in Christ, she was still beheld in Christ, and amidst her change "the Lord changeth not." (Malachi iii. 6.) Sunk and degraded as she was by the fall; she was still the Lord's portion. Jehovah saith himself, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." (Jer. xxxi. 3.) And the provision made for her recovery in the glorious person and finished salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, became the highest proof of the unchanging love of Jehovah in his trinity of persons towards the

church in Christ. For so speaks Christ himself; "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.)

And this view of the church as Jehovah's portion, is endeared to the church, and comes home to the warmest affections of the church, from causes of the sweetest and most interesting nature. *First*, because it is Jacob, the distinguished Jacob and his seed, in contra-distinction to Esau and his seed. "Jacob have I loved (saith the Lord,) Esau have I hated." (Mal. i. 2, 3. Rom. ix. 13.) *Secondly*. The church so chosen in Christ and the joint portion of the Holy Three in One, is so chosen from pure love, from rich, free, unmerited grace. Moses, the man of God, who in the text was instructed to tell the church this great truth, was no less instructed to tell the church the cause. "Behold (said he) the heaven, and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is." As much as to say, the Lord needed nothing from his creatures; and in the choice of one rather than another, here he manifested special distinguishing grace. Well then, if the Lord chose you, it can be referred into nothing but because the Lord would, and therefore Moses adds, "Only the Lord had a delight in thy father to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day." (Deut. x. 14—16.) *Thirdly*. But was there nothing in the church herself lovely? or did not God fore-see that she would do somewhat to merit God's favour? Moses hath answered these and every other question of the like kind, when saying to Israel, "The Lord did not set his love upon you nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people." (Deut. vii. 7.) Neither was it for the church's righteousness, "for thou art a stiff-necked people." (Deut. ix. 6.) And

the Lord himself, ages after, by his servant Isaiah, declared concerning the church, "For I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb." (Isaiah xlvi. 8.) Nay, by another servant, even Ezekiel, we find those solemn declarations concerning the church, "As I live, saith the Lord God, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Thou hast committed more abominations than they." (Ezekiel xvi. 48—52.)

Now pause over this statement, and forget not that it is wholly scriptural. And when under divine teaching you have duly pondered the marvellous subject, namely, that Jehovah, "the high and lofty One whose name is holy, and who inhabiteth eternity," to whom nothing can be added, and from whom nothing can be taken, should in his infinite condescension, form a *portion*, a *lot*, an *inheritance* in his people; yea, that all the persons in the GODHEAD should alike take part, and by personal acts, make known their love to the church in Christ. And when, as had been fore-viewed by the Adam-fall transgression, the church became involved in ruin, and all her affections in enmity and rebellion against God; the glorious head of his body the church undertook and accomplished her redemption by himself; and restored her to an holiness infinitely greater than the natural holiness she lost in Adam. Who, that by regenerating grace is enabled to contemplate such things, but must cry out with the apostle, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Romans xi. 33.)

I have only one service more on this subject to perform at this time, namely, according to my proposal under the *second* branch of the discourse, to shew you, and from the same divine authority, some few of the very blessed consequences resulting from

this sovereign grace of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and in which the whole church are equally and alike interested.

The inference is unavoidable and conclusive: if the church be God's special *portion*, she shall be the special object and subject of the divine care. Hence John, towards the close of the canon of Scripture, was favoured with a special vision to shew this: "I, John, (said he) saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, behold! the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people; and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." (Rev. xxi. 2, 3.) And how sweetly and graciously did the Lord Jesus himself state this in his farewell sermon to his church; in which he promised the presence of the whole persons in the GODHEAD to be with them: "If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him; and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John xiv. 23.) "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter that he may abide with you for ever: even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (John xiv. 16, 17.)

And from this in-dwelling, this co-habitation, this unceasing presence of Jehovah in all the persons of the GODHEAD, manifested day by day to the regenerated church of God, as the church is in Christ; what can arise to prevent the Lord's unceasing attention to every individual of Christ's mystical body? Doth not the Lord in one of his love-songs say, speaking of his church, "Sing ye to her, a vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it. I will water it every

moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day!" (Isaiah xxvii. 2, 3.) And if the glorious inhabitant is always at home, can it be otherwise? Will the enemy dare approach to hurt it? He cannot come unseen, and the promise is absolute: "there hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. x. 13.) "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." (Romans xvi. 20.) Are the Lord's people a poor people, an afflicted people, which the Lord hath left in Zion? These things are not only known but appointed by the Lord, yea, measured out by the Lord. And were these things not so, half the promises in the Bible would have no opportunity for exercise. But the indwelling Lord hath provided the richest cordials for every case. So that as one said of old, and thousands can say the same now, "in the multitude of my sorrows within me, thy comforts delight my soul!" (Psalm xciv. 19.) In short there is not a case which can occur, not a circumstance that can arise, that ought to distress; yea, none could, or would, distress the regenerated child of God, if through grace he always had in remembrance that the church is the Lord's portion, and must be the Lord's care. Every child of God is garrisoned by the divine presence. Hence all are impregnable. The babe in Christ, or the fathers in God, all are what they are in the Lord. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old." (Isaiah lxxv. 20.) "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared unto Abram." (Gen. xvii. 1.) And amidst all the blighted and withered state of the church, as to our view,

things appear, "the new wine is found in the cluster;" the indwelling Lord of his inheritance is there, and he that looks on saith "Destroy it not, there is a blessing in it." (Isaiah lxxv. 8.) Such are among the infinite resources of holy comfort folded up in the assurance, that "the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."

You are going away, but not till I have asked what unction from the Lord hath accompanied your attention to the subject? Let us before we separate seek grace from Him, whose we are, that the glorious inhabitant of his people will, by unceasing manifestations of his presence, give us unceasing spiritual enjoyment of his indwelling favour. And as it is the special act of our glorious Lord to make himself known unto his people otherwise than he doth unto the world, let us seek grace from him day by day, to rejoice that he will keep us from falling, and present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

THE
FOLLOWERS OF GOD
AS
DEAR CHILDREN.



“ But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations ? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My Father ; and shalt not turn away from me.” JER. iii. 19.

P R E F A C E.

I WOULD recommend the cottager here, as I have done before, that when gathered together in his little circle, before entering upon the perusal of the sermon before him, to read the whole chapter from whence the text is taken: he will find, under divine teaching, much spiritual instruction from its blissful contents; he will realize the leading truths in himself, and his own soul; that state of alienation in which, while unregenerate, he was in heart from God, will feelingly be understood by him; and he will then discover the suitableness to himself and his former circumstances, while he reads those solemn words, “for ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light.” And yet more important as leading to the spiritual enjoyment of what this sermon is proposed to bring forward, he will, from the same divine teaching, see the ground on which the church rests her adoption character as *dear children of God*, from her oneness in Christ Jesus. Here is founded the marvellous grace to the church, and the cause of her recovery from the Adam-fall transgression, being “members of Christ’s body, of his flesh, and of his bones.” Under these impressions, I would say for myself, and the Lord’s people present,

Lord! we beg for grace “to bow the knee unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named;” and looking up through Him, and his divine mediation, “who is the way, and the truth, and the life,” we pray for that unction by which our souls at this time may be refreshed in the manifestation of “the love of God the Father, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost.” Lord! let thy presence be eminently shewn in our midst; let so much of revelation in the knowledge of Christ be shed abroad in our hearts, that in Him, and through Him, and by Him, “we may have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” And the Lord suit blessings to that part of his family before him, that each child may have his portion, and all be edified to the Lord’s glory and our happiness in Christ. Amen.

SERMON XIV.

THE FOLLOWERS OF GOD AS DEAR CHILDREN.

EPH. v. 1, 2.

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children : and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.

THERE is somewhat most delightfully endearing, and beyond all calculation precious, in the expression "dear children." I find no where in the Bible the word *dear* applied to any but to our most glorious Christ ; of Him it is said, (Col. i. 13.) that he is God's dear Son, or as it is rendered in the margin of the same Scripture, the Son "of his love." But to none but Him, and to the church in Him, is the term given. We read of "the elect angels," (1 Tim. v. 21.) but they are never called "dear angels;" they are called "sons of God," (Job. xxxviii. 7.) "when the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy." And so are magistrates, "I have said ye are gods," (Psalm lxxxii. 6.) but this appellation is on account of *office* : and in neither is there the most distant idea to any relationship with God. But of the church alone, as she is in Christ, is this tender name used, "dear children." They are said "to have been predestinated unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to himself," (Eph. i. 5.) and to have been made "accepted in the beloved." (Eph. i. 6.) But such things are inapplicable to the angels ; elect as they are, and upheld by Christ as they are, yet no union *with* Christ, neither *adopted in* Christ, nor *accepted in* Christ. And as a farther confirmation

of the total dissimilarity, the Lord Jesus speaks of his church very differently from what he doth of angels, when he saith, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfect in one; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." (John xvii. 21—23.) These are all such mighty things, of union and communion with this mighty Us, as are never spoken of angels, or indeed of any other, but the church. Hence we trace somewhat of the very precious expressions in the text, of "dear children."

And it is very blessed also to trace the love-tokens shewn to the church as "dear children," corresponding thereto through the whole of Scripture. Jehovah in his trinity of persons appears to take delight in speaking *of* them, and speaking *to* them, under a variety of appellations, all manifesting the love he hath *for* them. "Thou Israel art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend." (Isaiah xli. 8.) And speaking of distinguishing grace, shewn to them in an ample supply of all good, which, like the fleece of Gideon, shall make them full of divine favour, while the ungodly around them in the earth are dry; the Lord saith, "they shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them." (Isaiah lxxv. 23.) Hence they are said to be "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." (1 Pet. ii. 9.) Yea, they are expressly declared "to be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; growing unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom they are builded together, for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. ii. 20—22.) And to add no more, the Lord saith of his church, "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal

diadem in the hand of thy God." (Isaiah lxii. 3.) And what a multitude of Scriptures is the Bible full of, to testify the corresponding affection: "Fear not Abraham, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." (Gen. xv. 1.) "Thou God seest me," said the handmaid of Abram in a moment of great extremity. (Gen. xvi. 13.) "Yes (said Elihu,) he withdraweth not his eye from the righteous." (Job. xxxvi. 7.) "Can a woman forget her sucking child, (saith the Lord,) that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." (Isaiah xlix. 15.) Thus appealing to every sense of our nature, to demonstrate that our God is all eye, all ear, in watching over his people, his dear children, "keeping them night and day, that none shall hurt them." (Isaiah xxvii. 2, 3.)

But we shall have a clearer view of this subject, and under the unction of the Holy Ghost be led into a more scriptural and spiritual apprehension of the numberless gracious things included in it, if we trace it to its source. Every effect must have had a cause. And the cause wherefore the church in Christ, in every individual of Christ's mystical body, are "dear children," ariseth from the everlasting love of Jehovah in his trinity of persons towards the church, "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord!" (Ephes. iii. 11.) And if you observe the words of the text, there is a somewhat referred to in what went before to this amount, when the apostle saith *therefore*, "be ye therefore followers of God as dear children." He grounds this as the reason why they should be followers of God; namely because they are dear children. In the preceding chapters he had been very largely proving the doctrine, in the united love of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, towards the church in those acts of

grace, whereby their relation to God in Christ is manifested, and now calls upon the church on their part to set forth the reality, by a suitable life and conversation.

I must not at this time call upon you to look back and trace the subject through the preceding chapters, in confirmation of the truth ; though the subject would be highly profitable, and can never be studied too often, or too warmly cherished under spiritual enlightenings, in the church of Christ. But my text contains in its bosom enough for our present contemplation without amplifying particulars. "Followers of God as dear children" include the affectionate love and obedience to all the persons of the GODHEAD in Christ ; because each glorious person hath taken equal part in those acts of grace. And the "walking in love as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us," is not confined to our love of him, or love to one another, but eminently higher than both, in meaning our walking in his love to us as the *cause*, and then walking in love to him and to each other, as the *effect*, according to the statement of Scripture, that if we love him, it is because he first loved us. (1 John iv. 19.) And the sweet savour of his offering and sacrifice, being the unction of the Holy Ghost, through whom Christ made the propitiation ; and through whom it becomes so to his people, in "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. i. 30, 31.)

Under this view here is proposed to our meditation a subject of the sweetest and most soul-refreshing nature, in being called upon as dear children to be followers of God, that is, in his trinity of persons ; in which we learn from Scripture that the whole of the Holy Three in One are blended, and in which following of the Lord in this endearing point, the blissful

consequences will be found resulting from it, "by walking in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." In the prosecution of the subject under these distinct branches, I purpose, as the Lord shall enable, in the *first* place, to consider the gracious manifestation of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, by those sovereign acts in each towards the church, which denote GODHEAD, and which demand our united reverence, obedience, and love, as dear children. And *secondly*, how plainly those *effects* arise out of this *cause*, when we thereby shew our adoption character, and "the Spirit thereby beareth witness to our spirits that we are the children of God." And I cannot but hope, from the good hand of our God upon all his children which are here before him at this time, that we shall receive the full conviction of this sonship personally, in our hearts, and minds, and consciences, and have a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Vouchsafe, gracious God, to be in our midst, and give each of thine spiritually to hear the divine acknowledgment: "I will say they are my children; and they shall say, the Lord is my God."

In prosecuting what I proposed under the *first* branch of the subject, I begin with observing, that it is essential in order to have a right apprehension of the gracious doctrine itself, to have it impressed upon our minds, and everlastingly to keep it in remembrance, under divine teaching, the unity of the essence of Jehovah, in his trinity of persons. For the perfect equality of each, and the perfect equality of love manifested by each to the church, as the church is in Christ, can only form a suitable foundation for the church, in every individual instance, to be "followers of God as dear children." For while I know, and feel, and live upon the love of God the

Father, in those instances of personal grace to me, as I am in Christ; and no less enjoy the indescribably sweet and precious testimony, in all those personal acts of God the Son; and daily experience the quickening and renewing influences of God the Holy Ghost, directing my heart into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ; I possess a constant source leading to the principles inculcated in the text. This is what John means by the expression, "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John v. 10.) For here is a sure and solid foundation for daily, hourly, having communion with all the persons in the GODHEAD. And under these circumstances there will be, more or less, an unceasing desire of being "followers of God as dear children." I cannot, within the limits of my sermon, propose to exemplify the truth of this statement, under many particulars; for the subject is as extensive as it is great; but I will beg to offer a few, and which, if the Lord be your teacher, you will find very sweet and interesting, in proof of what John saith to the regenerated spiritual church, in which every child of God is supposed to be a follower of God, as dear children, in having "fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

In relation to God the Father, here we find such a cloud of witnesses in testimony of his love to his church in Christ, as most blessedly shew that the objects and subjects of this love are indeed in the fullest sense of the expression, dear children. For as it is said in the text concerning the personal grace of Christ, that he so loved us as to give *himself* for us; so the love of the Father was and is manifested in predestinating the church to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to *himself*. This personal love of God the Father to the highly favoured objects on whom that love is bestowed, was not and is not to

give them empires and kingdoms ; or wealth and grandeur ; or the mere enjoyment of things without or within ; no, nor heaven ; but God himself. "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise." (Isaiah xliii. 21.) The gracious design, will, and pleasure of our most gracious God and Father, in his adopting the church in Christ, was for himself, and to bring her in Christ into the highest communion with himself. And had you time, or could it be brought within the limits of preaching, to set forth this boundless love of our God and Father, in the numberless instances of it, you would see the whole church in Christ are dear children. Take however a few proofs by way of sample. The personal love of God the Father to the church began from everlasting. He it was that in his sovereign decree gave being to the church in Christ "before the foundation of the world;" and so chose the church in Christ, that "she should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Ephes. i. 4.) By the same grace, the Father who chose the church in Christ gave her to Christ, forso the Lord Jesus saith: "thine they were, and thou gavest them me." (John xvii. 6.) And as the Father gave the church to Christ, so he it is that secretly draws the church to Christ. And so indispensably necessary is this divine act of the Father, that Jesus himself saith, "no man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John vi. 44.) Yea, it is the Father which teacheth the church of Christ who Christ is, and what Christ is to his people. (Matt. xi. 27. Luke x. 22.) It is the Father who persuades the church to love Christ. (Ps. xlv. 10.) It is the Father who undertakes to make the church willing to accept Christ. (Ps. cx. 3.) It is the Father that reveals Christ in the believer's soul. (Gal. i. 15.) All these, with more to the same effect, are in the gracious personal acts of God the Father.

And well therefore may every regenerated child of God, conscious of these divine operations, join the apostle in his exultation of praise, and say: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us!" (1 John iii. 1.)

No less in relation to God the Son. Having betrothed the church to himself from everlasting, and grace being given to the church in him from everlasting, (2 Timothy i. 9.) all those personal acts in which his love hath been shewn, and which the record in the gospel sets forth, are equally demonstrative of his own inherent and eternal power and GODHEAD, by which alone such acts could have been wrought, and by which the equal part he hath taken in all the interests of the church are manifested, in common with the Father and the Holy Ghost. He it is in whom eternal life is for his church, and in whom alone eternal life can be had by the church. (1 John v. 11, 12.) He it is that assures the church "that all that the Father hath given him shall come to him, and him that cometh he will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) He it is that declares, "of all that the Father hath given him he will lose nothing, and that he himself will raise him up at the last day." (John vi. 39.) "My sheep, (he saith) shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no one is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are One." (John x. 28—30.) And in relation to the recovery of his church from the Adam-fall transgression, the text hath very blessedly stated the infinite salvation he hath wrought in the accomplishment. He so loved his church as to die for her, to shed his blood for her, to wash her from her sins in his own blood, yea to give himself for her, "an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." And what then can separate from the love of Christ? (Rom. viii. 35.)

And equally so in relation to God the Holy Ghost. The church, which was anointed in Christ by God the Spirit *from* everlasting, is sealed by the same Almighty power *to* everlasting. And all those gracious acts of regeneration, quickening, renewing, strengthening, confirming, rendering and making effectual unto eternal salvation, the church in Christ, by divine application ; these are among the sovereign agencies of God the Holy Ghost. And as they prove equal love to the church, with the Father and the Son, so do they decidedly and as plainly shew his eternal power and GODHEAD, since none less than God could perform either. And hence the conclusion is undeniable, that all the persons in the GODHEAD alike concur in the marvellous work of grace to the church ; and the words of the apostle in exhorting the church to be “followers of God as dear children,” have equal respect to the unity of the divine essence, in his trinity of persons, “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for these three are One.” (1 John v. 7.)

Having thus, though briefly, yet plainly and scripturally established the divine doctrine proposed under the *first* branch of my discourse, the *second* point, and which ariseth out of it, will at once appear ; and the motives which follow will need but little statement, to teach every regenerate and renewed mind to be “followers of God as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.”

It appears most evidently from the whole tenor of Scripture, that the very purpose of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, in raising up a church in Christ, was, and is for communion. The beloved apostle John assigns this motive as the express design for which he wrote to the church under the unction of the Holy Ghost, namely, that the church might be

brought into this fellowship; and truly added John, "our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." (1 John i. 3, 4.) And the imagination cannot conceive any joy equal in a life of faith, to that of communion with the holy Three in One; it is a prelude and foretaste of that which will constitute the whole joy and blessedness of the open vision in glory, when we shall see God in Christ, and know even as we are known.

And it is very precious to observe in the Scriptures of eternal truth, the many and abounding provisions the Lord hath made for opening and keeping open this communion, when by regeneration we are brought into our new and spiritual life, and to make us every day, and all the day, "followers of God as dear children." A throne of grace is erected, and the Lamb is in the midst of the throne, accessible in every direction all around, unto which the children "may come boldly to obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. iv. 16.) Helps are given to the Lord's people both for prayer and praise, so that all bondage frames are taken away; and a spirit of adoption is imparted to them "because they are sons; and God sends forth the spirit of his Son into their hearts, whereby they cry Abba Father; the Spirit bearing witness with their spirits that they are children of God." (Gal. iv. 6. Romans viii. 15, 16.) Yea, the very desire of communion awakened in the soul by the Lord, as it comes *from* the Lord, leads *to* the Lord; and is known and answered even sometimes before it is made. For so that sweet Scripture shews: "And it shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear." (Isaiah lxxv. 24.)

And to all the seeming preventions which from indwelling corruption, coldness, and deadness to divine

things ; worldly cares, and the numberless other causes thrown up by fear, to cloud the way to the mercy-seat ; the Lord in his promises hath made such an ample discovery of his love, as, if had recourse to in the moment of need, would brighten up the path and shine over all. The consciousness of " dear children " acts as an everlasting cordial of encouragement under the most distressing circumstances. True, we are rebellious children, ungrateful children, wayward children : nevertheless we are still *children*. Nothing can destroy this relationship. It was formed in Christ before the world began, and must continue in Christ when the world is done away. And God himself hath owned the relationship under the worst of circumstances. In a season of great departure, we find the Lord thus speaking : " But I said, how shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations ? And I said, thou shalt call me, my Father, and shalt not turn away from me." (Jer. iii. 19.) Here is the never-failing remedy, their relationship in Christ. So that have they backslidden ? " the Lord saith, turn, O backsliding children, for I am married to you. I will heal your backslidings." (Jer. iii. 14. Hosea xiv. 4.) Doth the Lord behold them like Ephraim bemoaning their transgressions ? the Lord saith, " Is Ephraim my dear son ? is he a pleasant child ? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still ; therefore my bowels are troubled for him : I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 20.) Such are the provisions made by the Lord.

Shall I in conclusion put the question to those that are present, and affectionately enquire, who among you " are followers of the Lord as dear children ? "

Allow me to express my fears that few of the Lord's people know the blessedness, or exercise

themselves day by day in the enjoyment of the endeared and endearing character of God's dear children. The sweet word, Abba Father ! doth not drop from the lips as often as it should, though more blessed than honey and the honey-comb. Earthly parents know what it is to hear their children calling them affectionately by name ; yea, the very lisping of their little ones when they can but just say "Father !" hath a charm in it which none but parents know. And who shall say what is in the mind and pleasure of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, when the redeemed and regenerated children of God, in, and through Christ, by the teachings of the Spirit, call him Father, "by whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." I add no more, but a prayer to God to bless to us his divine word, that we may "be followers of God as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour."

THE
F A I T H F U L G O D .

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON, PREACHED IN THE
PARISH CHURCH OF CHARLES, PLYMOUTH, ON THE
FIRST DAY OF THE NEW YEAR 1826, BEING
ALSO THE LORD'S DAY.

P R E F A C E.

THE spiritual part of our cottagers present (and I hope that they are not a few in number) are here called upon to the contemplation of one of the most sublime views of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, the word of God proclaims. And what endears it to the affection of his people with the infinite love of all that can endear it to them is, that God himself recommends it, and by his divine teaching, wills them to know it. The Lord seems (if the expression be warrantable) to impress it upon the church, that when his faithfulness is known, received into the redeemed and regenerated heart, lived upon, acted upon, and under the unction of the Holy Ghost made their daily confidence, it enables them to live down the daily workings of their unfaithfulness; for it calls them off from self, that idol which is more or less in every man's heart, and which mingles up with our most spiritual offerings, and fixes their thoughts on Jehovah and his faithfulness.

The Lord, in his boundless love, open the subject to our spiritual apprehensions at this time, and open our souls to his own, and not to our conception of the infinitely precious truth. Glorious Lord! I would say for myself, and for you, and for all the church of Christ, let thy presence, in thy trinity of persons, be so graciously manifested in thy word, that *the faithful God* be engraven in the living tablets of our hearts, that each child of God having received the Lord's testimony, "may set to his seal that God is true." (John iii. 33.)

SERMON XV.

THE FAITHFUL GOD.

DEUT. vii. 9.

The faithful God.

THE church of God, which hath been accustomed to meet me in this place, will anticipate both my text and sermon, before that I mention either. It hath been my plan, as many of you know, for several years in succession, to enter on the subject of my preaching in the new year, with making proclamation of God's faithfulness. It was the saying of the good old king Hezekiah as we read Isaiah xxxviii. 18, 19. assigning this substantial reason, when speaking to the Lord: "For the grave (said he) cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; the living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day! the father to the children shall make known thy truth." This was proclaimed *then*, and it is proclaimed *now*; and in the contemplation of the dying and the dead, during the revolution of the past year, who is there that will pause a moment to make known the faithfulness of God? You will give me credit for speaking the truth, when I say, that in all the circumstances of my eventful life, during the past year, not one thing hath failed on the part of God's faithfulness, amidst all the faithlessness which hath appeared in mine.

And I am as fully persuaded that there is not a single redeemed and regenerated child of God in this place; no, neither one among the whole redeemed

and regenerated family now upon earth, whom the Lord hath called with an holy calling, to make him more and more out of love with himself, and to endear to him more and more the person, and fulness, and suitability of Christ, but what is resting this knowledge and this confidence on "*the faithful God.*" And if we look back to the ages that are past, in the several generations of the church, the same meets us under all. What a beautiful and affectionate appeal on this subject Joshua, the man of God, made at the close of his ministry, as we read Joshua xxiii. 14. He had gathered all the tribes of Israel together, to receive his dying testimony concerning the Lord's faithfulness and love to Israel; and in the close of his animated address, he said: "Behold, I am this day going the way of all the earth; and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass as it is this day."

What a lovely sight of a dying saint, a dying servant of the Lord, blessing the Lord, and in his name blessing the Lord's people: all which, and infinitely more, is contained in the bosom of my text—"the faithful God."

We shall enter upon the beauties of it with more advantage, under the divine teaching, if we look for a moment at the occasion which gave birth to it. The holy army was now arrived at the banks of Edrei, a small town on this side Jordan, situated in the front of the country of Bashan, and only one stage, one remove more, before the people were to pass over Jordan. Here therefore, Moses, the man of God, halted at this memorable spot, and addressed them finally and fully on their wonderful history, in the divine love amidst their continued rebellion. I need not bring before you even the outlines of this marvellous

grace on the part of God ; and the awful history of their rebellion, on the part of man ; you have the event related before you through the whole book of Deuteronomy. My text limits me to the consideration of the faithfulness of God, amidst all the worthlessness of man. *First*, Jehovah proclaims who he is in his trinity of persons, Israel's God ; " Know, therefore that the Lord thy God he is God ;" and then he adds this divine feature of character, " the faithful God." I pray you to observe the striking manner of expression ; not only the Lord, that is Jehovah as he is in himself, in the unity of his divine essence and trinity of persons, but as he is in his covenant engagements to his people, " the Lord thy God." *First*, you observe the Lord reveals himself as having in an especial manner become Israel's God, and *then* he proclaims his faithfulness to Israel : and what endears the whole in the most tender and affectionate manner is, that he bids his people to know it ; and it was to be the distinguishing mark by which the Lord's people were to be separated from the world. " They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 34. Heb. viii. 11.)

What I propose in the farther prosecution of the subject, as the Lord shall be pleased to favour, is in the *first* place to consider, according to the Scripture statement, what the church is taught of this Almighty God, as he is in himself, " the Lord." To this will then very properly succeed what he is in this gracious revelation of character to his people, " the Lord thy God." And *lastly*, the certainty of his faithfulness, " the faithful God." The Lord confirm his word to your hearts and mine, that *we* may feel and enjoy the blessedness of this whole Scripture ; and *know* as

Moses said, that "the Lord he is God, our God, and the faithful God to a thousand generations."

I begin the subject as I proposed, with the *first* of those propositions, namely, what this Almighty God (according to the statement of Scripture) is in himself. Now for the better apprehension of this sublime subject, under the influence of that "holy unction from the Holy One, by which we know all things," (1 John ii. 20.) it is highly observable, that Moses began his sermon with this proclamation, "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord!" (Deut. vi. 4.) an observation unnecessary for the man of God to have made, had the expression meant no more than to say, one is one; but as Moses added the Lord *thy* God, here he plainly and clearly revealed a plurality of persons in the GODHEAD. For with whom was this covenant made of being Israel's God, but in and with the persons of the GODHEAD, God himself? Nothing out of God could be competent to form a part in this covenant; and therefore Moses, in this scripture, proclaimed at once the unity of the divine essence, and the trinity of persons.

And, brethren, let me deal faithfully and plainly with you on this glorious doctrine of the Holy Trinity; it is this which lays at the bottom of all our mercies; hence we find the glorious name of Jehovah, which, as far as our apprehension of the incommunicable name can extend, implies self-existence, independence, underived being, and possessing all divine attributes and perfections; and all equally applied to each and to every one of the persons in Jehovah; and this, and no other, is the holy Trinity. For on the bare supposition of any inequality, in the "holy Three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and which Three are One," (1 John v. 7.) there is at once confusion in the divine order, and the faith of God's church hath

nothing certain to rest upon. We meet with numberless passages in the Bible which, for want of reading them through the medium of the holy Trinity, perplex even the regenerate children of God; but taking the *datum* of all revelation from this sure and unerring source, the holy Trinity, this explains all. For on the supposition that there never had been a church (and who shall say what millions of ages ran out, in which the holy Three lived in mutual enjoyment, and holiness, and blessedness with each other, in an eternity which never had beginning, before that Jehovah in his trinity of persons went forth in acts of creation,) numbers of those things spoken of in Scripture, which have reference only to the church, would never have been known. But whether Jehovah had or had not called into being the church, the unity of the divine essence, in his trinity of persons would have been as it hath been from all eternity, the same. Hence, therefore, the scriptural and spiritual knowledge of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, and the perfect equality of each in the possession and exercise of all divine perfections, is the foundation of all the superstructure of revelation. Until the Lord made me personally acquainted with the oneness in essence and being of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and that each and all, though constituting but one and the same GODHEAD, were self-existent and underived; I was like the dove of Noah out of the ark, unable to find a place to rest my foot upon: but when the Lord gave me the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of the eternity and sovereignty of God the Son, as equal with God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost, all difficulties vanished. The incarnation and humblings of Christ in our flesh, excited no surprise, for his Headship and Suretyship to his church explained all; and the in-dwelling GODHEAD, in his human nature, gave

infinity to all he said or did, because he himself was and is infinite. How oft have I lamented to hear some of God's chosen ones lost in attempting to account for the different appellations given to Christ as Christ, as *first* begotten, and only begotten, and God's dear Son, and the like, until they have lost sight of his own eternal, inherent, and undivided GODHEAD. Brethren, I know not whether I have expressed myself on this sublime subject to your apprehension, but very sure I am, that this and this only, is the Scripture statement of the holy Trinity; and which corresponds to the first proposition in Moses's sermon, "Hear O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord!"

I proceed now in the *second* place, according to my proposal, to consider what this High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, is, in covenant-engagements according to his own revelation of himself; when speaking to his people he calls himself "the Lord thy God." It will require but few observations in proof, that if Jehovah in his infinite condescension engages to be the God of his people, the purpose, the will, the pleasure, can only originate in himself, or be accomplished by himself; nothing on the part of the church could prompt to such marvellous grace, for it began before the church had being; and none less than God himself could be competent to propose or perform such mighty acts as are included in this high administration. But when we read in the Scriptures of eternal truth, that all the persons in Jehovah have alike engaged and guaranteed to each other to be a God to Israel, and that Israel is his people; here we not only trace the gracious footsteps of each, in proof of the personality in the persons in the GODHEAD, but the glorious persons come home endeared to our warmest affections, adoration, and praise, by those special and distinct acts, which

though emanating from one and the same God, yet set forth the personal love of each to the whole body the church; and are calculated to call forth corresponding returns in adoring “the love of God the Father, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost.”

Suffer me to detain you here with a practical observation. Do you ask how it is, and why it is, under such views of the love, and grace, and favour of the holy Three to my soul or your soul, we live on for the most part from day to day with such an unaccountable insensibility to the spiritual enjoyment of these things? The answer is at hand: we have too little regard to the personal acts of grace shewn us by the visits and manifestations of the holy Three in One. To look at the church of Christ in the present day, yea, the most spiritual church, one might be led to suppose that those divine promises Jesus left his church were not in the Bible. I often blush as I read the xivth chapter of the gospel by John; what a cluster of the richest love-tokens are there! but who is there that realizeth them in his soul from day to day!

But it is time to hasten to the *third* part I proposed, and which is the leading doctrine of my text: “Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God.”

The faithfulness of God, in his trinity of persons, is among all the other standards of character which constitute GODHEAD; his holiness, his unchangeableness, his almightiness, his immensity, in short, all divine attributes are himself: for it is not with Jehovah the first *cause*, as it is with his creatures in their *effects*; what they are and all they have is derivative; but his perfections are himself: and hence we find that when at any time Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, is about to make promise to his people, he

finds it in himself. A most beautiful illustration of this is given in the instance of Abraham; and as it is so exactly corresponding to the subject before us, of the divine faithfulness, which the Lord will have his people to know, I advert to it the rather.

The Holy Ghost hath thus related it in the beautiful simplicity of Scripture, in one of the chapters to the Hebrews, (chap. vi. 13.) "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee: and so after he had patiently endured he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife." And do observe what follows, which most blessedly shews that not to Abraham only the Lord had respect in this gracious assurance of his faithfulness; but as the Holy Ghost elsewhere explains it, "now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made: he saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one; and to thy seed, which is Christ." (Gal. iii. 16.) Hence, therefore, the Holy Ghost in his divine statement of this glorious perfection of the faithfulness of our Jehovah, in his epistle to the Hebrews, proceeds to observe, that "God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Brethren, pause over this precious relation of God's faithfulness; ponder well the word, the oath of Jehovah: and then ask your own heart what shall arise, what can arise, to counteract the gracious and unalterable purposes of this "faithful God?"

But we must not stop here, for our faithful God

doth not. Jehovah delights (if we may presume to use the expression) to remind his Israel of the testimonies of his faithfulness. Many an hundred year had passed between Balak's hiring Balaam to curse God's people, which the Lord turned into blessing, and the Lord calling upon his people by his servant Mical the prophet, to bring it to remembrance. "O my people, (said the Lord) what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me. For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim to Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord." (Mical vi. 3—5.) And it is very blessed, not only to observe the faithful God in his dispensations to his people, but the exactness in that faithfulness the Lord had to his promises. Four hundred and thirty years the Lord for wise purposes had appointed Israel's being in bondage in Egypt; but so faithful is God that he suffered not an hour beyond it. (Exod. xii. 40—42) Seventy years the servitude of Israel in Babylon, but not a day more. (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23.) It is good to watch the footsteps of God's faithfulness, for God is watching all the ways of his people, "watering them every moment, and keeping them night and day, that none shall hurt them." (Isaiah xxvii. 2, 3.)

It is time to enquire, and what was this Israel, to call forth this special regard of Jehovah? Moses tells you in this same Scripture, where he reminds Israel of his origin, his nothingness, and unworthiness: "the Lord did not set his love upon you for the righteousness or for the uprightness of thine heart, for thou art a stiff-necked people; neither did the Lord set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were

more in numbers than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you:" thus tracing his love where we trace his faithfulness, namely, wholly in himself. "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." (Exod. xxxiii. 19.) Hence, you see, all begins in God, leads to God, terminates in God; and Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, hath founded the church in Christ; and it is "to the praise of the glory of his grace, the whole church of God is accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. i. 6.)

Brethren, I commend you, with myself and the whole church of Christ upon earth, to this faithful God: through his grace we have lived to count, in the arithmetic of life, our entrance upon a new year. Pause with me, and consider the distinguishing nature of this mercy. Look into the world, look into houses, families, and the neighbourhood around you, and calculate if you can, to what numbers death hath entered into their windows, and taken away the desire of their eyes with a stroke! And what are the resources of the church of the living God, for all the pending events of the coming year? my text answers: "The faithful God." Having him for our confidence, and "our times are in his hand," all is well. "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." Faithful God, in thy trinity of persons, we look up in and through our most glorious Christ, and entreat thy sovereign Majesty to do by thy church and people as by Israel of old! Let thine eye be upon our British Judea, as it was of old upon Israel, from one end of the year even to the other end of the year; "and there command the blessing, even life for evermore." (Psalm cxxxiii. 3.)

THE
HORROR OF GREAT DARKNESS

WHICH FELL ON ABRAHAM,

MORE OR LESS, IN THE SOUL EXERCISES OF ALL
THE SPIRITUAL SEED OF ABRAHAM.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON, FROM GEN. XV. 12.
PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF
CHARLES, PLYMOUTH.

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds as of many, but as of one; And to thy seed, which is Christ. Gal. iii. 16.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Rom. viii. 29

PREFACE.

IN the prosecution of these Village Sermons, and endeavouring to proceed in a regular order, so as under divine teaching to declare unto you the whole counsel of God ; I have in the several preceding discourses dwelt on those things which are essential to salvation. What effects have followed, or may hereafter follow, is with the Lord. (Isa. lv. 10, 11.)

The subject I am now about to give in before you, considered in all its bearings, is of the most spiritual nature, and more or less, is, or ought to be, in the practical exercise of the whole redeemed and regenerated family.

I do not mean, in this preface, even to give the outlines of it, the Lord will do this, and fill in all the essential parts of it, as we go along. I only detain you therefore, that we may bend the knee of prayer together, before we begin the Sermon in supplication to the Father of glory, to give both to preacher and hearer the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of our most glorious Christ: that we may “know the things which are freely given unto us of God!”

Vouchsafe, Lord! thy presence, thine anointings, thine unction: that we may discover our conformity to our most glorious Christ, in such soul exercises as shall prove our fellowship with him, and our interest in him; that being partakers in the vast concerns of his finished and incommunicable salvation, we may be partakers in the triumphs of his resurrection, and be found in him to his infinite glory, and our infinite happiness, here and for ever. Amen.

SERMON XVI.

THE HORROR OF GREAT DARKNESS WHICH FELL ON ABRAHAM.

GEN. XV. 12.

And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram ; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

IT is of essential consequence, to be cherished and kept alive from day to day, in the mind of the redeemed and regenerated child of God, that our relationship in Christ was prior to all our connections with Adam. God the Holy Ghost is most plain and explicit on this fundamental truth. By his servant Paul he saith, that the church “was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world;” and not only chosen, but “to be holy and without blame before him in love.” (Eph. i. 4.) So that the church had an uncreated holiness in her glorious head, which no attainments in nature could possibly resemble. And as this holiness is in Christ, and beyond all the powers of created nature to acquire, so is it beyond all the powers of nature to injure or defile. And to heighten this unspeakable mercy still more, the Lord gave the church a *nature* holiness in Adam, which, by the Adam-fall transgression, was soon lost, and misery introduced in its stead. Here was opened the first divine volume, both of “the mystery of godliness, and the mystery of iniquity.”

But we must not stop here. By cherishing and keeping alive in our remembrance, our oneness with Christ, and our unfading, and imperishable holiness in Christ, we trace our mercies to their source, and

discover that no cause, but that one glorious cause, could have given rise to the inconceivable blessedness of the church in Christ, namely, the everlasting, unchanging, and eternal love of Jehovah, in his trinity of persons to the church, "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. iii. 11.)

Neither is this all. For another most sweet and inexpressibly blessed consequence results from this view, namely, that as this choice, this love, this giving *uncreated* holiness to the church, began before all worlds, and will continue when all worlds are done away, so the gracious effects of it run through all time, overthrow all opposition, which men, or devils, may seem to cast up against it, and like a golden thread pass through all the events in the departments of nature, providence, and grace, and connect all in one, the eternity that is past, and that which is to come. It is indeed as a mighty river which sweeps all before it, and during this operation, "the streams thereof make glad the city of God:" it is a love which passeth all knowledge. It hath no breaks, no interruptions, no changes! "I have loved thee with an everlasting love!" (Jeremiah xxxi. 3.)

And to add no more by way of introduction. By being enabled, through grace, to have always in remembrance, what we are, and what we always were, in our uncreated holiness in Christ, during the hot and fiery trials we sustain from corruption within, the world without, and all hell up in arms around, when like Abram, an "horror of great darkness falls upon us;" oh! what a relief to the soul, to know our safety in Christ! Very blessed are the words of the prophet to this amount, when he said, "therefore will I look unto the Lord. I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me! Rejoice not against

me, O mine enemy : when I fall, I shall arise ; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." (Micah vii. 7, 8.)

I cannot pass away, from the view of these unspeakable blessings, without first calling upon the spiritual part of the congregation to observe, with me, what a door is hereby opened for precious communion, day by day, and hour by hour, with the almighty Author and Giver of those distinguishing blessings—Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. All have concurred in the divine donation, and therefore to each and to all should be given unceasing praise. It was, and is, the Father, that chose the church, and gave uncreated holiness to the church in Christ : it was, and is, the Son, whose almighty power and GODHEAD upholds the church in his holiness for ever. And it was, and is, the Holy Ghost, whose GODHEAD becomes the eternal source of all spiritual and eternal life and communion to every individual of Christ's mystical body, both with the Father and the Son, in grace here, and glory hereafter. And what can the imagination form, equally blessed, as the going forth of the souls of the Lord's people, daily and hourly, in acts of lively faith, and love, and adoration, and praise to each and to all ? Are these to be among the chief felicities of heaven ; when in open vision we see God in Christ, and know even as we are known ? And shall it not be our delight now ? Lord ! give grace to thy chosen to be much alive in the knowledge of this fellowship, with all the persons in the GODHEAD, "that our joy may be fulfilled."

I said, in the beginning of this discourse, that it is of essential consequence to be cherished, and kept alive in the mind of the redeemed and regenerated child of God, that our relationship *to* Christ, and our

holiness *in* Christ, was, and is, prior to our nature alliance with Adam. And you, who have known "the wormwood and the gall" of a state of sin, in the Adam-fall transgression, while laying under the pangs of a wounded conscience, until relieved by Christ, will best know how to value this unspeakable blessing of grace-union with Christ. There is not in the history of a child of God, either in the Old Testament or the New, no, nor in the thousands since, but what, more or less, have found cause to subscribe to the blessed truth. I might exemplify it in the records of the faithful in all ages; but I have particularly selected the instance of Abraham, on account of the honourable testimony given to this patriarch, by way of illustration. With him were deposited the promises. He is dignified with the name of the great "father of the faithful:" yea, the Lord himself called him "Abraham, my friend!" (Isaiah xli. 8. James ii. 23.) To behold this man, this friend of God, under the state the text describes him, will come home to the soul, if sent by the Lord with peculiar strength of argument. "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram: and lo! an horror of great darkness fell upon him!" I beseech the spiritual church of Christ which are here present, to look with me, unto him, "with whom is the residue of the Spirit," that our meditation of this subject may be wholly under his unction.

In order that we may omit nothing, which may serve to explain to us the great and leading truths contained in the doctrine of the text, it will be proper to begin the history of Abram, where the Lord himself hath begun his scriptural account of this man. The first call of Abram opens at the xiith chapter where we read, "Now the Lord hath said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country, and from thy

kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation; and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing." (Gen. xii. 1—3.) As the state of an holiness, above all *created* holiness, in which the church was chosen in Christ, was wrought without any act or merit on the part of man; so the call of grace to the knowledge and enjoyment of this blessedness, is wholly of God. "If we love him, it is because he first loved us." (1 John iv. 19.) In the prosecution of the chapter it is related, that Abram did as the Lord commanded him: and God the Holy Ghost in another Scripture, hath given this testimony to Abram's faith, "that he went out, not knowing whither he went." (Heb. xi. 8.)

In the chapter from whence my text is taken, (and some years had passed in Abram's life, since the former) we read, that "after these things, the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not Abram, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward!" By "the word of the Lord," in this place, must be meant the uncreated Word, even One of those almighty Recorders in heaven mentioned elsewhere by John, (1 Epis. v. 7.) for there was no *written* word of Scripture at this time. Besides, the blessing proposed could be promised by none but God. And I pray you to observe that the prior promise was to make Abram great, by giving him this and that. But here God proposeth to give himself! Oh! the grace of the Holy Three in One! (Isa. xliii. 21. Ps. iv. 3.)

The patriarch availed himself of this unparalleled goodness, and reminded God of his present childless state. To correct which, "the Lord brought him forth abroad, (that is, in his vision) and said, look now toward heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able

to number them. And he said unto him, so shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness. Here I pause to observe the mistake which some of the Lord's people have made respecting this faith of Abram, in supposing that it was the patriarch's *faith* which was counted to him for righteousness. But not so. For if Abram's faith, or any other man's faith was counted for righteousness, so might any other good deeds of the creature. The Lord Jesus hath given the key to open and explain this, as well as all the other eventful things in Abram's life, when saying to the Jews, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day : and he saw it and was glad." (John viii. 56.) The spiritual sight the patriarch had of Christ beheld him in his incommunicable salvation, as the righteousness of his people. It was this Abraham believed : and this righteousness was counted to him, being one with Christ, as his own. And that this is what God the Holy Ghost by this Scripture taught is confirmed by another Scripture. For the Holy Ghost by Paul, when speaking of Abraham's faith, saith that this man "being fully persuaded that what God hath promised, he was able also to perform ; therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness." And then the Lord adds, that "this was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him ; but for us also to whom it shall be imputed." What shall be imputed ? Abraham's faith ? Ah ! no ; his faith can be no recommendation of ours. But the Lord explains it himself. "To whom it shall be imputed ;" that is Christ's righteousness shall be imputed, "if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." (Rom. iv.)

If this be a digression, I hope, through grace, it will not be an unprofitable one. But to return to the history of Abraham. It should seem that this vision,

in which the word of the Lord came to Abraham, must have been before day break, for the sun had not risen to obscure the stars of the sky. And it appears probable also, that the whole day after was taken up in communion between the Lord and his servant. But on these points I would speak cautiously. The chief object I have in view, and for which I have invited your present attention, is to the consideration of the very solemn things contained in the bosom of this Scripture. "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram: and lo! an horror of great darkness fell upon him." It is not unfrequently in the *spiritual* world, as it is in the *natural*, when the sun sets; or (to use the very solemn language of the Lord by the prophet) when the Lord fulfils that threatening: "It shall come to pass in that day saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon; and I will darken the earth in the clear day." (Amos viii. 9.) When this is the case, the soul is brought into the midst of various enemies. "Thou makest darkness, and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God." (Ps. civ. 20, 21.) And when the soul is thus enveloped in darkness, what advantage doth Satan, aided by the world and our inherent sin, take, to drive even sometimes to despair the people of God! (Job ii. 7, 8. 2 Cor. vii. 5.)

"A deep sleep fell upon Abram." Perhaps, not unlike that which Adam was exercised with, and from the same cause: where it is said, "the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam." (Gen. ii. 21.) I presume not to speak decidedly, where the Holy Ghost hath not explained. But, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual," may we not suppose that the Lord scaled up the faculties of the body, while

calling Abram to the exercise of the soul, that nothing might arise to interrupt the divine instruction? (2 Cor. xii. 2, 3.) Next follows the solemn account, for which I have desired your attention at this time to the subject: (and which again and again I pray the God of all grace, for grace to guide us through) "lo! an horror of great darkness fell upon Abram."

What I propose as the Lord shall be pleased to direct, is in the *first* place, to consider the cause which wrought on the spiritual mind of the patriarch, and in like manner cannot fail to operate on all the spiritual seed of Abraham, when by the work of God the Holy Ghost upon the heart, a deep soul conviction of sin, and the tremendous consequences of the wrath to come, arise to our contemplation. "An horror of great darkness!"

I shall then hope, under the same divine aid, to shew you another cause for this horror of great darkness in the patriarch's soul, (and the same more or less must be in all his spiritual seed when taught of God) in the contemplation of the sufferings of Christ in the accomplishment of salvation, for his church and people. This I gather from our most glorious Lord's gracious declaration, when he said, "Your father Abraham saw my day afar off." In beholding with the eye of faith, as enabled by the Lord, the day of Christ, he beheld the glories of his person, in his own inherent, essential, and underived GODHEAD: and no less he saw him in his suretyship engagement in the human nature he had assumed, and taken into union with his GODHEAD. And the marvellous acts of suffering of Christ in the accomplishment of salvation, thus viewed by Abraham, induced "an horror of great darkness" to fall upon him. When I have gone very briefly over both these branches of soul exercises, I shall in the *last* place, from that inexpressibly sweet declaration of Christ,

namely, that Abraham saw Christ's day, rejoiced and was glad, prove to you on Scripture ground, and by the testimony of God the Spirit, to that Scripture in the souls of the Lord's people, that nothing short of the same divine assurance, can relieve from the horrors of darkness, which out of Christ must involve the whole Adam-fall transgressors in endless woe for ever. The Lord shine upon his word, and shine in the hearts of his people.

I begin with the *first* proposition, namely, the cause of horror in the mind of Abraham, and which more or less is in all the spiritual seed of Abraham, when under the conviction of our utterly lost, helpless, and undone estate by nature. Abraham felt all this. Abraham knew it. And until the Lord opened to his contemplation the day of Christ, the patriarch had no resource, no more than any of the posterity of Adam, in any way, to escape the judgment of God. He knew himself to be a sinner. He had heard of the destruction of the old world by water for the sins of men. He beheld the fruits of sin in death all around him. And what had the patriarch to propose to himself from any thing in himself, to "flee from the wrath to come?" Death stood as the close of every man's life; and what was there that Abraham could figure to himself to escape the common destruction? Moreover the alarm of guilt dreaded somewhat *after* death. And though the Scriptures of God were not then unfolded, concerning "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched:" yet conscience made up the account to alarm every sinner. We may therefore safely conclude, that Abraham's feelings were the same as the church's feelings in all ages, and as the Holy Ghost hath described of all. For let it be remembered, it is of the church the Lord speaks, and not the *natural* man, (1 Cor. ii. 14.) when using such

language as we find all over the Bible. "The Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night; and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, would God it were even, and at even thou shalt say, would God it were morning; for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." (Deut. xxviii. 66.) When pangs of such dire distress compass the people of God they will know, as Abraham did, what is meant by an "an horror of great darkness falling upon them."

But, *secondly*. Connecting the sight of Christ's day, which Abraham had a distant view of, and beholding him as the Surety of his people, I conceive that Abraham's horror in seeing what sin had induced in the sufferings of Christ, rendered this horror of the mind infinitely greater than the view of his own. To behold the Son of God, who in himself knew no sin, made sin for his people: to contemplate God and man in One person, laden with the iniquity of all his redeemed, yet he himself possessing all divine perfections: himself being made a curse to redeem all his from the curse: destroying death by his own death, yea, the *second* death with all its tremendous effects, by draining damnation to the very dregs, and bringing "life and immortality to light" by his gospel: if, I say, the patriarch beheld these things, and in seeing the day of Christ, all these, with every other accompanying salvation were included—surely horrors of great darkness could not but have occupied the patriarch's mind, in the conviction that but for these things the whole church of God must have perished for ever!

I pause here to observe, that while I cannot but

conclude from the Scriptures of eternal truth, that more or less, soul exercises like these, are in the lot of all the regenerate and redeemed children of God, I do not mean to say that they are all exercised alike. This were to limit the Holy One of Israel. The dying thief on the cross had no time for the greater contemplation, than a sense of his sin; and to behold his God and Saviour by his side. The Æthiopian, which at the preaching of Philip found Christ, went on his way rejoicing. And yet who shall say what spiritual conflicts followed? Paul was three days without sight when the Lord first called him by his grace. And the jailor at Philippi had a convulsion of soul as well as the prison an earthquake, when sovereign love brought him to the Lord. He intended self-destruction, as thousands of the Lord's people have done, whom grace hath restrained. The enemy, which tempted Christ to it, hath not failed to tempt his people. (Matt. iv. 6.) I cannot be supposed therefore to say from this horror of great darkness which fell on Abraham that all the Lord's people are equally so. But all certainly have, in this, as well as other instances, one family feature.

One thing more I have promised on this subject; namely, to observe from what the Lord Jesus hath said of Abraham's sight of Christ's day "rejoicing and being glad;" so in every instance of Abraham's spiritual seed—nothing but the same view of Christ can bear the child of God up amidst the terrors of great darkness, deep convictions of sin induce in the soul. Until I see by divine teaching, Christ as my Head and Surety; and by divine consolation I am led to believe in him and trust in him cordially and heartily; beholding all my sins transferred to him, and he bearing the whole, and doing away the whole by the sacrifice of himself: the terrors of a guilty conscience

can find no relief, no hope, no confidence towards God. "There is no peace saith my God to the wicked!" What shall I add, except to close up this solemn view in prayer to God in Christ; that all the spiritual seed of Abraham may have given to them the same rich views of our most glorious Christ as he had, to rejoice in him when all other resources of joy fail. O, Lord! I would say, both for you and for myself, give unto us the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, that "we may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death!"

ALL

MOURNERS IN ZION,

COMFORTED BY THE LORD.



“I, even I, am He that comforteth you.”—Isaiah li. 12.

P R E F A C E.

THE sermon I am now about to bring before you, you will observe from the title-page, is addressed to the mourners in Zion, and them only. It is the church, the regenerated church, against whom the Lord declares his displeasure by reason of sin; the natural man knows nothing of it, neither regards it: and even the church, though chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, knew nothing of their natural depravity, until, by regeneration, they are awakened from their spiritual death in trespasses and sins, to an apprehension of their totally guilty state before God. But when they are brought to feel the galling weight of sin, and cry out under it, most sweetly the Lord Jesus is revealed, as in this Scripture, “to comfort all that mourn in Zion.”

There is another very essential point to be considered, for the scriptural and spiritual apprehension of this lovely and all-cheering view of the Lord’s comforting his people, under all their own discouraging circumstances of their guilt before God; namely, that the Lord himself, and he alone, is the sole Comforter. Jehovah, in his Trinity of persons, hath reserved this divine act to himself; “I, even I, am he that comforteth you.” God the Father, when revealed in his everlasting love; and God the Son, in his incommunicable work of his finished salvation; and God the Holy Ghost, in his manifestation of the whole to the mournful soul when bowed down under a sense of sin; these then become the sole source of “joy and peace in believing, abounding in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.” To substitute aught beside, or to mingle aught with these, is virtually to give the lie to the Holy Ghost; and to contradict that Scripture in which the Lord hath said, “For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. ii. 8, 9.) I cannot hesitate to say, and am too well assured of the truth of what I say to entertain the least doubt of

its reality, that this self-complacency is the idolatry of multitudes of the present day, who are supposed to belong to gospel churches. (Ezek. xiv. 1—6.)

Great and glorious Lord! help thy sons and daughters of Zion, which are before thee, to realize this day the presence of the Holy Three in One, in the united consolations of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the person of Jesus Christ. Thou Almighty Jehovah the Spirit, whose divine acts of grace are manifested in the convincing our souls of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; let the lightning down of thy glorious arm be felt in this our assembly! Suffer no secret, no presumptuous sins to remain uncovered! Be thou to us the Spirit of judgment, and the Spirit of burning! Make way in our souls for the full, complete, and cordial reception of the Lord Jesus! Let no comfort but Jesus be ours! And do thou, O Almighty God our Father! give us in him an everlasting consolation, and a good hope through grace! Jesus will fulfil his own blessed words to our souls this day; he will comfort all that mourn in Zion; he will have a suited mercy for every case of his people; he will open blind eyes, unstop deaf hears, heal the backslider, and cause the tongue of the dumb to speak plainly! Lord! let it be a season of refreshing, as our several wants may be, for all thy people! Amen.

S E R M O N X V I I .

 ALL MOURNERS IN ZION COMFORTED BY THE LORD.

ISAIAH LXI. 2

“ To comfort all that mourn.”

THE great and glorious truths of the gospel are at one and the same moment the most sublime and the most simple. Considered as the revelation from God, in his trinity of persons, for the recovery of his church from their Adam-fall transgression; who, but must exclaim in the words of the apostle, “great is the mystery of godliness! But when, through divine teaching, the sinner is enabled to realize the saving truths in his mind and conscience; the whole appears so plain and palpable, that like the prophet’s vision “he that runs may read it.” And what endears it to the affection of the Lord’s people, when, by regeneration, they are brought spiritually into a capability of discerning divine things, is the gracious plan by which the holy Three in One hath been pleased to accomplish the salvation of his people; namely, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Marvellous work, indeed, of grace! but yet as endearing as it is wonderful, that One of the sacred persons in the GODHEAD should assume into union with himself an holy portion of our nature, and thereby become the visible Jehovah. Yea, more than this, not only assume a portion of our nature, but be made in the likeness of sinful flesh; and in that nature not only redeem the church from all iniquity, but

take a fellow-feeling in all her interests, and so sympathize with every individual of his mystical body, as "to bear their sins and carry their sorrows."

A beautiful illustration is given in a comprehensive manner, of one feature of his character in the words of the text, "to comfort all that mourn." I do admire that little word in the middle of the sentence, *all* that mourn. Yes! Jesus hath a complete knowledge of all the persons of his people; and as he knows their persons, so he knows their circumstances, their wants, their exercises, their sorrows; yea, Jesus not only knows them, but appoints them: and as they are measured out in love and wisdom, so the final issue of them he hath appointed also for good; he saith himself, "for I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." (Jer. xxix. 11.) And it is astonishing if you look into the Scriptures throughout, how infinitely accommodating the Lord hath varied his expressions, so as that his exercised family shall see every case and every situation included. The tenderness of the Father is adopted, to shew that "as the father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." (Ps. ciii. 13.) And no less the mother, "as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." (Isa. lxvi. 13.) Nay, the Lord takes one of the most affecting images of nature, to shew the extensiveness of his care and watchfulness of his people; and in the instance of an infant at the breast, declares, what we should shudder at as impossible, that a woman might forget her sucking child, so as to have no compassion on the son of her womb; "Yet, saith the Lord, will I *never* forget thee." (Isaiah xlix. 15.) And yet still beyond all these, the Lord declares that so much are his people part of himself, and so much interest doth he take in them, that "whoso toucheth them, toucheth the apple

of his eye." (Zech. ii. 8.) Saul was persecuting the Lord's people; and Jesus called to him from heaven, saying, "Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?" (Acts ix. 4.) There is somewhat so very gracious and accommodating in this to all the cases and circumstances of the Lord's whole family, that I cannot pass away from it, until that I have first desired every one, and the poorest and least of Christ's little ones, always to have it in view,—Jesus comforts *all* that mourn in Zion.

You will observe that I have assumed for granted every one knows by whom the words of my text were spoken; it were to hold a candle of the night to add to the light of the sun at mid-day, to suppose any one can need information who was the Almighty Speaker: none but him "who spake as never man spake" could have used such language, or been competent to the acts proposed of comforting. But that no possible doubt might arise on this ground, we find the Lord of life and glory opening his very first sermon in the days of his flesh, in the Jewish synagogue, with the same words as he had before spoken by the prophet; and when he had so done, Jesus added, "this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke iv. 21.)

The whole passage is beautiful, had you time to attend to it. Jesus opens it with speaking of his unction. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God: to comfort all that mourn." All these are one and the same characters, though expressed differently, under different features; they are all of the sons and daughters

of Adam, and alike condemned in the Adam-fall transgression. It is not to the world, neither to natural man unrenewed, the expressions are suited. The *meek*, to whom the good tidings are preached, doth not mean such as the world call men of meekness, who by dint of natural education, or restraints from the fear of men, sometimes appear very gentle and affable; and can, and do, in the presence of those they fear, or wish to stand well with, smother the natural anger boiling within. The pharisees and scribes excelled in this in Christ's days; and the race is not extinct in our days. But had this been the meekness Jesus had in view, when he said to such he came "to preach good tidings," ancient Greece and Rome had men that prided themselves in not resenting injuries, and assuming the appearance of meekness. My brethren, the meekness of the gospel differs as widely from this natural hypocrisy, as the east from the west. Our Lord hath defined this meekness, of which he spake, when in his divine sermon on the mount, he said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." (Matt. v. 5.) The whole is a comprehensive statement of precious souls brought under the sentence of condemnation in their own hearts; they are meek and lowly in their own eyes; they have read, or heard, in the word of God, of their guilt and misery, as they stand in themselves before God; and, as such, they rejoice to hear Christ preaching good tidings to the meek; and, under divine teaching, they wait as broken-hearted, to be bound up, and as captives of sin and Satan, to be delivered. It is of such, and to such only, the Lord speaks, when declaring himself the healer of his people, and "to comfort all that mourn;" similar to that divine promise of Scripture, "for the Lord taketh pleasure in his people; he will beautify the meek with salvation." (Psalms cxlix. 4.)

What I farther propose in the prosecution of this

subject is, to consider in the *first* place the comprehensive nature of this comfort; which not only furnisheth ample resources as a remedy against all sorrow, but extends to all the varied and multiplied calamities of the Lord's people through life. When I have finished this branch of the subject, it will be proper, under the *second* particular, to enquire into the character of those mourners whom the Lord will comfort, and how they are distinguished from that sorrow of the world which worketh death. These preparatory enquiries will best pave the way for the contemplation of Him, in his infinite fulness, ability, and suitableness to comfort all that mourn. The good Lord, if it be his blessed will, realize the truth to the spiritual joy of all his people here; that each may find his own case particularly visited by the Lord, according to his own words, wherein he saith, "I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul." (Jer. xxxi. 25.)

I am, *first*, to consider the comprehensive nature of this comfort, wherein the Lord Jesus undertakes to comfort all that mourn. And, without advancing a step farther, it will be very obvious that the whole is comprised in himself; all the persons in the GOD-HEAD have concurred, and do concur, in the mighty act; but it is in the person of our most glorious Christ the infinite treasure is contained for communion: "I, even I, am he that comforteth you." (Isaiah li. 12.) And hence, when proclamation was made in the holy mountain, that the church should be refreshed with the abundance of consolations, the cry was, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isaiah xl. 1.) It is sin which is the cause of all sorrow; on the

supposition, therefore, that sin is taken away, with the departure of sin would cease sorrow: yea, even the afflictions of life would be sanctified blessings. Now as the Lord Jesus "hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, hence he is in himself the source of all comfort; and in the spiritual knowledge and enjoyment of him, Jesus comforts all that mourn; he gives (as this Scripture states) "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." (Isaiah lxi. 3.)

But we must not stop here. Such is the comprehensiveness of this incalculable blessing, that when Jesus comes to comfort his people, and them that mourn, he converts their very troubles into sources of joy, and makes their tears richer than the "spiced wine of the pomegranate." Here we discover a divine hand, and have such manifestations from the Lord, during our mournful seasons, as shew that, but for those seasons, we should have lost a thousand comforts. And it was the consciousness of this made one of old cry out, "it was good for me to have been afflicted." (To instance but one among many.) What blessed communion hath been produced by the means of soul exercises! how often have they constrained the people of God to visit the throne of grace, when a state of uninterrupted prosperity hath made them strangers at court! When, therefore, the Lord hedges our way up with thorns; and if thorns will not do to keep us from our earthly lovers, the Lord makes a wall, that we shall not get over. Oh! how gracious is it in the Lord, to allure us into some wilderness-dispensation, and there speak comfortably to us! (Hosea ii. 13, 14.) Brethren! pause over this statement; make it personal; see in the example of your own history, since you knew the Lord, whether, in looking back, you cannot trace how the Lord straitened you in this or

that providence, threw a damp upon this or that ordinance, and the several means of grace, at times; and at others enlarged your hearts, on purpose to call off your attention from secondary considerations, to have your whole regard directed to him alone. Here is the way by which the Lord brings about his sacred purposes, to comfort "all that mourn in Zion;" that by drying up all creature resources, as the prophet's brook, we may be brought to live wholly on the fountain: and learn that divine riddle of the apostle, which none but a child of God can understand, "as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. vi. 10.)

But it is time to proceed to what I proposed under the *second* particular, namely, to enquire into the character of those mourners in Zion whom the Lord will comfort, and how they are distinguished in their afflictions from that "sorrow of the world which worketh death." (2 Cor. vii. 10.)

I begin with observing, that the mourners in Zion are such, and such only, as have been by regeneration, or the new birth, brought into a state of spiritual life, and are thereby rendered capable of spiritual discernment. All men, the church, as well as the world, by the Adam-fall transgression, are alike "dead in trespasses and sins;" and until quickened by sovereign grace into spiritual life, no child of God is capable of mourning for sin. Sorrow for sin is a spiritual act, which the natural man in his unrenewed nature cannot feel. (1 Cor. ii. 14.) Hence it is expressly said, that "Christ is exalted as a Prince, and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins." (Acts v. 31.) And there is a beautiful order in these sovereign acts of grace, observed by the Holy Three in One towards the church, as distinguished from the world. God the Father hath

exalted Christ as a Prince and a Saviour, to bestow those blessings on his people. And God the Holy Ghost, by the washing of regeneration, brings the people into a spiritual life and capability of receiving them. (Titus iii. 4—7.) And God the Son comforts all that mourn in Zion, with them, when under a sense of sin. Hence, if the Lord be your Teacher, you will perceive that it is not the living among the people of Zion; not making the same profession as the people of God; not having the *form* without the *power* of godliness; not an head knowledge, so as to have the clearest apprehension by reason and argument, of the glorious truths of the gospel. Those words of Christ define real vital godliness from nominal, and *spiritual* from what is merely *natural*; and become an everlasting barrier against all spurious doctrines of men: “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John iii. 3.)

Again. True mourners in Zion are such as have known and felt the plague of their own heart, and are out of love with themselves, and in love with Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost, by the prophet, hath described them very graciously. “I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.” (Zech. xii. 10.) Here is an infallible mark; and such we may venture to assert on the authority of Scripture, more or less, is in the character of every true son and daughter of Zion. Self-loathing, self-abhorrence, self-renouncing are the sure features of mourners in Zion; and where these are, there will be, in exact proportion, a soul longing, a soul desiring, and a soul hungering for Jesus Christ.

Once more. True mourners in Zion not only lament over their own sins, but over the sins of the Lord's people ; and they are marked by the Lord, as such, with peculiar tokens of his favour. "And the Lord said unto the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side, Go through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said, in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city and smite ; let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity ; slay utterly, old and young, both maids, and little children, and women : but come not near any upon whom is the mark." (Ezek. ix. 3—6.) But what shall be said of those (for they are the Lord's people also) who are "at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations to whom the house of Israel came?" (Amos vi. 1.) And who are they, among the Lord's people, but the backslider ; the pharisee, that is bolstering himself in his own righteousness, making a yea and nay gospel ; that (as the Lord describes them by the prophet) "say, Stand by thyself ; come not near me ; for I am holier than thou ! These are, saith the Lord, a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day." (Isaiah lxxv. 5.) But what a gracious Scripture is that to the Lord's people concerning such, while they remain under their delusion, and despise the true mourners in Zion : "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word ; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified ! but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." (Isaiah lxxvi. 6.)

These are among the more prominent features of character to distinguish the mourners in Zion, and such as the Lord in the text promiseth to comfort. I

have only sketched what, more or less, marks all ; no doubt, did it come within the limits of a sermon, I might have enlarged the subject by drawing out some other descriptions, all which denote “the spots of God’s children;” but these are enough to shew how grace and the new birth mark “the precious from the the vile.” Those outlines are such as no natural man ever knew ; indeed they are such as the un-renewed man *cannot* know. Mourners in Zion have one family feature. “They shall come with weeping and with supplications will I lead them ; I will cause them to walk by the rivers of water, in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble ; for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born.” (Jer. xxxi. 9.) Brethren ! it will be your province, as it ought to be your pleasure, to see how far you correspond with this Scripture standard.

I have but one object more in view to bring before you, and which, indeed, is the highest and most important of all, but which in the outlines of it may be brought within little compass, namely, to speak of Him and his infinite gréatness, fulness, and suitability, who alone is all-sufficient, and who graciously promiseth “to comfort all that mourn in Zion.”

When we take into one view who this Almighty One is, and what he is, that he is one in essence and being with the Father and with the Holy Ghost ; one in will, purpose, decree, and pleasure, in all the gracious designs of the Holy Trinity relating to the church ; that by virtue of assuming our nature into union with his divine, he is the visible Jehovah, and “in him dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD bodily ;” that by reason of this relationship with his church, one and the same interest belongs to both ; that his glory more than our happiness is the first and pre-disposing cause of all : we indeed obtain in him and through him unspeakable blessedness ; but his is to wear the

crown of redemption, in bringing "many sons unto glory." When these things are taken into one comprehensive view, surely there is *that* in it which is enough to make every mourner in Zion glad. Jesus is all, and hath all, that can be needed in time and in eternity for his people; and every case he knows, and makes his own.

I stay not from *general* statement to make application to *particular* cases; the extensiveness of the language in the text renders it unnecessary; for if Jesus comforts *all* that mourn, then are all included, and not one can be overlooked.

Vouchsafe, Almighty Lord! at this time to give to them that are here present of thy mourners, a blessed realizing in their own souls of the precious truth of this divine Scripture. And this part of thy church now before thee so satisfy with thy goodness, as to leave behind them all their sorrows, living out of themselves, and from henceforth living in thee whose church is thy body, "and the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Amen.

THE
WASHING OF REGENERATION.



“ Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God ? ” “ And such were some of you : but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” 1 Cor vi. 9. 11.

PREFACE.

THE subject of this sermon on “The washing of regeneration,” forms so principal a part in the divine truths of the gospel, that the clearest apprehension of it is of indispensable moment, in the church of Christ. Our glorious Lord places it at the very door of revelation, and declares that without it there can be no entrance into his kingdom. (John iii. 3.) And indeed, from the total inability in man, by reason of the Adam-fall transgression, to receive any spiritual knowledge while dead in trespasses and sins ; there can be no desire after Christ, nor any knowledge of Christ, nor even the consciousness that we stand in need of Christ, until by our new birth, we are quickened into a new and spiritual life, to discern our misery, and to learn, by divine teaching, that Christ alone is our salvation. These most interesting truths will, I hope, through the Lord’s blessing, be made to appear in the following sermon. I therefore only enter upon it with prayer for the Lord’s unction, both upon our persons and services, that we may know, as the motto of our title-page expresseth it, that we were by nature alike dead in trespasses and sins ; but “we are washed, we are sanctified, we are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

Great and glorious Lord ! we implore thy presence to be eminently with us at this time. Let thy holy word be accompanied with thine almighty power. And if consistent with thy sovereign will, let the same blessed effects be felt by thy people before thee as were felt in the family of Cornelius ; while the apostle preached Christ among them, “the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.” (Acts x. 44.)

SERMON XVIII.

THE WASHING OF REGENERATION.

TITUS III. 5.

The washing of regeneration.

I DO not know whether it hath ever struck you, or even if it hath, whether you have dwelt upon it in a manner equal to its importance; but in the book of the Songs (which is wholly of what passeth between Christ and his church) we have our most glorious Lord contemplating the beauties of his church; and more or less in every feature he draws of her, he is setting forth her vast loveliness, from his comeliness which he had put upon her. Do, I beseech you, study that blessed book of God with an eye to these things; and sure I am, if the Lord be your teacher, you will discover innumerable beauties of this kind, as often as the Lord leads you to the contemplation, and explains its divine contents to your spiritual apprehension.

Among the several graces of the church, which the Lord dwells upon in the *fourth* Song, after commending the beauties of her person, he compares her teeth “to a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing, whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them.” (Song iv. 2.) So delightful to Jesus is this almighty act of quickening his members into the new and spiritual life, that when done he beholds them like the sheep that are shorn, whose fleecy covering, made white by washing,

renders them most lovely as a flock. And coming up from the washing, from nature to grace, from dwelling amidst the mire of this world, to the wholesome pastures of the divine ordinances of salvation; there can be nothing barren nor unfruitful among them, for the twin graces of the Spirit, in faith and love, lead them daily to holy communion with all the persons in the GODHEAD, by which their new life in Christ is made known, and by which they at length discover as he saith himself, "their righteousness is of me saith the Lord!" (Isa. liv. 17.)

My text, and the Scripture connected with it, leads to the same view as the Lord Jesus took of his church, when, as that Song expresseth, he commended the beauties of her person. The Holy Ghost by Paul, in a verse or two preceding the text, had been speaking of the universal fall and apostacy of our nature, the church as well as the world being alike involved in one common ruin with Adam. And it is of the church the Holy Ghost is always speaking when describing the delinquency of man: for to the world of unrenewed men the Lord speaks not; for how can nature, while dead in sin, receive any knowledge of what belongs to spiritual life? "For we ourselves also (said Paul) were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." What an awful portrait the Holy Ghost hath here drawn! To whom doth it belong? Nay, to every man and to all men. It is the universal family picture of every son and daughter of Adam by the fall. And without an act of regeneration, or the new birth, there can be no salvation. For though our new birth is not salvation, (for salvation is the incommunicable work of Christ) yet without it in the new and spiritual life, we have no spiritual faculties to partake of it.

Paul having thus stated the deplorable condition of all men by nature, and the church alike implicated in the same condemnation, proceeds to shew the happy deliverance of the church, by the rich, free, sovereign grace of God. “But after (saith he) that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” I have read the whole of this beautiful passage, though I mean to confine myself in my sermon, to the consideration of the doctrine of my text, namely, “the washing of regeneration.” I would only just remark, that here all the persons in the GODHEAD are included. The kindness and love spoken of refers to God the Father, whose mercy is said to have been the predisposing cause of providing salvation. And the act of regeneration, though in this Scripture personally ascribed to God the Holy Ghost, is not so exclusive of the persons of God the Father or the Son; for the whole constituting one and the same GODHEAD in the unity of the divine essence, are alike agents in the divine work. But while the Scriptures in their statement authorize this view of the subject, they do, in a yet more immediate manner, give authority to consider the act of the new birth, as the result of “the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

In following up this subject I propose, as the Lord shall be pleased to enable me, in the *first* place, to observe what the holy Scriptures have taught in relation to it, and what a marvellous act of grace is wrought in that day, in the spiritual faculties of every one made the happy partakers of “the wash-

ing of regeneration." I shall then, *secondly*, go on to shew, and from the same authority, some of the very blessed effects which result from so mighty a cause, and in which all the persons of the GODHEAD concur. And lastly, in what must ever be a most important part of every divine subject, in the humble enquiry each for himself of his own personal interest in it, to shew how fully and completely the work is solely the Lord's; neither depending upon the merit of the receiver, nor any preparation in the receiver for the obtaining this unspeakable gift. The Lord, the great author and giver of all good, so completely take up our attention at this time, that many of the Lord's people, like the church of old, may be found "coming up from the washing, every one bearing twins, and none barren among them," bringing the testimony of their new birth with them, that they are born, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 13.)

First. I am, according to my proposal, to observe, what the holy Scriptures have taught in relation to this sovereign act of grace, what a marvellous work is wrought in that day, when the spiritual faculties of the happy object of this love are made alive by "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." The Scriptures use a great variety of expressions by way of figure, to illustrate and unfold this blessed doctrine. Sometimes it is called, "the new heavens and the new earth:" because all the objects to which the new born child of God is brought thereby, are all new, and such as he never could have any conception of before. Sometimes it is called a "new creation," for it is said, "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." (2 Cor. v. 17.) At other times it is said to be a "deliverance from the power of darkness, and the being

translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son." And the corresponding affections in the heart bear testimony to the operation being marvellous, and such as none but God himself could perform. For every faculty, every disposition, yea, the whole of the man is changed. There is an immediate tendency of the new born heir of grace, to a different pursuit in the whole life and conversation: to "put off the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts; and to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephes. iv. 24.)

And what hath not been as closely considered by the Lord's people, as the vast importance of the subject demands; namely, the *cause* of this washing of regeneration, is not continually, as it ought to be, traced to its source, when of all meditations, this is the highest and the best. When a child of God finds himself brought from darkness to light; to contemplate wherefore such distinguishing grace is bestowed upon him, which all mere natural men know nothing of—what a soul-melting discovery is here! He beholds in it the everlasting love of God the Father; the grace union which before all worlds he had in Christ; and now, the washing of regeneration by the Holy Ghost, to cleanse from the Adam-fall transgression in nature, and bring them into the adoption of the sons of God by grace. And the blissful effects of this new life in Christ, in opening communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, make way for the spiritual faculties to be in exercise as an entrance into a new world, where every object is divine and heavenly, and where the soul expands in desires for unceasing enjoyment of the Lord. I fear that the tracing our washing of regeneration to this source is not so daily kept in view by the Lord's people as it ought; and which serves

to explain wherefore it is, that the Lord's people are sometimes tempted to question the reality of their new birth and conversion to God. Whereas, if you or I daily accustomed ourselves to the consideration of God the Father having chosen us in Christ from everlasting ; and that we had a spiritual and eternal holiness in Christ above the nature holiness afterwards given us in Adam which we lost ; and that from hence in what is called " the fulness of time, and because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father : " by this referring all our present blessings to the everlasting source and cause from whence they flow ; we should, through grace, keep up one uniform attention to the holy calling wherewith we are called ; when, " not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." I cannot dismiss this view of the subject, until that I have first desired the Lord's people who hear me, and who are of the regeneration, that they will be prompted, from what hath been said, to accustom themselves to the consideration of it in its source. Very sure I am, it is not as frequently as it ought in their remembrance. And yet equally sure I am, it is among the very first of all spiritual enjoyments.

But *secondly*, I proceed now, as was proposed, to shew, and from the same scriptural authority, some of the blessed effects which result from so mighty a cause, and in which all the persons in the GODHEAD concur. I said *some* of the blessed effects, for eternity itself can only afford space and opportunity to unfold *all*. Added to the sweet communion, which, by our spiritual faculties being awakened from the sleep and death of sin, we are brought into a capabi-

lity of discerning things by spiritual apprehension, and to enjoy fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ ; we are said to be brought also into all the privileges of the “ heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.” Yea, the Holy Ghost by Peter tells the church, that, “ according to his divine power he hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him, that hath called us unto glory and virtue : whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” (2 Pet. i. 3, 4.)

And although at our regeneration, our spiritual faculties are not so ripened for action, as to enjoy at once all the high privileges to which by our new birth we are begotten : but like babes in nature, must grow up to the gradual expansion of knowing the things which are freely given to us of God : yet certain it is, that divine laver my text speaks of, “ the washing of regeneration,” renders the soul capable of receiving, and the soul doth receive, the full remission of all sin, which is given to the whole body, the church, by the redemption in Christ Jesus. For thus speaks God the Holy Ghost by his servant Paul on this marvellous subject. Speaking of this *spiritual* circumcision as he calls regeneration, he saith : “ And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses ; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross : and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” (Coloss. i. 13—15.)

Let me not be misunderstood. Although on this almighty act, in the washing of regeneration, the

happy partaker of this unspeakable mercy hath a full and complete remission of all sin, from the redemption in Christ; yet do not from hence conclude, that he himself hath any knowledge of it. By regeneration, he is brought into spiritual life, and now under grace and divine teaching the Lord is preparing him for the enjoyment of all his mercies: yet he hath to go through the spiritual school of Christ, of repentance and faith, which by a divine process lead to Christ. Long, very long, sometimes are the Lord's regenerated children in a state of uncertainty, not unfrequently accompanied with deep soul distress on account of their sin not being in their view pardoned. But I am not speaking of *their* views, but of the Lord's grace. That poor cripple we read of in the gospel, whom Jesus by a word healed, had his sins pardoned before his body was cured: and this poor man knew it. But then, this was because revealed to him by the Lord himself: "Jesus said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins by forgiven thee!" And Jesus confirmed his word immediately after, as a proof of it, bidding "him rise and walk." (Märk ii. 1—12.) What a mighty act and what mighty efficacy in the "washing of regeneration!"

But one most blessed, most precious, yea, I would say most affectionate and endearing of all views of the "washing of regeneration" is this: that once done, it is done for ever. The Holy Ghost terms this new life by one of his servants, "the incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Pet. i. 23.) And, as I observed to you before, all those gracious acts, the whole persons in the GODHEAD concur in, and co-operate together. And what is very highly to be observed in those divine deeds of sovereign grace, each glorious person distinctly reveals himself in the instance of every child of God. It was God the Father who chose every individual of Christ's mystical body.

(Eph. iii. 14, 15.) And this almighty act once done, was done for ever. It was God the Son who, by his incommunicable work of salvation, redeemed the church from all iniquity: and this once done, was done for ever. (Heb. x. 10—14.) And it was, and is, God the Holy Ghost by the “washing of regeneration,” who gives spiritual life to every individual of the church: and this once done, is done for ever. Oh! what vast mercy is there in all those divine acts of Jehovah, in his trinity of persons! And what a vast act of sovereign grace is that, which by the washing of regeneration gives a capability to the soul, which before was dead in trespasses and sins, to have holy communion and fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ! Well might the apostle in the contemplation cry out, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” (2 Cor. ix. 15.)

And what is the result of the whole matter, as it relates personally to you, and to me, and the whole body of Christ’s church? Who among you can with humble hope look up, and bless God for this unspeakable mercy? And in your earnestness of discovery to know this great work, whether God hath wrought it in your soul; do not overlook the slenderest proofs because you cannot immediately discern greater. Remember, it is not what *you* conceive of divine working, but the Lord’s estimate of divine things. There cannot be one single act of spiritual life wrought by a soul that is unregenerate, for he is “dead in trespasses and sins.” Hence, if there be in you the desires of spiritual life, this becomes a testimony that you possess it. Are you in any measure or degree acquainted with the plague of your own heart? Is the warfare begun in you of your spirit battling with your flesh? (Gal. v. 17.) And if you are not so far advanced in the life of God in the soul, to call Jesus your own; still, can you say it is the desire of your

heart so to do? These are very strong symptoms of life. And where such things are, as they never were learnt, or can be learnt, in nature's school; there are pleasing hopes, that by the washing of regeneration they have been learnt of Christ: and Paul tells the church, that "he was confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in them, will perform it until the day of Christ." (Phil. i. 6.)

But what inference is to be drawn from this subject, for the encouragement of such among you (if any here) who know nothing at present of the new birth; and are fearful that they have not been the objects of this distinguishing grace, in coming under "the washing of regeneration?" Many, yea, very many considerations are to be found, in the Scriptures of truth, to hold forth patience and hope. Wherefore is it you attend the means of grace? Is there not some secret, predisposing cause within, which inclines your heart to this? Do you not sometimes feel the rising desire to say with the church; "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, were thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon?" (Song i. 7.) And what are these breathings of the soul but the acts of the new life? Moreover, in the principle of our new birth in grace, precisely the same as in our original birth of nature, we are alike passive in both: no merit nor preparation on our part contributing an atom toward it. The Lord saith, "I am found of them that sought me not." (Isa. lxx. 1.) Oh! what numbers in the Scripture history are there recorded in proof: Zaccheus, Matthew, the woman of Samaria, and the multitudes which are now in glory, who will one day appear to shew that it is "by grace we are saved, through faith; and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God."

And under this branch of the subject, there is one most blessed and striking particularity which I would

most affectionately recommend to the notice of the younger part of our congregation; namely, that this glorious act of God in "the washing of regeneration" is not limited to age, no more than it is to deservings. For as in the Adam-fall transgression, our birth in nature brings us all into the misery and corruption of our lost estate; so when God quickens a soul into this newness of life in Christ, our birth in grace being already given us in Christ, may be, and not unfrequently is from the earliest period of our being on the earth. And the cause is plain. The new birth, or regeneration, is on the spirit, and not the body, (John iii. 6.) that continues unaltered and the same: and hence the unceasing warfare between them when the soul is quickened, and which ends not but with life. (Rom. vii. 19. &c.) Let the younger part of our audience therefore consider, that as the mighty change wrought by regeneration is wholly spiritual, and limited to the *spirit*, the veriest child in nature may be made an early receiver of *grace*. Nay, Jeremiah was sanctified in soul before he came forth into the life of the body. (Jer. i. 1.) And John the Baptist "was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb." (Luke i. 15.) And this explains to us those sacred Scriptures. "And there shall be no more thence (that is, in the church of Christ,) an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner, (on whom no washing of regeneration hath been given) being an hundred years old shall be cursed." (Isa. lxxv. 20.)

What shall I say more? Only from man to turn to God. Lord! we wait for thy loving-kindness in the midst of thy temple. Pour upon thy redeemed before thee, the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; that we "may come up from the washing, like the flock that is shorn, every one bearing twins, and none barren among them." Amen.

THE
DIFFERENCE OF SICKNESS
BETWEEN
HIM THAT IS IN THE UNRENEWED STATE
OF NATURE,
AND
HIM THAT IS CALLED BY SOVEREIGN GRACE.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF AN ADDRESS, DELIVERED IN THE CHURCH
OF CHARLES, PLYMOUTH, ON THE LORD'S DAY, EASTER
MORNING, MARCH 25, 1826, AFTER A CONFINEMENT
BY SICKNESS OF THREE MONTHS.

“ I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians : for I am the Lord that healeth thee ! ”—Exod. xv. 26.

“ That ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.”—Exod. xi. 7.

P R E F A C E.

OUR congregation of cottagers will be better enabled, under the teaching of the Lord, to enter into an apprehension of what is here written, if previously made acquainted with some few of the historical circumstances which gave rise to it. It pleased the Lord, in his unerring will and counsel, to take me for a season from the public ministry of his word, to the private manifestations of his grace. Three months revolved, while the disorder remained; so that I lay, unconscious, under his Almighty hand, what his sovereignty had appointed, in respect to the termination. One thing I had assured myself, and which through every stage of the disease, I never lost sight of, but with Paul could and did say, and from the same well grounded hope as his, namely, that "Christ should be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death: for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Phil. i. 20, 21.)

My appearing before the congregation this day testifieth the divine will. And although I have not strength to engage in my usual services, yet am I, through mercy, in a state of convalescence. In the interval between the singing of the last Psalm and the sermon, I found strength from the Lord, to speak to his people the substance of what is contained in this sermon. And concluding from the effects wrought on the minds of many *then*, the same, under the Lord's teaching, if put into a more tangible form, and circulated through our villages, would be useful *now*, I have endeavoured to recollect the leading particulars then advanced, and herewith present them to our spiritual cottagers.

Gracious God! with whom are the issues of life, and death; thou that killest, and makest alive; that bringest down to the grave, and bringest up; vouchsafe to bless with thy grace what is here brought before thy people, as far as the contents are agreeable to thy holy word! Grant that my exercises may minister to the comfort of others. Prepare any of thine, and all of thine, which are now before thee, and who are at present in health, for a time of sickness, and of death; knowing that the transition from the one to the other is sometimes in a moment. Make all thy visitations messengers of sanctification and wisdom, that however painful to flesh and blood, as the stroke with which the Angel smote Peter in the prison, the chains may fall off, and the prison doors fly open. Oh! the unspeakable blessedness, when the regenerated and redeemed child of God can say, under every dispensation, "I know, Lord, that thy judgments are right; and that thou in very faithfulness hast caused me to be afflicted." (Ps. cxix. 75.)

S E R M O N X I X .

THE DIFFERENCE OF SICKNESS BETWEEN HIM THAT IS IN
THE UNRENEWED STATE OF NATURE, AND HIM THAT
IS CALLED BY SOVEREIGN GRACE.

BRETHREN, BELOVED IN THE LORD !

I AM not come out of the other world, neither am I come out of my grave, to speak to you this day of the grace and goodness of our wonder-working God ! But the Lord, under whose divine hand of sickness I have lain, since I saw you last in this place, hath brought me from the borders of *both*, and preserved my life, by a great deliverance. I am come, therefore, to make my first offering, as is most justly due, to the God of my life, "in whose hand my breath is, and whose are all my ways !" It is to His goodness must be ascribed that we see once more each other's face in the flesh. Sure I am, that your thanksgiving will join mine ; and that you will feel as holy men of old did, when one said to another, "O bless the Lord with me, and let us magnify his name together !" (Ps xxxiv. 3.)

And having first offered the tribute of praise to the Lord, I next turn to thank you. You have not only manifested an abounding affection to my person, in your enquiries after me ; but what is yet more than that, you have carried me in the arms of your faith before the Lord : and this day is the Lord's day for shewing himself herein a prayer-hearing God. But, brethren, I am not come at this time, to reassume my

ministry among you. Indeed you must perceive too much of debility in me, for such a service. I am simply come now, only to relate to you some of the Lord's gracious dealings towards me, during this my confinement; and to prove the Lord's own words, which I have desired to speak to you from, at the present moment; that in all the diseases to which our nature, by the Adam-fall transgression, is liable, there is a total dissimilarity between the unrenewed man, and him that is called by sovereign grace. And these words of the Lord proclaimed to the church, at the first formation of the church, confirm the unquestionable truth:

EXODUS xv. 26.

I will put none of those diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.

I FEAR that there are very few of the Lord's people, who can, and do, enter into a real, heartfelt conviction of this divine promise, so as to live upon it, with full assurance of faith. And yet the promise is as absolute, and the certainty of it as sure, as heaven and earth: yea, heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the Lord's words shall fail. The grace of the promise is the grace of the covenant; it is in fact part of it: God is engaged by it to do as He hath said. And while he proclaimed himself from the bush as the Almighty I AM, in that glorious incommunicable name he proclaimed himself as unchangeable in all his promises. Read what Jehovah then said: "The Lord God of your fathers; the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob: this is my name for ever, and this is my

memorial unto all generations." (Exod. iii. 15.) Here then is a pledge, an assurance, an immutable security. And every promise that follows to the church, looks back to this standard; and to all intents and purpose, makes appeal to it, for the fulfilment of all that God in his trinity of persons hath engaged for. It is precisely the same as the word and oath God made to Abraham, concerning which it is said, that "God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." (Heb. vi. 17, 18.) And such is the promise in the text. Every regenerated and redeemed child of God hath not only a right to plead for its accomplishment; but to exercise faith upon the promise, that it must be so. I fear therefore, I say, that few of the Lord's people do this; at least they are not aware of the effectual nature of it, when bringing it for fulfilment before the throne.

And it is worthy your closest attention, nay, it is both your interest and your privilege to notice, in the history of Egypt, and Israel *then*, (and the same runs through all ages of mankind *now*,) how the Lord distinguished his different dispensations, as well in providence as grace, to the different characters. The Lord turned the waters of the Egyptians into blood. But the Lord converts the waters of his gospel into wine. (Exod. vii. 19—21. John ii. 7—11.) When the Lord sent the plague of swarms of flies, which filled all the houses of Egypt in the land of Goshen, where Israel dwelt, there were none. (Exod. viii. 21, 22.) In the murrain of cattle, which destroyed the horses of the Egyptians; "of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one." (Exod. ix. 6.) In the visitation of darkness over the whole land of

Egypt; the Israelites had perfect day in their habitation. (Exod. x. 21—23.) And when in the destruction of the first-born, while the blood sprinkled on the door posts and lintels of Israel's houses preserved the whole alive; we read concerning Egypt, "that there was not an house where there was not one dead." (Exod. xii. 30.) And beside the *temporal* mercies of distinction which marked Israel from Egypt, there was not a single plague of Egypt but which taught Israel to form conclusions also of *spiritual* blessings under them, as related to the Lord's people. The attack made on the *bodies* of the Egyptians was rendered more dreadfully distressing, from the horror they felt in their *minds*. And darkness, "which might be felt," (such as Job speaks of) "a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death without any order, and where the light is as darkness." (Job x. 22.) What terrors must be excited in the breast of the sinner, contrasted to that divine light which God causeth to shine in the souls of his people, when he "gives them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ!" (2 Cor. iv. 6.)

And what is it now, but the same dispensations, in the divine government, continually exercising, in proof that the Lord, as he hath said, puts "none of the diseases upon his people which he brought upon Egypt;" yea, he reveals himself in his own peculiar and incommunicable name, as a confirmation, I am *Jehovah Rophe* (the Lord saith) that is, "the Lord that healeth thee." Look into common life in proof. For amidst the general visitation that is common to all men, by reason of our common corruption in the Adam-fall transgression, still there is a diversity in the administration. And the Lord thereby calls upon his people to distinguish, how the Lord puts a difference, as between Israel and Egypt

of old, between "the precious and the vile." Solomon remarked ages since, and a very blessed remark it was: "all things (said he) come alike to all. There is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked: to him that sweareth, as him that feareth an oath." (Eccles. ix. 2.) But while these things are so arranged by infinite wisdom, in relation to *outward* providences, that all appear to a superficial observer as the same, the *inward* accompaniments of grace to the people of God change the very nature of their exercises; and what to the ungodly becomes a source of terrors, sometimes inexpressible, to the children of God become sources of joy. As for example, we behold the same fever, the same consumption, the same burning ague, or what not, visiting the saint and sinner. But who shall calculate the difference of feeling, under the same circumstances of disease? Upheld by the Lord, Paul could, and did, send forth a triumphant voice amidst his various exercises: "As dying, (said he) and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed: as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing: as poor, yet making many rich: as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. vi. 9, 10.) Here we see how *grace*, accompanying the Lord's *providence*, makes the mighty difference; and soothes the sufferer of the Lord's household under the direst affliction. Would you behold the contrast? The Bible is full of illustrations. The Lord, speaking of the anguish of the wicked, saith to them: "The Lord shall give thee a trembling of heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee: and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, would God it were even, and at even thou shalt say, would God it were morning; for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes, which thou shalt see." (Deut. xxviii. 65—67.) And in

another scripture the Lord hath drawn the portrait of the trembling sinner, in the most finished colouring of misery: "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace saith my God to the wicked!" (Isa. lvii. 20.)

But we must not stop here. The sicknesses of the Lord's people are none of them in a way of penal judgment, but in a way of love. As the fruit of Adam's transgression, it is proper that the people of God should taste the *effects* of that awful apostacy: but not the *curse*. Every rod of God hath a voice, and speaks, as well as corrects. "Be still and know that I am God!" (Ps. xlvii. 10.) "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." (Prov. iii. 19.) "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him." (Prov. iii. 11. Heb. xii. 5.) Hence, in a sea of affliction, there is not one drop of wrath! Moreover, the child of God is at peace with God. Jesus hath borne all his sins. He hath drunk the cup of trembling to the dregs, and wrung them all out. And he hath put the cup of salvation into their hands, that they may drink of it, and call upon the name of the Lord. So that their sickness is but their retired chamber, where the Lord visits them. And hence the prophet, speaking of their everlasting health and welfare, describes it under the similitude of a city, "where the inhabitant shall not say I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." (Isai. xxxiii. 24.) The prophet did not mean that any place upon earth possessed that healthy soil which no sickness could invade; but that sickness lost all its pains, in the consciousness that their iniquities were forgiven in the blood and righteousness of Christ. Yea, death itself is among the privileges of the Lord's people. (1 Cor. iii. 20.) John heard a voice from heaven, declaring them "bles-

sed which die in the Lord." (Rev. xiv. 13.) And Paul echoed to the same, when he said, "For none of us liveth to himself: and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." (Rom. xiv. 7, 8.) Oh! what a blessed confirmation of the Lord's covenant promise. There are "none of the diseases which the Lord brought upon the Egyptians ever put upon Israel." Jehovah saith, "I am the Lord that healeth thee!"

Neither must we omit, or overlook, that sweet sympathy of Christ, who hath engaged to be with his people alway, and to manifest himself otherwise than to the world. He owns his relation to them, and makes their sorrows his own. "For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie, (will not dissemble with me, but will feel and confess the plague of their own heart) so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted; and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love, and in his pity, he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." (Isa. lxiii. 8, 9. xliii. 1—4.) And who is there, of the Lord's people, that would shrink from a sickness of the Lord's sending, when he knew that the Lord would accompany him through all? Who, that knew himself at peace with God in the blood of the cross, would wish to decline those hallowed seasons which by wakefulness of *body* affords the better opportunity for the sweet communion with the Lord in the *soul*? Oh! the unspeakable felicity (I hope I know somewhat of it) when laying sleepless in the night, to find Jesus by the bedside, looking in upon us, sweetening every bitter, "and making all our bed in our sickness!" Brethren, what know you personally of these things? Is not the word of the Lord thereby as much confirmed *now*, as when pro-

claimed to Israel of old ; “ I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians : I am the Lord that healeth thee ! ”

I had intended to have said much more to you on this interesting subject, coming as I have immediately from my chamber of sickness, where these things have been realized to my soul’s joy. But I find my strength unequal. One word more before I withdraw. I have before observed, that my appearance among you this day, is not to enter at present upon my ministry : until it shall please the Lord to renovate me for it. Those ordinances which I have in times past enjoyed in this place must for a while be withheld from me. But I bend to His sovereignty who thus appoints. Blessed be God ! though I shall not have the ordinance, I have always the God of ordinances : and while I have the *substance* I shall have no cause to regret in not having the *shadow*. I have somewhat of the same feeling as David had in his flight from Jerusalem. Zadok the priest in his zeal for the Lord, and in his affection for David, would have taken the ark of God, which was a symbol of the divine presence, with them ; but David suffered him not. “ Carry back the ark of God (said he) into the city : if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and its habitation. But if He thus say,—I have no delight in thee : behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.” (2 Sam. xv. 25, 26.) This is precisely my situation. Until the Lord, “ who giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength,” shall be pleased to grant me suited restoration, I am incompetent to labour. But if the Lord bring me again among you, very sure I am, that I shall come unto you “ in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.” But if his holy will hath appointed other-

wise ; good is the will of the Lord concerning me. I shall exchange ordinances for the Lord's more immediate presence : and from those *outer* courts, enter *within*, to see Him as He is, "and to know, even as I am known."

In the mean time I commend you to the Lord, as I am persuaded you commend me. Your prayers will still follow me, as they have been called forth before. I feel very highly interested in them : both for myself and my brother in the ministry, whom I leave with you to go in and out before you in the word and doctrine. We both seek this from you, as a boon from the Lord to the church. For it is highly observable, that upon every occasion, in which he is about to bless his people, he for the most part pours out upon them a spirit of grace and supplication to pray for it. By his servant the prophet the Lord notified this. "For thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." (Ezek. xxxvi. 37.) The Lord loves to be reminded of his promises. He takes it kind (if one may presume so to speak,) when you tell the Lord what the Lord hath first told you, of his loving tendencies towards you. And so abundantly gracious is the Lord in this particular, that he seems to send down blanks for his people to fill in, putting his Almighty name as a promissory note at the bottom of it. This we read in that wonderful Scripture : "Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel and his Maker : ask me of things to come, concerning my sons, and concerning the works of my hands command ye me." (Isa. xlv. 11) "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John xv. 7.)

And I cannot help observing farther upon this subject, to shew you with what importance holy men of old had respect to the prayers of the Lord's people,

that no event of magnitude, in the history of the church was undertaken without them. I might refer to many instances, by way of illustration. But one in point is enough: and we have a very notable one, quite apposite to the present occasion. I refer to that memorable Scripture of God the Holy Ghost by his servant James. "Is any sick among you? (saith he) let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." (James v. 14—18.) Here is a full confirmation of the doctrine. Prayer can shut up heaven and prayer can open heaven; when *both* are the result of the predisposing grace of God. When, as was said before, the Lord is about to make himself more immediately known by his providence, or in a way of grace; and the Lord gives his people, "a spirit of grace and supplication to make intercessions by the Spirit according to the will of God." (Rom. viii. 26, 27.) Hence that blessed promise, "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." (Isa. lxxv. 24.)

Great God! who inhabitest the praises of eternity! continue to manifest thyself a prayer-awakening, and a prayer-answering God. Pour out upon this hallowed spot, and the choice ones of thy flock, which

from time to time assemble here before thee, the divine unction of thy Holy Spirit. Let the gracious influences of the Holy Three in One be felt, and known, and enjoyed, in sweet communion. Let thine eyes be upon this place, as upon Judea of old, from "the one end of the year, even to the other end of the year;" and cause this place, from thy continual presence, to be called after that blessed city the prophet named "Jehovah Shammah, the Lord is there!" So shall Christ "dwell in our hearts by faith: that being rooted and grounded in love, we may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God. To Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us: unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end." Amen.

THE
COMMEMORATION
OF THE
FIRST OPEN DISPLAY
OF
GOD THE HOLY GHOST
ON THE
DAY OF PENTECOST:

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF AN ADDRESS, DELIVERED IN THE CHURCH
OF CHARLES, PLYMOUTH, ON THE LORD'S DAY MORNING,
WHITSUNDAY, AFTER AN ABSENCE OF FOUR
MONTHS, (EXCEPTING A SHORT TAKING
LEAVE AT EASTER.)

“ But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John xiv. 26.

PREFACE.

No subject claims the attention of the Lord's people more frequently, than that which refers to the person and ministry of the Holy Ghost. For although our salvation is not among the almighty acts of the Spirit, being the sole incommunicable work of our most glorious Christ; yet the knowledge and enjoyment of it can only be found from the divine communications of the Holy Ghost the Comforter. It is very blessed indeed, and a matter of vast moment for the regenerated child of God to have personal knowledge of, and personal communion with, each glorious person in the GODHEAD, day by day, from the time of the new birth until the child of God is brought home to glory; (neither can that child of God be otherwise than lean in soul who hath it not,) yet the distinct acts of the Holy Three in One open a very blessed source for daily meditation, and, when grace and faith are in lively exercise, furnish the child of God with numberless occasions for going forth in love and praise, adoration and thanksgiving, to the God of all our mercies. It is most blessed the employment, when we feel the constraining love of God drawing out all the finer feelings of the soul, to the contemplation of the Father's personal acts of grace, in choosing, adopting, and accepting, the whole and every individual of Christ's mystical members before the foundation of the world. And the meditation of Christ taking our nature into union with his GODHEAD, and redeeming his whole body, the church, from the Adam-fall transgression by his blood, is no less a subject of infinite delight, when the mind is divinely directed in the study. And the almighty acts of God the Holy Ghost, whose great work in the covenant of grace is consolation, when the spiritual faculties are brought forth to the view, of his "directing the heart into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ:" all are blessed.

Will our gracious God, who as at this time, made an open manifestation of himself on the day of Pentecost, grant to us a pentecost-renewal of his sovereign and almighty power, and come down in our midst, and fill the hearts of all his people that are here present, with divine manifestations of himself, and of the Father, and of Christ, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge?" Lord! accompany thy word with power: give testimony to thy Scriptures of grace: shine, Lord, in the hearts of thy people, and "give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Amen.

SERMON XX.

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE FIRST OPEN DISPLAY OF
GOD THE HOLY GHOST ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST.

I BEGAN my discourse, in consequence of my long absence from the congregation, in words to this effect:—Brethren, beloved in the Lord! I cannot tell you, (indeed I know of no form of words, in a way of utterance to tell you) what kind of joy of the soul that is, which I feel in meeting you here this day. I see so much of the Lord's goodness, in his wisdom blended with his love, as marked in the late providence of my sickness; and now having brought me back again from the borders of death and the grave, to speak a little longer of the unsearchable riches of Christ; that I cannot but anticipate very great blessedness and an enlargement of soul, both in myself and the Lord's people, during the remainder of my labours among you, whether the time shall be long or short. It is true, what with increasing years and increasing infirmities, my exertions cannot be what they have been. My sermons must necessarily be shorter, and my voice will be weaker. Time was, when as you know I had, through the goodness of the Lord, strength of lungs to fill this large church, so as to be heard to the most remote part. And this

grace of my God hath been continued unto me for *half a century*, excepting one year. I bless God in the recollection. But the Lord's people of this church will now be satisfied I hope, if what I have to deliver be delivered with a trembling voice. Sure I am, the great truths of God you have been accustomed to hear from me will be the same, however faltering in my speech. I have but one glorious subject, and which admits of no alteration, namely, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." And in this I know, that through the divine teaching, I shall be more and more enlightened; so that my last days will be my best days, to increase in all the increase of God.

Let me not be mistaken however. Though by the good hand of my God I have been separated from you for eighteen Lord's days, yet I have not found the want of ordinances, having had the God of ordinances with me. And the Lord hath filled up all vacancies with himself. And it is himself in his trinity of persons (I need not tell you) that is now by faith, and hereafter will be in open vision, the glorious One, to satisfy the most boundless desires of our souls in holiness, and blessedness, and glory to all eternity. And I hope I need not tell you farther, (for the Lord himself hath taught it you) that when this high and lofty One which inhabiteth eternity, comes to bless a soul with the manifestation of himself, here are greater acts than when God called the world out of nothing. I have enjoyed somewhat of this during my sickness, and without the medium of ordinances, since I last saw you. And I have felt therefrom what Paul calls "joy in God," (Rom. v. 11.) when I had nothing else to joy in. Not the *gifts* of God only, not his *graces* only, not his *revelations* only, but *himself!* And what a thought for the redeemed and regenerated child of God to feast on; that so great a God, so

glorious a God, who possesseth such a confluence of all fulness in himself, should condescend to make such a communication of himself to the people of whom he saith, "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise." (Isa. xliii. 21.)

We have a most blessed illustration of this in the high festival of this day. And I have to request your attention with myself, to those words which form a part of the apostle Peter's sermon which he preached on that ever-memorable and sacred occasion of Pentecost. (Acts ii. 23.) "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." I pray you to observe, how beautifully blended, within the short compass of this single verse, are all the persons in the GODHEAD. The promise of the Father had been all along through the Old Testament dispensation, proclaimed as what should distinguish the latter days of the New Testament church, by the out-pouring of the Spirit. And the exaltation of Christ, after he had finished redemption work, was the æra marked for the more open display of this sovereign power. And God the Holy Ghost, who had indeed, from the first dawn of revelation, graciously given out of his blessed influences on the minds of the people, thereby testified, that he had formed the church in Christ, and watched over the interests of the chosen from the beginning. But these sheddings by God the Spirit, were but as the dew drops of the morning compared with what would be given when Christ had returned to glory, and sent down his ascension gifts upon his people. The promise ran in these words: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring!" &c. (Isa. xlv. 3.)

Perhaps I shall be doing the most acceptable service, in giving a brief statement, such as the Scripture hath furnished, of the sacred day of Pentecost itself, which will throw a light on the wonderful events included in it. And these will again furnish matter for solemn consideration, how far we ourselves are become the highly favoured objects and subjects of this unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost.

The chapter, from whence my text is taken, begins with the relation of this miraculous event in those words: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." By the day of Pentecost, is meant the fiftieth day from the Jewish passover. And it was one of those great festivals appointed to Israel, in which all the sons of Israel were to appear before the Lord. So we read, Deut. xvi. 16. The *first* was the feast of unleavened bread, called the passover. The *second* the feast of weeks called Pentecost, being fifty days after the former. And the *third* the "feast of tabernacles;" so appointed for gathering in the first fruits, and waving the sheaf-offering before the Lord. See Levit. xxiii. 9—23. And it is a subject of grateful consideration to the church, how the Lord, in the appointment of those stated periods, had ordained that at the *first* of these feasts, Christ should be set forth the type in the Jewish passover, being really the true passover to which that Lamb referred. (1 Cor. v. 7. Rev. xiii. 8.) And in the *second*, God the Holy Ghost should come down in an open display of himself in the out-pouring of his influences for the gathering in his people. And what rendered the whole the more remarkable, those feasts of the church brought together multitudes of other nations to trade with the Jews, and who thereby became witnesses of those wonderful works of God.

And do observe how blessedly it is said, that when

this day of Pentecost was fully come, "they (that is, the church) were all with one accord in one place." Yes, the Lord Jesus had said to them before his return to glory, that he would send the promise of his Father upon them; and commanded them "to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high." (Luke xxiv. 49.) And almost in the very moment of his ascension, he assured them "they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." (Acts i. 4, 5.) Agreeably to this it was only ten days after, even on the day of Pentecost, the Almighty God came down upon them with his divine baptisms. And I do admire what is said of their being altogether with one accord in one place. And who was it that drew them together but the Lord? Who but the Lord secretly inclined every heart to assemble in humble waitings for the Lord's promise? Figure to yourself such an assembly, for it is a beautiful portrait of the church. No doubt all was solemn, silent, and retired. He that was coming to bless solemnized their minds in due preparation for the mercy. I pause to remark, and to remark it with painful consideration, how very different are our assemblies; too often in this day of lightness and irreverence. Solomon, ages ago, said "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifices of fools; for they consider not that they do evil." (Eccles. v. 4.) But what shall be said of those who rush to ordinances as the unthinking horse rusheth to the battle. And may we not conclude, that among the many causes which tend to hinder the efficacy of the word of God, this is not the least, the want of preparedness in not seeking the Lord's blessing upon the Lord's means of grace? It is worthy of remark, that in every epistle which the Lord Jesus sent to his churches, the Son of God closed every one with the same

solemn admonition: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches!" (Rev. ii. and iii.) It matters not who speaks, or what we hear, if we hear not what the Spirit saith unto the church!

But the Scripture proceeds. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." The suddenness of this sound manifested, as far as it concerned the people, the unexpected nature and manner of it. And the direction from whence it came, even from heaven, testified the Almighty presence in this mysterious revelation. The mightiness of the sound became no unapt representation what sovereign power was in it: and the nature of it, as of a rushing wind, proved what Christ had before taught of the new birth, both of its freeness and of the total abstraction from all human power by which it acted. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John iii. 8.) And the filling all the house where they were sitting, shewed how God the Holy Ghost would fill every heart, every faculty of his chosen, with himself. Here was the fulfilment of that illustrious symbol given to the eastern monarch in vision so many ages before, when he saw "the stone cut out without hands, which became a great mountain, and filled the earth." (Dan. ii. 34, 35.)

But the relation doth not rest here. "For there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." These were all so many blessed tokens of the divine bap-

tisms. Cloven tongues, probably, had an allusion to the many and various languages which at once the Lord the Spirit gave them the use of. And marvellous to observe, that as by the rebellion in building the tower of Babel, the church lost the knowledge of the spiritual apprehension of the sacred language of God himself; here the Holy Ghost graciously restored it to those whom he brought under his divine unction. And there was no small significance in the "fiery appearance" of those cloven tongues. For as the Holy Ghost was prophecied to be a "spirit of judgment and a spirit of burning to Zion," (Isa. iv. 4.) nothing could more aptly represent these mighty acts that God would accomplish, than when by "a spirit of judgment" he would shew the people of God the exceeding sinfulness of their lost estate by nature; and by "a spirit of burning" he would melt their souls into a deep contrition, and consume the dross of their carnal affections, to bring "every thought into obedience into the captivity of Christ."

The history proceeds: "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed, and marvelled, saying one to another: behold! are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born?" If we count the number of the different nations enumerated, we shall find that there were no less than *fifteen*. So that to have heard Peter, or John, or James, or indeed either and all of the apostles speaking, not as heretofore the Jews did at those feasts, by means of an interpreter, but in the languages of those they addressed. If they spake to a Parthian, they spake in the Parthian tongue: if to a

Mede, in the language of the Medes : and if to an Elamite, in the language of the Elamites : and all their discourse one and the same, namely, of Jesus Christ. It may be better conceived than can be described, what consternation the strangers coming from those different countries were thrown into, in being thus accosted. And accordingly it is said that such was the effect, that “some mocked, others said These men are full of new wine.” Such were the different conclusions then at the preaching of Christ : such they are now : and such will they always be. While *some* are struck with awe ; some mock : while many *blaspheme* ; the heart smitten by grace will *pray*.

But Peter, together with the *eleven*, arose to refute the foul calumny. “These are not drunken (said he) as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour in the day ;” (that is, nine o’clock in the morning, the hour of sacrifice, before which no Jew dared to take any refreshment for the body) but said Peter, this is the fulfilment of the prophecies of God, concerning the latter day dispensation ; and in proof the apostle quoted a long passage from the prophecy of Joel ii. 28, &c. and after this he added that divine discourse which the Lord the Spirit gave him to deliver, in pointing to the person and finished salvation of Christ, as the whole sum and substance of prophecy. I stay not to go over Peter’s sermon, it would lead too far ; you have it before you in this chapter. And my text is the conclusion the Apostle made by way of inference from the whole : “therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.” And from the sovereign power of the same Almighty Spirit, which gave grace to Peter to preach, communicating grace to many of the hearers

to hear; the effect was that "they were pricked to the heart, and cried out to Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren! what shall we do?" As if they had said, what think you, ye servants of the Most High God? Is there any possibility for us to be saved? Can we, that have embrued our hands in the blood of Christ, be washed from our sins in his blood? To which solemn and heart-rending questions, Peter said, Yes! we have command to preach pardon, and mercy, and peace in his blood, among all nations, "beginning at Jerusalem." And it is most blessed to read what follows: "then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them (that is, to the church) about three thousand souls! Pause, and contemplate the marvellous grace, both in its nature and extent. "Three thousand souls! not one, or two, or fifty, or an hundred, but "three thousand!" as if to shew, from this specimen of the first fruits, in the descent of the Holy Ghost, what a glorious harvest would follow through all ages, to the end of the world. And if such mighty grace was thus shewn to this host of Jerusalem sinners then, what should prevent this day, yea, this very day, the same Almighty God from a renewal of this pentecost-blessing in all the assemblies of his people? Lord! if it be thy blessed will, give proof of thine almighty presence, and as in those early ages of the church, let the unction of thy grace accompany the testimony of thy word, and "add to thy church such as should be saved."

Brethren! what a glorious subject is opened to the church of the living God by the contemplation of the blessed doctrine of this day; we here are called upon to behold, all in one, the gracious joint love of the Holy Three in One, which bear record in heaven, coming down by a visible manifestation of each upon

earth, and blessing the people of God, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And what tends to endear such sovereign acts of grace with still higher marks of favour, the redeemed and regenerated child of God hath not only the testimony of these things in the Scriptures of truth; but they are written and engraven in himself, not with pen and ink, but by the Lord the Spirit “in the fleshly tables of the heart.” For when a pentecost-day is fully come to every individual soul of Christ’s mystical body, and he is made a new creature in Christ Jesus; every such child of God can, and doth, know for himself the personal love of God the Father, of God the Son, and of God the Holy Ghost. And by this new life in the soul an holy acquaintance and familiarity is opened with all the persons in the GODHEAD, which keeps alive, from day to day, the divine influence in a life of faith, until faith comes to be swallowed up in a life of glory. And it is very blessed to have continually preserved this life of fellowship, that we may know each glorious person, in their respective acts, and make them our daily song of rejoicing in this house of our pilgrimage.

But the descent of the Holy Ghost, besides these divine effects, hath another saving influence for our spiritual enjoyment, namely, the realizing all the glorious truths in relation to the person, and in relation to the finished salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the word of Christ becomes life and spirit to our souls, so the testimony of the whole GODHEAD to the saving interest the church hath, both in his person and righteousness, gives conquest to the soul over sin, death, hell, and the grave. By the Holy Ghost coming down, we know that Christ is gone up; and all those sweet and precious things Jesus spoke of before his departure, concerning the Holy Ghost the Comforter, are fulfilled. So that as the resurrection of Christ

became the greatest miracle ever wrought in our world; the resurrection of the sinner from the death of sin becomes the greatest miracle to every individual soul made partaker of this unspeakable gift. Hence from this source flow all those ascension gifts which Christ is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to bestow upon his church. And in the daily manifestation of the same, we have what the Lord himself before his departure so graciously promised, and so blessedly performs, namely, the making known to us the visits of the whole persons in the GODHEAD: for so Jesus spake. "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him. Jude (the faithful Jude) saith unto him, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, if a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John xiv. 20—23.) Hence here are the whole Three graciously revealing themselves in a way the world knoweth not, and receiveth not; but which are, more or less, in the daily enjoyment of the redeemed and regenerated people of God.

It were well if the faithful ones of the Lord, and especially they who minister in holy things, would daily wait before they enter upon sacred services, for this endued power from on high. Depend upon it we know nothing, in a life-giving, spiritual way, of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, until we know of those resurrection and ascension gifts the Lord of life and glory was purposely exalted to give to his people: and hence the earnest prayer of Paul to be let into deeper views of these things, as the whole

sum and substance of vital godliness: "that I may know him (said Paul) and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings." Bear with me while I say we know nothing as we ought to know, either of the one or of the other, until the Lord hath given us spiritual apprehensions of the glorious truths themselves, and our personal interest in them. It is by the knowledge of Christ's person alone we can form suitable conviction of the infinite value of the salvation he hath accomplished; and it is only by a like conviction of having felt the power of his resurrection, and the consciousness of fellowship, that is, a partnership and interest in his sufferings, as if we ourselves had suffered them, that we can take confidence of being saved thereby. The Lord the Spirit give us this day this spiritual apprehension, that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God! Vouchsafe, Almighty Lord of thy church! thus to bless our this day's meeting, and let the spiritual minds of all thy people present receive of the out-pouring of thy saving grace. Oh! that this may be a pentecost-day to many a precious soul, not only amidst our little assembly, but amidst the thousands assembled elsewhere to commemorate this marvellous event; that "by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, we may be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Amen.

THE
DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY ;
AND THE SURE EFFECTS OF A
SPIRITUAL SIGHT OF CHRIST,
THE VISIBLE JEHOVAH.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON PREACHED IN THE CHURCH
OF CHARLES, ON THE LORD'S DAY MORNING,
TRINITY SUNDAY, MAY 21, 1826.

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.”—1 John v. 7.

“No man hath seen God at any time ; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”—John i. 18.

P R E F A C E.

THE sermon here presented to the cottager, is a continuation of the former, and may well be connected together. That the Scriptures of eternal truth have made a revelation of the unity of the divine essence, in a trinity of persons, is too evident a truth to be denied ; although as a mystery, it is not capable of being explained. Indeed it is not proposed to the church as a subject brought within the grasp of human faculties ; neither is it held forth for our explaining, but for our faith ; and as it lays at the bottom of all the revelations of the divine will, the spiritual and scriptural apprehension of its sublime truth is of the first moment to the welfare of the church to know. And for our happiness it is blessed to observe, that as the Holy Three in one have graciously made themselves known to the souls of the Lord's people, by the personal acts of each ; so can the Lord's people, when taught of God, distinguish the one from the other, and define those works of grace whereby the everlasting love of God the Father is discoverable from those of God the Son, in his personal manifestation of himself to his body the church ; and no less from the specific and personal acts of God the Holy Ghost, in proof of his eternal power and Godhead : and all from one and the same Almighty Jehovah. Let us, before we enter upon the perusal, unitedly seek grace from God that " we may know the things which are freely given to us of God." Vouchsafe, O Lord, to bless us at this time from on high, with an unction of thy Spirit ! Grant to us such visions of God, that like the prophet, in the manifestation of Christ, as he saw, we may have a spiritual apprehension of " the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge : " that in knowing Him we may know the Father, and in seeing Him we may see the Father ; and have our souls continually excited in the goings forth in acts of praise, adoration, and love, towards the glorious objects of our everlasting welfare. Such, Lord, may it be our daily blessedness, that we may be made happy, and an enlargedness of soul be our portion, while all redounds to the divine glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Amen.

SERMON XXI.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY; AND THE SURE
EFFECTS OF A SPIRITUAL SIGHT OF CHRIST,
THE VISIBLE JEHOVAH.

ISAIAH VI. 3—5.

And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

WHAT a sublimity is contained in those words, which ascribe holiness, in the abstract, to the Lord of hosts! and what expressions of humiliation follow in the words of the prophet! And from both, what an arrest do they make on the mind, when brought under the unction of the Holy One to ponder the marvellous contents! How empty and unsatisfying do all the dead and dying things of time and sense appear, and like the toyish pursuits of children, on which manhood looks down with indifference, when objects of such brightness and glory cross the imagination!

I know not whether it hath ever struck you, but so it is, the adoration of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, for what he is in himself, and in his own inconceivable majesty (independent and above all that he hath done, is doing, and will to all eternity do for his church and people) this is the highest note of praise, either here or hereafter. And without all doubt the glorified in heaven do this, in the most exalted degree. It is very blessed to bless Him, because he hath first blessed us; and it is very

blessed when the Lord hath given grace to love him, because he first loved us ! But when our regenerate and redeemed souls get rid, at the separation by death, of this idol *self*, and with it all selfishness ; then our unembodied spirits will be swallowed up in the contemplation of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, manifested in the visible Jehovah, our glorious Lord. We shall lose sight of self, and all that we have been the objects and subjects of here below ; and (as it is divinely expressed in one of the Psalms, xvii. 15.) “ beholding his face in righteousness ; when we awake (from the sleep of death) we shall be satisfied with his likeness.” Not so much satisfied with our likeness to him (though that is included in this superlative glory) but the likeness of the Lord Jesus in our nature, to the image of the invisible God. Our likeness to him will be indeed most blessed ; but this would not be Christ himself, but our likeness to Christ ; whereas, nothing short of Christ himself can satisfy our immortal souls, when awakened up to the glories of eternity. Oh ! the rapture of those words ascribed to our Christ. When Miriam, the sister of Aaron, sung her song of thanksgiving at the Red Sea, and led out the people to the same, she had some apprehension of the glorious person of our most glorious Christ, and cried out, “ Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods ? who is like thee ; glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders ? ” (Exod. xv. 11.) You and I, from our unholy and unhallowed nature by the fall, can have but little conception what holiness is, much less what the glory of holiness is ; but in the upper and brighter world, when we come to enter into the joy of our Lord, that glory will in some measure be known, for it is said, “ we shall see him as he is, and know even as we are known.”

I beg to call your attention to another striking

particularity in this sublime portion of the word of God, namely, that this ascription of praise to the Lord is thrice done: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts!" We do not find any similar ascription in the Bible to any of the other attributes; Jehovah indeed hath himself made mention of his holiness in a way of oath, but this is done but once; "Once have I sworn by my holiness." (Ps. lxxxix. 35.) And in another of the Psalms, in allusion to the Lord's sovereignty, it is said, "God spake once, and twice also have I heard the same, that power belongeth unto God." (Ps. lxii. 11.) But the holiness of Jehovah is trebled in this hymn of praise. Perhaps (but I do not presume to speak decidedly upon a subject of so infinitely sublime a nature) it is done here in reference to the Holy Three in One constituting the GODHEAD; for though Christ personal was the Holy One the prophet is said to have seen in this vision, yet we know that all the persons in the GODHEAD were present, and included. We find the ascription is offered to the Lord of Hosts; an appellation which equally belongs to all. And it was the person of the Holy Ghost which spake in his own name, and in the name of the whole at verse 8. Compare this verse with Acts. xxviii. 26. where it is explained in direct application to God the Holy Ghost. These are divine and soul-satisfying Scriptures for the church of God to live upon.

I must not overlook the particular æra of the church when the Lord favoured the prophet with this vision. It is dated, as if a point of much consequence to know, as being in the year "when king Uzziah died." And by referring to the corresponding history, (2 Chron. xxvi.) you will discover how graciously the Lord timed this mercy to comfort the people; that when the king of Judah, losing sight of Christ, invaded the priest's office, which typified

Christ, and was stricken with leprosy to the day of his death, and shut up from communion; here the church in the person of the prophet was taught to look to Jesus. It is blessed amidst the dying and the dead of kings and princes of the earth, to be called off by the Lord himself, to him that liveth for ever and ever. And since sin hath entered into the world, and death by sin, to look beyond all the time-state around, and behold him "who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by his gospel." (2 Tim. i. 10.)

But we must not stop here, for the Scripture doth not. In this year of Uzziah's death (saith the prophet) "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." In order that we may have a true spiritual apprehension of this sublime contemplation, we must remember that it was not a *bodily* sight Isaiah had, but a *visional*. And the lifting up could not mean the essence of Jehovah, in the invisibility of his nature, for in this particular the Lord fills all space: and it is expressly said elsewhere in Scripture, "whom no man hath seen or can see." (1 Tim. vi. 16.) But it is spoken of our most glorious Christ, who when he had finished redemption-work, and returned to glory, "all things were put in subjection to him." Neither is this Scripture to be interpreted as though it was heaven in which Isaiah beheld this vision; but the church upon earth. For all the expressions connected with it correspond to this statement. It was the *temple*, namely his body the church, which the Lord filled with his train, that is, his graces and gifts. And when it is said, that "the posts of the doors moved at the voice of him which spake;" this could not mean heaven. But what a solemn thought ariseth from hence in this representation. Walls and posts may, and will, move and totter to their centre, at the

voice of the Lord; even as Sinai was convulsed and quaked greatly when the Lord came down upon the mount, and the "smoke went up as the smoke of a furnace; (Exod. xix. 18.) but the sinner, the unawakened, unregenerated, unrenewed sinner, hears again and again the voice of the Lord, unmoved and unconcerned: he stands like another *Ætna* or *Teneriffe*, though all the combustion of smoke and fire is within him, ready to ignite in a moment at the command of God, and burn for ever!

But the principal feature in this sublime Scripture yet remains to be considered, namely, who this glorious person was the prophet saw? It could be no other indeed but our most glorious Lord: but had we any doubt, the Holy Ghost hath removed it by the plain Scripture of the apostle John; for speaking of the effect which should attend the personal appearance of Christ in his church, he said, "these things said Esaias when he saw his glory, and spake of him." (John xii. 4.) So then it was Christ personal Isaiah saw in vision: and though the whole Three persons were present, as hath been before shewn, yet it was our most glorious Jesus that here manifested himself as the visible Jehovah to the prophet.

One word more on this passage, before we proceed to the doctrine arising out of it, namely, to observe the effect, as is here stated, which took place in the mind of Isaiah. "And I said, Woe is me! for I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts!" Such will always be the consequence of every man's mind, whom the Lord hath convinced of sin, and shewn the righteousness of Christ. So spake Job when the Lord answered his words, by a whirlwind from heaven: "I have heard of thee (said

Job) by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job xlii. 5, 6.) "As for me (cried Daniel) my comeliness was turned into corruption when I saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me." (Dan. x. 8.) "And when I saw him (said John speaking of Christ) I fell at his feet as dead." (Rev. i. 17.) From such illustrious examples, in those highly favoured servants of God, one of the most important truths for the church of God to be established in, is, the vast and infinite importance of a spiritual knowledge of our most glorious Christ. Depend upon it (and these striking facts prove it,) until we have a spiritual sight of Christ, we have not sufficiently known, neither deeply felt, the dreadful state of the "reign of sin," under which the whole race of Adam's children by nature are involved; and consequently cannot truly value the being made subjects under "the reign of grace by Christ." Isaiah, and Job, and Daniel, and John, were from everlasting children of the kingdom: yea, all of them had felt convictions of sin; but neither of them had such deep views of the malignity of sin, until a spiritual sight of Christ had induced those effects, as one of them expressed, and all felt. "Woe is me! I am undone: for I am a man of unclean lips: I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts."

Here is one of the most interesting subjects, to which the regenerate church of God can have their attention directed. I cannot be supposed, in calling you to the meditation of it, to do more than merely to glance at some of the outlines of it. A few thoughts on the Almighty person of Him, according to the Scripture statement, the spiritual sight of whom produced such effects, will form the *first* branch of

my discourse. And the *second* thing to be done, will be, the enquiry, whether similar effects have followed our spiritual sight of Christ as with the prophet? And as the matter is so infinitely sublime in itself, and so infinitely momentous to our welfare; the Lord give grace, both to him that speaks, and to those of the Lord's people that hear, that while lying low in the dust before our God, we may put the shoe off our feet, as Moses did at the bush, "for the place on which we stand, (in beholding such a sight, as Christ's holiness, and our uncleanness) is holy ground."

I begin, according to my proposal, to state the *first* particular; namely, to offer a few thoughts according to the statement of holy Scripture, concerning the Almighty person of Him, the spiritual sight of whom produceth such effects. I am well aware that the whole burden of my preaching is to this amount, all directing to the contemplation of the person of our most glorious Christ. So that, perhaps, some may think this an unnecessary service upon the present occasion. But not so. For you will bear with me while I say, that if there be one among you that thinketh so, very sure I am, that soul hath not beheld Christ as did the prophet. The contemplation of Christ is an eternal contemplation. And when by regeneration, we are brought into a capability of having our spiritual senses brought into life, and to be called forth in the study of the person, and incommunicable salvation of Christ; we are supposed to be daily advancing in an holy familiarity with both; and find all our delight in this one divine science only.

And you should connect with this study of Christ, the consideration that we no less study the knowledge of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, as we are brought to know Him. Our Lord's own account of this is very blessed and decisive. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. If ye had known me, ye

should have known my Father also." (John xiv. 7—9.) There is no studying the divine personality of the GODHEAD but as it is studied in Christ. One of the sacred persons in the Holy Three having, through the medium of the human nature he hath taken into union with himself, come forth from that invisibility in which Jehovah dwells in the unity of essence, and trinity of persons; here is made known, "the mystery of God manifest in the flesh:" and it is only in Him, and through Him, and by Him, we learn to know God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

It will be a very blessed study in our desires after the spiritual knowledge of our most glorious Christ, to trace the subject by the revelation of the word of God from the beginning; yea, while taken by the hand of Scripture, we go back before all time, and learn under divine teaching what God hath taught the church on this sublime subject. For my own part, I do not hesitate to tell you, that I have found, and still do find a blessedness inexpressible as often as I am enabled through grace to go over the sacred ground again. I open the word of God to those parts, when it was all one vast eternity. I contemplate the Holy Three in One, "before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made;" when, as the Scripture sublimely states it, "God was from everlasting to everlasting, and world without end." (Psalm xc. 2.) I stand then, as on the borders of the invisible world, while I contemplate this High and lofty One (in his trinity of persons, as He is afterwards revealed) and in spiritual imagination I run over numberless views connected herewith. Here (I say to myself) in this eternity of being, the Holy Three, as Scripture states, was God, from everlasting to everlasting. Who shall count the millions of ages which had run out, before that event began when Jehovah raised up the world, and formed the church?

And here from this datum I form my conclusions, of the perfect equality in the persons of the GODHEAD, which no after events in time could possibly lessen or do away. That One of the sacred persons in the GODHEAD should assume our nature, for the vast purposes of grace which to our unspeakable joy and happiness he hath done, can have no effect to alter his own eternal power and GODHEAD. Nay, his own eternal power and GODHEAD it was which gave infinity, and value, and excellency to all he said, or did, or accomplished in our nature. But let us for a moment suppose that One of the persons in the GODHEAD had not assumed our nature; yea, let us suppose that Jehovah in his trinity of persons had not been pleased to create worlds, or to form a church; who doth not see, or who will not see, that the Holy Three in One were the same, resting in their own eternal happiness, holiness, and glory? If then from this eternal ground we gather our views of Christ, and carry such views through all the time state of the church; and from one eternity to another; we shall never be at a loss through "that unction which teacheth all things" (1 John ii. 20.) to have a clear, scriptural, spiritual apprehension of his Almighty person, whom the prophet saw "sitting on his throne, high and lifted up." But if we gather our knowledge of Christ from such views as go no higher than the time state of the church; we shall be as the mere reasoners of natural men are, always confused; and live and die, while in a state of unrenewed nature, totally ignorant of his person, and consequently equally ignorant of his salvation. And however it may subject me to the joint reproof, of *professed infidels* (with whom this nation swarms) and *professed believers*, (who are scarce less numerous among men of a *yea and nay gospel*) I hesitate not to say, that the ignorance of Christ's person as one in the Holy Three of GODHEAD, in his divine

nature from everlasting to everlasting, is the cause of all this evil. It will be a blessed effect of my sermon this day, if the Lord shall be pleased to make it instrumental to any of his people. "They that know thy name, (that is, thy person) will put their trust in thee." (Ps. ix. 10.) Since the Lord was pleased to give me "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him," I have never for a moment lost sight of my safety in Him. But no man can trust an *unknown* God!

I come now to the second part I proposed, namely, to enquire, whether such effects have taken place in the circumstances of our spiritual life as with the prophet? The spiritual sight of Christ, on his throne, high and lifted up, becomes the only sure and unerring conviction of deep and lasting sorrow for sin, under the same feelings as the prophet had: "Woe is me! I am undone!" Slight, and superficial views of sin, when the conviction is not wrought of God, will satisfy the mere professors of the gospel. Yea, such men will fancy that they are in a state of progressive holiness. The reason is, they calculate their state by what passeth as they conceive within themselves, and are not looking, as the prophet did, to Christ, until he felt himself, in himself, utterly undone before God. If such gospel professors could but see the fallacy of their pretensions, they would discover that self, and not Christ, or as they mingle, self and partly Christ, forms the basis of their faith: and thus in their supposed progressive improvement they flatly contradict the Lord's own statement concerning his people. "That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. xvi. 63.)

The spiritual sight of Christ hath one and the same effect upon every regenerated child of God.

It never fails of producing self-loathing and self-abhorrence; while it gives at the same time, the most exalted views of His glorious person in whom alone is salvation. Beholding Christ, as the surety, and sponsor of his body the church, and being on his throne, as having conquered sin, death, hell, and the grave; the child of God beholds here, as in a mirror, his own helpless, hopeless state, as subject to all these in himself. And feeling the sentence of death in himself, he exclaims as the prophet, "Woe is me! I am undone!" But when, as in the instance of the prophet, he hath passed under the condemnation of the law, being utterly guilty before God; and the Lord hath done by him, as by Isaiah, touched his lips with a live coal from the altar, and taken away his iniquity; he passeth from the reign of sin into the reign of grace; and looks at Christ, as the whole efficiency of salvation: having taken away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and having been made sin for his people who knew no sin, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him.

The Holy Ghost hath drawn a beautiful portrait of the church on this account; in shewing how from a state of unawakened nature yet when quickened by grace the child of God passeth on through the different departments with Christ, until he beholds himself sitting in Christ in glory. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." Here is a full drawn picture of the church, not only before regeneration but after; in all those instances where the church falls into idolatry and sin, of which the Lord himself

complains by all his servants both prophets and apostles, Jerem. v. throughout. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy, &c. 2 Tim. iii. 1—8. Then comes in the gracious recovery by the divine sovereignty of love. "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us; even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." (Eph. ii. 1—7.) All which is in exact correspondence to the portrait of the prophet Isaiah in the text. The sinner is quickened by regeneration, and brought into spiritual life. He falls into numberless corruptions, and walks, as other gentiles walk, in the vanity of his mind; and is a child of wrath, meriting wrath, even as others. But the Lord doth by him as by Isaiah, quickens him in Christ, opens to his view the glories of Christ which shine so blessedly, contrasted to his own deformity, that self-condemnation follows; he sees himself lost in himself, and saved only in Christ: he *dies* with Christ; is buried with Christ; is "raised up together with Christ;" and *ascends* by faith with Christ; is justified wholly by the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. And all this by the sovereignty of rich, free, and unmerited grace.

I cannot ask a greater blessing for myself, and you, than that these divine truths may be realized in every heart of the Lord's people. Gracious God! vouchsafe to write these saving testimonies of thy teaching in the souls of thy chosen ones; give us to receive them, most cordially, heartily, sincerely; and to live upon them by faith, until brought home in open vision to enjoy them in glory: daily crying out with the church, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts! the whole earth is full of his glory!"

THE
INIQUITY OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL

REMOVED BY THE

LORD OF HOSTS IN ONE DAY.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON, PREACHED IN THE BROADWAY
CHURCH, ST. MARGARET'S, WESTMINSTER, ON LORD'S
DAY MORNING, JULY 16, 1826.

“ In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none: and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found.” JEREMIAH I. 20.

P R E F A C E.

THE design of these sermons being (as it is presumed) sufficiently known, there will need nothing more by way of introduction, in the preface, than the commencement of the perusal in first seeking the Lord's blessing upon it. It hath long been with me a maxim, warranted both by reason and revelation, that what begins in prayer will end in praise. The cottager who, by regeneration, in the new birth, hath been brought to see things spiritually, will feel his mind when led out by grace to implore from the Lord "the seeing eye and the hearing ear; while contemplating the marvellous work of the Lord of hosts, in this sovereign act of mercy, proposed in this Scripture for the church's faith, "in the iniquity of the land of Israel being removed in one day." I would therefore say for him, and for myself, Lord! give grace to thy people in meditating on this soul-comforting subject, that "not having received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, we may know the things which are freely given to us of God." Lead out our souls in holy longings for the suitable and spiritual apprehension of his almighty person by whom such stupendous acts are wrought! And in beholding the greatness and all-sufficiency of his incommunicable salvation, to find faith to rest wholly upon Him, as the sole Author of redemption mercies.

And we do most earnestly entreat God the Holy Ghost, whose almighty province it is to glorify Christ, and to receive of the things of Christ to shew unto us, that while attending to the relation here given, in this sermon, of his own eternal power and GODHEAD, and the completeness of his finished redemption, we may realize the saving truths to our soul's joy, and know our own personal interest therein.

O thou great and glorious God! so stamp and seal those divine realities of the church's deliverance from sin and satan, from death, hell, and the grave, by those victories of our most glorious Christ over all the tremendous foes of our salvation, as may enable us to live out of self, and above all that is in self, which would tempt to the losing sight of Christ; and that we may make him what he is, and must everlastingly be in himself, the whole of our hopes, and the Lord our righteousness. Let an unction from our Lord be with us, that our meditation at this time of the Lord be sweet; and praises to the Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, begin and end our service. Amen.

SERMON XXII.

THE INIQUITY OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL REMOVED BY THE
LORD OF HOSTS IN ONE DAY.

ZECH. iii. 9.

“ And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.”

IF we take the scriptures of God in one complete whole, (when by regeneration we are rendered capable of spiritually knowing the glorious truths of God,) we discover that Jehovah, in his trinity of persons, had this one and chiefest of all designs in view, when coming forth from that invisibility in which from all eternity the holy Three in One had lived, in inconceivable blessedness and happiness with each other, in the unity of the GODHEAD; namely, to make such discoveries of himself as might best promote the divine glory. This evidently appears to have been the first and leading design of all revelation. God in his trinity of persons would make such a manifestation of himself, and his own glorious perfections, to his creatures, as might be rendered the means of glorifying him to all eternity. In this display of himself Jehovah was pleased also to set forth the riches of his grace towards the church which he had chosen in Christ before all worlds. But all this was secondarily and subordinately to the first and leading design of his own glory; for this could not but supersede every other. And hence the church gives in her full responses to the same, when saying, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” (Rev. iv. 11.)

This gracious discovery, which in relation to the church lays at the bottom of all our mercies, was followed up in a farther revelation; namely, that by One of the persons in the GODHEAD taking into union with his divine nature a portion of our's, he would become the visible Jehovah; and thereby such manifestations of the GODHEAD might break forth, and shine through the medium of his human nature, as should bring in a revenue of everlasting praises to himself, and be productive of everlasting happiness to his people. Hence those divine Scriptures: "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." (John i. 14.) "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim. iii. 16.) Hence therefore the church is said to have union with Christ, by virtue of his assuming (in what is called in Scripture the fulness of time) our nature "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. iv. 4, 5.) Jehovah having from "before the world chosen the church in Christ, to be holy and without blame before him in love; and having predestinated the church to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to himself." (Eph. i. 4, 5.) Here, by the redemption in Christ Jesus, accomplished the vast plan all along from everlasting intended, and brought the church by the Holy Spirit to receive that adoption character by which they cry, *Abba, Father!* (Gal. iv. 6.)

And hence (and which forms the culminating point of all) as the church, from her being chosen in Christ before all worlds, had an *uncreated* holiness in Christ which nothing in creatures could do away; so by her nature union in Adam, the church had a *creature* holiness, which from the very mutable state of man upon earth was liable to be lost: and which, by the fall of Adam, in which all his posterity was involved, was

very shortly after his creation lost, and the church, as well as the world, at once sunk in sin and misery. And this gave occasion for the display of the riches of grace, when by his own Almighty arm, and by his own incommunicable work, the Lord Jesus Christ wrought out the salvation of his people, and did *that* which he had before declared by his servant the prophet he would do, when he said, “And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.”

I beseech you to pause one moment, before we prosecute the subject farther, and contemplate the church under *both* those bearings of character. Look at her as she was first, when beheld by all the persons in the GODHEAD, standing up in her glorious Head, completely holy, completely blessed, and completely beautiful and lovely; an object for the unceasing beholding of Jehovah in his complacency and delight for ever. Then turn your observation through the inverted order of the perspective, and look at her as she stood in Adam at the fall; and you behold her completely unholy, completely wretched, completely ugly and deformed; and until recovered by sovereign grace from this horrid delinquency, an object only of disgust and horror to all the angels of God. And hence therefore this will serve to shew, in some faint manner, the infinite goodness of God in the church's deliverance. Redemption, taken in all its bearings; is bigger than that great mill-stone which John saw the mighty angel cast into the sea; (Rev. xviii. 21.) yea, of greater magnitude than the world. And what tends to heighten the representation, and to endear the divine sovereignty the more, to all who are made partakers of this great salvation is, that it is all of grace, rich, free, unmerited, unlooked for grace. The whole work is Christ's, the glory is Christ's: and the happy partakers of this unspeakable gift, from beginning to end, are simply receivers only, as it is in Christ. It

is Christ who is the Almighty Speaker in the text ; the Lord of Hosts, who hath said, "I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day."

If you will open your bibles at the prophecy of Scripture from whence my text is taken, you will perceive how the words are introduced. The prophet is directed to call on Joshua the high priest (who was a type of Christ) and his fellows with him, for Christ and his people are considered as one, and to attend to what the Lord was about to promise, and would fulfil. "Hear now, O Joshua, the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee, for they are men wondered at." Yes! the Lord Jesus Christ is himself wonderful, and well may his people ; they are a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. And the greatest of all wonders is, what they are to themselves ; that God should have set his love upon them, and made them objects of his electing, redeeming, and regenerating love. Then follows the leading design of this proclamation : "for behold I will bring forth my servant the Branch;" a well known name for Christ, (Isaiah iv. 2. and xi. 1. Zech. vi. 13. &c.) "For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua ; upon the stone shall be seven eyes ; behold I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of Hosts ; and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day."

All these are so many beautiful similitudes to depicture our most glorious Christ ; for he is indeed in his *human* nature "a branch out of the root of Jesse," (Isaiah xi. 1.) and in his *divine* nature he is David's Lord. (Rev. xxii. 16.) And he is the stone "which God hath laid in Zion, a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." (Isaiah xxviii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 6.) And upon him are *fixed seven eyes* ; yes! the eyes of all the persons in the

GODHEAD, the eyes of angels, and the believers in all ages; the eyes of the faithful longing for his second coming, and the eyes of them that tremble at his approach: for "every eye shall see him; and they also that pierced him, and all nations shall wail because of him; even so, amen." (Rev. i. 7.) And then comes in the vast and comprehensive promise in the text, "For, saith the Lord of Hosts, I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." Observe what is said to be removed, namely, the iniquity of that land, meaning Immanuel's land, that is, the iniquity of the people. (Isaiah viii. 8.) And what day was this? that blessed, that memorable, that never to be forgotten day, when the Lord Jesus "by the offering of himself once offered, perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. x. 14.) And by whom is all this accomplished? even by the Lord of hosts! When the Lord of hosts puts his Almighty name and authority to the promise, every doubt vanisheth. The promise being so great would rather tend to excite unbelief, as a thing too great to be true; but when we see that the Almighty Promiser is the Lord of hosts, fear and distrust die away.

In the farther prosecution of this subject, what I propose under the hope of divine direction is, in the *first* place, to call your attention to the infinite greatness of his person, and to the infinite suitability of his almighty work who thus undertook, and in the time appointed as fully accomplished it, that "in one day he removed the iniquity of that land." And the next point I shall have to regard will be, to shew you that in this removal, the church of God is wholly and for ever delivered from the wrath to come, in being freed from sin, and made partaker in his righteousness; for if "he was made sin for us who knew no sin," it was that we, who knew no righteous-

ness in ourselves, "should be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 21.)

I cannot, however, enter upon the subject until that I have first looked up to the Lord, that our God may give both to you and to me, the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. For though the doctrine itself, that our glorious Christ hath removed the iniquity of his people in one day, by being himself the substituted Sponsor and Surety of his church; and in all he did, and wrought, and suffered, he acted as their head; and although this is the very marrow of the gospel, yet I cannot but fear that there are too many, even of the Lord's chosen ones, that do not live in the enjoyment of it: there is great leanness of soul on this account among the people of God. It will be matter of joy unspeakable to my heart, if the Lord at this time should make it a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and give to us grace to enter into the spiritual apprehension of the divine truth. For this alone will lift us out of self and above all that belongs to self, and to see ourselves complete in Christ. And this is what every truly regenerated child of God must find, as the only thing effectual to plead against all the accusations of sin and conscience, the terrors of the law, and the alarms of justice; for herein we behold the whole satisfied, sin done away, hell vanquished, and the kingdom of God open to all believers. The Lord the Spirit give his divine unction to the word now to be delivered, "that it may not return void, but accomplish that which shall please the the Lord, and prosper in the thing to which the Lord shall send it."

I am *first*, agreeably to my promise, to call your attention to the infinite greatness of his person, and to the infinite suitability of his almighty work, who in the language of my text said "I will remove the iniquity of that

land in one day." And without this scriptural apprehension of his person, we can have no adequate ideas of the suitableness and completeness of his salvation. That he had in himself an inherent, underived, and self-existent being; possessing in common with the Father and the Holy Ghost all divine attributes and perfections; this is at the bottom of all the energies manifested in redemption, and the very foundation of our holy faith. And that he had an holiness and purity of manhood unconnected with our Adam-fall nature, is also an express article in the creed of God's chosen. And hence by the junction of both in one person, he, and he only, became competent to do what my text expresseth, namely, "remove the iniquity of the land, (or, from the persons of his people) in one day." And herein lay the mystery of godliness, in counteracting the mystery of iniquity. For the indwelling GODHEAD in the manhood of Christ gave an infinite efficacy, value, and dignity, to all the Lord wrought in the accomplishment of salvation. As God, every act was the act of God: and as man, all was wrought by the GODHEAD in human nature: and as both God and man in one person, he became the suited Mediator for the redemption of his people. For hereby it was manifested, that the same nature which by transgression had sinned, should atone; and the same nature which had brought in death by sin, should abolish death. And as the holiness, obedience, and blood-shedding of human nature simply in itself could not do away an infinite evil; by the infinity of his own GODHEAD he hereby gave an infinite value and efficacy to all that was offered in the man Christ Jesus. Hence we see how it was those mighty acts were wrought by our Emmanuel; and how in the doing of them he was shewn to be the suited Saviour for all his people. And hence the prophet, looking into gospel times, spoke of him

under those glorious distinctions of character: "Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations. And thou shalt be called the Repairer of the breach, the Restorer of the paths to dwell in!" (Isa. lviii. 12.) Thus much will be sufficient in the view of his Almighty person, to shew how very suited as well as competent our most glorious Christ was "to remove the iniquity of his people in one day."

My next office, which by my proposal I have to perform, will be, to shew you that by this removal the church is wholly freed both from sin and the merited punishment; for in all he did or wrought or suffered, he acted as the public head of his church and people; and his becoming "a curse for them, redeemed them from the curse," (Gal. iii. 13.) and "being made sin for them who knew no sin, they became the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 21.)

In prosecuting this part of the subject, I earnestly request your close attention. When this Almighty Holy One stood forth the head and representative of his body the church, it is expressly said that "the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. liii. 6.) Consequently, the iniquity of his people being laid *on him*, all iniquity was taken *from them*, and when he stood up chargeable with their sins, they were freed from them. They could not at the same time be on *both*. And the Surety and Sponsor thus bearing their iniquity, the principal debtor became free. This was very beautifully set forth by type under the Old Testament, by various representations, but in none more striking than by the figure of the scape goat on the great day of atonement. The high priest was commanded on that day to lay both his hands on the head of the goat, and confess over him "all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, in all their sins, putting them

upon the head of the goat, and then to send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. And it was said that the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited." (Levit. xvi. 21, 22.) Here we behold the church freed both from the charge of sin and the punishment due to it, and the Lord of life and glory for awhile burthened with both. And hence the prophet recording this marvellous transaction said, "In those days and in that time saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve." (Jerem. l. 20.)

But we must not stop here. We behold in this statement sin and all its tremendous consequences put upon Christ, and his body the church thereby freed from all. It behoves us next to enquire, and on Scripture authority, how the Lord freed himself from the vast burden, and thereby removed "the iniquity of that land in one day."

And in the investigation of this inquiry, we enter upon a subject of such profound wisdom and mystery, as is explainable only by the Lord, and capable of being received by none but the spiritually taught of God. For although by study, reading Scripture, attending ordinances, and the like, we may, from the mere natural powers of reason, obtain a rational knowledge of the things of God; yet the *spiritual* apprehension of them, and the *spiritual* enjoyment of them, can only be received by those who from the new birth are made spiritually alive "to know the things which are freely given unto them of God." But where this sovereign work is wrought, the children are all "taught of God, and great is the peace of the children." All such are led to see Christ putting "away sin by the sacrifice of himself." He freed himself from the load and guilt of sin by his holy obedience to the whole law of God, which we have

all broken ; and by his sufferings and death he made ample satisfaction to the just punishment of sin. And as the infinite greatness of his person gave an infinite value to all he did and suffered, he accomplished what he had undertaken, when he said, “ And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.”

But still there ariseth a question of some difficulty to answer, until by divine teaching we are brought savingly acquainted with it ; namely, how and by what authority it is that our sins are transferable to another. For though through grace we are brought to see a redundancy of merit, both from the almightiness of Christ’s person, and the almightiness of his salvation, to make more than ample amends for our delinquency, yet till we see the authority of the transfer, faith cannot find warrant to believe to the saving of the soul. Hence the glorious and crowning point of all is, that all the persons in the GODHEAD, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, had an equal hand in planning and executing this great salvation, and the church is taught to give equal praise to the Holy Three in One for such unspeakable mercy. For although Christ, the visible Jehovah, in his own person, wrought out the stupendous deliverance, yet herein he was the gift of the Father, and sealed to the work by the Holy Ghost ; and hence all the persons in the GODHEAD concurred in the accomplishment. And hence the prophet’s song, “ Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it ; shout ye lower parts of the earth ; break forth into singing ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein, for Jehovah hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.” (Isaiah xlv. 23.)

And now in conclusion, shall I ask what is the result of this whole discourse ? Let me, with great affection, put a few questions to all here present. Hath the Lord by sovereign grace, in the new-birth,

brought you into an acquaintance with the plague of your own heart, as to have shewn you that you are alike involved by original and by actual sin, in the universal iniquity of the land? Are you also sensible, and by the same divine teaching, that all men by that fall in Adam, are alike helpless to their own deliverance? Have you been brought into such knowledge of the person, glory, almightiness, and all-sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ, as to believe in his power, and to be convinced that by that power, "he hath removed the iniquity of his land in one day?" And, under these convictions, are you so totally stripped of self, and all self-righteousness, as to the laying low in the dust before God, convinced that "salvation is in no other; neither is there any other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved?"

If these impressions of soul wrought by sovereign grace, are upon you, there will be the accompaniment, that a salvation, full and free, and wholly in God, without respect to merit, or deservings or undeservings in man, is at once equally suited to saint and sinner; the debtor of *five hundred* pence, or the debtor of *fifty*; for both are equally insolvent before God. I pray God to give every awakened, convinced sinner to see that Christ is suited as truly for him, as he is for Christ. And I pray God to give every one that is brought to believe in the glorious truth, that "Christ hath removed the iniquity of his land in one day!" that the real, cordial, and hearty belief, must be connected with the living upon it. Here (ought every one of this description to say) I behold the promised salvation confirmed. Christ "the most Holy hath finished the transgression; made an end of sins; made reconciliation for iniquity, and hath brought in everlasting righteousness!" Blessed for ever, blessed be God, in Christ. Amen.

ETERNAL REDEMPTION
OBTAINED FOR THE CHURCH,

IN THE ENTRANCE OF CHRIST ONCE INTO THE

HOLY PLACE, BY HIS OWN BLOOD.

“Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.” REV. v. 9.

“Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of
Jesus.” HEB. x. 19.

P R E F A C E.

IN bringing before the villagers, who assemble together, under the Lord's unction for divine worship, the following sermon for their perusal, I would very earnestly and affectionately, as they enter upon it, beg of them to seek for grace, that they may have a true scriptural sense of the vast interest the redeemed of the Lord have in the weighty contents.

The Holy Three in One, having made the church their own, by covenant relations, in the ancient settlements of eternity; each glorious person hath not only revealed himself in those distinct characters of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but hath manifested such personal acts of grace in each towards the church, that, while the very acts themselves prove that all are, from one and the same, in the undivided essence of GODHEAD; the church can and doth, while blessed with a true spiritual apprehension of divine things, mark and distinguish in them the Father's love, the Son's grace, and the Spirit's fellowship. We shall do well, if led by the Lord, and drawn by the Lord, to his throne at this time: we very earnestly desire and obtain, each for himself, the blessed revelation of these soul-comforting truths!

I would say, both for myself and you; Our God; who hath in thine infinite condescension formed thy church, and taken all the members of it into covenant relations to thyself, vouchsafe at this time, in the perusal of this discourse, as instrumental in thine hand, to bless it to our spiritual enjoyment. Give us to see that our God and Father, having chosen the whole church in Christ before the foundation of the world, they are thereby his own elect, in whose everlasting welfare, not only for themselves, but for thine own glory thou art engaged: for thou hast said, "this people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise!" And no less may we be led to discover, through the same divine teaching, that when thou, our glorious Lord, "entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us by thy blood;" it was because we are thine own! For we remember thine own most gracious words, when thou saidst, "Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so thou wert our Saviour!" And as thou, Almighty God the Spirit, makest the bodies of thy people thy temple, and hast called them "the temple of the living God, saying, I will dwell in them, and walk in them!" here we have the threefold cord, that cannot be broken. Lord, cause every new born and redeemed child of God before thee this day, in the full assurance of faith, to know this, and say with the church of old, God, "even our own God, shall bless us." Amen.

SERMON XXIII.

ETERNAL REDEMPTION OBTAINED FOR THE CHURCH, IN
THE ENTRANCE OF CHRIST ONCE INTO THE
HOLY PLACE, BY HIS OWN BLOOD.

HEB ix. 12.

By his own blood he entered in once, into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

THERE is somewhat very blessed in these words ; “his *own* blood.” Thus defining the acts of our most glorious Christ, and the offerings of our most glorious Christ, as his own. All is personal ; and indeed, there is of necessity an identity, a personality, which forms the character of all beings and all things. Even Jehovah in the unity of the divine essence is revealed to the church in that sublime description which distinguisheth him from all creatures he hath made by his identity ; and as possessing in that unity of GODHEAD a trinity of persons. Hence those wonderful Scriptures : “Hear, O Israel the Lord our God is one Lord.” (Deut. vi. 4.) “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ; and these Three are One.” (1 John v. 7.) And when these sacred truths of the Holy Scripture are brought home by an unction from above, and engraven in the heart, they create “a joy unspeakable and full of glory !”

But we go on to observe, that from those divine revelations, which had not God himself taught us we never could have known ; we are farther instructed

that this Almighty God, in his trinity of persons, hath in a marvellous way and manner, and infinitely beyond the comprehension of our present finite capacities to grasp, made himself over in covenant relations, and declared, that he hath formed and constituted the church for himself. Moses sang this great mystery many ages since in his love-song, being taught it by the Holy Ghost. "For the Lord's portion (said he) is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." (Deut. xxxii. 9.) And we find the same precious declaration in the Psalms. "For Jehovah hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure." (Psalm cxxxv. 4.) It is a blessed thing for a regenerated and redeemed child of God to say, and when he is taught it of God he will say, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot!" (Ps. xvi. 5.) But it is a far greater thing when the Lord saith that we are his. For this is the *cause*, the other is the *effect*. "The Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation; here will I dwell, for I have desired it." (Ps. cxxxii. 12.)

And what endears it yet more is this, namely, that it is all personal. It is God the Father which hath made his people his own. "Of him the whole family in heaven and earth is named." (Ephes. iii. 15.) And no less hath God the Son made the church his own. For thus we read: "Thy Maker is thine husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the holy One of Israel: the God of the whole earth shall he be called." (Isa. liv. 5.) And of God the Holy Ghost, the Lord Jesus himself hath testified when he said: "He dwelleth with you and shall be in you." (John xiv. 17.) And Jehovah in his trinity of persons sets his almighty seal to those soul-refreshing truths, when by his servant the prophet speaking of his Israel he said, "I am their inheritance, and ye shall give them no possession in Israel, I am their

possession." (Ezek. xlv. 28.) And as a man lives upon his substance, his property, his heritage, in *earthly* things, so *spiritually* the church lives upon the Lord. And as the glory of Jehovah in his trinity of persons is in the pleasure of his people; so he draws a revenue of praise from them, which he condescends to call his portion. And in the upper and brighter world, when he hath brought them all home to himself, and made them everlastingly holy, and everlastingly happy in himself; such an effulgence of glory will be reflected back upon Jehovah in his trinity of persons from their blessedness, as shall be "to the praise of the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus!"

I pause for the moment just to remark, that if those divine truths were realized, and lived upon day by day in the minds and hearts and consciences of the Lord's people, so as to become the habitual frame of their walk and conversation; what a source of spiritual joy would it continually open! And, if added to this habitual frame, the gracious Lord, in the manifestations of the Holy Three in One, should sometimes and not unfrequently let in upon the soul, the renewings of his love; and give his people to possess enlarged and enlarging views and apprehensions of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as "our home and dwelling-place in all generations:" such effects would follow, as for the season would lift the soul in meditation above the confines of time, and bring her into the suburbs of heaven. We should by faith see ourselves as entering our possession, before the Lord comes to take us home to dwell there. All which are founded in the everlasting love and manifestations of grace from the personal acts of covenant love in the holy Trinity to the church in Christ; and which is opened to us in that distinguished part of it, of our glorious Lord, described in the

text: "who by his own blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

We shall have a clearer apprehension of the subject if we look back to a few verses preceding the text, and observe how the words themselves are introduced. God the Holy Ghost had been speaking in the former part of the chapter, of the dispensations of grace under the law; and had very blessedly shewn how the whole ministered to the gospel. And having described both the furniture of the first tabernacle, and of the second; and of the daily services of the priests in the first, and of the high priest in the second; and that only "once every year," it is added, "the Holy Ghost this signifying." Without staying to enquire what that Almighty God thereby signified, (for that is too obvious to need explanation) what I would more particularly desire you to notice is, the thing itself; namely, that it was the Holy Ghost, which by these ordinations signified what his sovereign mind and will was. For here we prove, *first*, the person of the Holy Ghost. For the act of *signifying* can be no other than the act of a person, and distinct from another. and *secondly*, the same acts which could be no other than the acts of God, as plainly demonstrate his eternal power and GODHEAD. For had he not been God, he could not have inspired the apostle to the relation of these things; neither could he have ordained them; neither could they have been called *his* services. And *thirdly*, the institution of those services in the church in those first appointments of ordinances, as plainly proves, that he it was who founded the church, presided over the church from the beginning, and gave unction to every service in the church among the faithful, in the savour of Christ. I beseech you not to overlook those precious words, (for they are eminently precious in the present awful day of a Christ

(despising generation) “the Holy Ghost this signifying.”

And I request you to take with you another observation before that we enter upon the words of the text, namely, to keep in mind what this Almighty God the Holy Ghost hath himself declared, that the whole of the ordinances, under that dispensation, were no other than symbols or figures of the gospel church. “For the law was a shadow of good things to come ; but the body is of Christ.” (Col. ii. 17.) And what is a shadow ? There can be no such thing as a shadow without a previous substance ; for it is the substance which forms the shadow by the interposition of some medium. If (for example) I put my hand between the sun when shining and the earth, or any other substance on which the sun shines, or between a candle and the wall, the shadow of my hand will appear ; but it is the substance of my hand which forms the shadow, without which, or somewhat to the same effect, there would be none. Precisely the same in things pertaining to our most glorious Christ. He was the substantial whole, which formed the shadow of the law. And hence every lamb, offered under the law, shadowed him ; “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Rev. xiii. 8.) And hence, when Christ came and openly tabernacled amongst us, and by “the one offering of himself once offered, for ever perfected them that are sanctified :” all the symbolic representations were over : the substance being come, the shadow was for ever done away. And it should be yet farther observed, that the whole ritual of sacrifices under the law had neither use nor efficacy while they were in being, but as the people which followed them looked beyond the service, and eyed Christ in all. Hence the Holy Ghost, in the very verse of my text, most blessedly introduceth it, with this divine observation ; “Christ being come

an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say not of this building: neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

It is this one feature in our Lord's person that I would desire at this time your minds and mine to be fixed on for meditation; for in the scriptural and spiritual apprehension of this Almighty Being doing all he did, as *his own*; the indwelling GODHEAD giving dignity and value to the whole; proves the blessed doctrine that thereby he obtained "eternal redemption for us." And nothing less than eternal redemption could have answered the wants of his people; for his body the church being involved in one common ruin with the whole nature of man, by the Adam-fall transgression, became alike subject to death, both the first death and the second death: so that nothing short of eternal redemption, accomplished by an eternal power, would have done. Hence, under the law, the high priest was appointed once in every year, to enter into the holy place with blood, thereby shadowing the entrance, once for all, of Jesus with his own blood into heaven itself, "there to appear in the presence of God for us." Our glorious Lord in this his atoning character, not only offered himself an offering upon earth; but priested it (if I may so speak) in heaven, and carried up his own blood ont he mercy-seat, and having obtained eternal redemption, "sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high; angels, principalities, and powers being made subject unto him."

The leading design of my present discourse being intended for the consideration of the personal glory of Christ, in this incommunicable work of his, by accomplishing the eternal redemption of his people

by his own blood; I have to request your closest attention to the scriptural statement of this divine truth, in the prosecution of which I shall, in the *first* place, endeavour to pave the way to the clearer apprehension of it, by calling upon you to observe with me, as the foundation of the whole, the personal acts of Jehovah in his trinity of persons, (for all took equal part in the same) to this stupendous mystery in the covenant of grace. And when we have surveyed this platform, I shall, in the *second* branch of my discourse, bring before you some of the more prominent parts of our glorious Lord's personal character, when by his own blood he "entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." And the Lord grant such an unction from the Lord accompany our view of the whole subject, as may render it profitable both to saint and sinner. The *sinner*, under the most desperate circumstances, may behold in it, if taught of God, that as it is Christ's own personal, incommunicable work, no merit in the creature can recommend, neither demerit disqualify, for partaking of such great salvation. The whole proclamation from the court of heaven, is summed up in these words of the Almighty author, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none else; and beside me there is no Saviour." (Isaiah xlv. 22.) And the *saint* no less is hereby taught that all other resources for salvation are vain. The Lord saith himself, "of the people there was none with me; therefore mine own arm brought salvation." (Isaiah lxiii. 3—5.) And if there are any of the Lord's people who do not realize this blessed truth to their souls; the cause is obvious, namely, they are calculating their spiritual state before God more by what they feel, than what Christ is. Oh! for grace for lively actings of faith upon

this glorious person, who hath "by his own blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us;" that that Scripture may be daily realized to our comfort, "surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come; and all that believe in him shall never be ashamed nor confounded, world without end." (Isaiah xlv. 24, 17.)

I begin as I proposed, namely, under the *first* branch, to bring before you, in a short comprehensive manner, the Scripture statement of what is said of the whole persons in the GODHEAD taking an equal part in the great work of salvation: for all the works of the Holy Trinity are undivided, being acts of one and the same God; and for this plain reason, because though distinct in person, they are substantially but One in work, in counsel, will, and pleasure. And hence the church is alike dedicated to all, baptized in the joint names of all, blessed in all; and the first cause, and final end, is alike to the glory of all. Hence we hear each divine person separately and distinctly called the God of glory. The apostle Paul speaking of God the the Father, calls him, "the Father of glory." (Eph. i. 17.) And James, speaking of God the Son, thus describes him, "my brethren, have not the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons." (James ii. 1.) And Peter calls the Holy Ghost, "the Spirit of glory." (1 Pet. iv. 14.) And if those glorious truths, which are the fundamentals of all faith, were realized and lived upon, they would become principles of action, and carry on the regenerated child of God through all the time state here below, with full assurance of faith, until faith is swallowed up in open vision. But I hasten on to the leading object proposed in the doctrine of the text, which was proposed to form the *second* branch of my discourse, namely,

the personal act of our most glorious Christ, in his entrance once into the holy place, "having obtained eternal redemption by his own blood."

That this was a personal act of Christ is evident from his very character of Mediator: for the offering of what he had received from another, whether given to him, or borrowed, would have put quite another face on the transaction. Hence in allusion to the high priest under the law, it is said of him, "that every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore (speaking of our most glorious Christ, it is added) it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." (Heb. viii. 3.) Hence we read, that forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage. (Heb. ii. 14.) So that as it was his person which, in the compound of God and man in one, became our Mediator, so was it "his own blood" and not another's, by which he entered in once into the holy place, "having obtained eternal redemption for us." And hence those numerous Scriptures which identify his person, and identify his work. He gave *himself* for us, saith Paul, (Eph. v. 2.) when he had by *himself* purged our sins, "he sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high." (Heb. i. 3.) And the tenor of the covenant is expressed in these words, "As for thee, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water." (Zech ix. 11.)

And it is both beautiful and blessed to observe, in every part of the great Redeemer's character, this same identity of person in all the acts he wrought, uniformly carried on. In his death, he is said to have made himself an offering for sin. "Therefore (said

he) doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it 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 commandment have I received of my Father." (John x. 17.) And as in his death so in his resurrection it was all personal, and it was all of himself; for he was declared (that is, he was proved) to be the Son of God thereby with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." (Romans i. 4.) A most beautiful illustration we have of this, in the discourse of Christ to the Jews in the temple; pointing to himself he said, "destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews who thought our Lord referred to the temple of stone in which they then stood, expressed their astonishment at the declaration; but "Jesus spake of the temple of his body. 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 which Jesus had said." (John ii. 19—22.)

I know not whether I have been happy enough to follow up the very interesting doctrine contained in this Scripture, of Jesus offering up and entering in, once by his own blood for the eternal redemption of his people; but if I have, I pray God to give all his redeemed and regenerated family that are here a true scriptural and spiritual apprehension of it in their minds and consciences. It is by realizing these sublime truths under the unction of the Holy Ghost, we make the doctrine practical and experimental, so as to live upon it. And in realizing this gracious act of our most glorious Christ, we no less do the same with all the like gracious acts of all the Holy Three in the GODHEAD. While I behold with an eye of faith, Jesus entering in within the vail with his *own* blood; I behold no less the sovereign act of the

Father avenging, as our Lord saith, his *own* elect. (Luke xviii. 7.) And with this also the divine and Almighty act of God the Holy Ghost himself indwelling in his people, as his *own* temple. (2 Cor. vi. 16.) And under the united testimony of all to behold Jehovah in his oneness of essence, and trinity of persons, blessing the church as his own, and our souls exulting by crying out with the church; "This God is our God for ever and ever. God, even our own God, shall bless us." (Psalms xlvi. and lxvii.)

And now, what is the sum and substance of the whole, in relation to our glorious Lord; and in reference to his church and people. If, as I hope it hath been very fully laid open before you, Jesus by his own blood hath entered in once into the holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us, then must it undeniably follow, that as the prophet ages ago stated it, he hath "finished the transgression, made an end of sins, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness." (Dan. ix. 24.) And hence, "when the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, there shall be none, and the sins of Judah shall not be found;" for the Lord hath said, "I will pardon them whom I reserve." (Jer. 1. 20.) And in relation to Christ's church and people, nothing can be wanting, to complete their triumphs over sin, death, hell, and the grave, but through grace to believe, that in all the victories of Christ we are interested. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Oh! the unspeakable felicity, in the realizing these divine truths in the soul and living upon them. When we were dead in sins, God quickened us together with Christ! so that I see myself "saved by grace," raised up together with Christ, and now, even now "sitting together in heavenly places in Christ." And ere long shall find myself with Christ for ever. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

THE
LORD CASTING UP

THE
WAY OF HIS PEOPLE.

A SERMON PREACHED ON THE LORD'S DAY MORNING, AUGUST 27, 1826,
IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF CHARLES, PLYMOUTH, AFTER
A RECOVERY FROM SICKNESS.

“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of
the Lord.”—ISAIAH xl. 3.

P R E F A C E.

THE subject of the following sermon, is of the blessed properties of the promulgation of the gospel, both in the first coming of Christ, and of the gathering in of his redeemed, in the latter day glory. The Lord commands that all obstructions shall be removed ; and He himself proclaimed. The Lord commands the gates to be opened ; an highway cast up, and himself lifted up as a standard for the people. And the Lord adds how his people shall be designated. They are holy in the Lord, and they shall be called holy. They are the redeemed of the Lord, and they shall be known as such. And as it is said in another Scripture, “ all flesh shall see it together : for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

Let us beg for grace, that our present contemplation of the subject may be followed with those distinguishing marks of the divine blessing.

Lord God Almighty ! (I would say) let thy presence be eminently with thy people, which are now before thee ! Do thou, gracious God, do as thou hast said ; and both cast up, and prepare a way, even pointing to thyself as the way, the only way, and the truth and the life for them to walk in. Cause every valley to be exalted, and every mountain and hill to be made low ; the crooked made straight, and the rough places plain : and thy glory to be revealed. Blessedly realize in our souls those divine truths of our God, that the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God may have an indwelling and abiding principle in us, influencing all we do or say ; that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith ; that being rooted and grounded in love, we may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God. We fall before our God for those mercies ; and arise to prosecute the subject with full assurance of faith ! Glory to the Holy Three in One in Jesus Christ ! Amen.

S E R M O N XXIV.

 THE LORD CASTING UP THE WAY OF HIS PEOPLE.

ISAIAH lxii. 10—12.

Go through, go through the gates ; prepare ye the way of the people ; cast up, cast up the highway ; gather out the stones ; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh ; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord : and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.

I HAVE NO words sufficiently strong, to express the delight I feel in being brought home by the goodness of my God, to behold your faces once more in the flesh, and to stand up in my place before you this day. And after bending the knee in praise to the God of my life, for these mercies, contemplating Him the Almighty cause, “in whose hand my breath is, and whose are all my ways ;” I would say to you, in the words of the apostle Paul to the church : “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.” (Rom. xv. 30.) I have already apprized you, before my late departure, what you have to expect from my labours, in what remains to be filled in, in my feeble, and now almost worn out life. For myself, I feel as the prophet speaks, “when the summer fruits have been gathered, as the grape gleanings of the vintage, there is no cluster to eat.” (Micah vii. 1.) But I am comforted in the assurance of what the Lord said to the apostle, and which equally belongs to all his people : “My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor. xii. 9.)

And so divinely suited is our most glorious Lord for all the states and circumstances of his people, both minister and congregation, that however helpless and hopeless in ourselves, the Lord Jesus hath an all-sufficiency of correspondence for each and for all. So that when you and I have nothing, are nothing, yea, worse than nothing; those gracious words of our most glorious Christ sound with the sweeter melody in our ears, in which he saith, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John x. 10.)

My text is a beautiful confirmation of this doctrine: for all that is said in it is the Lord's saying, and hath not the least dependance for accomplishment upon human means or human deservings. If you analyze the several parts of it, there is not a syllable said of what the church feels, or what the church merits; what she hath done, or can do; but what the Lord will do for her. In a preceding chapter, the Lord had called upon the church to "arise and shine, for her light was come, and the glory of the Lord was risen upon her." And the Lord added the assurance of unceasing light and life, when he said: "thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself, but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." And under these divine gifts of grace, the Lord, more or less, prosecuted the same marvellous condescension through the chapters which followed, even to my text: and then, as if not only calling upon his church to arise and shine in his glory; but now as about to enter upon the possession of it, the Lord said; "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people: cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh;

behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The holy people; The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken."

This portion of the word of God contains in its bosom all the great and leading truths of our most holy faith. I cannot propose, within the limits of a sermon, to do more than merely to glance at the several particulars of it. But this will be enough, if the Lord, the Almighty author of his sacred Scripture, condescends to be our Teacher, and to lead us into all truth. Glorious Instructor of thy church and people; wilt thou at this time do it, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake?

I begin with the *first* part in the text. "Go through, go through the gates!" And here, on our very entrance, we find the Scripture testimony to the Holy, undivided Trinity, in their joint operation of this immense work. It was in the covenant of the Holy Three, before all worlds, the church hath to date her origin from the Father's choosing, and naming the whole election of grace, (Ephes. i. 4, and iii. 14.) when those ancient settlements of eternity were made. The Son, no less becoming the Head and Husband of his church and people. (Isaiah liv. 5. Ephes. i. 22, 23.) And God the Holy Ghost anointing by his unction the whole church in Christ. And, as if in conformity to the doctrine of our text, the beloved apostle described the New Jerusalem, that is, the spiritual church of Christ, under corresponding circumstances. After speaking of this church, as coming down from God, out of heaven; and stating the several particularities, John said: "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there." (Rev. xxi. 25. compared with Isaiah lx. 11.) And this is explained elsewhere in Scripture. The Lord Jesus hath entered into heaven as

our Forerunner. "The breaker (saith the prophet) is come up before them: they have broken up, and passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them." (Micah ii. 13.) Beautiful and blessed is it to see our glorious Lord, this Almighty Breaker, breaking up all before us. In his life, in his death, in his resurrection, in his ascension, he hath accomplished the whole: and like another Samson, (yea, Samson was but a faint shadow of Christ,) he hath broken down all the gates of obstruction to his people, and carried them up to an high hill as the trophies of his victory. (Judges xvi. 3.) Hence the Song of the church; "Lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors and the King of glory shall come in!" (Psalm xxiv. 7.) Thus the church is said "to go through, go through the gates."

The *second* branch in our text is, "Prepare ye the way of the people." And this, like the former, can only be accomplished by the sovereign power of God. He, and He alone, who opens the gates for his people, can prepare their way to pass through them. The whole process of grace is "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." And marvellous to observe, the workings of grace, that all the persons in the GODHEAD concur, and co-operate in every individual instance of the Lord's people "to prepare their way." It is God the Father who draws them to Christ. (John vi. 44.) It is God the Son who saith, "Fear not, I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy Name; thou art mine!" (Isaiah xliii. 1.) And it is God the Holy Ghost "which reproveth of sin, of righteousness and of judgment." (John xvi.) "Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth."

(James i. 17, 18.) "And as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will!" (John v. 21.) And all the spiritual gifts the people of God are blessed with in life, the holy Scriptures are express to declare, that "all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." (1 Cor. xii. 11.) Hence, therefore it is evident, and very blessed is it to see, and know it; that to the Lord alone, in his trinity of persons, it belongs, "to prepare the way of the people."

But *thirdly*; the text proceeds, "Cast up, cast up the highway." Here is a beautiful allusion to the gospel, which, through the whole Scriptures of the prophets is uniformly called an highway. Hence we read; "An highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness." Yes; for our text adds, the people that walk therein shall be called, "The holy people." But the same Scripture adds; "the unclean shall not pass over it." (Isaiah xxxv. 8.) No unregenerate, no unrenewed sinner can pass over it: for our Lord himself makes this the unalterable qualification for an entrance into his kingdom. (John iii. 3, 5.) But do not overlook in all this casting up the highway, the same Almighty power must be exerted as in the former: the work is the Lord's. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps!" He that saith: "Go through, go through the gates;" saith also "Cast up, cast up the highway!" And it is the same Lord that enableth his people to do both: "who worketh in them, both to will, and to do, of his good pleasure."

The *fourth* clause in this divine Scripture, to "gather out the stones," should seem to have an allusion to the city of refuge, (Deut. iv. 41.) (though I do not presume to say as much) which Moses, with an eye to Christ, was directed to appoint for the manslayer

to flee to, and finding shelter there, he was safe from the avenger of blood. And we are told that once in every year the magistrates appointed a day for the stones, which might have fallen in the road by rain or other causes, to be removed by men appointed for that purpose, so that the poor fugitive might find no obstructions in his flight. And they appointed, that at every opening which lay in the way to this city of refuge, the word *miklat*, which signifies *refuge*, should be marked as a directing post, pointing to the direct path. "Beautiful on the mountains (saith the prophet) are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth!" (Isaiah lii. 7.) And what was this *miklat* of the magistrates in Israel, but pointing to the same in our most glorious Christ! Was not, and is not, what my text saith, "to gather out the stones," graciously illustrated by the several means of grace in leading to Christ!

But we must not stop here, for the Scripture of my text doth not. The *fifth* beauty (to mark them in the order in which they are placed) next commands a standard to be lifted up for the people. And here we behold Christ the Almighty standard, and the whole persons in the GODHEAD the Lifter up. Hence we find one Scripture thus stating it: "And behold in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious." (Isa xi. 10.) "Behold! I have given him for a Witness to the people; a leader and commander to the people." (Isa. lv. 4.) "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit Jehovah shall lift up a standard against him." (Isa. lix. 19.) And is not our most glorious Christ Jehovah's standard in his trinity of persons for war with sin, Satan, death, hell, and the grave?

And is He not the sure, signal of victory for all, and to all, his redeemed, from the united love of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

The next portion to be noticed is a brief summary of the whole gospel. "Behold the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world; say ye to the daughter of Zion; Behold! thy salvation cometh: behold! his reward with him, and his work before him." Here we have a beautiful portrait of His Almighty *person*, and a short but complete drawing of his Almighty *work*, by whom alone all is wrought. His reward with him, and his work before him. Yes; for it was his own arm which brought salvation; and of the people there was none with him. (Isa. lxiii. 3—5.) And the apostle very blessedly echoes to the language of the prophet, when speaking of our most glorious Christ he saith, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; 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 confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. xii. 5—11. Heb. xii. 2.) There is not a doctrine of the gospel more fully and more plainly revealed in Scripture than of this incommunicable work of our most glorious Christ; and yet scarce one so little understood, or brought into daily practical enjoyment. And hence the leanness of soul with which, in the present day the church of God is marked. For though all the properties of salvation prove that no arm but the arm of God could have

been in it; no power less than an infinite power could have undertaken it; no merit less than an infinite merit have given dignity and efficacy to it; yet, such is the unhumbed pride of man, that we are for ever attempting to add somewhat of our own; and, according to those supposed attainments, we feel more or less satisfaction in the work of Christ. Upon all such occasions, it would be well for the church to hear, and have in spiritual enjoyment, these words of Christ: "Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, behold thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." His is the work. His is the reward. His is the sole glory. And his people are simply receivers, and no more, of his finished salvation!

Now follow the blissful consequences. Jesus, being the Author and Finisher of faith, and the sole *Cause* in the efficiency of salvation, the prophet proceeds to give a statement of the *effects* among his people. "And they shall call them, (saith the prophet) The holy people: The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out; a city not forsaken." Here, without running over a large tract of ground in the holy Scripture, to the confirmation of these divine truths, it will be sufficient for our present purpose to observe, from those most precious words, that in them we behold the gracious footsteps of the Holy Three in One in the several acts of grace here mentioned. The Lord's people shall be called the holy people! Yes! for God the Father, "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Ephes. i. 4, and iii. 15.) But they are to be called also, "The redeemed of the Lord." Yes: for though they were chosen in Christ to be holy in him before

the world, and without all doubt were so ; yet as their nature had been involved in the Adam-fall transgression of this time state, they were in themselves sinners ; and Christ “redeemed them by his blood.” (Ephes. i. 7.) Thus each glorious person in the GODHEAD, the Father and the Son, took equal part in grace concerning them. And when this Scripture adds, speak to the church herself, “And thou shalt be called Sought out!” here we see the outlines of God the eternal Spirit, in his Almighty Sovereign work, in “calling sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan, to the living God.” Hence the Lord Jesus, in allusion to his Spirit’s work in the hearts of his people, saith, “I am sought of them that asked not for me, I am found of them that sought me not.” (Isaiah lxxv. 1.) And in allusion to the same Almighty power, the Lord Jesus elsewhere saith, that his Spirit shall bring home all his chosen. “For thus saith the Lord God, Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered, in the cloudy and dark day.” (Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 12.) And lastly, to close all, this beautiful Scripture ends those blissful words and the chapter together, in saying, they shall be called also, “A city not forsaken!” Thus using a similitude to that of a city impregnable to the enemy ; so the church of Christ is so garrisoned by her Lord’s presence, that no foes can approach to hurt her. Hence the Lord himself sings his love-song to her in one of the Psalms. “Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem ! praise thy God, O Zion. For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates : he hath blessed thy children within thee !” (Psalm clxvii. 12, 13.) And the Holy Ghost, by Paul,

sets his Almighty seal to the church's everlasting safety. Speaking of the Father's original choice of his people in Christ, he saith, For whom he did fore-know, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. viii. 29, 30.)

I have dwelt so largely in dissecting the several parts of my text, that I cannot trespass much farther. I would, however, just beg to observe, what a blessed relation this Scripture contains of the glorious and fundamental doctrines of our most holy faith, in the gracious acts of Jehovah in his trinity of persons. In many, yea, in numberless portions of the word of God, the Holy Ghost, by his servants whom he inspired, hath very blessedly marked the divine features of all. But here they are all combined, and brought in together, shining in one full constellation.

Let me farther desire you to observe, from the several contents of this blessed Scripture, how fully, and clearly, the whole cause of salvation, both in its origin and conclusion, is in and from the Lord in his trinity of persons. Here is nothing of the creature found in it. Here is nothing of the creature to be added to it. And if the Lord was so jealous of his honour, when appointing "an altar of earth" to be made in the camp of Israel, for the offering of sacrifices under the law ; and then saying, "If thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone, for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it ;" (Exod. xx. 24, 25.) what can we conclude will be the Lord's view of our offerings under the gospel, if aught of ours be mingled with the Lord ? The altar of earth, or the altar of stone,

suiting the circumstances of our lost estate, when approaching to the divine glory ; in which there was nothing of the creature : “ for the earth is the Lord’s ; and the fulness thereof.” (Psalm xxiv. 1.) But our most glorious Lord, in his own Almighty person, is both our altar, sacrifice, and sacrificer. “ In him dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD bodily.” And the Holy Ghost hath added, to this soul-refreshing sentiment, this blessed testimony to the church : “ Ye are complete in him.” (Colos. ii. 9, 10.)

My brethren ! It is of vast importance to know these things from divine teaching ; and from the divine influence to live upon them. Nothing this side eternity can equal, on these truths, the anointings of the Holy Ghost in the heart, and mind, and conscience, that from day to day, the Lord’s people may realize them, substantiate them, make them our familiar companions, and by lively actings of faith upon each person in the GODHEAD, be growing up into such an enjoyment of them as to fill the soul by anticipation of delight with the glory that shall be revealed. The Sacred Scriptures, under the unction of God the Holy Ghost, will widen our spiritual apprehension to the daily contemplation ; and bring the glories of heaven down to our view, like those glasses, to the natural eye, which bring home distant objects as if very near. This is what Paul for himself, and his few faithful companions meant, when he said : “ Our conversation is in heaven : from whence we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Philip. iii. 20.) And this is similar to that other expression of Paul’s to Titus, in which he expressed himself as on the look out “ for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ.” (Titus ii. 13.)

I add no more but a prayer to God, that a blessing

may accompany our present attention to this subject. And as the whole efficiency of salvation is of the Lord, nothing of those who are made the happy partakers of it being any thing more than receivers, the Lord the Spirit will give to all his people present the like participation. For, as the highest taught child of God hath nothing to boast, so the lowest hath nothing to fear. Salvation is equally suited to all. Indeed, it is on the souls of those which lay lowest in the dust before the Lord, he makes his grace to shine. Vouchsafe, gracious Lord, thy blessing upon thy people: and give them to see their personal interest in this divine Scripture, as "The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord; Sought out, A city not forsaken." Amen.

THE END OF THE VILLAGE SERMONS.

A PROP AGAINST ALL DESPAIR,

INTENDED FOR THE CONSOLATION OF

SELF-CONDEMNED SINNERS

IN GENERAL,

BUT MORE ESPECIALY FOR

THOSE PERISHING SOULS

WHO FEAR THAT THEY HAVE SINNED

BEYOND THE POSSIBILITY OF PARDON.



“The Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost.” Matt. xviii. 11.

“I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Matt. ix. 13.

“God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly.” Rom. v. 8.

“Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him.” Heb. vii. 25.

PREFACE.

IT hath been long a subject of much concern in my mind, and occasionally operated with peculiar force, when I have at times seen the melancholy effects of it, that “the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God” is not preached with that fulness, freedom, and sovereignty of salvation which its great Author commanded, and the necessity of sinners evidently requires.

According to every principle of the gospel, there can be but one great and leading idea entertained concerning it, namely, that it is a glorious display of mercy to a lost world; originating in the sovereign, free, and unmerited grace of God, and proclaimed to mankind as a finished salvation through the sole merits, righteousness, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ: in which rich plan of redemption there are these striking particularities eminently distinguished.

As *First*. The gospel considers all men, universally speaking, as *lost*, and all equally incapable of putting forth an helping hand toward the attainment of their own salvation. For it is the unalterable sense of Scripture, that it was when “we were without strength, and in due time, that Christ died for the ungodly.” Observe the expression. Not simply when we were maimed or crippled in our faculties by reason of sin; not when some strength remained, however small, which, when co-operating with other aid, might have procured our recovery; but when all possible resources in ourselves were lost; without strength, or (as it is elsewhere more strongly expressed,) when we were altogether “dead in trespasses and sins;” as if some mighty mountain had fallen upon our nature, and crushed all our powers.

And this view of mankind, in which the gospel considers our nature as universally *lost*, represents it also as universally *undeserving*, in every instance, of Divine favour. This forms a *second* striking feature in the gospel of Jesus. The gospel of

the Lord Jesus makes no distinction in the objects of its clemency, as if one man became more or less worthy of grace than another ; for the positive language of Scripture on this point is, that “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” And however gratifying it may be to the unmortified pride of nature, when at any time making comparative views of man, with man, to fancy one more excellent than his neighbour, the gospel knows of no distinction but what grace hath made among creatures of universal depravity and corruption. Such notions may float on the imagination of the vain and unawakened, who are strangers to “the plague of their own hearts,” but they lose their very existence before God. The debtor to God of five hundred, or the debtor of fifty pence, being both alike insolvent and unable to pay, are both alike equally exposed to the prison, and that prison means hell ; and must continue so for ever, unless the goodness of the Almighty Creditor should pass an act of grace, and frankly forgive them their respective debts. Indeed the dear Lord of his people, as if to encourage the most timid mind, when overpowered with the sense of multiplied transgressions, and to prevent all despondency, mercifully taught in this view of nature’s insolvency, in this very parable of the debtors, that as the greatness or littleness of the debt is the same, both as it respects the state of the sinner’s mind in violating the Divine precept, and as it concerns the Divine mind in the exercise of mercy ; the difference is wholly on the part of man, and not on the part of God. “To whom little is forgiven the same loveth little.” Our gratitude for pardoning love will be in proportion to the sense we have of its extent. For, though it may well be supposed that all ransomed debtors, when their

* See Luke vii. 36—50. Few persons seem to be duly sensible of this most unquestionable truth, though it be confirmed to us, both by the plainest matter of fact, and by the apostle St. James, who, in his 2nd chapter, says, that “whosoever keepeth the whole law, and yet offendeth in one point, is guilty of all.” And for this plain reason, because in breaking the law in one point, he evidently manifests his disregard to the authority of the Lawgiver, as much as he would by the breach of ANOTHER : and consequently, if he be restrained from breaking it in ALL, this does not arise from a cordial reverence to God, for that is already given up in the *first* instance. Hence, therefore, the man that knowingly ventures to violate the obedience which he owes to God’s law in ONE commandment, would as certainly do it in every other, if the temptation and the motive were equally powerful.

fetters are broken off and the prison doors thrown open, will sing "to the praise of the glory of His grace," by whom their salvation is procured; yet *his* will be the loudest note, whose recovery hath been the most gracious, the most undeserved, and the most unexpected.

And what sums up and completes this finished view of the gospel, is the *third* prominent character of it, in super-adding to both those gracious properties this striking particularity, that it is altogether *unconditional* on the part of God, and requires no previous qualification or worth on the part of man. Indeed the highly favoured objects of such rich bounty, as is shewn in the gospel, being all along considered as "without strength, and dead in trespasses and sins; and having the sentence of death in themselves, that they should not trust in themselves, but in Him who raiseth the dead;" it would be a contradiction in terms to suppose, that characters so described should be capable of *doing* any thing to help, or *bringing* any thing to recommend them, to the Divine favour. For even "repentance and faith, those most essential qualifications of the mind, for the participation and en-

This is so plain a matter of fact, that it cannot be denied. So that, in accounting for the different degrees of transgression among men, we must refer them to other causes, and not to an internal approbation of the law of God. And in the various situations of life, and the variety of temptations arising out of them, in the constitutional features of the mind, and above all in the preventing and restraining grace of God; in these alone we shall find the real and adequate reasons, why offences abound in some more than in others. The deadly seed of sin is the same in all. But, like the seed of hemlock, not cast in the earth, **THAT** will remain inert and inactive, which, if falling into a suitable soil, would have brought forth its poisonous fruit. Sin in the heart, not brought into action, is like seed not used, but laid by in a chest, or other receptacle. Drop it into its mother-earth, and the consequence is certain, and soon appears. So that it is the absence only of those contingencies, which are necessary to give it birth, which accounts for its inactivity in some cases and not in others.

If you, my reader, before whom these lines appear, be ready to call in question this statement of our fallen nature, I can only lament your unconsciousness of it, and that on a double account. *First*, because, according to Scripture, nothing can be more fatal to a due apprehension of the infinite importance of salvation by Christ, than this blindness and ignorance of the heart. And, *secondly*, because, in respect to the happiness of the present life, you certainly lose one of the sweetest enjoyments the mind is capable of receiving here below, in not knowing that "they that are kept, are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." (1 Pet. i. 5.)

joyment of the blessings of the gospel (and which all real disciples of the Lord Jesus cannot but possess) are never supposed as a *condition* which the sinner performs to entitle him to mercy, but merely as *evidences* that he is brought home to God, and hath obtained mercy. They cannot be the *conditions* of obtaining salvation ; for, like the gospel itself, both faith and repentance are the immediate result of the Divine operation, and are the gift of God. The same hand which bestows the gospel, bestows also faith and repentance, or the sinner would never obtain them. The blessed Redeemer of mankind is called both the *Author* and *Finisher* of faith ; and is said to be exalted to *give* repentance and remission of sins. And when His servant, the apostle, declares that believers are saved by grace through faith, he as positively declares also, that this is “the gift of God.” Unto you (he says) it is *given* to believe. I could as easily create a world, as create either faith or repentance in my own heart. Both are of divine origin ; and, like the light, and the rain, and the dew of heaven, “which tarrieth not for man, neither waiteth for the sons of men,” are from above, and “come down from the Father of lights, from whom alone cometh every good and every perfect gift.”

This view of the gospel (and which certainly is the only true view of it) serves to place it in that light, which corresponds with our purest and most exalted notions of the beneficence of God, and answers to all the necessities of man. For it consists of nothing but invitations, promises, assurances, and the strongest declarations of mercy, followed up by innumerable instances of those who have been made the happy partakers of it, from one end of the Bible to the other. It seems to court the observation, to solicit the attention, and to invite the acceptance of the miserable and the wretched to its warmest embraces. And, that no broken-hearted sinner might despair in fancying himself placed beyond the reach of this rich tide of mercy, which flows continually without ebbing, it is not enough to say, that it washes on the shore of the *un*-deserving, but it reaches to the ground of the *ill*-deserving : not barely to those who have done nothing to merit mercy ; but even to those who have done every thing to merit punishment. It rises therefore above high water mark, overflows all bounds, evertops even the tallest mountains of corruption, and demonstrates what one of the apostles declared, and

thousands of sinners have found to be true, that, "where sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded."

Such being undeniably the state of the case in reference to the gospel; and which on account of the boundless extent of its mercy, is very properly termed "the unsearchable riches of Christ;" it next follows that to preach the gospel under any limitations, restrictions, or reserve whatever, in proposing *conditions* to the sinner, as constituting his title to a participation of its blessings, is to invert the very order of the gospel; and, instead of holding forth salvation to the *lost*, is only to propose strength to the *whole*. Just as absurd would it be in a physician to send away his patient, when labouring under some desperate disease, with a recommendation to do *his utmost* towards his own cure, and then to come to him to finish it; as it is in the minister of the gospel to propose to the sinner "to do his best," by way of healing the disease of the soul, and then to come to the Lord Jesus to perfect his recovery. The only previous qualification is to know our misery, and the remedy is prepared. And as the Lord Jesus Himself, when upon earth, in opening His commission in the synagogue of Nazareth, declared that, "He was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to give deliverance to the captives, to give sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord:" it must follow by an undeniable inference, that the office to which He hath appointed His servants, who minister in His name, is to preach freely and fully the same gospel of salvation. I consider therefore the several churches of Christ on earth, as so many market-places of public resort, established for this express purpose, where proclamation is continually supposed to be made, to the poor and to the wretched, the weary and the heavy laden, to come with their several wants unto Him, who alone can supply them, and give rest unto their souls, without money and without price. And it is very certain, that the various ordinances of worship which the Lord Jesus hath appointed in His church, are for this purpose and this only, that they may become so many channels of communication, under the blessed Spirit's operation, between Christ and His people, by which empty, needy, distressed, and burthened sinners may bring their wants, and their cares, their sorrows and their sins before the Lord, and receive a suitable sup-

ply out of His abundant fulness, and "grace for grace." And were I to drop into a church of christians, professing the eternal truths of the gospel, and found not evidences of these things; but discovered that moral essays were supplying the place of evangelical truths; that the person of the Lord Jesus, and His precious offices to lost souls, were not made the great topic of discourse; I should be led to conclude that I had mistaken my path, and had fallen into a synagogue of the Jews, and not the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

My brother in the ministry! (if peradventure one of the sacred order should condescend to be among my readers) shall I entreat you not to be offended with this statement of the case, neither hastily to turn away from the serious consideration of a subject, which involves, in its final consequences, the everlasting welfare both of ourselves, and our people? Do not fancy that this doctrine leads to licentiousness, or that any poor *self-condemned* and broken-hearted sinner can possibly adopt the horrible maxim of "continuing in sin that grace may abound." The apostle hath answered this childish question in a way which one might have supposed, and coming from him, would have "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. How shall we (says he) that are dead to sin, live any longer therein." How is it possible that a man once awakened to a new life, and thereby become "dead to sin, can live any longer therein?" And for characters of a different description, with whom both the awful threats of the law, and the sweet allurements of the gospel, have lost all their influence, there can be no apprehension. They wrest whatever is preached, as they do also the "Scriptures themselves, unto their own destruction." And would any man, in compliment to such persons, hold forth a restrained, mutilated, half-preached gospel? For my part, I am not afraid to imitate Him, in whose service I minister, by preaching a full, free, and finished salvation, through the sole merits, death, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. And, while I trace the footsteps of mercy in his history when upon earth, in going about the streets of Jerusalem, constantly inviting sinners to come to him for life and salvation; while I see him now with the eye of faith on his throne of glory, calling unto such persons in all the ends of the earth, to "look unto him and be saved;" while every ordinance of worship is uniformly

directed to follow up the Saviour's declaration of mercy, that, "If any man thirst and come to Him, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water ; and while the Spirit and the Bride say, Come ; and let him that heareth say, Come ; and let him that is athirst, come ; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely !" I am not afraid to echo to these glorious proclamations of grace, nor fear I to exceed my commission, in declaring, that " He can, and will save to the uttermost all that come to God by Him ; and that all that do come he will in no wise cast out !" Nay, in the market-days of his church, were I to perceive a case of more than ordinary wretchedness, in some poor *self-loathing* sinner, who, like the *publican* Jesus describes, dared not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, I should particularly direct my message to *him*, and say, " To *you* is the word of this salvation *sent*."

My poor brother, for whom I write, whose heart the Lord hath touched with a sense of sin, and a desire of salvation, and whose self-condemnation every action subscribes to ; hear the call of grace ! and while the heavenly voice sweetly sounds, " Return thou backslider, and I will heal your backsliding," let your whole soul echo back to the gracious invitation, " Behold I come unto Thee, for thou art the Lord my God."

But from man I turn to the Lord. I know that every thing is alike ineffectual, unless directed to the heart from above. Will the Lord be graciously pleased to commission my feeble call with his divine power, and send it to the heart of some poor self-condemned and despairing sinner ! And if the success of my embassy be never known upon earth, it will open new source of thanksgiving and joy, when the writer and reader shall meet before the throne of glory, mutually striving which hath most cause to sing with loudest note to the praise of "redeeming grace in ascribing salvation to God and the Lamb."

A PROP AGAINST ALL DESPAIR.

I BEGIN the subject, with assuming, for a principle, that my reader is one of those for whom it is designed, and to whom the title-page directs it; namely, a self-condemned and distressed sinner. One who is very apprehensive that he hath sinned beyond the possibility of forgiveness. And under this delusion of the enemy is driven to despair, and like those the prophet mentions, feels the same sentiment, and is expressing himself in the same language:—"There is no hope, for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go." (Jer. ii. 25.)

I enter upon the subject from this threshold, because the door of my present design opens to no other view of the gospel. My only object being to inquire, whether there be not, under divine grace, a sufficient prop found in "the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God to stay up the hopes of every poor perishing, self-reproaching sinner; who is brought to see and deplore his manifold transgressions against God, both by nature and practice, (though unconscious from whose gracious teachings the knowledge is derived) and under this alarmed state of the mind is crying out like him of old, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" (Rom. vii. 24.)

It will be equally obvious, I hope, that the unawakened, the unhumbled, and unconvinced sinner, who is ignorant of "the plague of his own heart," though equally needing salvation, yet from being unconcerned about it, hath no immediate interest in this little

work. It is the self-condemned, self-loathing, and self-despairing sinner, and him alone, for whom I now write.

Are you, my brother, one of this description? If so, I venture to hope that of whatever magnitude or enormity in sin your ideas may represent you to yourself to be, there is still a door of mercy open, and a remedy equal to the disease to be found in the blessed gospel of Christ. For it is not without a special reference to cases of more than ordinary malignity that precious promise was directed, when it is said; "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet:" (dyed in grain, and of the deepest inwrought colour) "yet they shall be as white as snow:—though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 18.) This becomes the universal remedy for great sinners as well as little sinners; "the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin." (1 John i. 7.)

The only preparatory question I would wish you to propose to your own heart, before you enter upon the perusal of this little treatise, is this: "Am I really awakened under a solemn conviction of my sin and depravity, to an anxious concern for salvation; and is sin become my greatest burthen, and a deliverance from it my first and most earnest desire?"

If the reader can truly say yes, to this solemn question, I shall then venture to hope, that the interesting view of the gospel, which it is the express design of this little work to present, will afford to a wounded soul, under God's blessing, an answer of peace. And may "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation," so dispose the heart, both of the writer and reader, by his grace, that "we may be able to comfort the soul in tribulation, with the same comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. i. 3, 4.)

The *first* observation that I would recommend to the notice of the distressed sinner, who is bowed down under an apprehension that his transgressions are too many, and too heinous to be forgiven, is the consideration of the nature and design of the blessed gospel of Christ: I mean, that it is a system of pure grace and mercy, and altogether intended for the very character the poor self-condemned sinner finds himself to be. Nay, so very peculiarly directed to the sinner, and to him only, is the blessed gospel of the Lord Jesus, that unless you are a sinner, you are not interested in its saving truths. For the great Author of it himself declared, that he came "not to call the righteous, *but sinners* to repentance." And agreeably to this, in the Redeemer's first sermon which he preached in the synagogue at the opening of his commission, he proclaimed this, and this only, to be the grand object for which he was anointed; "to preach the gospel to the poor; to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Examine those characters one by one, and see whether they do not exactly come up to your case and circumstances. If the gospel be to be preached to the *poor*, can any be more poor, more wretched, more deplorable in spirit than *you*? If Jesus be commissioned to heal the *broken-hearted*, is there one more broken-hearted than *you*? And if a state of sin and despair be represented under the image of a *captive*, bound and unable to come forth of himself from the prison, and Jesus declares that he came to preach deliverance to such a poor creature; will you not instantly cry out, Lord, that must be *me*? Who can have been more *blinded* by sin than *you*? Or who more *bruised* in all the faculties of the soul?—When Jesus, therefore, expressly declares, that

the very object of his coming from above was for the recovering of "sight to the blind," and for the "setting at liberty them that are bruised;" if your situation doth not correspond to the design of his commission, it is impossible to find a case that doth. The whole world is in a state of guilt and condemnation before God. And though *some*, from the pride and vanity of their own heart, may fancy themselves less so than *others*, yet if all the causes which prevent sin in one, from being so great as in another, were taken away, it would be found that *all* are more upon a level than is supposed in this particular. So that strictly and properly speaking, there are but two different characters of sinners to be found among men. I mean such as are awakened to a sense of sin, and such as are not. As for the unawakened, they know not their corruptions before God, therefore they seek not for a cleansing from them; they are ignorant of what Christ is to the soul, and therefore his precious blood and righteousness is but little esteemed by them. And such a state of hardness, unconcern, and impenitency, if continued in to the end of life, deprives them of being partakers of the blessings of redemption. "If ye believe not (says Christ) that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." (John viii. 24.) Hence, therefore, there is but one class of sinners more upon earth, and that is the class, my brother, to which you belong. The awakened, the convinced, the humbled, he particularly who is so convinced, so humbled, so broken-hearted, as to fear that he hath sinned beyond the power of redemption. And if such do not come within the promises of the gospel, all the promises would then be vain. Then the precious blood of Christ would have been shed in vain; and after all the many gracious and exceeding great and precious promises, then would our faith be also vain, and every son and daughter of Adam would be yet in their sins. So that

the very nature and design of the gospel evidently proves for whom it is intended: and a plainer or more obvious truth cannot be found, that *you* are among the very persons to whom the word of this salvation is sent, than in those features of the mind which distinguish your character.

Make this, my brother, the *first* observation in the subject of the nature and design of the gospel; and then go on to a *second* striking particularity by which this blessed system is known, I mean in the names and titles by which it is distinguished. It is called “the glorious gospel of the blessed God; glad tidings of good things; great joy to all people; the unsearchable riches of Christ; the exceedingly abundant riches of his grace; the word of life; salvation; redemption; plenteous redemption;” and the like.

Now if these terms signify any thing, they signify every thing, and become of infinite importance in their description, to shew that redemption is wholly of God, and not of man. Nothing can be clearer than that the sacred writers, by the use of them, meant to say, that “it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.” They absolutely labour for expressions to convey adequate ideas of the fulness, freedom, and sovereignty of divine mercy. Unsearchable riches, and exceedingly abundant riches of grace; redemption, plenteous redemption, are terms which carry with them very plain marks that the blessings they refer to are incalculable, boundless, bottomless, infinite. And what renders them particularly distinguished by these characters is, the free unmerited grace and favour in which they originate, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. As no merit of man induced God to be thus bountiful, so no demerit prevents man from receiving such clemency. These are indeed “glad tidings of good things,” and great joy to all people, to tell a poor

sinner that no sins are too great, no life too impure, no offences too many, nor too aggravated, to prevent the blessed influence of gospel mercies. But only reverse the case, and suppose that some qualification of merit is necessary in the objects of this favour, and that these mercies are suspended on the performance of such and such duties: what a vast alteration would it make in the circumstances of the gospel! What glad tidings would it be to you, or to me, my poor brother, who are both already self-condemned, under a conscious sense of having broken God's laws times without number, to propose mercy on the condition of deserving it!

In like manner the gospel is very properly distinguished by the title of unsearchable riches: when the poverty of the sinner, in his deepest insolvency, finds a full supply to all its wants. But if your sin exceeds the ability of Christ to remit, those riches are no longer so great as to be unsearchable, but have absolutely been exhausted. It is matchless grace, unspeakable grace indeed, when that grace riseth higher and higher, in proportion as the miserable objects of sin and iniquity have sunk lower and lower. But if it reaches only to such extent, or if it be clogged with certain limitations, that the objects of it be found qualified to receive it, it loses its very name, and ceases to be grace. "Grace is no more grace, if it be of works." (Romans xi. 6.)

Never lose sight therefore, my brother, of this view also of the gospel. But under the heaviest load of sorrow, arising from the recollection of sin, call to mind the glorious characters in which this blessed system of salvation is displayed, that it is the free, unmerited gift of God in Christ Jesus. In which the highest saint hath nothing to boast of as recommending him to its clemency; neither the lowest sinner who is groaning under a sense of sin

any cause to despair. It is all of grace, reigning "through the righteousness of Christ unto eternal life."

When you have duly pondered both those views of the gospel, go on and consider it under a *third* distinguishing character; I mean, as a "covenant of grace," altogether originating in the free and unbounded love of God, and completed in the sole merits and death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This view of the gospel is so fully competent to every purpose of my present argument, that when properly considered, it cannot but revive the most drooping mind of the most wretched sinner. For it silences every fear, removes every doubt, answers every objection, and carries before it, like a mighty tide, all resistance.

A few of its leading properties will amply prove what I say.

As *first*, It is a covenant of *grace*, and not of *works*. In which Jehovah intended to display the infinite greatness of his character, in giving pardon, mercy, and peace, without terms, and without condition, on the part of the poor creature who becomes the object of it: so that every idea of moral goodness, as a qualification for obtaining it, is done away.

Besides this, it is distinguished under another character, to confirm the certainty of its operation, in being an *everlasting* covenant,* founded in the "counsel of peace," (Zech. vi. 13.) which was between the glorious persons of the GODHEAD before the foundation of the world. Now an *everlasting* covenant, founded in *divine* wisdom, in the annals of *eternity*, cannot be frustrated by *human* folly, in the transient period of *time*. What God hath made everlasting, man cannot by any after act destroy.

* So called in numberless passages.

Moreover. Another distinguishing property of this covenant must not be forgotten. In it God undertakes both for himself and his people. "I will: and they shall:" these are the terms of it. Only mark with due attention this single verse of the prophet upon the subject, "I will make (says God) an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; and I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from me." (Jer. xxxii. 40.)

And that no poor sinner might yet be tempted to question whether such mercies, free and unpurchased, might not be too great and too abundant for him to be the happy partaker of; the Lord condescends yet farther to shew in this covenant that, though it originates from the free spontaneous mercy of God, yet it is grace, reigning through "the righteousness of Jesus Christ," unto eternal life. That the Lord Jesus both repaired the law which our nature had broken, and suffered the penalty due to the breach of it: that "he who knew no sin became sin for his people, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him." And therefore the sinner, though in himself too vile to appear before God, yet considered in Christ, is become justified, and even righteous. So that in pleading for pardon in the blood of the Lamb, he pleads for both, by grace, and by justice. And God, in forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, plainly proved that he "can be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly who believe in Jesus."

Such then, to speak of them briefly, are the views of the gospel as a covenant of grace and mercy. And, therefore, under this character also, I very earnestly beg of you, my brother, to regard it.

When this consideration, like the former, hath had its proper influence upon your mind, let your next attention be directed to that vast body of gracious

invitations, backed as they are, with the most gracious *promises* with which the blessed gospel is proclaimed in every part of the Bible.

“Doth not wisdom cry, and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul; all they that hate me love death.” “Ho, (saith the prophet Isaiah) every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?—hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me:—hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” “Go ye, (saith Christ to his servants, after he arose from the dead) Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.” And Jesus himself, when upon earth, went about inviting sinners “to come to him, that they might find rest unto their souls. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” And to sum up all that can be

needful to endear the Saviour to the heart, Jesus declares "all that the Father hath given me shall come to me, and him that cometh I will in no wise cast out."

Review now, my poor brother, these charming and gracious invitations and assurances, which I have selected out of a multitude which lie thickly scattered over the whole book of God, and might, if needful, have been brought also before you; but only review those, and see what unanswerable arguments they afford to encourage the most desponding mind. The proclamation made in God's holy mountain is to every one that thirsteth, and the poor and the wretched who have nothing to bring, and nothing to offer, are commanded to come without money, and without price. Wisdom crieth aloud, not in the temple only, and in courts of the Lord's house, but in the streets and the lanes of the city, among the graceless, the idle; they who are too graceless to attend the ordinances of duty, and too idle to be concerned for their own salvation. And when Jesus calls, observe who they are he calls. He says, If any man thirst, If any man hear my voice: He doth not say, If any good man, or any moral man; but *any* man. As if he had said, I will have my offer made among such as the world may fancy too worthless to be made partakers of my salvation, and too far lost to be recovered. Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. The single qualification I expect, is to believe the gospel: For he that believeth shall be saved. And even that belief, my Spirit will bestow: He maketh my people willing in the day of his power. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. And he that cometh, I will in no wise cast out. Observe again the extensiveness, the freedom, the sovereignty of his grace. *All* that the Father giveth. Not one, or two, or ten thousand, but all. And they *shall* come. What, if they do

such and such duties? Not a word of the kind: What, if they perform such obligations? Not a syllable like it. It is an absolute promise of the Lord Jesus, founded in his own absolute power. Here are neither ifs nor buts. No conditions nor terms. They shall come. And if they themselves will not, the Lord will make them willing in the day of his power. It is he who worketh in them both to will and do of his own good pleasure.

These united considerations, you will confess, my brother, are very great, and highly meriting your attention. But these are not all. In addition to the large volume of invitations and promises, with which the gospel abounds, to allure the trembling sinner to draw nigh God, must be next subjoined the testimonies of those who have accepted the gracious call, and received the proffered mercy. Here the waters of grace, in the sanctuary of our God, rise higher and higher. An invitation coming from the Lord of heaven and earth to a wretched sinner, to prompt him to receive mercy, is an unspeakable blessing. And a promise, that if he accepts that invitation, he shall be kindly welcomed, is yet greater. But when we see that promise actually fulfilled, and the sinner, like the prodigal in the gospel, returned home, and the fatted calf killed for his joyful reception; this puts the matter beyond all doubt, and silences every fear that might arise in the timid mind, whether such mercy is not too great to expect.

You have heard, therefore, the invitations, and you have seen the many promises with which those invitations were followed up; but if you ask, as it is very natural for you to ask, Are there any that have accepted the gracious invitation, and found mercy from the Lord? The answer is, Yes; thousands and tens of thousands now in glory, who were once, many of them no doubt, as great enemies to God by

wicked works as you, have found mercy, and are entered into the full possession of the kingdom of Christ, which is above. The beloved apostle John saw in his day "a multitude whom no man could number, standing before the throne, who had come out of great tribulation, and had washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." And since that period unknown numbers have been adding from all quarters of the universe to people the Lord's house. "They shall come (says Christ) from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south; and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God."

Oh! could you but be permitted, as the beloved apostle was, to look within the vail, and behold that happy multitude, you would see thousands whom divine mercy hath rescued from the very brink of destruction, and manifested, in their instance, the positive truth of that precious Scripture, that "where sin abounded grace did much more abound." They are looking over the battlements of heaven upon *you*, and upon every poor sinner like yourself, whom sin and Satan have led captive at their will, and with the most affectionate concern for your eternal welfare. And could you but hear that voice with which they call upon you to be wise unto salvation, how earnestly would you pray for grace to be the "followers of them who now, through faith and patience, inherit the promises." Oh! that God the Holy Ghost might now open your ear to hear, and give you an heart to believe, that you might be found "faithful unto death, and that God might give you also that crown of glory that fadeth not away."

Now let us pause, my brother, just to look back and review the ground over which we have trodden.

In the preface to this little work it was noticed, that the gospel considers *all men*, universally speaking, as

lost; and all equally incapable of putting forth an helping hand to their own recovery. It was shewn also, that as all men are by nature and by practice lost, so "all are alike equally undeserving" before God.—And that the gospel, in offering salvation, offers it wholly unconditional, and as the free unmerited gift of God in Christ Jesus. Such were the views in which our preface considered the gospel. In our entering upon the subject of this little work itself, those views were followed up with shewing in the *first* place, that, agreeably hereto, the very *design* of the gospel was to manifest a plan of rich mercy, wholly flowing from the pure love and benignity of God, and altogether finished in the righteousness, merits, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was next shewn, that agreeably to those ideas, the names and titles by which the gospel was made known, as "glad tidings of good things," and the like, all served to manifest a correspondence between the proclamation of the gospel, and the gospel itself. To this was added another most satisfying and unanswerable consideration in the character the gospel comes under, as *a covenant of grace*, wholly different and opposed to, *a covenant of works*; as if to shew the earnest design of Jehovah to gain over the affections of mankind to himself, by such unequalled displays of his love.—And when you see that, to those rich views of the gospel, are added such a multitude of *invitations*, *promises*, and *assurances*, and supported, as they are, by so many positive proofs of being the "sure mercies of David," in those who are already entered upon the actual possession of the promised inheritance; tell me, I beseech you, if it be possible, what greater testimonies can be needed? How much to the purpose is that recommendation of the apostle: "Seeing (says he) that we are encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin

(of unbelief, perhaps the apostle particularly meant, which is the besetting sin) that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of salvation."

Laying these principles down as a foundation, and "a prop against all despair," for the consolation of all self-condemned sinners in *general*, I shall now desire *you*, my brother, to state your objections, as they respect your own personal instance in *particular*, and then see whether in the view we have already taken of the subject, and the circumstances which arise out of it, there be not found a sufficient argument to encourage you to come to him, "who came to seek and save the lost," and who hath graciously promised that "those who do come to God by him, he will in no wise cast out."

You will not, I hope, after what hath been advanced, continue to say that your sins are too great, or too many to be pardoned; for "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." David so far thought the multitude, or the malignity of his transgressions, from being an argument against suing for mercy, that he makes it the very foundation for pleading with God. "For thy name's sake, O God (says he) be merciful unto my sin, for it is great." This kind of arguing, were it made among men, would be considered strange indeed, for we use the very reverse. It is the common maxim to endeavour to extenuate offence by pleading the never having done it before, and the hope of not falling into it again. But with God the plea differs. The greatness of our sin pleads with the greatness of divine mercy. "Deep calleth unto deep." And the reason is obvious. The foundation to hope for mercy is not in man's merit, but in the Lord's grace. The name's sake of Jehovah is interested in the event. On this ground David pleads.

And it is in this consideration the plea is heard. "I even I (saith God) am He, which blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." (Isa. xliii. 25.) "For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it, saith Jehovah. For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off." (Isa. xlvi. 11, 9.)

Do you feel astonished at this? The Lord appears to have expected you should. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah lv. 8, 9.) In the circumstances of human life, "scarcely for a righteous man would one die," saith the apostle. For a man that was barely honest, and who did nothing but what the law compelled him to do, hardly would any one venture his life to save him: "yet, peradventure, for a good man," that is, a benevolent, kind, and friendly man, "some might be found that would even dare to die." But the way by which "God commendeth his love towards us," that is, recommends it to the particular notice of his creatures, is on very different grounds, namely, "that while we were yet sinners," rebels, and enemies to God by wicked works, "Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) And if the mind stands astonished, as well it may, in the view of such unparalleled mercy, the whole terminates in this reply, "I am God and not man." (Hosea xi. 9.) This answers all objections, and stops every argument, and proves what an apostle hath observed, "That no flesh shall glory in his presence." (1 Cor. i. 29.)

If you still conceive that your *particular* offences are of that nature as to preclude the *general* application; look into the Bible, and see whether you cannot find unparalleled instances to your own case and cir-

cumstances. To silence every apprehension of this kind (as if conscious that the great enemy of souls would be for ever troubling the guilty breast with fears that his case was an exception) the blessed Spirit of God hath graciously appointed such examples of sinners received into mercy to be recorded in his holy word, as brings the proof of grace received home to almost every individual's case, and serves to revive the hope of the most desponding. The history of Noah, Lot, Manasseh, David, Peter, Paul, Mary Magdalene, the dying thief, and a great body of the Corinthian converts, are all so many proofs in point. Whose case is so truly singular, but what may find somewhat in the example of one or other of these characters to afford encouragement and comfort? The apostle, in enumerating the offences of the Corinthians, hath scarce omitted any sin in the black catalogue: they were "fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners: And such (says the apostle) were some of you. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.) And for what, think ye, were these particularised, but for the encouragement of sinners in all ages, that they "through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope?" Nay, what an eminent example is that of the apostle Paul himself, who was, he tells us, "a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious. But (says he) I obtained mercy in that I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus."

But, perhaps, you may suppose that as St. Paul was called to be an apostle, his case is not to be considered as a precedent in common life. This the apostle himself, however, obviates; for he immedi-

ately adds, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." And then as positively declares, that for "this very cause he obtained mercy, that in me (says the apostle) first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering for a pattern; (observe the expression, for a pattern) to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." (1 Tim i. 13, &c.)

If these are not sufficient to give you comfort, what think you of that very striking one which is found in the Redeemer's tenderness and compassion towards Jerusalem. I mean, in enjoining his apostles, when commissioning them to go into all the world, to preach the gospel to every creature, to make the first offers of salvation to that wicked city. "Let repentance and remission of sins (said Jesus) be preached in my name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." One should have thought, (speaking after the manner of men,) that the commission would have been the very reverse of this, and that Jerusalem, the bloody city, the slaughter-house of all Christ's servants, the prophets, and of Christ himself, would have been excluded from all the offers of pardon and salvation; and instead of saying, "Begin at Jerusalem," Christ would have said Carry not the gospel there. Or, if the divine compassion was made to rise in proportion to human necessity, the Lord Jesus had said, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," and then when "all the earth have seen the salvation of God," let the Jerusalem sinners once more be offered the glad tidings of salvation. Even this would have been an astonishing act of grace, and very highly demonstrated the mercy of God our Saviour. But here, as in a thousand other instances, God's thoughts are not our thoughts: Jesus determines Jerusalem shall

be the first saved, and all the earth shall wait until the gospel hath been again preached to those who had so long rejected it. Jerusalem is still the beloved city. The tears which Jesus shed over it were not dried; neither the blood which Jesus had shed for it become cold. "Go, therefore, (says Jesus,) unto all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." But as you go, still seek for the "lost sheep of the house of Israel," and be sure to make the first offers there. "Tell them (says a sweet writer,*) when paraphrasing this passage of Christ,) that I will be their shepherd still. Though they despised my tears, and spilled my blood, tell them that for their sakes I shed both. Let them know that I live, and because I live my death shall not be their damnation, nor my murder an unpardonable sin; but tell them that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin, even that sin by which that blood was drawn."

"And do you let them know that you have seen the prints of the nails upon my hands and feet, and the wounds of the spear in my side; and that those marks of their cruelty, so far from giving me vindictive thoughts, that every wound they have given me speaks in their behalf, pleads with my Father for the remission of their sins, and enables me to bestow it; and by these sufferings which they may be ready to think have exasperated me against them, by these very wounds, do you persuade them to receive the salvation they have procured. Nay, if you meet that poor wretch that thrust the spear into my side, tell him that there is another way, and a better way of coming at my heart, even my heart's love: that he may look on him whom he hath pierced, and mourn. I will cherish him in that very bosom he hath wounded, and he shall find the blood he shed

* Dr. Grosvenor.

an ample atonement for the sin of shedding it. And add, moreover, from me, that his refusal now will put me to more pain and displeasure in rejecting again salvation through my blood, than when his spear first drew it forth."

How irresistible appears the argument, and how ought it, my brother, to operate upon *you*! Did the kind Jesus mean all this, and more, when he commanded salvation to be first preached in Jerusalem; and will he refuse your cry for that salvation, when, by his gracious command, it is now brought here and offered to *you*? Were the very murderers of the Lord Jesus made partakers in this great salvation, and shall it be withholden from *you*? How irreconcilable this to our ideas!

But, perhaps, you will still object (for the heart is so full of unbelief as to be continually objecting,) that your guilt is even greater than theirs, for they accepted the redemption proposed at the *first* offer; whereas you have rejected it again and again. But here, blessed be God, our argument is still accommodated. For some there were among them, like you my brother, who stood out against the awakening call of Peter's first sermon, but yet, under the blessed Spirit's influence, were afterwards converted. (See Acts, ii^d iii^d and ivth chapters.) If you object, that the case of Jerusalem sinners doth not exactly come up to the point with the Gentiles; here again we are furnished with a new train of arguments, to prove that this distinction of character is all done away in Christ. "You hath he quickened, (says the apostle,) who were dead in trespasses and sins." And who is this said to? even to the Ephesians! worshippers of heathen images, and sunk in all the sins and corruptions of unenlightened nature. And for what purpose was this mercy shewn to them? The apostle says, "Because God who is rich in

mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved them; even when they were dead in trespasses and sins, did he quicken thence by grace in Christ." But was all this intended mercy as so much mercy to the church of Ephesus only? No, by no means. For the apostle immediately adds, this was the express purpose of it, that "in the ages to come, God might shew forth the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards sinners through Christ Jesus. That now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." (Ephes. ii. 3, 4, 5, &c.)

What will you farther say in objection to all those charming and unanswerable recommendations of this glorious gospel of the ever blessed God? If neither great sins, nor great sinners; if neither sinners among the lost sheep of the house of Israel, nor sinners among the Gentile church, scattered over the whole earth, are excluded from this mercy; what next resource will the unbelief of your heart, assisted by the great enemy of souls, tempt you to fly to, in order to prevent *your* accepting this great salvation?

Methinks I hear you say, that these are certainly great and precious things to those who can receive them; but as for *you*, they do not come up to your case. You say, I have outlived, I fear, the day of grace, and have outstayed the accepted time of salvation. Oh! that "I had known in the day of grace, the things which would have made for my peace; but now they are for ever hidden from my eyes!"

But here again, my poor brother, you write bitter things against yourself which the Lord hath not written. And the enemy of souls tempts you to bring the very Scriptures of truth, and pervert them against yourself, in order to cast you down. He dared to do this once, even against the Lord Jesus himself, in the days of his flesh, and therefore, no

wonder that he should do to you. But may God the Holy Ghost enable you to repel the great deceiver by the same "sword of the Spirit" which Christ did, which "is the word of God!"

You say, you fear that you have out-lived the day of grace, and the things which once would have made for your eternal peace are now for ever hidden from your eyes. To which I answer, that your very fears do, in a great measure, serve to refute themselves. For it is, I believe, a very rare, if not altogether an impossible thing, to find any *religious* fear in the breast which is given up to a final hardness and impenitence of heart.

But let us farther attend to the subject, and particularly to the true sense and meaning of these words of the Lord Jesus, which you have quoted. When Christ wept over the beloved city of Jerusalem, and declared that the things, which, if before had been attended to, would have made for their peace, were now for ever hidden from their eyes, it is very evident, by what followed, in sending his gospel expressly *first* to Jerusalem, that he could not mean their eyes were hidden to the things concerning salvation. For had this been the case, to what purpose would he have sent it? And it is far more evident, by the success which attended his sending his gospel, in the conversion of three thousand souls of the Jerusalem sinners on the day of Pentecost, which was but a little while after Christ had wept over Jerusalem, that that salvation was not hidden from their eyes, but, on the contrary, that then, and then only, for the first time, were their eyes opened to receive it. Nothing can be more plain and palpable than this; and therefore, it is as evident that our Lord had some other meaning in those words. And if you apply them as they were clearly intended, and indeed, as the succeeding verses explain, not to the things which made for their *eternal*

peace with God, but their *temporal* prosperity and continuance as a nation, you will immediately enter into the true meaning of our Lord's words. It was the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army, and not the *final* destruction of Israel as a people. "Hadst thou but known, says Christ, in this thy day, the things which make for thy peace ! But now they are hidden from thine eyes." And observe what follows : "For the days shall come that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee. And they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, which shall not be thrown down, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation." (Luke xix. 43.) Here, you see, is evidently a *temporal* ruin declared for neglecting *temporal* visitation, and which as truly came to pass. Nationally considered, Jerusalem would have been preserved in its peace, had the people, upon the *rational* opportunity afforded them for receiving the Messiah, accepted Christ under that character. And by comparing their own Scriptures with Christ's miracles and ministry, they might have found enough evidences to have convinced their understanding. It was in this sense Sodom would have been saved as a nation, if only ten righteous persons had been found in the city. Yet all the while, Sodom itself, as a nation, would have been sinful Sodom still. It is in the same sense, nations openly professing the gospel are saved now.—But the personal salvation of the Lord's people, or their day of grace being over, and the truths hidden from their eyes, is a perfectly different thing, and by no means intimated or applied, but the contrary plainly proved. And this view of the subject will not only serve to explain this passage concerning Jerusalem, but many similar passages of a like nature ; and plainly shew that this notion of

out-living the day of grace hath been very improperly taken up, to the distress of many precious souls, whose "heart hath been made sad, whom God would not have made sad." (Ezekiel xiii. 22.) For the day of grace, that is, the day of *saving* grace, the day of God the Holy Ghost, was not given to the beloved city of Jerusalem when Jesus wept over it; for it is as expressly said, "the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified:" consequently, therefore, the day of grace, so far from being then *finished* with Jerusalem, was not even *begun*. Then only can it be said, in any case, to be "the day of grace," when God the Spirit makes sinners willing in "the day of his power." All other days of grace are no more than *means* of grace, *ordinances* of grace, such as preaching, reading, worship, and the like; which are in themselves efficacious, or not, as God the Spirit shall be pleased. And whenever this blessed day of grace comes, that is, when sinners are made "willing in the day of God's power," it never can be said to come too late. The labourers in the *eleventh hour* found that hour to be of equal grace with them who had received it earlier, "and borne the burden and heat of the day." The dying thief experienced the like mercy, when, to all human ideas, every hope was over. Despair not, therefore, my brother, nor think *your* day of grace is past, while you are yet on praying ground, and continue a monument of sparing mercy. Rather, if you feel a rising *desire* after Jesus, a conscious *sense* that you need a Saviour, and that that Saviour can save to the *uttermost* all that come to God by him; rather assume the hope that these are all so many proofs of the blessed Spirit's now teaching you what you never knew before; and hence, that you have been all this while purposely spared to be the greater pattern of his sovereign grace and mercy. And surely I would, were I you, reason thus with myself:—If the Lord

spared me when my heart was as hard and insensible as a stone, and when I neither felt a sense that I needed mercy, nor asked that mercy of the Lord, he will not now reject me, when my very soul is melted into sorrow, and all my cries are, "Lord, save, or I perish!" Never, surely, would Jesus have excited such desires in my heart, if he had not meant to answer them!—Lord, I *will* believe; I *will* hope that my day of grace cannot be past, while such sweet effects of grace are upon me. "With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. He will redeem Israel (it is said) from all his iniquities."

But still I expect another objection to arise and anticipate that question which thousands now in glory once put forth while they were here below:—What, if my day of grace be not past, yet if I have committed the unpardonable sin, still I shall be lost. True: if you *have* committed the unpardonable sin, all hope is indeed over. But what reason or authority have you to suppose this? Before you listen to such suggestions of the enemy, first understand in what the unpardonable sin consists; and also what are the marks and characters by which those are known who have committed it. The first persons mentioned in Scripture, under this awful state, were the scribes; who, in spite of all the evidences with which Christ proved his GODHEAD, daringly ventured to charge Jesus with casting out devils by the prince of the devils; and this was blasphemy indeed! "Because they said, he hath an unclean spirit." (Mark iii. 22—30.) But have you ever said this of Jesus, much less have believed such a thing? Is it possible that you can have used a blasphemy of this kind? Besides, the characters by which those are known who have committed it do not suit you. Your present state and frame of mind totally contradicts it. They that committed this sin in the days

of Christ's flesh, and they who commit it *now*, are both of them given up to an hardened, insensible mind: for, having resisted, by this awful means, the operations of that blessed Spirit, by which alone they can be quickened to the knowledge of their sins, and to a proper apprehension of Christ as a Saviour, they remain awful monuments of God's righteous judgment. And, continuing therefore in an hardened state of sin, they continue unreclaimable for ever, and thus they live and die lost to all feeling. But how different my brother is your case, if you really felt what you professed to feel at your entrance on the perusal of this little work! You said, that "sin is your greatest burthen, and a deliverance from it your first and most earnest desire." And if this be the case, I will venture to say that such impressions can only come from the teachings of God the Holy Ghost. And if God the Holy Ghost be your teacher, depend upon it you have never resisted his blessed operations by a blasphemy of this kind. And every other species of blasphemy, Christ says, shall be forgiven unto men; there is no exception of any but this. I shall venture to hope therefore, that the stating the case in this very plain point of view, and which I have purposely made use of that you may remember it, will be sufficient, under divine grace, to convince you that you have been kept by restraining mercy from falling into this condemnation.

And now what shall I say more? unless it be to fold up what hath been said, with a very earnest prayer, as I began, that God the Spirit will be graciously pleased to commission it as far as is agreeable to his own most sacred truths, to the heart of some poor self-condemned sinner, that "the labour may not be in vain in the Lord."

THE
SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE HEART

THE GREAT WITNESS TO THE

TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS:

A SMALL TOKEN OF AFFECTION TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.



"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit."—Rom. viii. 16.

TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

THROUGHOUT THE EARTH.

GRACE, MERCY, AND PEACE BE MULTIPLIED.

I SEND forth this little tract with the more confidence, from a consciousness (if I know any thing of my own heart,) that it carries with it in its bosom, an unfeigned affection to all that “love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.” And I send it forth at this particular period of the church, from a well-formed conviction, that it is a period more than ordinarily interesting to the concerns of our common Zion; and in which no one who feels for her welfare ought to keep back his testimony, however feeble that testimony may be in itself, to “the truth as it is in Jesus.”

We live in an awful day. The opening of the *nineteenth* century is teeming with events highly portentous to the profession of christianity. Many of our modern infidels are for “causing the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.” They affect to call the present time *The Age of Reason*, and treat all the doctrines of *Revelation* with like indifference, as calculated only for the amusement of the childhood of existence, which, in their estimation, the world hath now passed. And many more in the opposite extreme, are, it is exceedingly to be apprehended, by what we behold in their lives, *sporting themselves*, as an apostle expresses it, *with their own deceivings*; not content with extending their views of salvation

universally to all men, they include the very devils also. And thus, while the *former* are aiming a deadly blow at the whole fabric of the gospel, the *latter* are sapping it at the foundation. Every circumstance therefore, connected with the pure religion of Jesus, loudly proclaims, that those *perilous times* are come, which were to distinguish *the latter days*.

But these are not all. Happy, comparatively speaking, would it be for the true interest of the gospel, if these were the only errors to be deplored in the present day of the church. The most violent assaults of a storm *without* are nothing, if there be perfect security and peace *within*.

How shall I speak on this subject, so as to conciliate while speaking faithfully! Is there not (I propose the question with all possible deference and humility,) is there not, even in the best professing churches of the day, more regard shewn to the appearance of godliness, than to the evidence of its reality in our hearts? Are we not, in our respective congregations, and even in the moment while seemingly contending for all the great and distinguishing truths of the gospel, abundantly more anxious to increase the number of professors among us, than careful to examine whether they who do profess are real followers of God as dear children? And is it not a fact, that while in the churches there appears to be an earnestness of exertion to promote the revival of the gospel in the nation at large, and to diffuse its glad tidings abroad throughout the earth, we are more attentive to the external form, than to the internal power of godliness?

Forgive me, my christian brother, whosoever you are, before whom these lines appear, whether of the ministry or people, in presuming thus to write. I am free to confess, that the questions have arisen in

my mind, from a review of the present state of religion, as it hath struck my observation. But I desire in the very moment of enquiry concerning these things, to exercise a greater jealousy over my own heart in searching for an answer to them, than over any other man's. Happy will it be for the best interests of the gospel, if my fears are all unfounded. But of one thing I am confident; the heart that is most free from the charge will be least displeased with the accusation. And he who hath the smallest reason to shrink from the search, will rather be thankful, than feel resentment from such touchstones of character.

In times so critical to the interests of vital religion, and amidst such awful departures from the faith as we are daily called upon to behold, it becomes a very anxious enquiry in the breast of the humble—Is there no method under divine grace by which the believer may arrive to a well-grounded assurance concerning the great truths of the gospel? Is it not possible for him to be so firmly settled in those great truths, as that he shall not only be ready “to give answer to every one that asketh him a reason of the hope that is in him,” but to find the comfort of it in his own mind, “that his faith doth not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God?”

To this enquiry I answer, Yes, blessed be God, there is. An infallible method is discovered, at once to secure from the possibility of apostacy, and to afford comfort and satisfaction to the believer's own mind, concerning the great truths of God; namely, *from the Spirit's work in the heart*; by the sweet influences of which he may find “joy and peace in believing, and abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

The investigation of this subject, as a subject at all times truly interesting in itself, but eminently so in

the present period, is to form the substance of this little tract. And I the rather insist upon its importance on this occasion, and as such, venture to call the attention of the churches to it, as decisive to the point in question, from the authority of an apostle. He hath determined this sacred work of the Spirit to be the great security against all the heresies of the latter day. His language upon this occasion is, indeed remarkable. "Little children, (says he,) it is the last time. And as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." And as if the apostle had foreseen, and directly pointed to that very species of apostacy which so peculiarly marks the present day, he adds; "They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." And then he subjoins, what appears to me, I confess, to be unanswerably conclusive on the subject of the Spirit's work in the heart: "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

Brethren! may all congregations of the faithful throughout the earth be always under this rich anointing, "to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. And may the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory, by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory in the church of Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end." Amen.

ROBERT HAWKER.

P R E F A C E.

READER! the design of this little book, is (in the divine hand) to bring you acquainted with what of all concerns upon earth it behoves you most to know; namely, with the nature and certainty of those things which respect your present and everlasting welfare. To be perfectly satisfied, in your own mind, of the great truths of the gospel; and to be as perfectly convinced of having a personal interest in all the blessings of the gospel; these cannot but form an object of the first concern, in the breast of every serious person. And that man must be lost indeed to all that is really valuable in life, who can be indifferent to matters so highly interesting.

In the gracious work of the Holy Ghost, those precious evidences are alone to be found. And that every truly regenerated believer in Christ hath those evidences, in his own experience, is what I not only affirm, from the authority of the Holy Word, (whatever reproaches it may bring upon me from the carnal, and ungodly world) but I venture to believe also, that the facts themselves are so fully and circumstantially proved to the believer's own experience, in the daily occurrences of his life who is made the happy partaker of such unspeakable mercy, that they require nothing more than the suitable attention of the mind, in order to ascertain their reality.

Holy and Eternal Spirit! descend with all thy precious influences, upon this feeble attempt, to make manifest thy gracious work upon the heart. Direct the hand that writes; and enlighten the eye that reads: and as it is thou alone, who causest the light to shine out of darkness, do thou shine in upon the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE HEART,

&c.

IF there be a single point of the gospel insisted upon with greater emphasis than another, it is certainly that part of it, which, by tracing redemption's work up to the Fountain Head, leads the believer to discover that all the streams flowing from it issue from the joint mercy of the sacred Three in One, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. For the same Scriptures, which reveal to us the mysterious nature of the existence of the persons in the unity of the GODHEAD, do as expressly assign to each his particular and distinct office in the economy of human redemption.

To God the Father are peculiarly ascribed those gracious acts which result from his everlasting love, of contriving, forming, appointing, and perfecting the glorious scheme of salvation. Hence the gift of the Lord Jesus to his people, and his people to him, are said to be in an especial manner his act. He is therefore peculiarly distinguished in every part of the divine word, and we are taught to look up to him, under this affectionate and endearing character of the Father. Not only because all the tendencies of his love are directed in a *fatherly* way, but also, because every mercy is of his begetting. It is not enough to say that he bestows them : but he is the Father of them ; and as such, he is called " the Father of mercies ; and the God of all grace."

I stay not to bring proofs of this doctrine from the word of God; for the truth itself is too plain to require it. And it would be to go over the whole volume in enumeration, if every testimony were produced. The apostle, in a verse or two, hath summed it up in his comprehensive manner, when he says: "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ. For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory, for ever!" Amen.

In like manner, to God the Son there is as peculiarly ascribed, (and in a way perfectly distinguished, either from the person of the Father, or of the Holy Ghost,) certain relations of character, into which he hath most graciously condescended to put himself; and certain acts, arising out of that relationship, which he hath as graciously condescended to perform, for the redemption of his people. He it was, who, in the ancient council of peace, between the persons of the GODHEAD, entered into covenant-engagements, when he was set up in this character of Redeemer, from everlasting. He it was, and neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost, who by virtue of those engagements did, in after ages, in what is called "the fulness of time," assume our nature and tabernacle among us. And it was he, who, as the Representative and Surety of poor fallen man, did in his own sacred person fulfil all righteousness, and by "the one offering of himself, once offered upon the cross, for ever perfect them who are sanctified." And it is a point ever to be remembered, and kept in view, in the recollection of the personal ministry of the Redeemer, that it is Jesus, the ever blessed, ever precious Jesus, who, by the assumption of humanity, hath taken our nature, and brought his people into such an unity, or oneness with himself, that they are "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Reader! how very

sweet and endearing, under this view of things, are those names of Jesus, which are peculiarly his, and by which he is known. And what a tenfold sweetness is added to the view, when by an appropriating right, the soul can call him, *my* brother, kinsman, husband, friend, &c.!

To God the Holy Ghost is also specially and distinctly ascribed, certain acts and offices of character, in the accomplishment of redemption, which are distinguished both from those of the Father and of the Son: and by which he is equally recommended to our attention, and equally entitled to our affection, adoration, and praise. To his almighty ministry it belongs, to make effectual the whole of the Father's love, and the Son's merits, to the sinner's necessities. And in the personal instance of every individual, who is made the happy partaker of salvation, we have the authority of Scripture to assert, that it is from the gracious application of it to the soul by God the Holy Ghost.

My christian brother! if you know any thing of what is meant by "fellowship, or communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," you must know also, that it is the blessed Spirit, who is the source of all that sweet intercourse, which true believers have with either. By his taking of the things of the Father, and of the Son, and making application of them to the heart, he becomes the author of all that inexpressible happiness which results from the communication of the graces of the Father, Son, and Spirit, to the believer's heart; and the return from the heart of the believer, in those actings of faith, and love, and praise, on the persons of the GODHEAD, in which the happiness of communion consists.

Indeed, if this were not the case, there would be a defect in the scheme of salvation. For according to

the account given of it in Scripture, the recovery of our nature, from the ruins of the fall, is there expressly referred to the joint agency of the Sacred Three. And hence, believers are *baptized* into their joint name; and *blessed* also in their joint benediction. Of consequence, as from the separate and distinct offices performed by each, ariseth our salvation: it is but an act of justice, to say nothing of gratitude, to render suitable acknowledgment to each; that all the persons of the GODHEAD may be jointly praised, who have been jointly engaged in such a work of mercy.

Beheld in this point of view, there is a beautiful analogy in the economy of human redemption. And though it will be readily confessed, that the subject itself, from its very nature and sublimity, is too much surrounded with mystery, to be clearly seen by us in the present twilight of our existence; yet when we arrive at that world of spirits to which we are hastening, we are told, that "we shall know, even as we are known." But in the mean time we can and do see enough to discover, under divine teachings, how our mercies are continually flowing from this united source. And as the felicity of the present state can only be framed from this knowledge; so the meetness wrought in the heart for future glory can only be accomplished by the same mercy.

To the investigation of this subject, with peculiar reference to that part of it which relates to the Spirit's work in the heart, the present little tract is directed.

Perhaps the reader may have been hitherto inattentive to this most interesting of all subjects. And it is possible, yea more than possible, that in a thousand, and ten thousand instances, the Spirit working in his heart, (that is, on the supposition he is a partaker of divine grace,) hath been directing his

tokens of love towards him, and he, for the most part unconscious of the operation.

Reader ! it will be your mercy and my rejoicing, if that Almighty God, of whom I am about to speak, should graciously condescend by the feeble ministry of this little work, to incline your heart to a more awakened frame of observation concerning himself and his tender manifestations towards you, than you have hitherto known. It will, I am very confident, open to your daily meditation some of the most pleasing, as well as the most profitable of all studies ; and be productive in its consequences, of a happiness of the purest and most satisfying nature the heart is capable of enjoying in the present imperfect state of existence.

I shall commence the subject from that part of the work of the Holy Ghost, in our nature, respecting the renewed life, which will best correspond to the title page, and in which the mind is enabled to receive those witnesses, which his sacred ministry brings "to the truth as it is in Jesus."

No doubt, if our faculties were competent to the discerning the first footsteps of his Almighty agency, in his operations on our nature, we might take up the subject from the very beginning. There cannot be a shadow of a doubt, from what the Holy Scriptures have taught us on this interesting doctrine, but that God the Holy Spirit accomplisheth several acts of grace upon the soul, before the person is capable of any discernment of them.

It is the work of the blessed Spirit, by his quickening power, to impart the first principles of the new life in the soul. To him also it belongs to accomplish on the soul that act of grace, whereby we are translated from "the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son." And it is his work no less, to separate from the original stock of a corrupt

nature, and to unite the soul by a living union, to the person of Christ Jesus, as the spiritual Head of his people.

Several beautiful similitudes are made use of in Scripture, to explain these doctrines by :—such as a vine and its branches; the head and its members. But then these acts of the Spirit are all wrought by his Almighty power, at a time, and in a manner perfectly unperceived, and unknown by the soul. And however evident by the after fruits it appears, that such grace must have been accomplished, there is no one trace in the moment of its being wrought, by which the great agent is discernible. Man is not only altogether as passive in the new creation as in the old, but he is altogether as unconscious of it. And the very first *breathings*, and *movements*, and *desires*, and *cries* of a new-born soul, are all subsequent to this gracious work of the Holy Ghost. So that we can know nothing of the first and original advances of the blessed Spirit, by which those actions of the renewed life are formed; and can only judge of the certainty of his precious visits, as we judge of causes by their effects. As the wise man beautifully reasons, “Thou knowest not (says he) the way of the Spirit, no more than how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child.”

Passing by therefore these operations of the Holy Ghost on the mind of the believer, which are antecedent to any possibility on his part of knowing them, let our attention be directed to such as are brought within the grasp of his observation. And here, if I do not greatly err, from the very first traces of the renewed life, until that grace is consummated in eternal glory, there may be found, more or less, in the circumstances of every believer's experience, a multitude of the most sweet and precious instances.

. And first, as an Almighty *Teacher*, in the school of

the Lord Jesus, he stands forth a most glorious testimony to the truth.

It was a covenant promise relating to the gospel church: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." And Jesus himself explained this in reference to the Holy Ghost: "When he (says Christ) the Spirit of truth is come, he shall teach you all things. He shall take of mine and shall shew it unto you." And one of the apostles adds in confirmation of it, "the anointing which you have received of Him abideth on you, and ye need not that any man teach you. But the same anointing teacheth you all things."

The reality of the Spirit's teachings is indeed one of the plainest doctrines of the gospel. But the investigation of it, in the numberless instances by which it is carried on in the heart, is attended, no doubt, with obscurity. For who shall undertake to say, by what secret process of grace, the Holy Ghost makes his approaches to the heart, abides in the heart by his indwelling presence, and influences the heart by the constraining acts of his love!

The teachings also of the blessed Spirit are so comprehensive and extensive, that the bare enumeration of them would swell many pages. For as his office is said to be, "to guide into all truth," of consequence every thing connected with the great truths of God, either in the law or the gospel, and having a relation to the spiritual life, comes in for a part in the system of his education.

To him it particularly belongs to open to the soul all that relates in the covenant of the redemption, to the Father's love, the Redeemer's grace, and his own precious manifestations. His is the blessed work, to reveal the whole scheme of salvation to the sinner's view, and no less to open the sinner's heart to the cordial reception of the truth in the love of it. It is he, and he alone, that can "convince of sin, of

righteousness, and of judgment :” and while impressing on the sinner’s mind the fullest and strongest apprehensions of the sinful, helpless, and ruined state of our undone nature, which renders redemption-work so abundantly interesting, to him alone it belongs to enlighten the eye of our understanding, to behold the Son of God in all the glories of his person, and in the suitableness, and fulness, and all-sufficiency of his redemption ; so as to carry conviction to the heart, that “ there is salvation in no other, neither is there any other name under heaven given amongst men, whereby we must be saved.”

But what I would most earnestly desire to impress upon the reader’s mind, respecting the office of this matchless instructor, and what above all things I do beg of him never to lose sight of in the recollection of his character, is the *manner* and *effects* of his divine teaching. Not only do those glorious truths of God which he teacheth, mark the greatness of his person ; but the sovereignty of his method in teaching them decidedly proves “ his eternal power and GODHEAD.” As it was said of the Lord Jesus in the days of his flesh, “ never man spake like this man ;” so of the Holy Ghost in the day of his power, it must be said, “ He teacheth not as man teacheth !”

In all the sweet lessons which he instructeth his people in, and the precious lectures which he reads to them, either in his word, or by his providence or grace, in whatever part of the divine science it may be, there is so much power and energy accompanies the same, that the experienced soul is frequently constrained to cry out, like the man the apostle speaks of, “ God is in this word of a truth.”

Reader ! let me come home to your experience. Hath ever the Spirit been *your* teacher, in convincing you of sin ? If so, he hath taught you the great evil of it, the malignity and defiling nature of it, and the

utter impossibility to do away its baneful effects by any thing short of the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ! Can you, therefore, and do you, in the same moment that you implore pardon for the sins of your nature, through the salvation by a Redeemer, bear an unreserved testimony against your own heart, that you are altogether undeserving, in yourself, of the blessing which you ask? And while expressing your whole dependance on the divine mercy, do you fully subscribe to the rights of divine justice? This is a great thing to do. But mark it down, I beseech you, as one of the truest evidences of soul-experience: for this is clearly among the lessons, which peculiarly distinguish the teachings of God the Spirit.

Again. He that layeth the sinner low in the dust before God, under deep convictions of sin, to him no less it belongs to glorify the Lord Jesus in the sinner's view, by convincing him of the all-sufficiency and suitableness of his great salvation. Shall I ask you that first question of the gospel catechism, "What think ye of Christ?" What glory do you ascribe to his person? What value do you put upon his righteousness? What place, in point of esteem, doth the Redeemer bear in your heart? Sir! the soul that is taught of God the Holy Ghost, what he is himself both by nature and by practice, and what the Lord Jesus is to the soul, would give the universe if he had it, to call Christ his own; when the eye is once enlightened, to behold him in the beauties of his person, and in the glories of his salvation.

Once more. If so be you have so learned Christ, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, then have ye, (as the apostle describes it) "put off concerning the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and are renewed in the spirit of your mind, and have put on the new man, which after

God is created in righteousness and true holiness." What know you of these things? Depend upon it, if God the Spirit hath been your master in the divine science, then hath he taught you these practical and experimental lessons. For his instructions carry with them so many distinguishing properties, and are followed with such soul transforming effects, that it is impossible to mistake them. His teachings are all powerful teachings, persuasive teachings, converting teachings, abiding teachings. "I shall never forget thy word, (says one of old) for by it thou hast quickened me."

Lastly, to add no more. In reading the Holy Scriptures, he that reads them under the teachings of God the Spirit finds an evidence in his own heart to the truth of them, which all the infidelity in the world can neither gainsay nor resist. Have you never found upon occasions of this kind, when perusing the sacred word, that such a power hath accompanied it to the heart, and such a light hath shined in upon the understanding, that you have been constrained to bear testimony to its truth, and say as the saints of old did; "Oh! how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day. I have esteemed thy word more than my necessary food." And have you not sometimes discovered so much sweetness in a promise, and its contents so exactly suited to your own case and circumstances, as if it had been purposely written for *you*: and as if it spoke to your experience, in the language of the apostle's sermon, "To you is the word of this salvation sent?" Surely if you know any thing of the life of God in your soul, you cannot be altogether ignorant of these things, neither of the vast and essential difference between that teaching which is merely human, and that which is accompanied with a divine power. How cold, how lifeless, how unaffecting, are even the sweetest words of Scripture, when

He is away who alone can make them life and spirit to the heart! But with what a warmth and animation do they come, when He commissions them by his Almighty power!

Reader! shall I possess so much influence with you, as to prevail upon you to look into the workings of your heart for those decypherings of the blessed Spirit? Remember, I beseech you, that "it is by these things men live, and that by these is the life of the Spirit."

But the office of a teacher is not the only one which distinguisheth the personal ministry of God the Holy Ghost. He is also a witness in the heart of every real believer "to the truth as it is in Jesus." For under this character, as well as the former, he is pointed out to us by the Redeemer, when predicting his coming: "He shall testify of me."

And how sweetly and graciously doth he testify of Jesus, and perform every other part of this blessed work in the heart! Truly is that Scripture verified to the believer's experience, wherein God appeals to the fact itself, in proof: "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." For every single instance of his power over the heart, in the multiform methods by which he witnesseth to the truth as it is in Jesus, carries with it a testimonial of his GODHEAD.

I might go over the whole of the ground which I have already trodden, in tracing some of the outlines of the Spirit's ministry, as a *Teacher*, in order to represent him under this department of his office also, as a *Witness*; for there are no doctrines in which he instructs the believer, but he as faithfully confirms, in witnessing to the certainty of what he hath taught. But having so largely illustrated the doctrine of the Spirit's work in the heart as a *Teacher*, it will be the less necessary to exemplify the many evidences in which he manifests himself as a *Witness*.

A few instances will be sufficient to produce in proof of the doctrine. It will be happy if the reader be led therefrom to seek for more, in the practical evidences of his own experience.

As for example. When in his written word he holds forth the practical atheism of the heart of man, in the commission of sin, and as plainly reveals the righteous judgment of God which is to follow; in the same moment that he teacheth those solemn truths, he as faithfully witnesseth to the conviction they have carried with them to the heart; in the unreserved acknowledgment they produce from every awakened sinner, of the justice of God, and of the merited punishment of man.

Again. It is the blessed Spirit's witnessing, as well as teaching, concerning all that relates to the Father's love, and the Saviour's grace, which convincingly satisfies the soul of the reality of those precious doctrines, and gives the believer that confidence in depending upon the record made of both in Scripture. And what I would beg the reader more particularly to remark with me, as a most distinguishing feature in this office of the Holy Ghost, is this: that while unfolding those glorious discoveries to the view of the believer, which, by his powerful instructions he impresseth on the mind, by his testimony to their certainty also he inclines the heart to believe them, and thereby confirms that Scripture which saith, "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true."

Neither is this all. For as in the greatness and sovereignty of this almighty character, he testifies *for* all the sacred persons of the GODHEAD, and *to* them in the heart of the believer; so he no less gives assurance to all the covenant promises of redemption, that they are "yea and amen in Christ Jesus." And without this precious testimony of the Spirit, the be-

liever in the seasons of soul-exercises would neither be enabled to see them in their fulness, nor discover their suitableness and sufficiency to his own case and circumstances; much less to find the privilege, or the power, of pleading for the fulfilment of them before the mercy-seat.

And *lastly*, to add no more. Who, but the Holy Ghost can witness to the gracious state of the people of God, when under the doubts and fears which the remains of unbelief, and indwelling corruption, form in the heart!—Who but he can testify to the soul, that the believer is justified before God by the obedience of the Lord Jesus, and hath redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of grace! Who, but the blessed Spirit, can witness to the spirits of the redeemed, concerning their adoption-character before God; when the great accuser of the brethren, joining with the perfidy of their own hearts, are prompting them to call every evidence in question!

My brethren! if you know any thing of the Spirit's work in the heart, you will know how to value God the Holy Ghost in this most interesting office of his ministry, as a witness to all the great truths of salvation. For nothing, surely, can be more satisfying to the soul, in seasons of distrust, in times of temptation, under languor both of mind and body, than his gracious testimony to the everlasting, unchangeable love of God the Father: and the endearing tokens of affection which he discovers to the believer, concerning the person and offices of the Lord Jesus Christ. Even a single promise, brought home and applied to the heart, by the blessed Spirit, in an hour of dejection and sorrow; what a cordial doth it afford to the drooping spirits! It produceth that sweet effect which the apostle prayed for the church, in "filling the soul with joy and peace in believing, and enabling

it to abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost."

Almighty Witness ! do thou mercifully testify *to* me of all the precious things which accompany salvation ; and *for* me, that I may be the happy partaker of them both in time and eternity. In opposition to all the unworthiness, and ignorance, and unbelief of my heart, do thou continue, Lord, to exercise this blessed office in my heart, that from thy unceasing testimony to the truth as it is Jesus, "my soul may be sealed by thy divine earnest, unto the day of redemption."

Let us go on to the consideration of another part of the Spirit's work in the heart, by which he eminently displays the vast importance and efficiency of his ministry in the church of the Lord Jesus. I mean as the Quickener to prayer, and the Helper of our infirmities in prayer. And this forms so distinguishing a part in the operations of the Holy Ghost, that the bare mention of it ought to be enough in confirmation of its reality. I pity the man indeed, who is altogether unconscious of this work of God the Spirit in the soul, and hath yet to learn what his influence means, when drawing nigh the mercy-seat.

Of all the branches of the divine science, in the practical parts of experimental religion ; none can be more interesting, because none can be more frequently needed than an heart-felt acquaintance with that sweet promise of the gospel-church, in which God saith, "I will pour out the Spirit of grace and of supplication." And the man who is well versed in the knowledge of his own heart, and hath drunk deep into the same spirit of divine things as the apostle, will, from the same consciousness as he had, of not knowing "what to pray for as we ought," best know how to appreciate the gracious work of God the Spirit, in this special office of his divine agency.

My brother ! suffer me once more to appeal to

your experience. Shall I venture to suppose you well informed in the understanding, respecting divine things? Let it be granted then that you are perfectly convinced of the high privilege of having a throne of grace to fly unto; and as perfectly satisfied that we have One there, whom the Father heareth always, even the great Advocate of our nature, Jesus Christ the righteous. Yet still I contend, that unless that almighty Quickener of dead souls, the Holy Ghost, shed his sweet influences upon the heart, though every promise call you near, not the least disposition will you have to approach. Your very wants will be unfelt, and even unknown. Not a petition will you be able to put up with earnestness, not a promise plead with warmth, no argument will be enforced by you; nay, under such circumstances, prayer itself will be a burden, when the graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost are withheld. Indeed, what shall that man be supposed to pray for, who is unawakened, uninterested, unconcerned, either to a proper sense of his own necessities, or to a real desire of partaking of the rich mercies of God in Christ!

But reverse the case. Imagine only to yourself the soul of him who is under the the life-giving influences of God the Holy Ghost. Suppose the man thoroughly awakened to a sense of his own wants, and as thoroughly satisfied of the fulness there is in the Lord Jesus to supply them: conceive that he is led by the blessed Spirit under these impressions before the mercy-seat; and that (as Job expresses it) he that led him there hath "filled his mouth with arguments:" then see how such an one will plead with God in prayer, and bring forward every motive, every plea, which that blessed teacher suggests to the soul, either arising from the Redeemer's name, his blood, and intercession, or from the covenant-righteousness and faithfulness of God the Father, as grounds of being

heard. Like the patriarch, he will wrestle with God, and cleave to him with resoluteness to be heard, and never give over his importunity, until he hath obtained a blessing.

And this explains to us the secret, why holy men of old were so famous in prayer! No wonder that Job longed to find God, and to come near to his seat, when he had before known what it was for "the candle of the Lord (as he expressed it) to shine upon him." No wonder that David's heart fainted, under the restraints of prayer, when he called to mind how, in times past, he had beheld the "goings of his God and King in the sanctuary." It is nothing surprising, in an heart so sweetly under the Spirit's influence, to hear those devout breathings which panted after God, equal to the vehement thirst "of the hart after the water-springs!"

Reader! Do *you* know what these things mean? Are you acquainted, heart-felt acquainted, with those precious tokens of the work of God the Holy Ghost? Do you know what it is, at times, to mourn the absence of the blessed Spirit, when you come before the mercy-seat: and pine under the sensible abatements or withdrawals of his influences? Can your closet witness for you, or your bed in the night watches, how self-abased you have lain before the high throne, when a sense of sin, and a conscious distance from God, hath forced your heart to cry out, like the church of old, "The comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me?" Alas! if you are altogether ignorant of such soul exercises as these, how shall you ever have a proper estimate of divine gifts; or learn the immense difference between those heart-straitenings and bondage frames, well known to the true believer in prayer; and that freedom of soul under the actings of grace, in which as the apostle saith, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty."

And is not the blessed Spirit a *Comforter* also? Oh! Yes. Praised be his name, this is a very decisive part of his divine character. The Lord Jesus himself particularly directed the church to receive him under this title, when he emphatically called him the Holy Ghost, "the Comforter." And the mournful, long tried, long-exercised believer, who hath at times known and felt the refreshments of his grace under this special part of his divine offices, would not, I am well assured, forego the evidences of his power and GODHEAD in it, neither part with the sweet name of Comforter, for a thousand worlds.

I have often thought what a tenderness the Lord Jesus manifested to his people, in that interesting moment, when about to leave them to the more immediate ministry of the Holy Ghost, in that he spake of him under so many different names and characters. Had he meant only to have identified his person, one surely would have been enough. But no! It is plain that the Redeemer intended thereby to endear him the more to our affections, that by so many precious names, and all of them strikingly expressive of a particular office and character, we might find somewhat peculiarly sweet and affectionate in every one! And hence he is endeared to the heart, that is more and more enlightened to see his ignorance, as a *Teacher*: to the soul tempted with unbelief as a *Witness*: to the cold and lifeless in prayer, as a "Spirit of grace and of supplication." In times when errors prevail, and the great truths of God are called in question, the soul regards him then particularly, as "the Spirit of truth to guide into all truth." And when the heart is bowed down under manifold heaviness, it is precious to be able to look up to him, as "the Holy Ghost, the Comforter."

My brother! have you ever known the blessed Spirit in any of those characters?—Hath he revealed

himself to your experience in that we are now reviewing, as a comforter. You cannot be at a loss to know, if you have ever felt the blessed effects of his consolations. The sympathy of his love in our afflictions; the soft and tender soothing of his grace to our distresses; the manifestations which he makes of the Lord Jesus, in all his lovely characters exactly suited to the soul's need; and the grace, and purposes, and mercy, which he displays of the Father's heart, towards his people in their troubles; these are among the testimonies by which the Holy Ghost manifests himself as a *Comforter*, when directing the heart into "the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Jesus Christ."

There is one work more of the blessed Spirit, by which his work is made known in the heart, though it is not (as far as my observation hath extended to the writings of others) as generally noticed as its importance should seem to demand: I mean as a *Remembrancer*. "He shall bring all things (said Jesus when speaking of him,) to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you."

And I have found this office in the Spirit's work, at times, so very interesting and precious (if I may venture to say so) in my own experience, that I cannot but beg to recommend it to the reader's notice with the more particular attention. My memory of divine things is so treacherous, (though it may not perhaps be equally so with the reader,) that, like a sieve, every thing valuable runs through it, and leaves nothing of the finer parts behind. It is, I conceive, therefore, a most gracious and endearing office of God the Holy Ghost, to act as a *Remembrancer*, in calling the mind afresh to the recollection of the precious tokens of divine love long past. And in those numerous instances, where the temptations of Satan, joined with the treachery and deceitfulness of the

heart, have blotted out from the mind a thousand memorandums of grace received, which in the moment of making them, we fondly thought never would be lost; surely it is a distinguishing mercy in the Holy Ghost to bring them again to remembrance. And what can be more pleasing, or more profitable, than when the blessed Spirit opens to our view the volume of our own history, turns back the leaves of our experience, points to the chapter and page where Jesus shewed his love, and God the Father answered prayer, and thus brightens up again the recollection of long forgotten blessings, and stamps afresh the assurance, that nothing but mercy and goodness have been following us all the days of our life!

If, perchance I should be addressing a heart somewhat like my own, prone to the forgetfulness of divine things, and which feels a partiality, from the consciousness of it, to this feature of office in the Holy Ghost's ministry, there is a method I would recommend to him, which, under grace, I have found useful to myself in this particular, to bring to remembrance again the things of God; and that is, by committing to his keeping, for a future day of necessity, what our memories are too treacherous to keep for ourselves: We should do in this instance, by God the Holy Ghost, as well taught children do by their parents: Whenever any thing valuable is given them, they put it into their parent's possession, to preserve for them until they want it. Reader! Let you and me do the same. Let us commit into the hands of the Holy Ghost, all those precious things which he hath mercifully taught us in respect to our salvation. And, Blessed Spirit! I would say, be thou my Remembrancer, to bring again and again to my forgetful heart, every thing which tends to endear to me my heavenly Father's love, the tender mercies of Jesus, and thine own unspeakable gifts; that "my heart

may rejoice for the consolation, and my joy no man take from me."

I find the subject encreasing on me as I go, and the pages swelling much beyond what was originally intended. I had proposed indeed only a little tract; and now it is extending to a large one. And were I to bring forward many offices of the Spirit's ministry, yet unnoticed by me, such as his advocacy, intercession, and the like, it would fill a volume. But I would rather leave the subject unfinished, in order that the reader himself, from the outlines given of some of the characters in the ministry of God the Holy Ghost, may, in his own experience, under the guidance of Scripture, be led to search for others. And this will be the best confirmation of the doctrine; when from human teaching, he consults that which is divine, and which cannot fail to carry conviction to the heart, that "his faith is not founded in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

If I have advanced sufficient testimonies in proof of what I had in view, I would now request the reader to to pause over what hath been said, and gather for himself, the several particulars into one mass of evidence. And when he hath done this, let him determine the point, (for to that decision, as far as it concerns himself, I refer it,) whether the Spirit's work in the heart of every true believer, be not the great witness "to the truth as it is Jesus." And upon the presumption that the fact be so, let the reader farther determine, whether any thing can be equal, or indeed, whether any thing beside can be competent, as a preservative, in the present day of apostacy, against the various heresies abounding.

Suffer me, for the sake of argument only, to suppose that all the churches, professing the eternal truths of the gospel, were uniformly living under a constant and an abiding sense of these things. Nay, to come nearer

home ; put the case, that the reader himself is the very subject of divine grace we have been speaking of, and, in relation to the work of the Holy Ghost in the heart, can adopt the motto in the title page of this little book, and say, the Spirit itself beareth witness to *my* spirit. Let the patrons of *modern infidelity* advance what they please to decry *all* revelation, or the advocates of *universalism* to confound it, this is a testimony which will stand by him against all. He can humbly assume the language of the apostle, and from the same unquestionable authority say as he did, " I know in whom I have believed. For he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."

My brother ! Is it your happiness to be thus taught of God ; and have you this testimony to the work of the Spirit, in your heart ? Let this be the standard then with you at least, for ascertaining all the doctrines proposed to you by men. Put that question which Paul the apostle proposed, as the first and most important of all questions, to the church at Ephesus, to every one who would tempt you to swerve from the faith once delivered to the saints :— " Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed ?" This will be the only method to prove the doctrine whether it be of God. For the time is arrived which the apostle predicted, when " men will not endure sound doctrine." And it is in vain to oppose argument to argument ; for even the Scriptures themselves are perverted, and wrested by the several advocates of the various heresies of the present day, to countenance their several tenets. But in the blessed Spirit's work in the heart, there can be no possibility of error. And when the word and the testimony are confirmed by his Almighty assurance, they exactly correspond, like as the impression made by the seal on wax manifests their relation to each other. And this is what,

if I mistake not, the apostle meant when he said, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." The heart which is taught of God is one, the word of God is another, and God himself, the Holy Ghost, is the third, who sets to his seal in the heart, all the great truths as "yea and amen in Christ Jesus."

Before I take leave of the reader, I would first very earnestly beg of him to be careful that the convictions of these things be not, in his instance, the convictions of the *letter*, but of the *Spirit*. Remember what an apostle saith: "The letter killeth; the Spirit giveth life."

The most dangerous of all states respecting religion is, according to my apprehension, that which rests in head-knowledge, void of heart-influence. It is very possible, from the mere effects of hearing sermons, reading books, the habits of education, and the like, to acquire a competency of understanding in divine things, so as to be able to reason and argue on any point of doctrine, with a clearness of judgment which may astonish the hearers. (And this by the way I would observe, within a parenthesis, is no uncommon thing in the younger branches of a family, brought up under the means of grace by their pious parents. And I mention it, by way of exciting such parents to be jealous over their children with a godly jealousy.) But all the while this differs very, very widely, from that divine teaching, which is the sole effect of the Spirit's influence. Indeed there is as essential a difference between the one and the other, as between that knowledge which our children acquire of a town or a city, by the dissection and putting together of a map, according to the improvements of modern education in geography, and that which an inhabitant of such a place obtains from having continually gone over the several lanes and streets of it.

I must again, therefore, repeat my request, that nothing may serve to satisfy the reader's mind, concerning the important doctrine to which I have called his attention in these pages, but that heart-renewing, that soul-instructing knowledge, which "maketh wise unto salvation through the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Reader ! farewell. Accept this New Year's Gift as a small token of love to the church of Christ, for 1803.* What may be opening before both of us in the unforeseen events of it, I know not ; neither would I, if I were able, anticipate the information. It is enough for me that my God knows, and that the same who knows as graciously appoints. And I am well persuaded that the next blessing to that of having a well-grounded assurance of an interest in the covenant-mercy of God in Christ through the eternal Spirit, is the consciousness that it is a covenant ordered in all things and sure.

May it be your portion and mine, living and dying, to be blessed in our souls with all covenant-mercies from God, and all covenant-grace leading to God, that we may be happy in time, and happy to all eternity !

* This tract was first printed in January 1803.

FIVE MINUTES' ADVICE

TO

PRAYERLESS PERSONS AND FAMILIES.



“Thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God.” JOB xv. 4.

I consider prayerless hearts as so many defenceless citadels, lying open and exposed to the incursion of every foe ; whereas the houses of the truly devout are like castles in which the Lord dwells, and which are garrisoned with the Divine Presence.

FIVE MINUTES' ADVICE,

&c. &c.

THE great and pressing claims of prayer, considered as a means of grace, are so fully allowed by every one of common sense and common reason to be positive and indispensable, that there can be but one character upon earth who will presume to question or deny them. He, and he only, will do it, who hath thrown off all sense of religion, and hath dared to say with his mouth, what hitherto the *fool* hath only ventured to suggest in his heart, that "there is no God."

It is not, therefore, to confirm the positiveness of the duty, neither is it to give conviction of what no reasonable man can want to be convinced of, that these Five Minutes' Advice are offered; but it is to warn those who profess in words to *believe*, but neglect to carry it into *practice*, that something more is necessary than the mere consent of the understanding, in the great concerns of religion.

Among many apparently well-disposed persons, there are not a few who are, like Agrippa, but *almost* Christians; and, among others, the numbers are, perhaps, as many who, like Nicodemus, though they own Christ in their hearts, are afraid to profess him openly. Would to God the *former* would seriously consider the extreme folly of halting between two opinions; and that the *latter* would frequently place before him those awful sentences pronounced by the blessed Author of our religion on this culpable timidity:—"He that denieth me before men, shall be

denied before the angels of God; and whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels."

An awakened sense of the infinite importance of the great duty of prayer; an increasing apprehension of the danger of living without it; a serious concern for the souls of all such unthinking characters; and an earnest desire of contributing, though in the smallest degree, as an instrument in the Divine Hand, to stir up the minds of men to a proper regard to it; these are the causes which have prompted the author of this little work to try somewhat out of the common way, in order to awaken, if possible, a spirit of piety in the land;—and may He, who alone can give energy to what is said, bless the labours to the end intended!

The writer presumes, that "Five Minutes' Advice" on so important a subject, cannot be considered tedious by any one; and he presumes also, that the most busy life will not complain much of the impertinence of so short an interruption; and, if he were to add any thing farther to these considerations, by way of gaining the indulgence of a favourable hearing, he would say moreover, that as the object in view, in giving the advice here offered, does not proceed from any interested views in the writer, he should suppose there would need no stronger reason to persuade the reader to regard it.

My brother, consider well these arguments before thou refusest the advice here offered thee; and do not turn from it with a fastidious indifference and disregard. Alas! if the world could but see the thick film of prejudices with which the eye of the understanding, in a state of nature, is darkened, how gladly would they accept of any help which might place them in the way of its removal!

The *almost* Christians, like Agrippa, who were just now mentioned, and the half-believers, like Nicodemus, both need nothing more than the frequent recollection of the unpardonable duplicity of an unsettled and wavering conduct; and of the increased condemnation which must finally fall on such in the great day of account. Reader, art thou ashamed of prayer?—ashamed of that which is the distinguishing character of man, and the noblest privilege with which he is furnished? Anticipate, I beseech thee, that hour when the shame will be on the opposite side of the question; when it will not be the shame of man; or of a poor fleeting creature of a day, like thyself; but the shame of an offended God, an injured Redeemer, and the presence of the whole world of congregated beings, at the judgment-seat of Christ!

But while the author of this little work looks up to God with an eye of humble supplication, that his grace may bless these considerations to both these sorts of *prayerless persons*, he cannot but more earnestly implore the Divine Goodness that they may affect *prayerless families*.

It is to rouse inconsiderate, unnatural, and thoughtless fathers, parents, and masters, for which these hints are given:—it is to convince them of their iniquity and their danger; for to their shameful neglect of this necessary duty, must, in a great measure, be ascribed the prevalence of profaneness and impiety which abound in life; and, oh! that all such would but duly consider what a brutal part they are acting towards those whom the ties of nature and affection have so intimately linked together, that they should be so anxious as they are to see them “labouring for the meat that perisheth,” and not bestow a thought or concern how they may obtain “that bread which endureth to everlasting life!”

Reader, art thou a parent, a father, or a master?

Awake to the duties of these high characters ! Consider the souls of thy household as entrusted in some sort to thee, and suffer not "those souls to perish" through thy neglect, for whom Christ died. How agonizing will be the interview between such cruel and irreligious parents and their unhappy children at the last day ! What dreadful reproaches ! How painful the accusations which the children will throw upon them ! And with what a piercing bitterness will the sound of their cries enter into their ears ! and let it be observed that these matters will be in an increased proportion of evil between those tender relations, where the parent hath attended to every thing in this life for his child's interest but the "one thing needful." The more solicitous and provident he hath proved, as the father and the friend, in the concern of this world's good, the more bitter will be the reflection, for not having regarded the important concerns of a better. Let the mind conceive, if possible, the horrors with which the prayerless father will hear the accusation from the son or daughter of his own bosom, in terms perhaps like these :—"Ah ; cruel parent ! was this the seeming tenderness with which you studied my happiness in yonder world, in contriving every amusement and pleasure for my enjoyment, while leaving me ignorant of *that* in which alone true happiness is founded, and for the want of which I am miserable for ever ?"

Reader, art thou a parent ? and dost thou call thyself a *tender* parent ? wouldest thou be displeased to be accused of inattention to thy children's welfare ? Attend, then, to that which concerns their welfare indeed ! even their eternal welfare ; and know, that void of this, though thou labourest night and day for their earthly comfort, and though thou leavest behind thee the richest worldly possessions to thy children, and to thy children's children, yet art

thou infinitely worse and more foolish than the senseless ostrich of the wilderness, who "leaveth her eggs in the dust," and is regardless of every attention to her young. Oh, may the eye that reads this, if he stands in either of the relative situations of the head of a family, and is among the unhappy characters who neglect household devotion, be awakened to an instant discharge of it! and may the prime Mover and Hearer of all prayer be graciously pleased to pour out the Spirit of supplication upon him from on high!

But perhaps thou art one of those who art so far awakened as to feel an anxiety for thy own *personal* salvation, and art attending upon the means of grace thyself, but hast not set up religion in thine house. This is one of those unaccountable problems which excites the wonder of men and angels. What a contradiction is such a man's life to himself! Anxious to discharge *one* duty, and neglectful of all the rest! In *secret* serving God, but ashamed to do it *openly*! It would be a most unnecessary service to offer any argument upon this point. A moment's reflection is enough to convince every man of this complexion both of his iniquity and his danger. Awake, awake, therefore, from this delusion, and let not the fear of Man any longer bring a snare. Attend only to that cutting expostulation of God by the prophet, which is enough to drive out all lesser fears: "Who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and the son of man which shall be as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy Maker?" May this awful consideration be so accompanied with divine grace as to operate to the purpose intended!

I fear the five minutes I requested, is nearly, if not quite exhausted, and therefore, reader, I take my leave. Farewell! Let not a *stranger*, and perhaps unknown, feel this concern for thy eternal salvation, and thou remain uninterested. Add but thy

prayer to his, and God will bless the means to the end intended : and however the fashion of the world may be against this great duty (a world whose customs are declared enmity to God ;) however "fools make a mock of sin, and scorners delight in scorning," let nothing intimidate thee from taking up the resolution of Joshua, and saying "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

To assist in the execution of this desirable purpose, and that none may want a proper form of devotion, here are added short Prayers both for morning and evening service in a family, and also an additional help for the Lord's Day. They are not given as perfect models, but merely as helps to devotion. The great principles, by which the christian religion is peculiarly distinguished, are carefully preserved in them ; and though they are by no means meant to fetter the spirit of piety to those who need no form of prayer, yet it is to be hoped they will answer the purpose to those that do. Gladly would the author throw them aside, was that blessed effect more generally manifested in the world, which is promised of God, when "a Spirit of grace shall be poured out from the Lord ;" and when the Spirit shall so plentifully be helping our infirmities, as to teach us in our hours of devotion, what to speak ; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought ; but, in the mean time, we are admonished not to despise the day of small things.

Such as they are, they are humbly offered to those who may stand in need of helps of this nature ; and the author can only earnestly pray to God that a divine blessing, like that which distinguished the fleece of Gideon, by the dew falling upon it, while all the

earth around was without moisture, may be sensibly felt by "all that in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus;" distinguishing them from those prayerless families who live "without God in the world," and lie down and rise up like the herd of the stall, never saying "Where is God our Maker?"

It would, perhaps, much conduce to the infusing a spirit of piety in a family (and especially among the younger branches of it) if a short Admonition was *sometimes* made use of by the head of it, before the Prayers were begun. Such, for example, as the following:—

"We are going to take upon us, who are but sinful dust and ashes, to speak unto the High and Holy One, who inhabiteth Eternity; who dwelleth in that light which no man can approach to; and to whose mercy-seat we cannot draw nigh but through the merits and intercession of our ever-blessed Redeemer: with what reverence and godly fear ought we to approach him! Let our souls be awfully impressed with becoming sentiments of the lowest humility; and let us beg of God, that such a sense of his divine Majesty may possess every faculty of our nature, that we may never be in danger of "drawing nigh unto him with our mouth, and honouring him with our lips, while our hearts are far from him."

"With every holy disposition of soul, and with a lively faith in God's mercy, through Christ, let us now fall upon our knees, and present our supplications at the footstool of his grace."

MORNING PRAYER FOR A FAMILY.

O LORD God, most high, most holy, and most gracious,—the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of our nature,—the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God.

We draw nigh to thee through the prevailing intercession, and atoning merits of Christ!—and as we approach thy awful presence, Lord, quicken us by thy Holy Spirit to call upon thy name! Put words into our mouth, that the words of our mouth and the meditation of our hearts may be always acceptable in thy sight!

We desire to adore thy divine Majesty, and to worship thee with humble reverence! Thou art infinitely wise, powerful, and gracious,—far above all our highest thoughts, and above all our warmest praises! But we implore grace to present our morning sacrifice of thanksgiving, that thou hast brought us to the light of another day, and raised us from the bed of sleep in peace and safety. Praised be thy goodness, O God, for these and all our other undeserved mercies! Let our souls praise the Lord, and all that is within us bless his holy name!

But when, from considering the greatness and goodness of thy nature, we return to the recollection of ourselves, how utterly unworthy are we to come into thy holy presence! Thou art in Heaven, and we upon earth. Our being is but of yesterday, and our foundation in the dust. Born in sin, and living in transgression, how have we offended from our childhood to this very hour, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us!

But, Lord, take away the guilt of our sins by the atoning merits of Christ's blood! Subdue the power of our iniquities by thy holy Spirit. Pity, O heavenly Father, the blindness of our nature, and the corruption of our hearts! Work in us sincere repentance: it is thou only that canst give us this gift, or renew a right spirit within us. Form us after thine own image, which was lost by the sin of our first parents, and preserve us from all the dangers to which we are exposed, amidst the several enemies of our salvation!

Let thy providences be all sanctified, whether of affliction or prosperity;—let thy mercies draw us nearer to thyself; and let thy chastisements have this intended effect upon our hearts, to wean us from sin, to mortify us to the world, and to keep us in a constant readiness to depart from it.

If it be thy blessed will, continue to us the mercies of health and prosperity, and give us grace in the midst of all to expect and to be ready for a change; and, as in a day or an hour, our prosperity may be turned into adversity, our health into pining sickness, and our very life into death,—O, merciful Lord, establish us, we pray thee, in Christ Jesus; seal us for thy faithful people; give us the earnest of thy Holy Spirit, and let "holiness to the Lord" be inscribed upon all we are, and all we do or say; Lord, strengthen us this day mightily by thy Spirit in the inner man!—whatever temptations we may meet with from the world, from the powers of darkness, or in ourselves, enable us to overcome!—and do thou keep us by thy grace, both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls!

As we are required, so would we cheerfully testify a true and christian love and charity to the whole race of men, by remembering them in our prayers. O thou Almighty Maker of the spirits of all flesh,

look down and pity a lost, miserable world ! Send the light of thy gospel into the dark corners of the earth, until thou hast brought all to the knowledge of the truth, and made every knee to bend to the name of Jesus ! Particularly bless the preaching of righteousness in this land, to which we belong ! May the purity of our faith be manifested by the piety of our lives ! and may we live as the redeemed of the Lord ! —and while we pray for the people of this land, we would yet more immediately desire a blessing on this our house and family ! That thou, who makest men to be of one mind in a house, wouldst inspire all the members of it with a spirit of love and concord ; and let this benefit be always produced from our prayers, that we may rise from our knees with such refreshments of grace as may manifest to each other, and to the world, that a true spirit of piety lives in our souls, by that spirit of love and unity with which, as brethren, we dwell together !

Comfort and protect all our absent friends and benefactors ! Sanctify to them their condition, whatever it may be ; visit and relieve the oppressed ; pity, Lord, and in thy own appointed time relieve the sick, and sanctify the afflictions of their bodies to the endless comfort of their souls ; instruct the ignorant, reclaim the disobedient, and them that are out of the way, and let sinners be converted unto thee. Bless our enemies, and do good to them that hate us ! and bring into the bonds of christian fellowship all that are at variance, that it may be known whose disciples we are by our love to one another !

Finally, Lord, while we thus implore the continuance of mercies, accept all that our cold hearts can offer of thankfulness for those already received ; for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of our lives ; but, above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ !

Accept all our petitions through his prevailing name and powerful intercession; to whom, with thee, and the Holy Ghost, we desire to ascribe all praise, and glory, and honour, both now and for ever! Amen.

Our Father which art in heaven, &c.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ &c.

MORNING PRAYER FOR THE LORD'S DAY.

BLESSED Lord, who hast graciously set apart this sacred day, which thou hast called by thine own most holy name, as a day of rest and refreshment to man, to call off his attention from those perishing objects around him, and in a more immediate manner to direct his thoughts toward thee and his future state; we praise thy merciful appointment, and acknowledge our sense of thy great goodness in granting to us a return of this holy day for those blessed purposes! Give us grace to improve it to the everlasting comfort of our souls. Help us to commemorate afresh this day the rising of our blessed Redeemer from the grave! and may our hearts arise from the dead and unprofitable things of this world, to ascend with him in holy contemplation to that glorious place, where he sitteth at the right hand of God! Never can we sufficiently adore the bounties of thy Providence, that thou hast granted to poor sinful creatures, in these regions of darkness, such a day of light and joy, whereby we have an opportunity of imitating the heavenly host, while assembling in thine house of prayer, with one heart and voice to worship God through Jesus Christ.

Banish from our souls, this holy morning, every vain thought and worldly concern, that we may begin this day with God, and go through it under an abiding sense of thy continual presence.

Praised be thy forbearance, that we are alive here this day! that, while others are tossing upon the beds of sickness, and cut off from the assembly of thy people, thou hast granted to us the favour of going with the multitude into the house of God, and uniting in the voice of prayer among such as keep holy this day; and that we have one sabbath more allotted to us to prepare for the eternal sabbath of Heaven.

Lord, impart thy grace to our souls, that this sacred day may not be added to the many we have spent improperly! How often have we passed those holy days in a total neglect of the duty intended! and, instead of dedicating them to thine honour, have consumed them in idleness and folly! How often, even in the seemingly better application, have we rushed into the courts of thy house and the place where thine honour dwelleth, without a thought or reflection on the greatness of the Being whose presence we were approaching! And how very often, while our bodies have been present before thee, and our lips uttering words of prayer, have our souls been wandering among the things of the world, neither has God been in all our thoughts!

Pardon, gracious God, all that is past, and give us grace, that we may be no longer among the drowsy, the idle, and forgetful hearers of thy word; and that the vanities of this life may not call away our eyes or our hearts from attending to thee, the Supreme Object of devotion.

Go with us to thy holy temple, and may we always find thy presence in the assemblies of thy people! Let thy Holy Spirit be powerfully assisting all the ministers and stewards of thy word throughout the world, that some souls may be gathered to Christ every sabbath! Particularly bless his ministry under whom we are placed; and as thou hast ordained that the "priests' lips should retain knowledge, and the people should seek the law at their mouths," do thou fill

them, O God, with knowledge and sound doctrine, that they may not preach themselves, but Christ the Lord!

And as the *public* ministration of thy holy word employs but a small portion of this sacred day, enable us, O Lord, to fill it up with *private* duties, and to be careful of applying every portion of time so precious to the best of purposes. In retirement and abstraction from the world, in prayer and self-examination, let our souls delight; not "doing our own way, not finding our own pleasure, nor speaking our own words;" and not going into the idle customs of unprofitable visits, and the like, which distinguish men of this world from sincere lovers of God.

And, finally, gracious God, grant that both our *public* duties at thy temple, and our *private* meditations and sacred employments at home, may all serve to lead our souls to him who is the Author and Finisher of our faith, the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us unto thee by his blood, and through whom alone we seek acceptance and salvation! To him, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all glory and honour, in all churches of the saints, now and for evermore! *Amen.*

EVENING PRAYER.

GREAT and glorious Lord of heaven and earth, behold thy poor creatures of the dust approaching thy divine presence, to present our evening sacrifice and thanksgiving for the mercies of the day past, and the whole of our lives, and to implore thy protection through the night! We humbly desire to call upon thee, thou almighty Lord, through the atoning merits and intercession of Jesus Christ! We adore thy great goodness, manifested to us, in that we yet live

monuments of thy long-suffering and forbearance, and are permitted to call upon thy holy name! Most justly might we have been cut off from the land of the living for our manifold transgressions, had thy ways been as our ways, and thy thoughts like our thoughts; and long since have been past the power of offering any prayers to thy Divine Majesty; but thou art a God of mercy, therefore thy grace is still continued towards us. Oh, that we may now find grace in thy sight! We desire, with the lowliest prostration of soul and body, to confess our manifold offences before thee, and to smite upon our breasts humbly imploring that thou wouldst be merciful to us miserable sinners.

Had we only the sins and errors of the past day to answer for, yet even this day's account would make us stand condemned before thee. But our transgressions have been multiplying from our childhood to this hour. We have sinned against the clear knowledge of thy will, often in the midst of the tenderest expressions of thy mercy; against all thy inviting promises, thy awful warnings, and thy fatherly visitations; against the powerful corrections of thy Holy Spirit, and all the mercies provided for us in the blood of Christ. Lord, we are unworthy to come before thee; and were it not that even a sense of our sins can only come from the blessed teachings of thy Holy Spirit, we should not have the confidence any more to pray unto God.

But when we look up through that channel of grace and mercy opened to sinners in the atonement and righteousness of Christ, we are encouraged to draw nigh, and to plead this before thee, as the means of acceptance. Oh, sprinkle our consciences with that blood of cleansing which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; clothe our souls with that robe of righteousness which is found only in the perfect obe-

dience of Jesus Christ our Lord ; and let our whole hope and dependance be in him, who of God is made to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption !

Accompany thy pardoning mercy with thy purifying grace ; and as our Lord Jesus Christ died for sin to condemn sin in the flesh, enable us to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness. Help us, O Lord, thou God of all power, and might, to put off the old man, which is corrupt according the deceitful lusts, and to put on the new man, which is created in righteousness and holiness.

O give us a new heart, and renew a right spirit within us ! Wean our souls from all the pomps and pleasures, from all the vanities and honours, and from all the enjoyments of flesh and appetite, in this transitory state of things, and make us hunger and thirst after righteousness, until we wake up after thy likeness, to be fully satisfied with it.

Impress us continually with that great truth, that the gaining of the whole world would be a miserable recompense for the loss of the soul ; and, oh ! let that solemn account we must all, ere long, give before the judgment-seat of Christ, so influence all our thoughts, and words, and actions, that when the moment shall come that Christ shall appear to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all that believe, we may be able to cry out with holy rapture “ Lo, this is our God ; we have waited for him, and he will save us !—this is the Lord, we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation !”

We humbly commit ourselves, our friends, our relations, our neighbours, and all that call upon the name of the Lord, to thy merciful protection this night ! The darkness is no darkness with thee ; but the night is as clear as the day. Defend, we beseech thee, our persons, our dwellings, and our property,

from all danger. Refresh us with such sleep, that the wearied limbs of the body may be so comforted and prepared to act with the vigour of the mind, that when the morning shall again dawn upon us, together with opening the eyes of the body to the light of a new day, we may open the eyes of the soul to the renewed light of thy grace!—or, if it be thy blessed will, that our sleep may be the sleep of death, let our souls be found among those who sleep in Jesus; and may all thy providences be sanctified with thy blessing and thy grace, that if we live, we may live to the Lord; and if we die, we may die to the Lord; so that, living or dying, we may be the Lord's!

After the many supplications we have presumed to make for the mercies we want, let a sense of the many we enjoy make us ever grateful for those already received! We bow with thankfulness for the mercies of ease and health, which thou hast been pleased to give us; for the comforts of the day past, and for the many providences bestowed upon us through life; but above all, these mercies which, great and undeserved as they are, are yet but temporal; we wish to express still more devout thanksgiving for those which are eternal; for all the wonders of thy grace; that such a redemption is provided for fallen man, in the death of the Son of God; and, oh! the abundant goodness manifested to our souls! that while so many millions are born, and live, and die, in ignorance of this unspeakable gift of heaven, thou hast revealed unto us this knowledge in the face of Jesus Christ!

Accept all that poor sinful creatures of the dust can offer of acknowledgment, and let our prayers, both of supplication and thanksgiving, come up before the throne of thy grace, through the sole merits and intercession of Jesus Christ!

Our Father, &c.

The Lord bless us and keep us!—the Lord lift up

the light of his countenance upon us, and give us peace, now and for evermore! Amen.

EVENING PRAYER FOR THE LORD'S DAY.

EVER blessed and gracious God, praised be thy goodness that thou hast fed thy unworthy creatures with that bread of life which came down from heaven, and of which whoever eateth shall never hunger! Surrounded as thou art with all the heavenly host of innumerable angels in thy courts above, yet have the doors of thine house below been opened this day, and sinners invited to enter in, to imitate the same delightful employment of praising thee through Jesus Christ!

Lord, we bless thee for every portion of power or ability which thou hast imparted, by which we have been enabled to hear thy word, and to have our souls quickened to any devotion. All the sincere breathings of our souls toward thee must come from thy mercy: it is thou that must first put into our hearts good desires; and it is thou only that canst bring the same to good effect! We adore the riches of thy grace, if we have been enabled to spend this holy day in any manner profitable to ourselves, or to the promotion of thy glory and honour! If we have been more convinced this day of the great evil of sin, and the sad corruption of our nature,—if we have seen it represented in stronger colours, and every self-exalting thought has been brought down to the ground, and we have been led to behold, with increased faith, that Lamb of God which alone “taketh away the sins of the world.”—

Carry on the good work, Lord we beseech thee, continually in our souls; and though the day be almost ended, let not the work of it be in vain! Let thy holy Spirit constantly bring to our remembrance the sacred instruction which we have heard in thy house; and as far as thy ministers have spoken agreeably to thy word, let our souls retain and improve it! Let the truths of thy holy word be our continual study and delight!—give us grace to meditate on them both day and night,—both when we lie down, and when we rise up! Suffer not the enemies of our salvation, the world, the flesh, or the devil, to take them out of our minds; neither let the concerns of this life, the lusts of the flesh, or the suggestions of Satan, render them useless and unprofitable; but, like good seed sown in good ground, let them spring up and flourish under the dew of thy blessing!

Pardon, Lord, the imperfections and transgressions of this day,—the dulness of our hearts under all the quickening ordinances of thy grace, and the wanderings of our mind, amongst the vanities of life, even in the place where thine honour dwelleth. Oh, when shall we come to join that holy assembly above, where not a single being feels an absent affection in all the innumerable multitude!

Let the serious impressions this day wrought upon our souls never be effaced; and, oh, may thy grace increase them more and more! May we return to the world like new beings, fortified with the love of God, and wearing the armour of our salvation!—and may every returning sabbath bring with it the blessings of thy Holy Spirit!

O may the name of Jesus have been glorified this day far and near!—and may many have been brought to bend their knee to his most holy name, and to have felt the power of Christ in their hearts! Has-

ten the time, Lord, which thou hast promised concerning thy church, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be completed, and all Israel shall be saved,—when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted above the hills, and the whole earth be filled with the glory of the Lord!

May thy praise and thy love, thy power, thy glory, and righteousness of thy kingdom, be most in our thoughts!—and may we daily grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, till we come to our future and eternal state, to join the society of pure worshippers in an everlasting sabbath, where we shall no longer need the use of means, but receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls!—where we shall no longer serve God as at a distance, but see him face to face, and for ever sing praises to God and the Lamb!

To Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,—to Him, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, now and for evermore!

Our Father, &c.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all, henceforth and for ever! Amen.

FRAGMENT.

As it is very possible that this little work may fall into the hands of a *pious* as well as a *prayerless* reader, in order that the perusal of it may not be altogether unprofitable to one of this complexion also, the author would beg to subjoin an observation on the great subject of prayer, which he is led to believe is but too generally overlooked and forgotten, even by devout persons in the exercise of this important duty. The circumstance to which he alludes is, the neglect of uniting *watchfulness* with prayer; or, in other words, *first* waiting the favourable moment in seasons of devotion for making our requests known unto God, and then attending upon the Lord in humility of heart and watchfulness *after* prayer, for the fulfilment of God's gracious promises.

It was not, certainly, without a special relation to these points that the great Redeemer so earnestly commanded his disciples to *watch and pray*; and though, indeed, this precept was given upon a particular occasion, yet that our blessed Lord did not intend it in any confined sense, is evident from the connection which the apostle Paul makes of both duties, when enjoining the Colossians to "continue instant in prayer, and *watch* in the same with thanksgiving." From whence it should seem very plain, that a truly pious soul is to watch *before* prayer, that "a spirit of grace and supplication may be poured upon him from the Lord;" by which alone his devotions can ascend, through the Redeemer's name, a grateful offering before God; and *after* prayer, like

the prophet, he is "to get upon the watch tower," to see what the Lord will say in answer to his petition; for without the *one*, a man will be in danger of praying unassisted by grace, and follow the indiscretion of those whom Jesus reprov'd "in knowing not what they asked;" and without the *other*, it is impossible to know whether the mercies implored are granted or not. It was probably with an eye to this, the prophet Isaiah was instructed to deliver that precept: "Keep silence before me, O islands, and let the people renew their strength. Let them come near, *then* let them speak."

This great principle of watchfulness in devotion, which as a duty hath the sanction both of Christ and his apostle in the appointment of it, and, in respect of usefulness and importance, carries with it its own commendation, is what the author of this little tract wishes to place in that point of view which may best engage the observation, and induce the practice of every pious reader; and under both considerations it is so self-evident and essential to the very spirit of piety, that it is only astonishing how it should ever escape the notice, or not attract the warmest regard to every devout mind.

We pray God, either for general mercies or for particular blessings, and such as we stand in need of; and the very application supposes that we earnestly desire (if consistent with the Divine will) to obtain what we ask. But how strange is it then, that as soon as we have finished our devotions, and made known our requests unto God, we arise from our knees, seemingly as regardless of the event, and unwatchful of the divine pleasure, concerning the object of our requests, as though we had not implored and were unconcerned to obtain! Doth such a conduct correspond with the idea of prayer? Is it thus that we ask from one another in the circumstances of common life, a

supply to our several necessities? Look at the poorest beggar which ever haunted the rich man's gate for charity! Suppose, when he has knocked at the door, as soon as it is opened to him, and he hath made known his request, he should hasten away without waiting for an answer, what should we think of the absurdity of such conduct? and how should we condemn the inconsistency of his behaviour? Could the beggar in this case expect, or would he be capable of receiving the alms he implored?—and yet in fact does not every man the same who knocks at the gate of heaven, and implores mercy at the throne of grace, but waits not the event of his application? Surely, we are all beggars in this sense before God, and are infinitely more inexcusable than him who asks for alms of his fellow-creatures upon earth, if we use less importunity in our petitions, or are tired of waiting in our prayers, when we draw nigh the great Father of mercies, who is always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and wont to give, more than either we desire or deserve.

Indeed, as a farther proof of the importance of this great duty of *watchfulness*, and as an additional motive to the performance of it, may it not be said that the blessings we ask from God are, in a certain sense, suspended upon our expectation and faith in receiving them? For when the great Redeemer promised that “if we ask we shall receive, if we seek we shall find, and if we knock at the gate of mercy it shall opened,” he connects with it the necessity of depending upon God to receive the blessings we implore; and adds, that all things whatsoever we ask *believing*, we shall receive; so that from hence we are taught, that the reception of the mercies we implore doth not depend so much upon the divine disposition to give as on the frame of our mind for receiving. “All things (as Christ elsewhere observes) are possi-

ble to him that believeth." To the same purport is the direction of his apostle John.—“This is the confidence,” says he, “that we have in Him, that if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us; and if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desire of him;” and yet, if possible, more express to the point is the apostle James. He is speaking indeed of one particular gift of God; but which may, be a parity of reasoning, be applied to all:—“If any of you,” says he, “lack wisdom, let him ask of him that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him; but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. Let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of God.” From all which nothing can be more clear and evident, than that the great duty of *watchfulness*, or humble waiting upon the Lord, forms a very considerable part in the faithful discharge of devotion; and if we hope to receive any thing from God, the blessings and mercies we ask for through grace must be looked for in watchfulness.

It ought not to be omitted also, as a conclusive argument in favour of the duty recommended, that it is impossible to praise God with a thankful heart for the innumerable mercies he is unremittingly bestowing upon mankind, or bless him for his promises when fulfilled, but in the exercise of it. By virtue of the divine promises it is that we are encouraged to make application to heaven with the confidence of success; and as by the promises the Lord graciously condescends to become a debtor (if the expression be warrantable) to his creatures, it certainly is an act of justice, as well as duty, to *watch* and observe, when at any time these promises are fulfilled, in order that a proper acknowledgment may be made accordingly.

Can we in fact ever make a suitable return without it? Ought not God to be as much regarded when completing his gracious promises, as the obligation between man and man, when fulfilled, is confessed and allowed?—and shall this bountiful hand be for ever stretched forth in performing acts of grace agreeably to his divine promises, and yet be for ever hidden from our inattentive view, unobserved and unacknowledged? Surely, it must be the duty, and it ought to be the highest comfort to every just and grateful mind, in those who are daily and hourly petitioning at the throne of grace, to watch also in their prayers, by way of making daily and hourly acknowledgements for mercies received; and it is a conduct so truly right and becoming, that, like all others, where duty and advantage are blended together, it brings with it its own reward; and it is a maxim of unquestionable truth never to be forgotten, that he who thus watches providence will never want a providence to watch him.

It will be a matter of real joy to the heart of the author of this Fragment, if any thing here said shall, under the divine blessing, serve to instruct any gracious soul in the great duty of watchfulness in prayer, and lead him more closely to the practice of it. Reader, how art thou affected with these things? and what is thy conduct concerning this duty? Bring home the observations here offered thee to thine own experience; and may He, who is the Giver of all grace, enable thee “to continue constant in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving!”

TEN MINUTES' RECOMMENDATION
OF
PRIVATE PRAYER,
CONSIDERED AS TO ITS
PLEASURES AND ADVANTAGES.

“There are no images or figures here below, sufficiently expressive to describe the solid and substantial pleasures of private devotion. Neither can language adequately convey the happiness that soul experiences, who, by constant communion with God, hath learned to realize the Divine Presence in all the occurrences of life.”

TEN MINUTES' RECOMMENDATION.

THE obligation incumbent upon every man to the observance of daily worship and family prayer, hath already made the subject of a former treatise. *Five Minutes' Advice* was humbly offered to the thoughtless and inconsiderate upon this topic ; in which was proposed to their serious consideration, the very pressing claims which are upon them to the duty as a duty, and the very awful responsibility in which every one is involved concerning it. And more especially, such as are placed at the heads of houses, were solemnly reminded of this weighty concern ; not only as being interested for their own everlasting welfare, but for the welfare of those immortal souls over whom they exercise a kind of spiritual guardianship. There was nothing knowingly omitted in that little tract, which five minutes could furnish, for the purpose of persuasion, in order to prevail upon the several readers before whom it might appear, to comply with the advice there given ; but every argument and motive which seemed likely to operate upon rational and accountable creatures was brought before them, and enforced upon their consciences in the plainest and most affectionate terms possible.

I was led to hope, that, among prayerless persons and families, the adopting a habit of worship, in a family way, might, as any other ordinary means of grace, be blessed of the Lord, however unconscious the several branches of the household might be in

what the spirit of prayer consisted ; and that here, as in a thousand other instances, that Scripture might be fulfilled in the experience of some,—“ I am found of them that sought me not.” What the event of that application hath already been, or may hereafter be, must be left, like all other cases where advice only can be administered, to the good pleasure of Almighty God : the province of man can extend no farther. It is the peculiar prerogative of God to give success to every ministration. He hath reserved to himself this efficient blessing ; and we have the sacred treasure of his Holy Word in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. It was in an humble dependance upon his divine aid, that that feeble work was undertaken and sent abroad into the world, confiding in the pleasing hope that the blessing of God might rest upon it. And however unusual it may be to notice it again in this place, I cannot, while the recollection of it is present on my mind, wholly suppress the rising prayer, that it may go forth in the strength of the Lord God, and be like “ the bow ” we read of in Scripture, “ which turned not back, and the sword which returned not empty.” May the Lord mercifully grant that a divine blessing may never cease to follow it wheresoever a divine providence shall cause it to come ! but that it may prosper in his Almighty hand, and accomplish the thing whereunto he is pleased to send it !

But, my christian brother, the present feeble work now presented before you, is intended to answer another, and, if possible, so far as it concerns your own personal salvation, an higher and more interesting purpose. The former aimed at nothing more than to induce a spirit of piety among the several branches of a family ; trusting, that where God was pleased to permit the means of grace to come, the

end also might be attained, through his blessing resting upon it; and that our dwellings might be established in peace, when, like the man of Uz (Job i. 5.) we sanctify our households in the daily sacrifice of prayer. And what father is there that can reflect for a moment only on the near and dear ties of kindred in which we are linked in the present world, and especially if he connects with it the recollection of a future and eternal state, who can resist the affectionate claim?

But however interesting, in a relative sense, the obligations of family worship may be, the present subject I am now upon becomes yet more persuasive and animating; for here the matter comes home individually to every man's own bosom. It interests by the strongest of all arguments, and appeals to the heart for attention by the most powerful of all motives, as it regards our own everlasting happiness in that day when all the connections of this life shall be over, and all human affinities shall have ceased; when our several relations in heaven will be similar to what our blessed Lord's was upon earth: "that they who are accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, the same will be our brothers, and sisters, and mothers!"



I shall assume it for a principle, that this little tract finds my reader in the habitual practice of daily devotion;—that, either influenced by the arguments proposed to his consideration in the former "Five Minutes' Advice," or convinced by an Higher Authority, arising from divine grace in the heart, whether he be appointed by Providence at the head of a family, or be only an individual of it, he is faithful and conscientious in the stated exercise of this important duty. The

first page, therefore, of my present address will naturally begin where the former left off. I am now, agreeably to the title of this little pamphlet, about to speak, by way of recommendation, of the pleasures and advantages of private prayer.

Suffer me, then, my brother, with the freedom of one whose sole object in the question aims at nothing but your happiness, to ask, are you acquainted with private prayer? Do you know what it is to enjoy a personal acquaintance with God? Have you been brought acquainted with God in his threefold personality of character, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?—Whenever we speak of God as God, he is always to be considered in this point of view:—for this knowledge of God can be the only foundation for a real acquaintance with him. And when the soul is awakened to a proper apprehension of God, in this threefold personality of character, as more immediately manifested in the great work of our salvation, then the enjoyment of God, in the sweet and retired moments of life, in a personal acquaintance with him, becomes the first and highest felicity of the soul. Are you apprehensive what these things mean? If you are unacquainted with this felicity of the soul, you are unacquainted with the purest gratification of life: you are a stranger to the noblest privilege of your nature. You have a Friend, and he an Almighty friend, “in whose hand your breath is, and whose are all your ways, in whom you live, and move, and have your being;” and you regard him not! He visits you every moment; and his compassions are new towards you every morning. He spreads your table, and furnisheth both the means and the power of enjoyment; and you sit down unconscious of the presence of the Great Master of the feast! at least you feel nothing of that nameless and inexpressible gratitude of the heart, which those enjoy who eye God in every dispensation! Alas! my

brother, if this be your case, what a source of the most exquisite joy do you deprive yourself of from this one fatal inattention! Mistake me not; I am not considering the subject as it concerns your ingratitude towards God (though that must be painful enough in the reflection, to every feeling and ingenuous mind); but I am now speaking of it simply as it concerns your own happiness. I mean to shew you what an enemy you are to yourself, and to your real and most substantial comfort. That by shutting God out of your constant remembrance, and not having any private and personal knowledge of your gracious Benefactor, you lose all the relish of those delightful sensations of the soul which those feel who walk with God, and are led on through every event by his guiding providence, enjoying that bread which is handed to them in secret.

Neither by these observations do you imagine that I consider you altogether a total stranger to God. No doubt, in a land like this, you have acquired that kind of general knowledge, which the great mass of mankind rest satisfied with, which manifests itself in an attendance on the outward forms of religion. Hence, it is possible you may observe all the public ordinances of worship, and the private exercises of family piety;—but if this be all the knowledge and acquaintance you have with the Supreme Object of devotion, you are still a stranger to the life of God in the soul. This is but the outside of it: a poor and confined knowledge of the Lord God of our salvation.—It is not, surely, such an acquaintance as every one would wish to acquire, who hath proper apprehensions of the intimate connection in which the soul stands to God, and the sole dependance on which that soul must rest his hopes for every prospect of happiness, both here and hereafter. Would any man be satisfied, in the common intercourse of earthly friendship, with such general knowledge of any object

of affection? Have you any acquaintance you regard; the child, the brother, the parent, or the friend, which is as a man's own soul; and would you be satisfied to see him only now and then in the society of others, where the conversation was common, and all alike interested, and not covet the happiness of being alone with the object of affection? And shall God, then, the best of all friends, the nearest and dearest of all possible connections, shall He be the only being in the universe, whose intimate communion and fellowship we are indifferent to possess? Surely, my brother, if you have the smallest apprehension in what endearing characters the God of your life hath revealed himself to the soul, there is nothing in this lower world would appear equally interesting, as to acquire a personal acquaintance with him! Other objects might, and certainly would, as they are intended from the divine bounty, occupy a proportioned regard, and possess their proper place in the esteem. But the soul would receive a fulness of gratification only from holy communion with Him, who is alone capable of filling its desires: and the most supreme enjoyment would be in these solemn seasons when the world is shut out, and every perishing object for awhile forgotten, that the soul might be left to the full impression of those divine sensations in the heart, when God manifests himself under the gracious characters of Him who hath made, and redeemed, and sanctified human nature.

In recommendation of this charming principle of a private and personal knowledge of God, it is not therefore enough to say that the happiness of another life will, in a great measure, depend upon it; and that a nearness and communion with our Maker, through the gracious offices of the blessed Redeemer, formed here below, must lead to a greater knowledge of him hereafter; for even all the happiness

and enjoyment of every prosperous circumstance in the present state, must derive all its relish from it. The commonest blessings of providence lose by far the greater part of their relish, when not received as coming from his gracious hand. It is the character of men of the world to trace the mercies they are continually receiving to no higher source than worldly strength and worldly wisdom. Chance and Fortune are the gods of their apprehension; and hence they have no higher enjoyments than such capricious and uncertain causes afford. But with the pious man things are not so. There is no event of life, however small or inconsiderable, but what comes to him in the way of a providence. Hence, the mercies of every kind he experiences are for the most part received by prayer, and followed with thanksgiving. And when devotion comes between his wants and God's supply of them, there is a twofold sweetness in every enjoyment: the prayer which is answered by the mercy given; and the mercy itself rendered still more grateful in the recollection and acknowledgment from whose hand it comes. And surely one mercy, thus received, infinitely transcends a thousand in the undiscerned and unacknowledged methods of a common providence. Considered, then, in this point of view, what a source of the most rapturous enjoyment does this one exercise of the soul open to the truly pious man! He resembles the holy men of old who walked with God. He realizes again somewhat of the patriarchal life, when the Lord condescended to assume an human form, and man enjoyed the highly-favoured privilege of a familiar interview and conversation with his Maker! for no object, no occurrence, no one event of life is void of God. He sees him in every thing; he traces his footsteps in every ordination. In solitude, or in society; in the silence of the night as

well as in the tumult of the day, he never loses sight of his Almighty Friend and gracious Benefactor. Accustomed to set God always before him, he beholds him on the right hand and on the left; and from every secondary object, he goes on to recognize the first and great pre-disposing Cause of all. Hence, not only in seasons peculiarly set apart for sacred worship does he commune with God, but from every place, and by every thing; in the market, as well as in the church or the closet, his soul is continually drawn out in devout aspirations towards God;—for that channel, through a gracious Redeemer, being always open, the distance between heaven and earth is lost in the contemplation; and the soul of the devout man finds continual access to the Father by the Spirit, and will be raising out of mere earth and earthly materials, wings for ascension; and, like the angels which the patriarch beheld in a vision on the ladder, will be going and returning in a constant succession of adoration before the throne of grace.

My christian brother, what do you say to these truths?—doth not the very relation make you long to be a partaker in such superlative felicity? Come, then, I pray you, be prevailed upon to enter into your closet. Place yourself there, at least, in the way of grace, by which an acquaintance with God may be formed; and though I know full well that the closet possesses no sanctity in itself, neither will it act like a charm to induce a spirit of piety in the soul (for this can only come from a higher principle) yet you will certainly take the most effectual method to obtain this blessing, and to open a communication between God and the soul, when you lessen the attractions of sense, which too close a commerce with the world and the concerns of it necessarily occasion, by stepping aside now and then from all its busy employments, and leaving them, as Abraham

did his servants, "to go yonder and worship." When a pious man, for this purpose, withdraws into solitude, under a lively impression of the solemn interview he is about to engage in with his Maker and his God, what shall then arrest his affections, or stop the tide of a holy and devout frame? It is true, indeed, there is no retreat so sacred, none so retired, that the man of God can find in the present world, but is exposed to interruption, and liable to be broken in upon. You cannot enter the closet so secretly, nor shut to the door so immediately, but what some enemy to devotion will observe, and either press in with you, or importunately knock afterwards for admission: and so disposed is the heart within, in carrying on a traitorous correspondence with the foe without, that too often the soul resembles the siege of the holy city; the gate is thrown open, and troops of vain thoughts lodge in it. (Jer. iv. 14.) Ah! when will that happy moment come, when the heart shall be occupied wholly by God! Still, however, though the soul be thus interrupted in her wishes to draw nigh to God, and can never be said to be altogether free from disturbance in her approaches to Him,—yet, most certainly, in retirement and abstraction from the world, the happiest occasions are sought for to keep off every preventive, and to procure the desired favour: and if ever the soul can be said to feel the real sensations of bliss, which arise out of those inexpressible felicities of communion with God, it must be in those solemn moments which are then employed, unobserved, and unknown by any standers-by. When the soul, like the Shunamite's vessel, comes empty to be filled; and the divine blessing, which is poured out from the Lord, stayeth not, until there be no more room to receive it.

Oh! that I could raise the soul of my reader, by any thing that is here said, to aspire after an intimate

knowledge and acquaintance with these sacred enjoyments! Join your prayers with mine, I beseech you, that a divine light from above may shine upon this page (without whose illumination, I am fully sensible, it must remain a dead letter) while I shall endeavour to lead you through some of those very weighty arguments which press to the frequent observance of closet devotions: and may the Lord grant that we may both, in simplicity of heart, follow that "day-dawn and day-star," which shineth as in a dark place, until "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" be known and experienced by us, as as of old it was manifested to them who were with the Redeemer in the Holy mount!

And here, that I may compress the subject, I shall be content to pass over unnoticed many arguments that might be brought forward into the account, which call loudly to the performance of private prayer and are in themselves unanswerable. I might speak of it as a *duty*, and of the most positive nature; having for its authority the whole tenor of Scripture to countenance and enforce it. I might safely recommend it also on account of its great privileges: for what, in point of excellence, can be more so than the permission of sinful dust and ashes to approach God in the near and intimate communion of *personal* worship? I might argue yet farther, by way of strengthening these considerations, in observing, that the uniform example of good men, in all ages, is in favour of the practice. None, I am persuaded, have been remarkably eminent for their attainments in grace, but have been as eminent also for their observance of closet-devotion. Neither would these considerations be without receiving additional strength in the argument, if they could be followed up with the testimony of those brilliant exam-

ples which have appeared in the lives of devout men of God, on whom a divine blessing hath evidently shined : but the limits to which, in point of time, I am necessarily restricted in the title-page, being "Ten Minutes" only ; as well as the plan to which I have confined myself, by way of recommending private prayer, which is to be simply on account of its pleasures and advantages ; these considerations deprive me of making use of any other topics of persuasion : and, indeed, I hope they are enough : for if I can make it appear to you by a few plain evidences, that, both in point of pleasure and advantage, you are injurious to yourself and your own happiness if you live in the neglect of this most gratifying of all enjoyments, I shall certainly have accomplished one point at least, in removing that mighty barrier which the mistaken views of men have thrown up against the practice of piety. The world hath advanced a general opinion upon this subject, and the heart is but too easily disposed to take it upon trust ; I mean, that a life of piety must be a life of gloominess and sorrow ! and that the sacred employments of the closet are comfortless things ; whereas, in fact, the reverse of this is absolutely the case. In the practice of devotion, the soul not only enjoys, in the way of anticipation, the *future* rewards of piety, but even finds a *present* satisfaction, superior to every other : and what the apostle Paul hath said of godliness in general, may, with a peculiar propriety of expression, be applied to devotion in particular : "It hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as that which is to come." Believe me, my dear brother, they who would teach you otherwise are enemies to your best interests ; and, like the spies sent to view the promised land, return with a false report, to deter you from entering upon the possession of it. Suffer me to imitate the true informers, by bringing before you the clusters of grapes, and the

pomegranates, and the figs, which grow there, that I may invite you to explore the country where such delicious fruits abound and flourish. (Num. xii 13. 23. 32.)

And this purpose, I flatter myself, I shall fully answer, under a divine blessing, if I can make it appear to your satisfaction, with clear evidence, That, of all pleasures upon earth, the pleasures of devotion are the highest and the best: that they are among the noblest gratifications the soul of man is capable of sustaining in the present state of being; and that when God mercifully proposed himself as the great Object of our affection, and invited men to draw nigh to him through a gracious Redeemer, he consulted no less our happiness than our interest.

One word more, however, I must premise, before I enter upon the subject (though I confess, in this land of Christian knowledge, it might reasonably be presumed all information on this point would be unnecessary :) That all approaches to the throne of grace, as well private, as public, presuppose that the channel of communication is sought for only through the mediation and by the merits of a Redeemer. We must be united to Christ by a vital union, before that we can possibly enjoy any communion with God; for this is the very foundation of all our hopes of acceptance. Since the fall, man is by nature so depraved, and by sin so far separated from God, that it is impossible he can be again brought nigh, but through the blood of Christ. "No man can come to the Father but by [him.]" He is "the way, and the truth, and the life." Christ, therefore, is the only medium: and the man that is ignorant of this divine truth, is ignorant of the first and leading principle of all true religion; and is equally unqualified for the worship of God, as well in public as in private. He hath "no fellowship with the Father, nor the Son." (1 John i. 3.) But wherever this fundamental truth of the gospel is known and

cherished, nothing, surely, can afford so charming an encouragement for the soul to approach God in all acts of divine worship, as when invited to draw nigh through the channel of a Redeemer:—and to minds under impressions of this devout nature, personal communion with God opens the highest and most rapturous enjoyment (as I before observed) the soul of man is capable of sustaining in the present life.

A few observations will be sufficient to set this matter in a clear point of view; and, oh! that they may be accompanied with a divine energy in the heart, to lead you to the practice of it, by way of experiment.

Dear reader, I know not by what particular circumstances in the world you are distinguished; and cannot possibly direct what I have to offer by an immediate appeal to your own personal situation in life. Were I to address you under any one express character, whether high or low, rich or poor, young or old, in prosperity or adversity, still I might err wide of the mark in respect to the very person to whom I am now directing my discourse. Hence it is evident, that, to make my subject generally useful, I must confine myself to general circumstances. Here and there, perhaps, I shall assume the possibility that my reader is one or other of the distinct classes of life, and may more directly appeal to him under that express character. But, for the most part, it must be by general observations only, that I am to prove the great excellence of personal acquaintance with God, in acts of private piety, and to recommend it merely on principles of pleasure and advantage. But though I certainly lose very considerably in point of argument what a personal knowledge of my reader's situation in life would otherwise afford; yet one thing I know, let that situation be whatever it may, there is no condition of human nature but what is equally interested in the doctrine; for as there is no state so prosperous but

what needs a personal acquaintance with God, to give the finishing relish to every comfort; so there is none so wretched, but what must find in this principle somewhat as an alleviation to every trouble.

Let us attend to the investigation of this great truth, and let us attend to it with the closeness of the application so important a subject evidently demands, and see whether, in point of pleasure as well as in point of interest and advantage, any object can be proposed to the human mind, which promises equal happiness to that of an intimacy and communion with God!

It hath been supposed by some that, among all the pleasures of life, the purest and most gratifying are those which arise from the intercourse of sincere and disinterested friendship; and, perhaps, the opinion is well founded; for certain it is, the joys and sorrows of the human state are so admirably constituted, that they derive aid from communication. By this mean the soul imparts, and receives back again, a sacred delight in her seasons of happiness; and the bitterness of the draught of misery is lessened, when the cup, which is full and running over, is made to pour itself into the bosom of a friend. Hence we find, that mankind have constant recourse to this expedient, by way of lessening their troubles, or heightening their enjoyments; and there are few individuals, I believe, so solitary and detached, but what will find some kind breast to lean upon in their sorrows, or some friendly heart to pour into of their comforts, through all the departments of social life.

But though these things should seem very clearly to prove, that, among the pleasures of the present state, pure and disinterested friendship claims the

highest department ; yet what human friendship is so pure as to be mixed with no alloy !—what regard among men so sincere as to be free from every principle of selfishness ! Alas ! such is the corruption, the weakness, the prejudices, and deceitfulness of man, that what from the infirmities of our acquaintance, and the frailties of our own hearts, there are but few friendships in this world which afford real and permanent satisfaction !—and even, indeed if they were more perfect than they generally are, yet so short and transitory is the tenure of all earthly connections, that if this be the grand prop on which the soul leans for happiness, how much to be pitied is that man, whose chief comfort rests on so baseless a foundation !

My brother, are you one whose heart is susceptible of the tender impressions of friendship ?—and are satisfied in your own mind that the greatest of all pleasures consists in the loving, and being beloved, by some suitable object of affection ? Would you wish to repose your happiness on this security ? Come then, let me direct you to an object every way calculated to afford you this gratification in the most superlative degree ; and indeed the only Being in the universe capable of satisfying the full wishes of the soul. The Being I mean, is your Maker and your God. He alone can give that joy which the soul requires, to fill her most capacious desires ; and he mercifully proposes himself under this character to your affection, and invites you to the nearest and most intimate communion, through the channel of a gracious Redeemer ; and what a source of the most exquisite rapture and delight is opened to the mind, to induce you to cultivate this divine acquaintance ! Are you lamenting the weakness, mourning over the perfidy, or dissatisfied with the selfishness of earthly friendships ?—what an

immediate remedy to all these evils is found in the strength, and faithfulness, and favour of God! Here is friendship indeed, as far transcending all human friendship as the heavens are higher than the earth! The one permanent, pure, and eternal;—the other fluctuating, mingled with much corruption, and of a day. The friendship of man, in his highest excellence, like man himself, is but a bubble on the water. The friendship of God can be likened to nothing less than the everlasting mountains and the great deep.

What yet more enhances this supreme felicity, is the consideration with whom man holds this personal acquaintance: I mean the infinite greatness of Him who confers this blessing, and the infinite littleness of those who are the objects of his favour; where it is all condescension, grace, and goodness, on the one part; and all frailty, imperfection, and unworthiness on the other. Not (as the apostle John beautifully reasons) “that we have loved him,—but that he hath loved us.”

My dear brother, What can human friendship propose to your fondest wishes, which can deserve to be mentioned with this divine acquaintance with your Maker? Alas! the tenderest alliances have perpetual abatements to make in point of comfort, and the purest friendship hath much alloy mingled with it; and indeed, unless the union of hearts is cemented in the love of God, and earthly friendship is refined and sublimated by that which is heavenly,—what is it, after all, but an unsanctified human passion, subject to caprice, change, and humour? But when kindred souls are brought together by this superior attraction, friendship of this kind is not only founded in a fixed and unfluctuating principle, but the objects of it are continually deriving new accessions of happiness in their attachments to each other, from their union in God; and in this case, so far is the period

of all human connections from threatening to lessen their tie, that they look forward to it as the season of complete enjoyment,—when the momentary separation on earth will be the prelude, through the Redeemer's merits and love, to their everlasting union in heaven!

My aged father (for perhaps I may be speaking to one of this description) I appeal to your heart, and to your long experience with the world, for the truth of what I say! The commerce of many years with mankind cannot but have taught you both the fallacy of all human friendships, and the precarious tenure on which the best of them is built. Methinks you are like some old tree of the forest, which hath survived many wintry seasons, and on whose trunk is visible the effects of many pruning dispensations; while all around are to be seen the spots where once your fellow-tenants of the grove stood, but which are now gone, and have left you a solitary individual. Say then, my venerable friend, what hath the long experience of many revolving suns taught you? How stands your acquaintance with your God?—Hath the departure of your earthly friends, one by one, brought you nearer to an heavenly communion? Have you learned that sacred art, which none but the true believer in Christ can acquire, to extract divine comforts from human sorrows?—and, from the disappointments of time, to find consolations in the prospects of eternity? Are the visits of your soul, by prayer and meditation, more frequent to that upper world, in proportion as you are every day loosening connection with this?—and do you walk continually in holy contemplation on the eternal shore, waiting the uncertain moment of your dismissal hence, that when the Master's call shall come, you may embark in full confidence, through Jesus's strength, for the land of spirits?

My hoary reader, if your experience can say *Amen* to these touchstones of character, and the gracious Spirit of our God beareth witness to your spirit of this unity of correspondence, you will need no additional persuasion from me to the perpetual observance of the charming intercourse I am recommending of communion with God; but if you are unconscious what these things mean, and are still seeking for consolations amidst the wreck of this world's treasure, with a mind hankering after earth and earthly pursuits,—alas! my brother, what shall be found for you, to give any real comfort to your soul! The world presents nothing but a dark and dreary prospect,—the profits, the employments, the pleasures of it, are all unsatisfying now; your former acquaintances are gone, and the heart is inaccessible to the disproportioned friendships of youth and years; and where then will you turn your eyes for comfort, or desire to lean your declining head, but in the bosom of your Redeemer and your God? My dear reader, may He who alone can awaken seriousness in the mind, or give gracious desires to the heart, both awaken and invigorate all that is needful to your present state!—and cause thee to know and seek “the things which make for thine everlasting peace, before they are for ever hid from thine eyes!”

But while I am thus making a particular application of my subject to the case of the aged, in order more fully to convince the reader of long experience in life, from his own personal knowledge, how incompetent all friendship, but the friendship of God, is to give real and permanent satisfaction to the soul of man,—perhaps some poorer brother, who peruses this page, and whose humble circumstances in the world may have rendered him unacquainted with any experimental knowledge of such effects, will be led therefrom to conclude, that these are observations in

which he is altogether unconcerned ; but in this he will be mistaken ; for the argument to the cultivation of the divine acquaintance is equally pressing, whether a man hath made the experience of the unsatisfying nature of all earthly connections to comfort the heart, or whether he hath not. And surely it never can be supposed that the poor and afflicted soul who stands solitary and detached, without a single person upon earth whom he can call his friend, can be less interested to seek the friendship of Heaven, than the man who prides himself in his rich connections ? But how is the argument heightened to the humble and friendless believer, when he goes on to consider the peculiarly encouraging and endearing characters in which the God of his life hath revealed himself to his apprehensions ;—as “ the hearer of the poor when he crieth, the needy also, and him that hath no helper : ” as the high and holy One, that “ looketh to him that ~~is~~ poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at God’s word : ” proposing himself as the never-failing Comforter of his people, and inviting the afflicted and disconsolate of every description to draw nigh, in and through the Redeemer’s name, and “ to cast all their burden upon him that careth for them ! ” What a volume of persuasion is found in those charming representations of the divine benignity !

My dear brother of humble degree, whoever thou art, before whom these lines appear, pause one moment, I beseech you, and ask your own heart, what can the noblest earthly friendship propose worthy to be mentioned in competition with this divine and heavenly principle ? And if so, what cause can there be to murmur at the want of any human friendship, when a man hath this Almighty Friend in the heavens always to look up to ? Must it not argue, then, a deficiency in this sacred acquaintance, when it becomes not suf-

ficient to supply the absence of all creature comforts? Can that gracious soul ever be said to be lonely and friendless, who knows, by his own experience, what the apostle found in his—truly to have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ? A fellowship always at hand! a friendship ever open to immediate access at all times, at all places, and upon all occasions? Oh! the unknown raptures that soul enjoys, who draws all his sources of happiness from this inexhaustible Fountain! “For when the poor and needy seek water (to use the beautiful figure of Scripture) and their tongue faileth for thirst, the Lord will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of vallies.” For thus the promise runs: “I the Lord will bear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.” And when to the tender call of God, with which he sometimes whispers that gracious invitation to his people, “Seek ye my face,” the believer can echo back the awakened prayer, “Thy face, Lord, will I seek;” in such moments the soul feels an animation lifting it above every thing here below; as if the body was left like a dead carcase upon the earth, without its immortal inhabitant, while the spirit is borne aloft on the wings of devout meditation, and is ascended up before God. My brother, Do you, in the present moment, experience any thing of this divine life? Shut the book, I beseech you, in order to open your heart still more to the devout impressions. And may the Lord enable you to enter into the animated feeling of the Psalmist’s devotion, until you have imbibed a portion of his spirit, and can adopt from the soul the same divine sentiments as he experienced:—“I have seen an end of all perfection.—Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth which I desire in comparison of thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.”

Enough hath been said, I hope, under the first branch of the argument, to prove, that if friendship be considered as a principal source of happiness to mankind (as it must in a very high degree) no friendship but that which is formed with God can be competent to answer this purpose, or fully satisfy the desires of the human soul.

But friendship is but one among many avenues by which man proposes to enter upon the enjoyment of happiness. The world is engaged in the everlasting pursuit of this principle; and every one is sending out continually into the highways and streets of the city, with the enquiry, Who will shew us any good? And while the search is made among the various objects of creature-comforts, whatever experiments are tried, or however the different stages of life may hope to find it in this, rather than in that proposed scheme of earthly felicity, it is but turning the mind from one vanity to another, and seeking the living among the dead, while exploring any of the vain and unsatisfying joys of this world's good; for it is the soul which wants to be comforted; and nothing but the Creator himself can satisfy this immortal principle, either here or hereafter.

Ask that man, I beseech you, who hath ever known what it is to enjoy the happiness of an intimacy and communion with God, whether, in the absence of this inexpressible enjoyment, creature-gratifications, of any kind, can satisfy the soul? Oh! he will tell you that the wealth of worlds cannot compensate for the want of it; that nothing but what is sanctified by the divine presence can give delight to his heart. "Lord (he will say,) lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me, and it shall put gladness in my heart, more

than in the time when corn, and wine, and oil increase!" In the intermission of this supreme enjoyment, the soul of a real Christian finds no rest or pleasure: all is darkness and the shadow of death. But when the Lord returns, and imparts some manifestations of his renewed grace and love; like the sun breaking from behind the hidden cloud, and gladdening the whole hemisphere, the believer rejoices in the enlightened mercy, and exults in the language of the Psalmist, "Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee!"

My brother, does your experience correspond to this doctrine, "As in water face answereth to face?" you will know then the infinite value of that rest to which the soul returns when God is his portion:—a rest which remaineth for the people of God in its full perfection in another life, but which is begun in part in the present. A rest, indeed, which none but the redeemed know, or can partake of; and which nothing less than the blood of Christ could purchase or obtain. Men of the world may have their other enjoyments and pleasures. The providence of God is for ever bestowing his mercies in a plentiful profusion upon the evil as well as upon the good; and sending the blessing of his rain both upon the just and the unjust. They have apparently alike an indiscriminate use of all the good things of his providence; health, and wealth, and children, and houses, and lands, and possessions; but it is the privilege of his redeemed people only to sit down to the feast, and the real enjoyment of those outward blessings of his providence, from the sanctifying effects they feel of his inward grace. Oh! did men of the world but know the immense difference between a sanctified and an unsanctified mercy; could they but once be made sensible of the infinite disparity in the enjoyment even of the commonest blessings of life, between those who mind

earthly things, and those whose conversation is in heaven,—how would they turn with indifference from almost every thing of creature-comforts only, and in which no traces or remembrance of the great Creator were found, to give a finishing relish to the whole enjoyment. I do not wonder, indeed, that men of pleasure, as they are called, should find such a perpetual restlessness and dissatisfaction in the various objects of their pursuit; for surely the card-table and the play-house, the midnight assembly, and the silly amusements of the ball-room, were never calculated to satisfy the desires of the human soul in its pursuit of happiness! and I protest that, independent of all other considerations, had I my choice, I would by far prefer the unconscious state of being a bird, or a harmless reptile of the earth, to the character of an intelligent and accountable creature, upon such terms of existence. Humanity pities the fly, which, in the absence of the sun, is attracted by the faint light of a candle, and hovers round it again and again, until, by approaching too near, it burns itself in the flame, and dies in agonies of pain. But what a flood of tears might we weep over those senseless beings who profess to be under the influence of a divine luminary, the Sun of Righteousness, and yet, instead of seeking their happiness from Him who is the light and the life of man, like the ignorant insect just mentioned, flutter round the taper of any meteor of vanity, and prosecute the dangerous delusion till they sink under a disabled body, and lie down in disappointment and sorrow!

My dear reader (for by what other name shall I call you?) are you in the present hour seeking your supreme happiness from the creature of any description, and are these arguments not convincing enough to shew you the extreme folly of your choice? Go then, my brother, go on, and prosecute the same round of

unthinking and unsatisfying pursuits ; compass yourself about with the sparks of vanity, and walk in the light of the fire of folly, which you have kindled, but tremble at the awful consequence which God hath decreed to be the termination of such a life :—" This shall you have of mine hand ; you shall lie down in sorrow."

Oh ! how it moves one's pity to see the rich provision the great Author of our nature hath made to recover the fallen objects of his bounty from a state of sin to salvation, through the wonderful labours and sufferings of the Son of God ; and that, under the gracious helps afforded, man hath only to implore grace to raise himself, by the exercise of faith and prayer, to a nearness and communion with God in this life, that after this preliminary state of things is finished, he may be translated into his immediate presence in glory, there with him for eternity to dwell ; and yet, that such a profusion of goodness should be lost upon the mass of mankind, who are sunk in sin and sensuality, and live as without God in the world, unconscious of the divine love, strangers to the Redeemer's salvation, and know not, in respect to the saving effects of his power on the heart, " whether there be any Holy Ghost !" Can it be possible that the happiness of seeing God, and dwelling for ever under the light of his divine countenance, can be reserved in Heaven for minds so earthly and sensual ? Do they in reality hope one day for ever to be with the Lord, and yet now shun all acquaintance, and desire no intimacy with him ? Alas ! to what a melancholy state hath sin reduced all the faculties of the soul ! Lord, do thou lift up the light of thy countenance upon our hearts ! Suffer us not to be lost for ever, amidst this darkness of the human estate, nor wander without a guide, in the fruitless pursuit of imaginary projects of good ; but bring us to the knowledge of thyself in

the face of Jesus Christ, whom truly to know is everlasting life ; that, from being acquainted with God, we may be at peace with him, and in his light see light !

And now I should hope, from all that hath been said, the mind can require no additional argument by way of conviction ; that the only solid and substantial happiness of life must be found in communion with God ; and that the man who is seeking pleasure from any other source, is erring widely from the mark. “ The deep saith, It is not in me ; and the sea saith, It is not in me.” Would you, my brother, then, possess real and true happiness, that happiness must be found in God ; and when the soul of the awakened believer is enabled to enjoy communion with Him through the channel of the Redeemer’s love, all other gratifications will appear in comparison thereof, but as “ the drop of the bucket, or as the small dust of the balance.”

If any thing remain to finish the subject, by way of recommending this charming principle of personal acquaintance and prayer with God, more than from the pleasures of it, a large space opens for saying just as much in respect to its advantages also ; for these are equally ample, and furnish occasion in as extensive a degree as the circumstances of human life can possibly supply. There is no situation, either of joy or sorrow ; no one event in which a man can be placed, but what must find advantage from private prayer, and bring with it, in its hand, a recommendation to the observance of the duty. Men of the world, persons whose existence is spent in the pursuits and employments, or pleasures, as they are called, of the world, from not knowing the solid and

substantial enjoyments and advantages of communion with God, are at a loss to conceive how it is possible to receive happiness from prayer, or what can be the perpetual subjects to employ the pious man in his seasons of devotion. They have asked, therefore, with much seeming surprise, What can a man have to say to God so frequently? and what can occupy the mind in the large portions of time he spends in retirement and prayer? But in answer to his childish enquiry, the real and sincere christian replies what have I not to say to my Redeemer, and my God, upon the numerous and important subjects in which my whole nature is involved, and in relation to those grand interests, in which God hath graciously pleased to reveal himself to my soul! there is nothing that concerns me, either in time or eternity, but what comes in for a place in my devotions. My own wants are so many and continual; my sins and departures from duty so frequent and aggravated; and the blessings I am for ever receiving so great and undeserved, that motives of prayer and of praise are arising all around me every hour. And were my own personal interests less than they are, yet, when I look round the world, and consider the tender charities of life; my family, my relations, my friends, the world at large, the unbelieving, insensible, and wicked world; those who know not God, and those who are too graceless to pray for themselves, and more especially that Zion, that church of Christ, which is dear to the Redeemer, and whose name is written on the palms of his hands, and therefore cannot but be dear to all his people,—these furnish out so many and such constant occasions for prayer, that I never find the want of a subject what to say to my heavenly Father; but I find, too often, indeed, the want of inclination to draw nigh to Him. My heart is so cold and languid, and divine things operate so little

upon me in proportion to their importance, that I have much reason to adopt the apostle's sentiment as my own, "When I would do good, evil is present with me."

Speak ye, whose experience of the heart testifies to the truth of these observations, is this not a faithful account of what passes continually within? You, therefore, cannot require that I should describe to you the advantages of personal communion and prayer with God, who finds a needs-be for it upon every occasion; and are only lamenting too frequently a disinclination to a practice, which brings with it both a pleasure and a reward. But would to God that any thing I could say in addition to the arguments I have brought forward to prove the pleasures of devotion, could operate upon minds that are strangers to this divine principle, and know not the enjoyments of the closet, to prompt them to listen to those persuasions which arise out of the advantage of it also! Shall I beg of you, my christian brother (if perchance I speak to one of this description in the present moment) shall I beg of you to pause, and consider with yourself the situation in which you stand in this world, and the very awful prospects opened before you in another, and then ask your own heart whether there must not be the most obvious advantages resulting from the practice of personal communion and acquaintance with God? and whether the duties leading thereto are not such as render it absolutely necessary and unavoidable? Have you ever considered the fallen and corrupt state in which you were born, and the transgression in which you have lived? Have you contemplated, as you ought, the weakness and impotence of man, and the continual help he stands in need of from God,—the rich provision made for a recovery in the Redeemer's atoning merits and blood; and the plentiful assist-

ance of grace which is promised to aid human weakness, when asked in prayer? And will not the conviction of these solemn truths compel you to seek a personal acquaintance with God, for the attainment of such desirable and indispensable blessings? Is it possible for the soul to be impressed with a sense of sin, and lift no voice of supplication to heaven in private, for a deliverance from it? or to consider the rich fountain which is opened for sin, and for all uncleanness, in the Redeemer's blood, and yet feel no desire, use no entreaty, to be washed from the guilt of it? Can it be possible that any man can coolly look round, and behold himself placed in this world, exposed to innumerable enemies, both from within and from without, subject to almost an infinite variety of temptations, sicknesses, and sorrows, together with all the numberless, nameless evils incident to a fallen state, helpless in himself, and hopeless in respect to all human power, and yet never retire in private to the reflection of a serious thought, or seek in solitude that personal communion and acquaintance with God, by which divine strength might be imparted to succour human infirmity! Alas! my brother, if these and the like solemn considerations have not employed the attention of many a thoughtful hour, it is not because they are not sufficiently interesting, or have not again and again demanded that attention in the loudest calls of necessity, but because other objects, among the frivolous and vain pursuits of a thoughtless mind, have driven them away; and every serious impression hath been buried under a heap of rubbish and folly!

Dear, inconsiderate reader, think once more, I charge you, before it be too late, of the importance of what is here recommended to your most serious regard, and the infinite advantage that must result

from its observance. Retire but for a moment, and open your breast to a conviction of the plainest and most palpable truths in nature. Call to mind your fallen state; consider, awfully consider, the sad and irremediable consequences of departing out of life in that state, with a nature unregenerated, and a soul uncleansed in the blood of Christ! anticipate that solemn hour, which cannot be far remote, and may be near, indeed, when physicians, attendants, relations, and friends will be all standing, perhaps around your dying bed, unable to administer any thing more than the fruitless wish, or the ineffectual medicine to prolong life. And if, in that trying season, you have no personal knowledge of God, no interest in Christ, no communion with the blessed Spirit, of what avail will be all the surrounding circumstances to the departing soul? "Miserable comforters are they all!" Oh! that you would fold down this leaf as a memorandum, frequently to look at it, until its contents are folded properly in your mind; until the Spirit of grace hath wrought conviction in your heart, and "Christ be formed in you the hope of glory."

But I turn from this consideration, to drop one word more to the pious frequenter of the closet; not, indeed, by way of pointing out to him the advantages of such an employment, for that, I hope, is unnecessary; but by way of strengthening his hands in the service, in the recollection of the many important causes, which, besides his own personal concerns, are calling upon him from every quarter, and begging aloud for an interest in his prayers. Oh! what a gracious opportunity hath the pious servant of God when drawing nigh the mercy-seat, and when feeling his soul warmed with the spirit of devotion, to put in a petition for his friends after the flesh; the poor and the distressed members of Christ, wherever situated, or however scattered; the graceless and the uncon-

cerned ; the long-lost wanderer, and the afflicted in mind : in short, persons of every description ! In how many ways, and by what various opportunities, may every real and sincerely-awakened Christian water the church with his prayers, and bless the world ! and will you not, my christian brother, upon those solemn occasions, when drawing nigh to God, feel somewhat of that compassionate spirit which actuated the holy prophet in the mount, when a long acquaintance with God made him for a while forget his own personal interest, to attend the interest of others ? Particularly you that are parents, need not, surely, the smallest *memento* to prompt you to bear your children on the wings of your devotion before the throne of grace. Every pious father, I am persuaded, is for ever adding new petitions in the court of heaven for renewed mercy on his offspring ; and certainly the earnest prayers of such parents are filed (if I may so say) on the divine records in everlasting remembrance. Oh ! what a comfort is it when a devout parent has an interest in heaven for his children, frequently makes a visit there, and lodges all his requests before God, and from thence draws all his expectation for them ! With what composure must he lie down upon his dying pillow, when, like Jesus, he can commit his children and all their concerns into the divine hand, as Christ did his followers, and from the self-same argument :—" Now I am no more in the world ; but these are in the world : keep them, through thy truth." Do you not believe such prayers ascend with a peculiar and prevailing energy before the throne of grace, presented as they are through the Redeemer's name, and sanctified by his atoning blood ? Oh, yes ! numberless are the instances wherein they have been answered, years after the pious petitioners themselves have been silent in the dust. Ye that are praying fathers, therefore, be

not discouraged. Hold on, and hold out:—it is impossible a single petition offered in faith can be unheard, or in the end unsuccessful. Graceless children may slight all your admonitions; they may long treat your tenderest entreaties with coolness and disdain; but one remedy always remains, in which you can promote their good, even against their will. Fly to the throne of grace; lodge all your wishes there. Prayer hath been known to open the windows of heaven, and bring down a blessing to soften the hardest heart, and to induce a spirit of grace and supplication in the most stubborn mind, when every other method hath failed. And mark it down, I beseech you, as a never-failing maxim, to form a judgment, both of the certain success of your devotions, and as an encouragement to a perseverance in the duty, that the prayer which is awakened by grace must be answered in mercy; for it is the same God who gives the disposition to pray, that proposes that subject of prayer to the mind, and enables the heart to watch, and depend in faith for the fulfilment of all his gracious promises. And never did the Lord pour out upon any soul these gifts of the blessed Spirit, but with an intention to render them effectual. Remember the words of the Redeemer: “All things whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

I must not forget, among the advantages of private prayer, to observe one singular privilege more which it proposes, in preference to every other means of grace: I mean, in that it is not limited to time or place, or confined to person; but universally open to all, and may be prosecuted by the pious character upon every occasion. In this respect it surpasses, indeed, even the advantage of public or family worship; for the stated period of those duties must be embraced in the seasons appointed for them, or as it suits the convenience of the several characters which compose the congregation; and if those seasons are

passed by, the opportunity is lost. But a private, personal drawing nigh to God may be embraced as frequently as the soul desires communion. No place precludes it; no situation or employment prevents it. The poor man, who hath no closet to enter, may enter into his own heart, and his devotions may go up before God, while his hands are engaged in the ordinary employments of life, as well as when withdrawing from the world to enjoy more immediate communion with God. I do not mean to say that opportunities are not to be sought for, by way of indulging in a more restrained manner the devout affections, where convenience and a situation in life favours the object. But what I mean to say is, That neither the busiest life, nor any honest worldly calling, can become a preventive to quench the devout flame. Holy men of old found opportunities in the midst of idolatrous people, and even in the most trying and adverse situations, to enjoy intercourse and communion with God. The example of Nehemiah stands upon everlasting record, to shew that a servant may wait at table, or with his hands employed in his necessary labour, while his heart may be drawn out towards the Lord, and pouring forth the incense of prayer. And Daniel's history presents an equally memorable proof, that a life engaged in the greatest circle, or occupied in the highest departments of worldly affairs, may find time for the sacred and self-rewarding service of private prayer; and that poverty and suffering become no hindrance to this duty, is evident; for Job prayed on a dung-hill, and Jeremiah in a prison; the apostle Peter sought the house-top; and the apostle Paul used the sea-shore. In short, all places suit, and may be made sacred to this delightful employment.—Nay, think only how the Redeemer himself, who needed not the aid of a prayer, yet had shewn that all spots may be hallowed to the service, when

the heart is awakened to the desire of it : the garden and the mountain were his retreats, to enjoy communion with his Father. But that the great and important work he came on earth to perform might receive no interruption from this secret employment, he suffered not the duties of the day to be broken in upon ; but borrowed from the silence of the night for this purpose ; and “ when he had sent the multitude away, he went up into the mountain apart to pray.”

O thou adored Redeemer ? how doth thy warm and bright example challenge our cold and lifeless hearts to imitate what we cannot but admire, and to follow thee withersoever thou goest ! Surely, the man who can contemplate such actions in the life of Jesus and can consider to what the whole of that life was intended to minister, and yet finds no disposition to do as he hath done, may very justly apply to his own heart that awakening exhortation which Christ used to his disciples upon another occasion : “ What ! could ye not watch with me one hour ? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.” Hath the Redeemer spent whole nights in prayer for us, and shall we think it too much to give one hour to him ?

To plead want of time, or multiplicity of business, is the weakest and most senseless pretence imaginable. What pursuits of this lower world ought to be prosecuted with that intense application as to leave no time for attention to the one thing needful ! Besides, so far is a multiplicity of worldly avocations from becoming a reasonable excuse for the neglect of religious duty, that it forms of itself the highest possible motive to the more frequent practice of it ; for he whose life is spent amidst the greatest circle of business, will need the greater grace to keep him unspotted from the world. And if the day be too short to admit of the sober claims of private prayer, those claims may be answered in taking from the slumber

of the night. David found this a happy expedient amidst the concerns of his busy life, and hath left standing upon record the good effects of it. "At midnight (says he) will I rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous judgments. Mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I might be occupied in thy word. The Lord hath granted his loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night-season did I sing of him, and made my prayer unto the God of my life. I have thought upon thy name, O Lord, in the night-season, and received comfort.—My soul fleeth unto the Lord before the morning watch."

Ye men of business, ye sons of labour, ye who rise early, late take rest, and eat the bread of carefulness, say, What can the most busy life find in extenuation, to justify a neglect of this most necessary and comfortable duty?—Oh! that mankind could learn that first and grand rule of all that is truly valuable in arithmetic:—So to "number their days, as to apply their hearts unto wisdom;" for then would be written upon the mind, with an abiding impression, never to be worn out, that solemn sentence of Christ, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"



BEAR with me, indulgent reader, while I offer but one observation more, as a finishing consideration of the whole argument, and which shall be only to say, that I consider the love of private prayer and secret communion with God as one of the truest evidences that a divine life is begun in the soul, and the surest method of ascertaining a real religious character.

I have often thought what a world of trial, and labour, and fatigue, some men go through, merely to appear what they are not. Oh! the madness and

the folly of all follies, in being outwardly religious, if I may so call it! That ever any man should desire to be considered that which hardly will gain him, in the eyes of the world, common reputation; and if it be a name only, without the life of godliness, must expose him only to the severer judgment of Almighty God!

My friend, would you really wish to know whether this be your case? The secret and unseen employment of the closet between God and your own soul will bring you very speedily to the clearest investigation of this matter. "What is the hope of the hypocrite (says Job) when God taketh away his soul? Will God ever hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? Will he always call upon God?" Yes; he may call upon God; but it will be in the public worship, when the eyes of others are upon him. But will he call upon God in private, when no eye seeth him? Yes; perhaps even here also, the effect of education shall lead him to the form of prayer, in private as well as public. Children brought up by godly parents will hardly be able to throw off altogether the custom of early habits. But will he delight himself in God? No; that is impossible. Here there is the grand discrimination of character. The hypocrite, as well as the man of real piety, may pray, may call upon God, may assume the mask of religion, and impose on the eyes of the world; but to delight himself in God; to take a pleasure, and feel a joy unspeakable in the religious duties and employments of the closet,—this can be the portion only of the real servant of the Lord. Reader, make application of this decisive evidence to yourself. Ask your own heart this question, Do I delight in God?

I HAVE now finished all that I intended to offer upon this subject, and shall have cause to bless God if any thing that is here said may serve as an instrument in the divine hand, to lead to the duties of the closet. I have done to the best of my ability upon the occasion. Would to God that I possessed the skill to have done better! But the highest human powers are alike incompetent to persuade, unless accompanied with a divine aid. If this be wanting the whole must prove ineffectual; and, like the weeping sisters mentioned in the gospel, I may take up a similar lamentation, and say "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my *labour* had not died." But to carry on the same reasoning, I know, that even now, if we will ask this blessing from God, God will give it us. Before, therefore, you shut the book, dear reader, ask once more for that wisdom which is from above, which can alone lead to the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Our eyes are unto thee, Almighty Power, that thou wouldest be graciously pleased to order that this feeble word "may not return void, but accomplish that which thou pleasest, and prosper in the thing whereto thou sendest it." Amen.

FRAGMENT.

I WOULD fain cherish the hope, that the arguments made use of in the preceding treatise in the recommendation of private prayer, carry with them a power of persuasion not easily to be resisted; and that, through the divine blessing accompanying them, some one or other at least, of my readers, may have been led to form this conclusion from the perusal

(which indeed, is the evident result of the whole) that no real Christian can possibly live in the neglect of so important a branch of duty.

But I shall have answered only in part the purpose intended from this little Tract (even if any reader should be led thereby to his closet) unless it serves at the same time to give him a clear idea of the manner in which the service itself must be performed. I conceive it to be very possible that much time may be spent in the closet, and yet the soul not enriched; for if men take the world with them into their retirements, and even there are more engaged in the consideration of things temporal than things eternal; if the Scriptures be then read for the purpose of answering the claims of duty, and not to promote the interests of religion and the pleasures of the mind; or, if the devotion of the closet be the mere huddling over a form of heartless prayers, in which the soul feels no interest; may not the awful appeal of God, by the prophet, be justly applied to such cases? "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord?"

If I have been happy enough, therefore, to convince any reader of the great importance of the duty here recommended, I would wish to follow up that conviction, in offering, by way of Fragment, a few observations on the proper method by which it can be discharged, so as to answer the purposes of piety, and procure the pleasures and advantages it promises:—and I shall esteem my labour most happily devoted, if it serves, under God's grace, to guide any one uninformed reader to a better apprehension than he before possessed of this capital branch in a Christian's duty.

It must be obvious, I think, to any one of the smallest reflection, that real heartfelt prayer, whether in public or private, must be the result of the awaken-

ing influence of God. I cannot tell God what my wishes are, until those wishes are called forth by his quickening grace. I cannot know my own wants, but from his gracious condescension is teaching me. "We know not (saith an apostle) what to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities." Hence the same authority of God's holy word expressly tells us that the preparation of the heart of man, and the answer of the tongue, are from the Lord. Nothing can ascend to God but what comes first from God. Now, if this be the truest statement of prayer, it will of necessity follow, that the grand qualification must result from the immediate teaching of the Holy Spirit.—Hence, therefore, however forms of prayer and books of devotion may be allowed as useful, or even necessary for the purposes of public worship or family piety, yet private, personal communion with God can need no such helps; neither, indeed, can they come up to all the purposes required. In the solemn transactions between God and the soul, so various are the situations in which a man is placed in this world; so different are the dispensations of God both in providence and grace, with which he is continually exercised; so many are the circumstances which distinguish one from another in the condition of human life, that it is impossible that any form of prayer can express what the soul hath to say to God in those delightful moments when drawing nigh to him. Private personal prayer must be the prayer of the heart, to express all the wants and desires of the soul. And here the Holy Ghost is the quickener; so that all men are alike incompetent without his influence. The most ignorant as well as the most accomplished; the man who cannot read, as well as he who is master of many languages, are all upon a level; for, though one may possess the power of expressing his thoughts in a better form of words than the other, yet, when it

is considered to whom prayer is made, and the sole purpose it is intended to answer, it is plain that the frame of the soul, and not the form of words, is what the Almighty regards in all our approaches towards him.

My humble friend, Are you at a loss what to say unto God in those moments when drawing nigh unto him? Consult, I beseech you, your heart upon the occasion. Previously examine what are your wants and your desires; for, if you are sensible of these things, it is impossible you can be so ignorant of the manner of expressing them. A real, lively, abiding sense of want cannot fail to give desires to the soul and language to the tongue. "Out of the abundance of the heart (our Lord hath said) the mouth speaketh."—Just apprehension of the sins of our fallen nature; a proper knowledge of the rich provision of mercy made for those sins in the benignity of God through Jesus Christ; an awakened sense of the awful objects of eternity, and the consciousness that these infinitely solemn and momentous concerns are all suspended on the frail thread of human life; these subjects once impressed in their proper characters on the mind, will call up the voice of supplication, and "make the tongue of the stammerer speak plainly." Men may fancy what they please of inability to express themselves suitably in prayer; but it is not the want of words, but the want of feeling.—The fact is, they are not sufficiently interested in the object of their prayers, and therefore do not find (as well they may not, under such circumstances) the fervour of piety arising from the vacant heart. Ask the man who lives by alms, what it is which furnishes his mouth with arguments from day to day to prosecute his trade of begging? let him say what it is which makes him so clamorous in his petitions, and gives him that ceaseless importunity, which takes no denial; he will tell you, that it is

the pressing call of hunger and want ; and these are the stimulants which teach him, without the aid of books, how to express the sense he has of his misery. And strange, indeed, would it be that his wants, if real, should need such assistance. It would be a novel sight, truly, and as ridiculous as new, to see a beggar opening a book, to read from it his suit for alms.—And shall a poor, miserable, untutored creature, possess that art of persuasion among men, merely from the dictates of nature only, because he feels the pressing wants of the perishing body ? and shall you, or I, with all the aids of grace on our side, while awakened to a suitable earnestness, in seeking the everlasting welfare of the soul, be apprehensive we cannot properly express our wants before God ? Can the form of words, or the manner of expression, be so very important a part in prayer, if the heart be really interested, especially when it is considered to whom we speak ? One, who hath made us what we are, is better informed of our abilities than we are ourselves ; and will not, we are assured, require from us what we are not qualified to perform ; or, like an hard and unfeeling master, expect to reap where he hath not sown ! And is it possible, then, that any man can be sensible of these things ; can really look up to God, under those endearing characters in which he is revealed in Scripture, as “ the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort ;” who is both the Giver, the Hearer, and the Rewarder of prayer ; and who, in order to lessen that infinite distance between his unspotted holiness and the unworthy objects of his favour, hath appointed the medium of his divine Son, and offered the aids of his blessed Spirit to bring men to his mercy-seat, and hath expressly promised that “ all things whatsoever we ask,” by faith in the Redeemer’s name, and relying on his atoning blood, “ believing, we shall receive !” Is it possible, I say, that any man

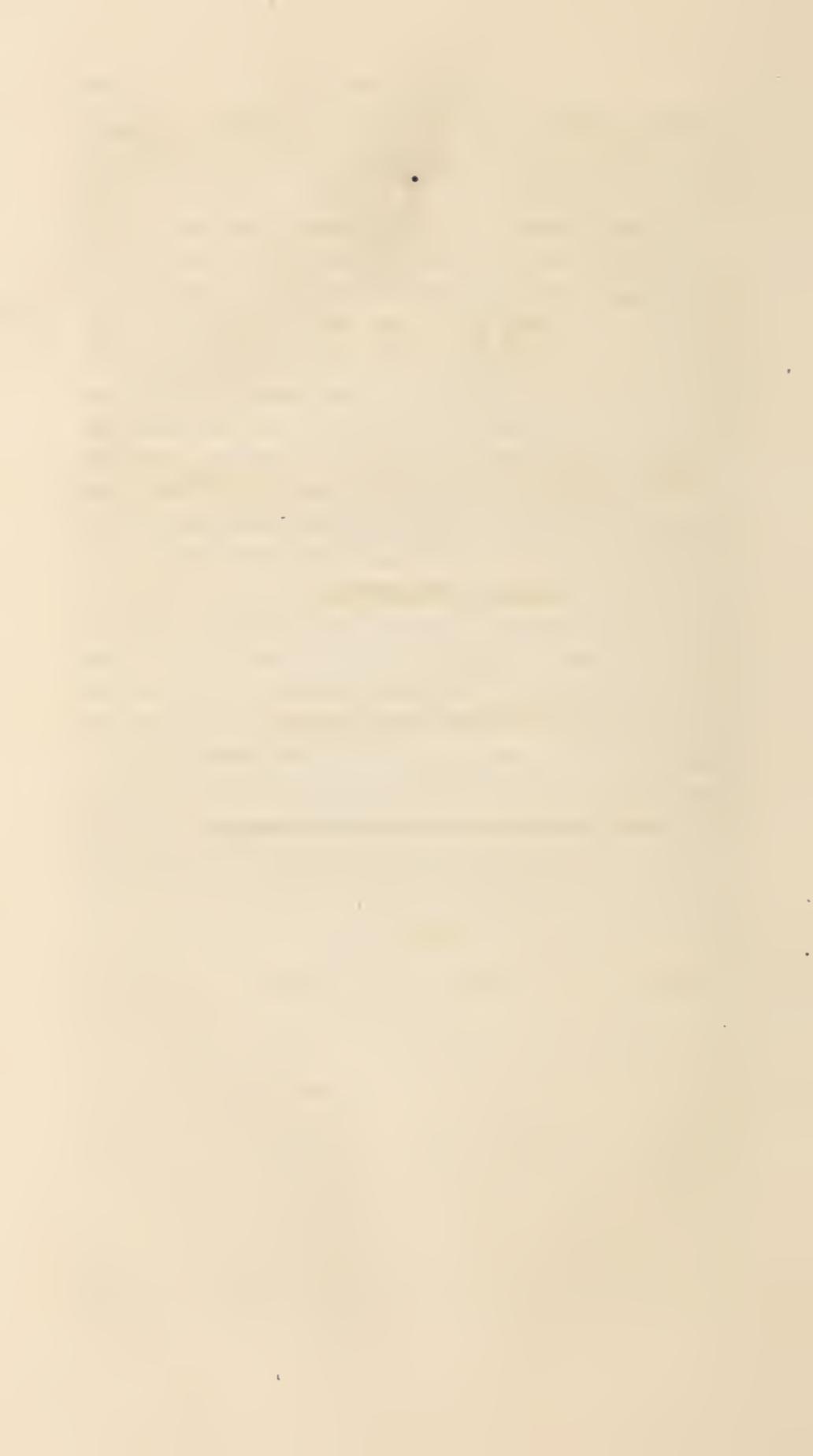
can view the throne of grace thus encircled with mercy, and can find his heart properly affected under all these impressions, and yet be at a loss for a suitable manner of making his requests known unto God? Oh! how much we degrade God while we think to honour him! and how grossly do we injure our own souls, and deprive them of their chief pleasure, when we damp the ardour of devotion by such needless and unbecoming apprehensions! Go, my brother, go into thy closet; recollect “who hath made man’s mouth, or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind!” Apply the same promise to thyself which the man of God received, to give him confidence in the execution of his commission:—“I will be with thy mouth (said God) and teach thee what thou shalt say.” And if you can but feel a real sense of your wants, though the lips be unable to express what the heart sustains, and, like Hezekiah, can only mourn in broken sentences before God; nay, if even the spirit can but bow down in humble silence before Him, the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners must come up with prevailing energy, we are assured, through that channel of acceptance in the great Redeemer’s intercession, which never fails. And who knows but, perhaps, at length, like David in a similar situation, “while the heart is musing, the sacred fire may kindle, and at the last you may speak with your tongue.”

I hope no one, either designedly or inadvertently, will misconstrue what I say, as if from hence I meant to discountenance books of devotion in public, or social worship.—Such intentions are foreign to my thoughts. I have ever considered, indeed, that the general wants of a congregation assembled for the purpose of divine worship, are best expressed by a form of devotion which may comprehend most advantageously their general necessities and desires; and in a former publication (*Misericordia*) I have ex-

pressed my sentiments more fully upon the subject. But I am here speaking of the private personal devotion of the closet, which I cannot but think, in all cases, and without exception, requires no such aids ; but their use tends rather to cramp the spirit of piety and tempt the mind to lean on the form, while forgetting the power of godliness. And the more I consider the subject, the more I am convinced of the propriety of the observation ; and I am only astonished that the very obvious reasons on which it is founded do not carry with them the same conviction to every mind. Every possible apprehension arising from a just sense of the infinite perfections of God and the unworthiness of man, and the fear which keeps back the soul in her devout aspirations, are all removed into the consideration of those gracious and encouraging helps which are held forth, inviting us to draw nigh. Since " God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts," we are now enabled to cry " Abba, Father !" Since " we have such an High Priest over the house of God, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God," we ought to " draw near, in full assurance of faith." And since " we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," shall we not, as the apostle recommends, " come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need ?" Methinks, the " spirit of bondage again to fear" ought now to give way to the spirit of adoption : and, while that animating voice is heard from the sanctuary (or, which is just the same thing, the call of God in his word) " Seek ye my face," the heart may intuitively reply, " Thy face, Lord, will I seek." And if in this manner you seek the Lord, the promise is absolute, " Thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thine heart and with all thy soul ;" " for the Lord is nigh unto them that call upon him ; yea, all such

as call upon him faithfully. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry, and will save them."

And now, what shall I say more, either in recommendation of the principle of private prayer itself, or of the best method of performing it? I am come, indeed to the last page in my book; and had I any better argument to offer, (which I confess, indeed, I have not) there would be no more room to write it. The thought of this, however, awakens a serious reflection (which in conclusion, I shall beg to leave on the mind of my reader) of the necessity of filling up the pages of the Book of the present Life with every possible improvement, before we come to the end of it, when nothing more can be added. And as you, my indulgent friend (who have been kind enough to accompany me thus far) will shortly enter also upon the last leaf of your own history, as you are now finishing the last leaf of this humble work; suffer me to write the final lines of this little Fragment, and to serve the whole up before you on the knee of prayer: That God in mercy may sanctify it to the improvement of both writer and reader! that it may make us "wise unto salvation, through the faith which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"



A

D I A R Y

GATHERED FROM

THE LORD'S GRACIOUS PROMISES

TO

HIS PEOPLE :

INTENDED AS

A MORNING BLESSING

ON SOME

SWEET REFRESHING PORTION OF SCRIPTURE,

FOR EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR.



“There are given to us exceeding great and precious promises.”—2 Pet. i. 4.

P R E F A C E.

IN order to render this little publication more immediately useful, and that it may become what it was originally designed, and indeed the title expresses, *The Companion of the Pocket*, I have added to this third edition a Diary of some sweet Promises of Scripture, for truly gracious souls to feed on, for their support and refreshment from day to day. And I am fully persuaded, that if the people of God would make it their uniform attention, morning by morning, with the first return of day, and, if possible, before the thoughts of the world break in upon the mind, in this manner to have recourse to God's word, and "hearken (as David says he did,) to what the Lord God would say concerning them," they would find the Lord speaking most graciously to them in his promises, otherwise than he doth to the world: and sometimes, indeed, they would discover the word so immediate and direct to the purpose of the present moment, as if the Lord had left the whole world for a while to draw nigh to them in the sweet visits of his grace, till, like the patriarch at Bethel, they would be constrained to use his language, and say, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."

It was thus holy men of old "walked with God." They communed with the Lord, and the Lord with them, through the medium of his word!—They made known their wants, and the Lord made known his grace: prayers went up, and answers came down, and "all his goodness passed before them." In a more especial manner they considered all the *promises* of God as their own, and given with that express view, as so many bonds and obligations, in which the Lord pledged himself to his people, that they might bring them before the mercy-seat as occasion requires, and plead for payment. Hence they kept house, feasted, and lived joyfully upon them, when they had nothing else to live upon. And from this cause it was, that after a succession of many generations, from father to son, they could, and did appeal to the uninterrupted experience of every preceding history, and left it upon record for the assurance and comfort of all that should come after, that "not one thing had failed of all the

good things which the Lord had promised, but all was come to pass."

I cannot, therefore, but very earnestly recommend similar conduct to all true believers now, who desire to be "the patient followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." And with this view I have here selected from "those exceeding great and precious promises" of our covenanting God, *one* for every day in the year, that it may be our daily song and subject of rejoicing "in the house of our pilgrimage." And I would most affectionately recommend its use with the first impressions of the morning. For I am confident to say, that if some sweet and refreshing promise of our God be thus communicated to our thoughts with the early dawn of light, and followed up with prayer and supplication with thanksgiving through the day, it will be found that "the Lord's compassions are new every morning, great is his faithfulness." And by thus reminding the Lord of his promises daily, experience will be continually proving what the Psalmist hath observed, that "the Lord hath been mindful of his covenant and promises which he made to a thousand generations." And a method so short, so easy, and practicable, which the most busy life, and even among the poor and labouring of our people cannot find a difficulty in observing, will carry with it both its pleasure and reward; for this will be literally "to go forth in the strength of the Lord God, making mention of his righteousness, even his righteousness only." And the mind, thus fortified with some gracious promise for the various occurrences of life, will be enabled, through the Spirit's aid, to plead it as occasion may require, before the mercy-seat, and say, as the man of God did, "Remember thy word unto thy servant, wherein thou hast caused me to put my trust."

I commit and commend the whole to God, with an assured hope, that the Lord will bless the daily use of his "exceeding great and precious promises," to his people's comfort, and abundantly prove, that they are all in "Christ Jesus, yea and amen."

R. H.

D I A R Y
FOR
THE NEW YEAR.

JANUARY.

1st day.—**AND** he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. Rev. xxi. 5.

2nd.—I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me. Jer. xxxii. 40.

3rd.—Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Psalm ciii. 13.

4th.—In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Prov. iii. 6.

5th.—I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. John xi. 25.

6th.—I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication; and they shall look upon me

Additional promises for the Lord's Day.

1st Sunday. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. Prov. viii. 34.

whom they pierced, and mourn. Zech. xii. 10.

7th.—I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name saith the Lord. Zech. x. 12.

8th.—I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. Gen. xv. 1.

9th.—My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Phil. iv. 19.

10th.—Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Psalm xxxvii. 3.

11th.—Fear not for I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God. Isaiah xli. 10.

12th.—This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his trouble. Psalm xxxiv. 6.

13th.—My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places. Isaiah xxxvii. 18.

14th.—God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 1 Cor. x. 13.

15th.—I am the Lord which teacheth thee to profit. Isaiah xlviii. 17.

16th.—Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Rom. vi. 14.

17th.—Fear not, for they that be with

2d Sunday.

Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me. Rev. iii. 20.

3d Sunday.

What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? Luke xi. 41.

us are more than they that be with them.

2 Kings vi. 16.

18th.—I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring. Isaiah lxiv. 3.

19th.—Let not thine heart envy sinners; but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Prov. xxiii. 17.

20th.—If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Rom. viii. 13.

21st.—Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. Isa. xxvi. 3.

22nd.—I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee. Isaiah xlii. 3

23rd.—Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Isaiah xlii. 6.

24th.—These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace: in the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. John xvi. 35.

25th.—Their Redeemer is mighty, he will plead their cause. Prov. xxxiii. 11.

26th.—If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. James i. 5.

27th.—I will direct their work in truth. Isaiah lxi. 8.

28th.—He restoreth my soul. Psalm xxiii. 3.

4th Sunday.

I will be to them a little sanctuary.

Ezek. xi. 16.

29th.—Unto you it is given to believe in Christ. Phil. i. 29. } *5th Sunday.*

30th.—Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns. Hosea ii. 6.

31st.—My people shall know my name. Isaiah lii. 6.

FEBRUARY.

1st.—And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim; and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. Isaiah xxxii. 3.

2nd.—The peace of God which passeth understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Phil. iv. 7.

3rd.—I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you. John xiv. 18.

4th.—In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. Isaiah xiv. 25.

5th.—They that hate me shall be clothed with shame. Job. viii. 22.

6th.—When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. Isaiah xli. 17.

7th.—I will be with thee in trouble. Psalm xci. 15.

8th.—I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain. Isa. xlv. 10.

9th.—I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. Rev. xxi. 6.

10th.—Ye shall be unto me a king-

The Lord shall open to them his good treasure. Deut. xxviii. 12.

6th Sunday.
As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may

dom of priests, and an holy nation. } give seed to
Exod. xix. 6. } the sower,

11th.—I create the fruit of the lips : } and bread to
peace, peace to him that is afar off, and } the eater: so
to him that is nigh, saith the Lord. Isa. } shall my
lvii. 19. } word be that

12th.—Because thou hast not asked } goeth forth
riches, wealth, or honour—wisdom and } out of my
knowledge is granted unto thee, and I } mouth: it
will give thee riches, and wealth, and } shall not re-
honour. 2 Chron. i. 11, 12. } turn to me

13th.—Your heart shall live that seek } void; but it
God. Psalm lxix. 32. } shall accom-
plish that

14th.—I, even I, am he that blotteth } please, and
out thy transgressions for mine own } it shall pros-
sake, and will not remember thy sins. } per in the
Isaiah xliii. 25. } thing where-

15th.—Even to your old age I am } unto I send
he—and even to hoary hairs will I carry } it. Isa. lv.
you. Isaiah xlvi. 4. } 10, 11.

16th.—They that sow in tears shall } 7th Sunday.
reap in joy. Psalm cxxvi. 5. } Unto you

17th.—I know the thoughts that I } that hear
think towards you, saith the Lord, } shall more
thoughts of peace, and not of evil. Jer. } be given.
xxix. 11. } Mark iv. 24.

18th.—Many are the afflictions of }
the righteous, but the Lord delivereth }
them out of all. Psalm xxxv. 19. }

19th.—The Lord knoweth them that } 8th Sunday.
are his. 2 Tim. ii. 19. }

20th.—There shall not a hair of your }
head perish. Luke xxi. 11. }

21st.—He will subdue our iniquities. }
Micah vii. 19. }

22nd.—To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word. Isaiah lxvi. 2.

23rd.—I will love them freely. Hosea xiv. 2.

24th.—Ye shall go out with joy, and and be led forth with peace. Isa. lv. 12.

25th.—There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God. Heb. iv. 9.

26th.—I will pardon whom I reserve. Jer. v. 20.

27th.—Cleave unto him, for he is thy life. Deut. xxx. 20.

28th.—The righteous shall hold on his way. Job. xvii. 9.

MARCH.

1st.—As thy days, so shall thy strength be. Deut. xxxiii. 25.

2nd.—Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. John xvi. 24.

3rd.—God dealeth with you as with sons. Heb. xii. 7.

4th.—Thy Maker is thine Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. Isaiah liv. 5.

5th.—The eternal God is thy refuge. Deut. xxxiii. 27.

6th.—Looking unto Jesus. Heb. xii. 2.

7th.—Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days. Eccles. xi. 1.

Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live. Is. lv. 3.

9th Sunday,

Desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. 1 Peter i. 2.

10th Sund.

8th.—He will keep the feet of his saints. 1 Sam. ii. 9.

9th.—And let him that is athirst come; and whoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely. Rev. xxii. 17.

10th.—Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 2 Thes. iv. 14.

11th.—Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart, for consider how great things he hath done for you. 1 Sam. xii. 24.

12th.—Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. 1 Thes. v. 24.

13th.—I am thy salvation. Psalm xxxv. 3.

14th.—He shall enter into peace. Isaiah lvii. 2.

15th.—I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. Hosea xiii. 14.

16th.—If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. John viii. 57.

17th.—I will be a father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 2 Cor. vi. 18.

18th.—The Lord shall fight for you. Exod. xiv. 14.

19th.—I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. Isaiah xlvi. 10.

20th.—Cast thy burden upon the Lord, he will sustain thee. Psalm lv. 22.

21st.—I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely. Hosea xiv. 4.

22nd.—For my name's sake will I

The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them. Rev. xxii. 3.

11th Sund.

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. John vi. 37.

12th Sund.

Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that

defer my anger ; and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Isaiah xlviii. 9.

23rd.—O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help. Hosea xiii. 9.

24th.—I will betroth thee unto me for ever. Hosea ii. 19.

25th.—He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye. Zech. ii. 8.

26th.—My presence shall go with thee. Exod. xxxiii. 14.

27th.—God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 1 John v. 11.

28th.—That he may know what is the hope of his calling ; and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. Eph. i. 18.

29th.—Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Acts xvi. 31.

30th.—Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. Eph. v. 14.

31st.—Come, and let us return to the Lord ; for he hath torn, and he will heal us : he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. Hosea vi. 1.

breaketh the rock in pieces? Jer. xxiii. 29.

13th Sund.

The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour. Luke xii. 12.

APRIL.

1st.—I will turn mine hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin. Isaiah i. 25.

2nd.—He openeth also their ear to discipline. Job xiii. 10.

3rd.—I will make all my goodness pass before thee ; and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee ; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. Exod. xxxiii. 19.

4th.—I will call her beloved, that was not beloved. Rom. ix. 5.

5th.—As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Rev. iii. 19.

6th.—It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Phil. ii. 13.

7th.—A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you ; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

8th.—He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry ; when he shall hear it he will answer thee. Isaiah xxx. 19.

9th.—Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me. Exod. xix. 5.

10th.—It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. Lam. iii. 26.

11th.—I will make you a name, and a praise among all the people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord. Zeph. iii. 20.

12th.—He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. Isa. liii. 11.

14th *Sund.*

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.

Psalm cx. 3.

15th *Sund.*

In my holy mountain I will accept them, and there will I require your offerings.

Ezek. xx. 40.

13th.—So shall he sprinkle many nations. Isaiah. lii. 15.

14th.—God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. 2 Cor. v. 19.

15th.—Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. 2 Cor. iv. 10.

16th.—For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. v. 21.

17th.—And God is able to make all grace abound towards you. 2 Cor. ix. 8.

18th.—And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Gal. iv. 6.

19th.—Christ in you the hope of glory. Coloss. i. 27.

20th.—Perfect in Christ Jesus. Col. i. 28.

21st.—And you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through his death. Col. i. 21, 22.

22nd.—The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him in truth. Psalm cxlv. 18.

23rd.—Their soul shall be as a watered garden. Jer. xxxi. 12.

24th.—Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness. Psalm cxii. 4.

25th.—His place of defence shall be

16th Sund.

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on mine holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honourable, and shalt honour him not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause

the munition of rocks : bread shall be given him : his waters shall be sure. Isaiah xxxiii. 16.

26th.—I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. Exod. xxxvi. 37.

27th.—If thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him. Deut. iv. 29.

28th.—Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it. Psalm lxxxi. 10.

29th.—This is the promise that he hath promised us, eternal life. 1 John ii. 25.

30th.—So shall we ever be with the Lord. 1 Thes. iv. 17.

MAY.

1st.—Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread, and he shall be for a sanctuary. Isaiah viii. 13.

2nd.—Lo ! this has touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Isaiah. vi. 7.

3rd.—God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love. Heb. vi. 10.

4th.—O love the Lord, all ye his saints ; for the Lord preserveth the faithful. Psalm xxxi. 23.

thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father. Isa. lviii. 13, 14.

17th *Sund.*
For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.

Heb. iv. 12.

18th *Sund.*

All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. Isaiah liv. 18.

5th.—Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart: wait I say, on the Lord. Psalm xxvii. 14.

6th.—I will be as the dew unto Israel. Hosea xiv. 5.

7th.—In returning and rest shall ye be saved. Isaiah xxx. 15.

8th.—The promise is to you and your children. Acts ii. 19.

9th.—Blessed is the man that endureth temptation. James i. 12.

10th.—Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. Psalm lxxxix. 15.

11th.—They shall come with acceptance upon mine altar. Isaiah lx. 7.

12th.—In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified. Isaiah xlv. 25.

13th.—By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Rom. v. 19.

14th.—The Lord is thy keeper. Psalm cxxi. 1.

15th.—He giveth his beloved sleep. Psalm cxxvii. 2.

16th.—The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in. Psalm cxxi. 8.

17th.—Whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. Isaiah xv. 54.

18th.—I will love him, and will

19th *Sund.*

Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: mine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation that shall not be broken down, not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any cords thereof be broken. Isa. xxxiii. 20.

20th *Sund.*

Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you. Luke xxiv. 49.

manifest myself unto him. John xiv. 21.

19th.—And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. John xii. 32.

20th.—Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Isaiah lxii. 2.

21st.—In that day shall the deaf hear; and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity. Isaiah xxix. 18.

22nd.—If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself. 2 Tim. ii. 13.

23rd.—He shall save the humble person. Job xxii. 29.

24th.—If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye. 1 Peter iv. 14.

25th.—Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings. 1 Peter iv. 13.

26th.—Fear not, it is your Father's good pleasure to give *you* the kingdom. Luke xii. 32.

27th.—The blessing of the Lord maketh rich. Prov. x. 22.

28th.—Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. Mal. iii. 10.

29th.—He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of water. John viii. 38.

30th.—I will bring the blind by a

21st *Sund.*

He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Mal. iii. 3.

22nd *Sund.*

Behold I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.

Hosea ii. 14.

way that they know not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them. Isaiah xlii. 16.

31st.—When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. Prov. xiv. 7.

JUNE.

1st.—I will contend with him that contendeth with thee. Isaiah xlix. 25.

2nd.—Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God. Rev. iii. 12.

3rd.—Ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel. Joel ii. 27.

4th.—Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Rev. xiii. 13.

5th.—Israel shall be saved in the Lord. Isaiah xlv. 17.

6th.—As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you. Isa. lxvi. 13.

7th.—Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest. Psalm xciv. 12.

8th.—The inhabitant shall not say I am sick. Isaiah xxxiii. 24.

9th.—Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved. Acts xvi. 31.

10th.—Thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left. Isaiah liv. 3.

11th.—Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit. Isaiah xxvii. 6.

23rd Sund.

Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. Isa. xxx. 21.

24th Sund.

12th.—Be ye also patient, stablish your heart, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. James v. 8.

13th.—To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God. Psalm l. 23.

14th.—Who forgiveth all thy iniquities. Psalm ciii. 3.

15th.—Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Deut. xxviii. 5.

16th.—I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it; I will keep it night and day. Isaiah xxvii. 3.

17th.—The beloved of the Lord shall dwell safely. Deut. xxxiii. 12.

18th.—Wilt thou be made whole? John v. 6.

19th.—Thou art loosed from thine infirmities. Luke xiii. 12.

20th.—He that eateth me shall live by me. John vii. 57.

21st.—Be of good cheer, for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Acts xxvii. 5.

22nd.—The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Rom. xvi. 20.

23rd.—Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. i. 3.

24th.—Though it tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not tarry. Hab. ii. 3.

25th.—For the Lord, the God of Is-

He satisfieth the longing soul. Psalm cvii. 9.

25th *Sund.*

How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. Gen. xxviii. 17.

26th *Sund.*

rael saith, that he hateth putting away.
Mal. ii. 6.

26th.—The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty, he will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy, he will rest in his love: he will joy over thee with singing. Zeph. iii. 17.

27th.—They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in the day that I make up my jewels. Mal. iii. 17.

28th.—Fear not, believe only, and thou shalt be made whole. Luke viii. 50.

29th.—There shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you. Acts xxvii. 34.

30th.—He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it he will answer thee. Isaiah xxx. 19.

JULY.

1st.—When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 1 Peter v. 4.

2nd.—When Christ who is our life shall appear, ye shall also appear with him in glory. Col. iii. 4.

3rd.—Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 1 Peter ii. 6.

4th.—The hope which is laid up for you in heaven. Col. iii. 4.

5th.—That good part which shall not be taken away. Luke x. 42.

Thy teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers.
Isa. xxx. 20.

27th *Sund.*

The people pressed upon him to

6th.—I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Zech. viii. 3.

7th.—I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. Psalm cxxxii. 17.

8th.—The Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted. Psalm cxl. 12.

9th.—Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Isaiah xxvi. 1.

10th.—Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace. Gen. xv. 5.

11th.—I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant. Gen. ix. 13.

12th.—I will abundantly bless her provisions. Psalm cxxxii. 15.

13th.—Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy. Psalm cxxx. 7.

14th.—I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger. John vi. 35.

15th.—Ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Eph. ii. 13.

16th.—That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ. Phil. i. 26.

17th.—It is a faithful saying, if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. 2 Tim. ii. 11.

18th.—The dead in Christ shall rise first. 1 Thess. iv. 16.

19th.—If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself. 2 Tim. ii. 13.

20th.—My strength is made perfect

hear the word of God. Luke v. 1.

28th Sund.

Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. John v. 49.

29th Sund.

Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near with a true heart,

in weakness. 2 Corinthians xii. 9.
21st.—He shall come to be glorified
in his saints. 2 Thes. i. 10.

22nd.—He is not ashamed to call
them brethren. Heb. ii. 11.

23rd.—The trial of your faith is much
more precious than gold which perisheth.
1 Peter i. 7.

24th.—He became the Author of
eternal salvation to all them that obey
him. Heb. v. 9.

25th.—Leave thy fatherless children,
I will preserve them alive; and let thy
widows trust in me. Jer. xlix. 11.

26th.—This people have I formed
for myself, they shall show forth my
praise. Isaiah xliii. 21.

27th.—That thy trust may be in the
Lord, I have made known to thee this
day even to thee. Prov. xxii. 19.

28th.—Praise is comely for the up-
right. Psalm xxxiii. 1.

29th.—Behold the eye of the Lord is
upon them that fear him. Psalm xxxiii.
18.

30th.—So shall we ever be with the
Lord. 1 Thes. iv. 17.

31st.—Behold, I am for you, and I
will turn unto you. Ezek. xxxvi. 9.

in full assur-
ance of faith.
Heb. x. 19,
22.

30th *Sund.*

In the Spirit
on the Lord's
day. Rev. i.
10.

31st *Sund.*

AUGUST.

1st.—The kingdom of God is within
you. Luke xvii. 21.

2nd.—This poor man cried, and the
Lord heard him. Psalm xxxiv. 6.

Building up
yourselves
on your most
holy faith.
Jude 20.

3rd.—Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you, he will avenge them speedily. Luke xviii. 7, 8.

4th.—If any man love God, the same is known of him. 1 Cor. viii. 3.

5th.—Them also which sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him. 1 Thes. iv. 14.

6th.—Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. Psalm xxxiii. 12.

7th.—He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. John iii. 36.

8th.—Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God. Luke xviii. 16.

9th.—Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst. John iv. 14.

10th.—The just shall live by faith. Heb. x. 38.

11th.—All that are in the graves shall hear his voice. John v. 28.

12th.—Give, and it shall be given unto you. Luke vi. 28.

13th.—And he shall be a Priest upon his throne. Zech. vi. 13.

14th.—The least grain shall not fall upon the earth. Amos ix. 9.

15th.—Wait on thy God continually. Hosea xii. 6.

16th.—I will ransom thee from the power of the grave. Hosea xiii. 14.

17th.—My people shall never be ashamed. Joel ii. 26.

32nd Sund.

Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?

1 Cor. vi. 19.

33rd Sund.

And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and

18th.—He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself. 1 John.

to preach
Jesus Christ.
Acts v. 42.

19th.—The good will of him that dwelleth in the bush. Deut. xxxiii. 16.

20th.—Light is sown for the righteous; and gladness for the upright in heart. Psalm xcvi. 11.

34th *Sund.*

21st.—He shall call upon me, and I will answer him. Psalm xci. 15.

22nd.—Is not the Lord in Zion? is not her King in her? Jer. viii. 19.

23rd.—If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. iii. 29.

I will give
you pastors
after mine
heart, which
shall feed
you with un-
derstanding
and know-
ledge. Jer.
iii. 15.

24th.—He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee. Job v. 19.

25th.—Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good old way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Jer. vi. 16.

26th.—The Lord is not slack concerning his promise. 2 Peter iii. 9.

27th.—If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. Mark ix. 23.

35th *Sund.*

28th.—And the nations which are saved, shall walk in the light of God and the Lamb. Rev. xxi. 24.

29th.—My faithfulness and my mercy shall be with thee. Psalm lxxxix. 24.

30th.—Thus saith the Lord, shall they fall, and not arise? Jer. viii. 4.

Hallow my
sabbaths;
and they
shall be a

31st.—Surely the Lord God will do

nothing, but he revealeth his secret to his servant. Amos. iii. 7.

SEPTEMBER.

1st.—God, according to his promise, hath raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus. Acts xiii. 23.

2nd.—And his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads. Rev. xxii. 3.

3rd.—The Lord the God of Hosts shall be with you as ye have spoken. Amos. v. 14.

4th.—Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered. Jer. viii. 22.

5th.—Through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. Acts x. 43.

6th.—Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Acts xi. 16.

7th.—Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord. Jer. ix. 23.

8th.—We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God. Acts xiv. 22.

9th.—To them who by patient continuance in well doing—eternal life. Rom. ii. 7.

sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God. Ezek. xx. 20.

36th *Sund.*

I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. Ezk. xxxvii. 23.

10th.—He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. Rev. xxi. 7.

11th.—For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt. Jer. viii. 21.

12th.—Thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, seek ye me and ye shall live. Amos v. 4.

13th.—The righteousness of God, which is by faith in Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all that believe. Rom. iii. 22.

14th.—The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus. 1 Tim. i. 14.

15th.—My people Israel, I will not again pass by them any more. Amos vii. 8.

16th.—The Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. Rom. iii. 26.

17th.—Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. 2 Tim. i. 9.

18th.—The Lord God of Hosts will be gracious. Amos v. 15.

19th.—To the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed. Rom. iv. 16.

20th.—Thus saith the Lord, I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies. Zech. i. 16.

21st.—Behold I will cause breath to enter into these bones, and they shall live. Ezek. xxxvii. 5.

37th *Sund.*

The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him. Hab. ii. 20.

38th *Sund.*

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in his holy place? Psalm xxiv. 3.

22nd.—Upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness. Obad. 17.

23rd.—O thou that art named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the Lord straitened? Micah ii. 7.

24th.—That no man should be moved by these afflictions. 1 Thes. iii. 3.

25th.—Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. 1 Cor. v. 7.

26th.—He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water. Psalm i. 3.

27th.—Arise ye and depart, for this is not your rest, because it is polluted. Micah ii. 10.

28th.—The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed. Psalm ix. 9.

29th.—Who gave himself for us. Titus ii. 14.

30th.—The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. Ob. 17.

39th *Sund.*

This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat. Exod. xvi. 15.

OCTOBER.

1st.—He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted. Psalm xxii. 24.

2nd.—And this day shall be unto you for a memorial. Exod. xii. 14.

3rd.—Behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest. Gen. xxviii. 15.

4th.—Their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them. Micah ii. 13.

5th.—The Lord goeth before by day

40th *Sund.*

This day is holy unto the Lord your God. Neh. viii. 9.

in a pillar of a cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire. Exod. xiii. 21.

6th.—Trust in him at all times, ye people, pour out your hearts before him, for God is a refuge. Psalm lxii. 8.

7th.—Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Titus ii. 13.

8th.—In that day, saith the Lord, I will assemble her that halteth. Micah. iv. 6.

9th.—The needy shall not always be forgotten. Psalm ix. 8.

10th.—That ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. Exod. xiv. 7.

11th.—When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back. Psalm lvi. 9.

12th.—And this man shall be the peace. Micah v. 5.

13th.—For we, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. Gal. v. 5.

14th.—Behold I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy. Luke x. 9.

15th.—And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant. Exod. ii. 24.

16th.—Arise, and thrust, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron, and thy hoofs brass. Micah iv. 13.

17th.—Ye shall be baptized with the

41st. *Sund.*

Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it. Luke xi. 28.

42nd *Sund.*

Holy Ghost not many days hence. Acts i. 5.

18th.—For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Phil. i. 19.

19th.—Put on the armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

20th.—Christ is all in all. Col. iii. 11.

21st.—As many as walk according to this rule, peace be unto them and mercy. Gal. vi. 16.

22nd.—The Lord shall redeem thee from the hands of thine enemies. Micah iv. 10.

23rd.—Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or death. Phil. i. 20.

24th.—Behold I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH. Zech. iii. 8.

25th.—It shall be given you in the same hour what ye shall speak. Matt. x. 19.

26th.—And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as a dew from the Lord. Micah v. 7.

27th.—Because I live, ye shall live also. John xiv. 19.

28th.—To him that ordereth his conversation right, will I shew the salvation of God Psalm l. 23.

29th.—I will be an enemy to thine enemies, and an adversary to thine adversaries. Exod. xxiii. 22.

30th.—The Lord preserveth all

In this place is One

greater than the temple.

Matt. xii. 6.

43rd *Sund.*

Behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it. Rev. iii. 8.

44th *Sund.*

them that love him. Psalm cxlv. 20.

31st.—The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him. Psalm cxlvii. 11.

NOVEMBER.

1st.—Call unto me and I will answer thee ; and show the great and mighty things which thou knowest not. Jer. xxxiii. 3.

2nd.—Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. Isaiah ix. 7.

3rd.—Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and to them that look for him, shall he appear a second time without sin, unto salvation. Heb. ix. 28.

4th.—Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. Rom xiii. 11.

5th.—His leaf also shall not wither. Psalm i. 3.

6th.—Concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me. Isaiah xlv. 11.

7th.—Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Exod. xiv. 13.

8th.—God hath spoken once ; yea twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God. Psalm lxii. 11.

9th.—Behold, I come quickly ; hold fast that thou hast that no man take thy crown. Rev. iii. 11.

10th.—And it shall be to them a renown, the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord God. Ezek. xxxix. 13.

I will feed them in a good pasture. Ezek. xxxiv. 14.

45th *Sund.*

Come, eat of the bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Prov. ix. 5.

11th.—I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me. Psalm iii. 4.

12th.—The Lord shall bless thee out of Sion. Psalm cxxviii. 5.

13th.—Can a woman forget her sucking child—yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Isaiah xlix. 15.

14th.—Their Redeemer is strong, the Lord of Hosts is his name; he shall thoroughly plead their cause. Jer. i. 34.

15th.—I will pardon them whom I reserve. Jer. i. 12.

16th.—Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Rev. xix. 9.

17th.—And God said Certainly, I will be with thee. Exod. iii. 12.

18th.—He forgetteth not the cry of the humble. Psalm ix. 12.

19th.—And they overcame *the accuser of our brethren* by the blood of the Lamb. Rev. xii. 11.

20th.—And I will accept you, saith the Lord God. Ezek. xliii. 27.

21st.—I, even I, am he that comforteth you. Isaiah. li. 12.

22nd.—Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, though their land was filled with sin. Jer. li. 12.

23rd.—The expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever. Psalm ix. 18.

24th.—And the Lord said I have surely seen the affliction of my people, and I am come down to deliver them. Exod. iii. 7, 8.

25th.—Behold, I, even I, will both

46th *Sund.*

Arise, O Lord, to thy rest; thou and the ark of thy strength. Ps. cxxxii. 8.

47th *Sund.*

Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Psalm l. 2.

search my sheep and seek them out. }
 Ezek. xxxiv. 11. }

26th.—He hath looked down from }
 the height of his sanctuary to hear the }
 groaning of the prisoner. Psalm cii. 19. }

27th.—The Lord shall increase you }
 more and more, you and your children. }
 Psalm cxv. 14. }

28th.—Behold I have graven thee }
 upon the palms of my hands. Isaiah }
 xlix. 16. }

29th.—Neither will I hide my face }
 any more from them. Ezek. xxxix. 29. }

30th.—For the oppression of the }
 poor; for the sighing of the needy, }
 now will I arise saith the Lord. Psalm }
 xii. 5. }

DECEMBER.

1st.—The Lord will command his }
 loving kindness in the day time; and in }
 the night his song shall be with me. }
 Psalm xlii. 8. }

2nd.—The redeemed of the Lord }
 shall return and come with singing }
 unto Sion. Isaiah li. 11. }

3rd.—God is able to make all grace }
 abound towards you. 2 Cor. ix. 8. }

4th.—The hand of our God is upon }
 all them for good that seek him. Ezra. }
 viii. 32. }

5th.—My people shall know my }
 name. Isaiah lii. 6. }

6th.—Know, therefore, that the Lord

48th Sund.

Come, buy
 wine and
 milk without
 money, and
 without
 price. Isa.
 lv. 1.

49th Sund.

God is
 greatly to be
 feared in the
 assembly of

thy God he is God, the faithful God.
Deut. vii. 9.

7th.—He shall thrust out the enemy
before thee. Deut. xxxiii. 27.

8th.—But he saveth the poor from
the sword. Job. v. 15.

9th.—The lot is cast into the lap;
but the whole disposing thereof is of
the Lord. Prov. xvi. 33.

10th.—I will strengthen them in the
Lord, and they shall walk up and down
in his name. Zech. x. 12.

11th.—The Lord his God is with
him, and the shout of a King is among
them. Num. xxiii. 21.

12th.—In thy name shall they rejoice
all the day. Psalm lxxxix. 16.

13th.—And Samuel took a stone,
and set it between Mizpeh and Shen,
and called the name of it Ebenezer,
saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped
us. 1 Sam. vii. 12.

14th.—So the poor hath hope. Job.
v. 16.

15th.—In that day there shall be no
more the Canaanite in the house of the
Lord of Hosts. Zech. xiv. 21.

16th.—Whosoever shall humble him-
self as this little child, the same is the
greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
Matt. xvii. 14.

17th.—Shew me a token for good,
that they which hate me may see it,
and be ashamed: thou, Lord, hast
holpen me. Psalm lxxxvi. 17.

18th.—The Lord God shall call his

his saints,
and to be
had in re-
verence of
all them that
are about
him.

50th *Sund.*

Behold, this
have I found,
(saith the
preacher,)
counting
one by one.
Ec. vii. 27.

51st *Sund.*

servants by another name. Isa. lxxv. 15.

19th.—Thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid. Job xi. 19.

20th.—God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man, that he should repent. Numb. xxiii. 19.

21st.—And let it be when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do as occasion shall serve thee, for God is with thee. 1 Sam. x. 7.

22nd.—Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth. Job. v. 17.

23rd.—I am poor, yet the Lord thinketh upon me. Psalm xl. 17.

24th.—It shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light. Zech. xiv. 7.

25th.—Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. Heb. xiii. 8.

26th.—Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Matt. i. 21.

27th.—I the Lord have spoken it; it shall come to pass, and I will do it. Ezek. xxiv. 14.

28th.—Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue. Job. v. 21.

29th.—The eyes of the Lord they God are upon thee, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. Deut. xi. 12.

30th.—He is faithful that promised. Heb. x. 23.

31st.—Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord God spake concerning you. Josh. xxiii. 14.

Of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born there. Ps. lxxxvii. 55.

52nd. *Sund.*

Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they know not that they do evil. Eccles. v. 1.

THE
CHRISTIAN'S POCKET COMPANION;

OR
A HELP TO PRAYER.

GATHERED WHOLLY FROM THE SCRIPTURES, AND FORMING
AN UNEXCEPTIONABLE GUIDE, FOR THIS PURPOSE,
TO EVERY SERIOUS PERSON;

Suited to the most General Occasions of Life.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.” COL. iii. 16.

“These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

DEUT. vi. 6, 7.

“The law of thy mouth is dearer unto me than thousands of gold and silver.”

PSALM cxix. 79.

P R E F A C E.

I SEND abroad this little book with less diffidence than any former publication which I have intruded on the Christian world, from the pleasing consideration, that as it is the result of no merit, the product of but little labour, neither the effect of great study or application, but merely a compilation from Scripture; it cannot justly become the object of criticism, but is alike unexposed to censure, and unentitled to praise. And as it aspires to no higher attention, than to become the humble companion of the Christian in those vacant hours which, more or less, are in every man's life, and which the world can neither fill nor gratify, perhaps its modesty may be thought a sufficient recommendation.

I feel much satisfaction also, I confess, under this idea, from another consideration; and that is, that as the whole of what is here offered to the reader's perusal is gathered from the Book of God, it certainly claims an equal respect from every man, and must be universally deserving the attention of all. Whoever makes the sacred volume the standard of his religious faith, will find nothing here to offend him. For whether the arrangements shall or shall not be exactly corresponding to his own sentiments, yet the book itself can furnish no reasonable objection, because it contains nothing but the pure ore of the divine word, unmingled and unalloyed with human dross.

The title-page sufficiently explains the design of this little work, that it is intended to become the pocket companion of the serious Christian: and the object of it is, that by always having at hand some refreshing portion of Scripture, suited to the various situations which are perpetually occurring in the experience of every man's life, recourse might be had to it as occasion may require; and thus, by not confining religion to the mere stated seasons of worship only, which tends, in a great measure, to defeat its own purposes; but by mingling it with the ordinary events of life, the mind may be always preserved

in a flame of devotion, and furnished with a fund of the most pious sentiments from the sacred treasury of God's holy word, to keep up a constant intercourse at the throne of grace.

The advantages of such a companion in a world like the present, are too plain to require being enumerated. What from the corruptions of the heart within, the numerous temptations of the world from without, and the situations of danger of the enemy all around; every gracious man's experience cannot but have feelingly taught him how infinitely to be prized that precious book of God is, which furnishes, for every case, a lamp to the feet, and a light to the path. Neither is it, in my apprehension, the most inconsiderable proof of its own intrinsic excellence and divine authority, that there is not a single situation in which the human mind can be placed, but what hath some more direct provision made for it in the Holy Volume. But how invaluable soever the Bible is in itself, and near at hand as it ought ever to be kept for perusal; yet men of much labour and little leisure, find it, I believe, rather an impracticable study to turn over the sacred pages in the very moment of need, in quest of some gracious direction to guide, or some divine consolation to refresh, on the immediate occasion. By selecting, therefore, a few of the more luminous and striking passages, which may be found most suitable to general use, and arranging them under their different classes, both the busy and the uninformed may at once be provided with an easy help to answer their wishes in this particular: and the disconsolate, the tried, and the humble Christian, who knows what real communion with God in Christ is worth, in a dark hour will think the present no unacceptable companion, as a guide to walk with, to direct to the very Scripture best suited to their case in the season of necessity. In sick rooms, and dying chambers particularly, where all the refreshments of grace are required, but where the soul is for the most part too much oppressed to know how to pray, or what to pray for, I should hope this humble companion may be found eminently useful.

I cannot omit the present opportunity of observing, (though it is probable I may be thought somewhat singular in my opinion,) that it hath been long a matter of conviction in my mind, that real heart-felt prayer, which is awakened by the Spirit of grace

in the soul, and as distinguished from the mere form and shadow of piety, is actual conversation with God; and a conversation, indeed, in which man is not the chief speaker. Whoever will be at the pains of looking diligently into the sacred Scripture for proofs on this point, will find so many instances of God's speaking to his people in their seasons of approaching him, as will abundantly confirm the observation. A few instances, by way of illustration, will be sufficient to explain.—“O,” says Job, “that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth with his neighbour.” (Job xvi. 21.) “Put me in remembrance,” says God, “let us plead together.” (Isa. xliii. 26.) In the same chapter God complains of his people's backwardness to praying: “But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.” (Isaiah xliii. 22.) Again, in Micah vi. 3, “O, my people, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee?” So in Jer. ii. 31, “Have I been a wilderness unto Israel; a land of darkness? Wherefore say my people, we will come no more unto thee?” And what is the answer of the gracious soul to these expostulations? David hath explained it, when he says, “Lord, I call upon thee, haste thee unto me, and consider my voice when I call upon thee.” (Psalm cxli. 1.) And when God, by way of special promise to his faithful people, says, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,” it is evident the apostle considered this as absolute; for in the same verse he immediately adds, “Hence we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.” (Heb. xiii. 5, 6.) In the prophecy of Jeremiah, (iii. 22.) God calls upon his people to return to him, and promises to receive them: “Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.” “Behold, we come unto thee,” is the answer, “for thou art the Lord our God.” In the book of the Canticles, Christ is represented as affectionately inviting his church to communion: “Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it.” (Cant. viii. 13.) “My voice,” says David, “shalt thou hear betimes, O Lord; early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.” (Psalm v. 3.) On the other hand, when the church is repre-

sented as passionately desiring the Redeemer to come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits ; the answer is immediately given : " I am come into my garden," saith Christ. (Cant. iv. 16. v. 1.) And similar to all those instances, and many others with which the book of God abounds, the sacred canon closes in the same gracious conversation : " Surely I come quickly," says Christ ; " even so come, Lord Jesus," the church echoes. (Rev. xx. 20.)

The prophecy of Habbakkuk is so beautiful an illustration of this great truth, that if I mistake not, it contains nothing more, from the beginning to the end, than a constant communion between the gracious soul and the more gracious God. The first chapter opens with the prophet's call to God, under the burden of an oppressed mind. " O Lord," says he, " how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear ; even cry unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save ! " The prophet continues in his supplication to the end of the fourth verse ; and then the Lord takes up the subject in reply : in which God assigns the cause for which his people groan ; and the eventual greater punishment, unless the present produces the desired reform. This answer, as was designed, tends but to awaken in the man of God a more fervent earnestness in prayer, which opens at the twelfth verse, and is prosecuted without remission to the conclusion of the first chapter.

The prophet, having thus closed his petitions for the present, and finding no answer, but, instead, silence from the throne of grace, opens the second chapter with declaring his resolution to follow up prayer with watching ; and having laid his petitions at the footstool of mercy, waits like an humble suppliant at the door for the Lord's answer. " I will stand upon my watch," says the prophet, " and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." This conduct of the prophet corresponds to the duty which the great Redeemer, in after ages, enjoins his disciples, " to watch and pray," (Mark xiv. 38.) and without the exercise of which, indeed, it is impossible to know whether our petitions are accepted or not. And so prevalent was this waiting upon the Lord in the case of the prophet, that no sooner do

we find him on his watch-tower, like a centinel on his post, but the Lord as immediately granting the meeting desired. For from the beginning of the second verse to the end of the chapter, the communion between the Lord and his servant is kept up, and God himself is the sole speaker. The termination of this correspondence, so gracious and condescending as it is on the part of God, and so refreshing and delightful on the part of man, the prophet gives us in the third and last chapter, which is a continued prayer, and a hymn of praise, from the beginning to the end. Like the great father of the faithful, the prophet returned not to his place till God left off speaking. (Gen. xviii. 33.) And what is worthy our closest observation, and becomes indeed the most striking illustration of the doctrine for which I have adverted to this prophecy is this,—that the prayer which began with a burden, ends in a hymn of praise. From the same mind we hear the voice of lamentation—“O Lord, how long shall I cry?” We hear the voice of thanksgiving; “Though the fig-tree shall not blossom, yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.” And numerous are the instances in the records of departed saints, as well as in the testimonies of living believers, in proof that prayer is actual communion with God; where the soul hath bowed down to the throne of grace overwhelmed with sorrow, and arisen again in a transport of the most refreshing joy. All which, in my apprehension, fully proves what God hath said by his prophet: “I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth. I said not unto the seed Jacob, Seek ye me in vain.” (Isaiah xlv. 19.)

Agreeably to this opinion, it hath been my endeavour to incorporate, as much as possible, in the arrangement of this little book, and to keep in one and the same view, God’s *precepts* with his *promises*, that the proper scriptural forms for prayer, and the Lord’s answers thereto, might be connected together; well knowing, both from experience and observation, how infinitely important it is to the humble soul, to be encouraged and refreshed by the one, while performing the other: and under this branch of my subject particularly, I very earnestly pray God they may prove serviceable to the reader, as they have, and do, to the compiler; and that his grace may rest upon them.

While I flatter myself that this humble Companion may solace the man of piety in his retired hours, and in his noon-day walks, when withdrawn from all human society; I venture to hope, that it will be found no less useful in prayer-meetings and in schools, by way of catechism, to “cast up, and to prepare the way of the Lord.” I would only desire, however, that it may be carefully observed, that what is here offered is to be considered but as a specimen on the several important points adverted to, and not as a finished subject. I have only gathered a nosegay from the sacred garden, of a few of its odoriferous flowers: they who admire their fragrance will find a great luxuriancy in the same divine enclosure, to afford endless gratification.

I dismiss the whole with fervent prayer to God, that his blessing may accompany this little work wherever it shall come. And if any thing in it shall be found helpful to the serious Christian, I have only in return to beg his remembrance of the unworthy author, (while he is in a situation to benefit by his prayers,) in those better moments, when drawing nigh the throne of grace through the divine Mediator. And may the God of all grace reward every such prayer sevenfold into his bosom!

R. H.

*Plymouth, Charles Vicarage,
July 29, 1824.*

THE reader is desired to use this "Pocket Companion," in reading, according to the direction of the figures, from one page to the other on the opposite side, and not from top to bottom.

For example:—When on one side we read the supposed language of a seeking soul, (1. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself," Jer. x. 23.) it will prove refreshing to such a state of mind to apply the supposed answer on the opposite page, under the same figure, (1. "Jesus saith, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me." John xiv. 26.) and thus, in like manner under all the other several subjects, which are here gathered together.

THE

CHRISTIAN'S POCKET COMPANION;

OR

A HELP TO PRAYER.

CHAPTER I.

The indispensable duty of prayer.

1. MEN ought always to pray, and not to faint. Luke xviii. 1.

Pray without ceasing. 1 Thes. v. 17.

2. It is good for me to draw near to God. Psal. lxxiii. 28.

3. I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting. 1 Tim. ii. 8.

4. Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him in the name of the Lord. James v. 13, 14.

5. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. Psal. xxvii. 8.

THE
CHRISTIAN'S POCKET COMPANION;
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CHAPTER I.

God's gracious promises to the performance of prayer.

1. Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Matt. vii. 7, 8.

2. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. James iv. 8.

The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them. Psal. cxlv. 18, 19.

3. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. James i. 6.

4. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James v. 15, 16.

Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee. Psalm l. 15.

5. I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. Isaiah xlv. 19.

They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God. Zech. xiii. 9

6. Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them. Ezek. xxxvi. 37.

The conclusion, both from the precepts

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, time of need. Heb. iv. 16.

CHAPTER II.

The soul convinced both of the duty of prayer, and encouraged by God's promises to the faithful discharge of it, now enquires after the proper method for the performance of it.

1. O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Jer. x. 23.

2. Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Micah vi. 6.

3. Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! Job xxiii. 3.

4. What shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth me, what shall I answer him? Job xxxi. 14.

6. Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me. Isaiah xlv. 11.

and the promises of God.

that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in

CHAPTER II.

God's gracious answers and directions to this enquiry.

1. Jesus saith, I am the way, and the truth, and the life : no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John xiv. 6.

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him ; and he will shew them his covenant. Psalm xxv. 14.

2. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matt. xi. 28.

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me ; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. John vi. 37.

3. I am found of them that sought me not : I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name. Isa. lxxv. 1.

Therefore my people shall know my name : therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak : behold, it is I. Isaiah lii. 6.

4. It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. Matt. x. 19.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities. Rom. viii. 26.

5. I would ask the way to Zion with my face thitherward: to join myself to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten. Jer 1. 5.

The conclusion, both from the enquiry

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a

CHAPTER III.

The soul pleading inability to prayer, and asking aid of the blessed Spirit of God.

1. We know not what we should pray for as we ought. Rom. viii. 26.

2. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves. 2 Cor. iii. 5.

3. Lord, teach us to pray. Luke xi. 1.

O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. Psalm li. 15.

O send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God. Psalm xliii. 3, 4.

5. Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. John xiv. 13, 14. See also Heb. vii. 25. Eph. ii. 18, 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.

and God's gracious answers and directions.

holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living vail, that is to say, his flesh; and having an High true heart in full assurance of faith. Heb. x. 19, 20.

CHAP. III.

God's gracious promises of helping in prayer, and giving his blessed Spirit to them that ask it.

1. THE Spirit helpeth our infirmities, with groanings which cannot be uttered. Rom. viii. 26.

2. Our sufficiency is of God. 2 Cor. iii. 5.

3. All thy children shall be taught of God. Isa. liv. 13.

The Lord shall guide thee continually. Isa. lviii. 11.

The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say. Luke xii. 12.

I create the fruit of the lips, saith the Lord. Isa. vii. 19.

I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications. Zech. xii. 10.

Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. Isa. xxx. 21.

4. Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter : I did mourn as a dove : mine eyes fail with looking upward : O Lord, I am oppressed ; undertake for me. What shall I say ? He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it. Isaiah xxxviii. 14, 15.

5. O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant : but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. Exod. iv. 10.

6. I am so troubled, that I cannot *speak*. Psalm lxxvii. 4.

7. My *sighs* are many, and my heart is faint. Lam. i. 22.

My *sighing* cometh before I eat. Job. iii. 24.

8. What shall I say ? He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it : I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. Isa. xxxviii. 15.

9. I *look* for the Lord, my soul doth wait for him : in his word do I hope. Psalm cxxx. 5.

O Lord, the *hope* of Israel. Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed ; save me, and I shall be saved : for thou art my praise. Jer. xvii. 13, 14.

CHAPTER IV.

The soul, in its approaches to the throne of grace, humbled under an awful sense of the infinite perfections of God, and the littleness of man.

1. HOLY, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Rev. i. 8.

4. The eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly. Isa xxxii. 3, 4.

5. The Lord said, Who hath made man's mouth? Or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. Exod. iv. 11, 12.

He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. Isa. xxx. 19.

6. It shall come to pass, that before they *call*, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. Isa. lxxv. 24.

7. For the oppression of the poor, for the *sighing* of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord. Psalm xii. 5.

8. *Look* unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else; beside me there is no Saviour. Isa. xlv. 22.

9. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord. My Spirit that is upon thee, (that is Christ) and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever. Isa. lix. 21.

CHAPTER IV.

God's promises and encouragements to the soul under this state of mind.

1. Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high

The Three that bear record in heaven ; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ; and these three are one. 1 John v. 7.

All nations before thee are as a drop of the bucket, or the small dust of the balance, and thou takest up the isles as a very little thing. They are as nothing and are counted to thee less than nothing and vanity. Isa. xl. 15—17.

Who can express the noble acts of the Lord, or shew forth all his praise ? Psalm cvi. 2.

2. All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, John v. 23.

Being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power ; when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Heb. i. 3.

Who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten from the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth, Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father ; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Rev. i. 5, 6.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. Rev. v. 12, 9.

CHAPTER V.

The soul humbled before God, under a consciousness of sin and unworthiness.

I. O MY God ! I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God ! For our iniquities are in-

and holy place : with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit ; to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. Isa. lvii. 15.

Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool ; but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. Isa. lxvi. 1, 2.

Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word ; let the Lord be glorified, and he shall appear to your joy. Isa. lxvi. 5.

2, I and my Father are one, John x. 30.

He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. John v. 23.

But now thus saith the Lord, that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not ; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.

I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. Isa. xliii. 1, 3.

I, even I, am the Lord ; and beside me there is no Saviour. Isa. xliii. 11.

I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. Rev. i. 11.

I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen ; and have the keys of hell and of death. Rev. i. 18.

The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Rom. x. 12, 13.

CHAPTER V.

God's promises and encouragements to the sin-burthened soul.

1. **THUS** saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy—I will not contend

creased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens. Ezra. ix. 6.

O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee; but unto us, confusion of face as at this day. Dan. ix. 7.

Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity. Hab. i. 13.

2. Woe is me, for I am undone; I am a man of unclean lips. Isa. vi. 5.

Thou, even thou, art to be feared; and who may stand in thy sight when thou art angry? Psalm lxxvi. 7.

3. We are all gone out of the way, we are altogether become abominable: there is none that doeth good, no not one. Psalm xiv. 3.

4. I will arise, and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. Luke xv. 18, 19.

Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. Psalm cxliii. 2.

5. O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom. vii. 24.

CHAPTER VI.

The soul still under depression by reason of sin, unable to lay hold of the promises of God.

1. O MY God, I cry in the day time, but thou

for ever, neither will I be always wrath; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. Isa. lvii. 16.

As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live. Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

2. The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John i. 7.

Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Isa. vi. 7.

3. All ye, like sheep, have gone astray; ye have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isa. liii. 6.

4. All that the Father giveth me *shall* come unto me; and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. John vi. 37.

Bring forth the best robe and put in on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. Luke xv. 22, 23.

5. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. i. 15.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Eph. i. 7.

CHAPTER VI.

God's gracious promises under this increased distress of mind.

1. COME now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be

hearest not, and in the night season also I take no rest. Psalm xxii. 2.

There is no health in my flesh because of my displeasure, neither is there any rest in my bones, by reason of my sin; for my wickednesses are gone over my head, and are like a sore burthen too heavy for me to bear. Psalm xxxviii. 3, 4.

O Lord, let it be thy pleasure to deliver me; make haste, O Lord, to help me! Psalm xl. 13.

2. Our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away; for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us because of our iniquity. Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O Lord? Wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore? Isa. lxiv. 6, 7, 12.

Be not wroth very sore, O Lord: neither remember iniquity for ever. Behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people. Isa. lxiv. 9.

3. Now therefore I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight. I beseech thee shew me thy glory. Exod. xxxiii. 13, 17, 18.

4. I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Psalm li. 3.

Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin

white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Isa. i. 18.

I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me ; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. Jer. xxxiii. 8. See also Heb. viii. 12.

I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far off ; and my salvation, it shall not tarry ; and I will place salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory. Isa. xlvi. 13.

2. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted, for a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. Isa. liv. 11, 7, 8.

3. And the Lord said, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken, for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. Exod. xxxiii. 17,—19.

And the Lord passed by, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth ; keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

Only acknowledge thine iniquity that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. Jer. iii. 13.

4. If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass that they have trespassed against me, and that they also have

did my mother conceive me. Psalm li. 5.

I said, I will acknowledge my sin unto thee, and my unrighteousness have I not hid. Psalm xxxii. 5.

I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. Job xlii. 6.

I have sinned : what shall I do, O thou Preserver of men? Job vii. 20.

For thy name's sake, O Lord, be merciful to my sin, for it is great. Psalm xxv. 11.

O remember not the sins and offences of my youth; but according to thy mercies think thou upon me, O Lord, for thy goodness. Psalm xxv. 7.

CHAPTER VII.

The soul mourning under hardness of heart, and desiring the Lord to remove it.

1. O LORD why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our hearts from thy fear? Return, for thy servant's sake, the tribes of thine inheritance. Isa. lxiii. 17.

Lord, why castest thou off my soul? Why hidest thou thy face from me? I am in misery, and like unto him that is at the point to die; while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted. Psalm lxxxviii. 14, 15.

2. My sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters. Job iii. 24.

Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night! Jer. ix. 1.

3. What prayer and supplication soever be made

walked contrary to me, and that I also have walked contrary to them; if then their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham, will I remember.—I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God. Lev. xxvi. 40, &c.

All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. 2 Cor. v. 18, 19.

CHAPTER VII.

God's gracious answer under this affliction.

1. I WILL sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.

And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26.

Neither will I hide my face any more from them, for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel saith the Lord God. Ezek. xxxix. 29.

2. And the Lord said, Go through the midst of the city, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof—and slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children—but come not near any man upon whom is the mark. Ezek. ix. 4—6.

3. If any people which are called by my name,

by any men, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands before thee; then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do.—
1 Kings viii. 38, 39.

4. My heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death is fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me.

Hear my prayer, O God, and hide not thyself from my petition. Take heed unto me, and hear me; how I mourn in my prayer, and am vexed. Psalm lv. 4, 5, 1, 2.

CHAPTER VIII.

The soul encouraged by God's promises, now pleads for converting grace, and repentance, and faith; all which are the gifts of God.

1. TURN thou me, O Lord, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God. Jer. xxxi. 18.

Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved; for thou art my praise. Jer. xvii. 14.

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. Psalm cx. 3.

And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken. Numb. xiv. 17.

2. "Thou hast said," that it was expedient for thee, "O blessed Jesus," that thou shouldst go away; for if thou went not away, the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, would not come; but if thou didst depart, thou wouldst send him unto us. John xvi. 7.

Not by works of righteousness which we have

shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and heal their land; and mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made. 2 Chron. vii. 14, 15.

4. Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy Father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears. Isa. xxxviii. 5.

I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Isa. xliii. 25.

Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee. Jer. xxx. 10, 11.

CHAPTER VIII.

God's gracious promises to bestow these gifts upon his people.

1. O ISRAEL, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help. Hos. xiii. 9.

The Lord will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed. Deut. xxx. 6.

And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart. Jer. xxiv. 7.

2. And Jesus said, I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. John xiv. 16, 17.

done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Titus iii. 5—7.

Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people. O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen; that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation; that I may glory with thine inheritance. Psalm cvi. 4, 5.

Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. 2 Cor. ix. 15.

The soul pleading for the gift of repentance.

1. That we may repent and be converted every one, that our sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. Acts iii. 19.

O my God, incline thine ear and hear; open thine eyes and behold our desolation; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercy. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not for thine own sake, O my God; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name. Dan. ix. 18, 19.

2. Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God. Surely, after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my

And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. John xvi. 8.

I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. Isa.

I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication; and they shall look upon me, whom they have peirced, and they shall mourn as one that mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first born. Zech. xii. 10.

In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping; they shall go and seek the Lord their God. And they shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten. Jer. l. 4, 5.

God's promising repentance to his people.

1. God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities. Acts iii. 26.

Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. Acts v. 31.

The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. Rom. ii. 4.

And then shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for all the evils that ye have committed. Ezek. xx. 43.

2. Is Ephraim my dear Son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. Jer. xxxi. 20.

thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Jer. xxxi. 18, 19.

3. Give me that godly sorrow that worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of; and let me not rest in the sorrow of the world, which worketh death. 2 Cor. vii. 10.

The soul praying for the gift of faith.

1. Lord, increase our faith. Luke xvii. 5.

2. That I may be not faithless, but believing John xx. 27.

3. Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. Mark ix. 24.

Lord grant that my faith fail not. Luke xxii. 32.

4. Grant that I may be like Stephen, a man full of faith. Acts vi. 5.

5. That being justified by faith, I may have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. v. 1.

6. That Christ may dwell in my heart by faith. Eph. iii. 17.

For without faith it is impossible to please God. Heb. xi. 6.

And to him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. Acts x. 43.

Now the God of hope fill me with all joy and peace in believing, that I may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. Rom. xv. 13.

3. For behold this same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of yourselves; yea, what indignation; yea, what fear; yea, what vehement desire; yea, what zeal; yea, what revenge. 2 Cor. vii. 11.

God's gracious answers.

1. Unto you it is given to believe in Christ. Phil. i. 29.

2. To as many as received him (Christ) to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John i. 12, 13.

3. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph. ii. 8, 9.

4. I will give them one heart and one way that they may fear me for ever. Jer. xxxii. 39.

5. By him all that believe are justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses. Acts xiii. 39.

6. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth. Rom. x. 4.

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the end that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John iii. 16—19.

CHAPTER IX.

God's promisiug pardon to sinners, and justification through Christ.

1. IF thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Rom. x. 9.

2. For the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. Rom. xi. 29.

3. God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly. Rom. v. 8.

4. Now in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Eph. ii. 13.

5. He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. v. 21.

If when we were enemies we were reconciled, to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. Rom. v. 10.

6. Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me. Isa. xxvii. 5.

7. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. John i. 29.

CHAPTER IX.

The soul rejoicing in this salvation.

1. BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

2. Whom the Lord loveth, he loveth to the end. John xiii. 1.

3. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Rom. viii. 32.

4. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Rom. viii. 1.

5. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Rom. viii. 33.

6. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. Isa. xlv. 24.

I will go forth, therefore, in the strength of the Lord God, and will make mention of his righteousness only. My mouth shall daily speak of thy righteousness and salvation, for I know no end thereof. Psalm lxxi. 15, 16.

7. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God—For of him and through him, and to him, are all things. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Rom. xi. 33—36.

CHAPTER X.

God's promises of adoption, and the assurance of an interest in his covenant.

1. I AM a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first born. Jer. xxxi. 9.

2. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called The children of the living God. Rom. ix. 26.

I will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 2 Cor. vi. 18.

Ye are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. Gal. iii. 26.

3. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Gal. iv. 6.

4. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the

CHAPTER X.

The soul rejoicing in those privileges, and experiencing the evidences thereof in union with Christ, and communion with God.

1. SHALL we not from this time cry unto thee, and say, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth, Jer. iii. 4.

2. Now, therefore, we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. Eph. ii. 19,—21.

3. Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. Eph. i. 5, 6.

4. For this cause, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named; that he would grant us, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; that being rooted and grounded in love, we may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God. Eph. iii. 14, 19.

And if we be Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. iii. 29.

Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Jer. xxx. 31,—34.

5. In whom, after ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise. Eph. i. 13.

Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

And another angel ascended from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea; saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. Rev. vii. 2, 3.

6. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. 1 John v. 10.

Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. 1 John iv. 13.

Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. Isa. xliii. 6.

CHAPTER XI.

The dedication of the soul to God by virtue of this union with Christ, and the privileges of adoption.

1. THE love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. 2 Cor. v. 14. 15. 17.

5. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God. I Cor. ii. 12.

Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm ; for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave ; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which have a most vehement flame. Cant. viii. 6.

6. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Rom. viii. 16.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God ! Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and 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. 1 John iii. 1, 2.

CHAPTER XI.

God's promises of assisting grace.

1. AND you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh, through death, to present you holy and unblameable, and unreprouvable in his sight. Col. i. 21, 22.

2. Ephraim shall say, what have I to do any more with idols? Hos. xiv. 8.

For our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in us, which we have of God; and we are not our own, for we are bought with a price, therefore we should glorify God, in our body and in our spirits, which are God's. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

Forasmuch as we know that we were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, from our vain conversation received by tradition from the fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

3. We desire, therefore, by the mercies of God, to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service; and to be not conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of the mind, that we may approve what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. Rom. xii. 1, 2.

CHAPTER XII.

Praying for grace to persevere against all opposition in the path of duty.

1. HOLD thou up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not. Psalm xvii. 5.

O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Jer. x. 23.

2. Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Rom. vi. 14.

Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. Gal. v. 16.

The Lord is a sun and a shield, and he will give grace and glory. Psalm lxxxiv. 11.

Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Rom. viii. 9.

And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. Rom. viii. 10.

But 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. Rom. viii. 11.

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. John xv. 7.

3. If so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. ii. 3,—5.

CHAPTER XII.

God's gracious promises concerning it.

1. THE salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; he is their strength in the time of trouble. Ps. ix. 9.

I will inform thee, and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go, and I will guide thee with mine eye. Psalm xxxii. 8.

O Lord, direct my heart into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. 2 Thess. iii. 5.

Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; let thy Spirit lead me forth into the land of uprightness. Psalm cxliii. 10.

2. The enemy crieth so, and the ungodly cometh on so fast, they are minded to do me some mischief, so maliciously are they set against me. Psalm lv. 3.

Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. Isa. xxv. 4.

Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee; yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me. He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Psalm lvii. 1, 3.

3. I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. Rom. vii. 18.

Be not thou far from me, O Lord, O my strength, haste thee to help me. Ps. xxii. 19.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort our hearts, and stablish us in every good word and work. 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17.

I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do, and not forsake them. Isa. xlii. 16.

2. Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Isa. xli. 10. See also, 11,—14.

I, even I, am he that comforteth thee. Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy Maker? Isa. li. 12.

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn: this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. Isa. liv. 17.

He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee; so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

3. My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. 2 Cor. xii. 9.

I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Jer. xxxii. 40.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. John x. 27, 28.

CHAPTER XIII.

The soul under temptation.

1. WE are in heaviness through manifold temptations. 1 Pet. i. 6.

2. The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail. Isa. li. 14.

Thou hast promised, That when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. Isa. lix. 19.

We would desire to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; to put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore we would take unto us the whole armour of God; and above all, taking the shield of faith, whereby we shall quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. Eph. vi. 10,—16.

Lord, grant us grace to be sober and vigilant, because our adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom we would resist, stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in our brethren that are in the world. 1 Pet. v. 8, 9.

3. Wherefore, seeing we also are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, we would lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before

CHAPTER XIII.

God's gracious promises to the tempted soul.

1. **BLESSED** is the man that endureth temptation ; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. James i. 12.

2. He shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of Hosts. Isa. xlv. 13.

Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered ; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. Isa. xlix. 24, 25.

Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation. Rev. iii. 10.

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation. 2 Pet. ii. 9.

And the God of all grace who hath called you unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. 1 Pet. v. 10.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man ; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able, but will, with the temptation also, make away to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 1 Cor. x. 13.

3. For consider him (Jesus Christ) that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children : My son, despise not thou the

him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Heb. xii. 1, 2.

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Heb. iv. 14, 15.

Let us come boldly, therefore, to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Heb. iv. 16.

CHAPTER XIV.

The soul mourning under backsliding.

1. OUR transgressions are many, our backslidings are increased. Jer. v. 6.

Hast thou not said, Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings? Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God. Jer. iii. 22.

Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render thee the calves of our lips. Ashur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods; for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. Hos. xiv. 2, 3.

2. O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake, for our backslidings are many, we have sinned against thee. O, the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night? Why shouldest thou be as a man astonished; as a mighty man that cannot save? Yet thou, O Lord,

the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Heb. xii. 3,—6.

The Captain of their salvation is made perfect through sufferings. Heb. ii. 10.

In that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. Heb. ii. 18.

And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Rom. xvi. 20.

CHAPTER XIV.

God's gracious answers to this frame of mind.

1. Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. Jer. iii. 12, 13.

I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away. Hos. xiv. 4.

2. My people are bent to backsliding from me; though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God and not man, the Holy

art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name ; leave us not. Jer. xiv. 7—9.

Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory. Where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies towards me? Are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting. Isa. lxiii. 15, 16.

CHAPTER XV.

The soul mourning under the hiding of God's countenance.

I. WHEREFORE hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy ;

Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? And wilt thou pursue the dry stubble? Job. xiii. 24, 25.

Why standest thou so far off, O Lord, and hidest thy face in the needful time of trouble? Psalm x. 1.

O turn thee then unto me, and have mercy upon me ; shew some token upon me for good. Psalm lxxxvi. 16.

O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not, and in the night season also I take no rest. And thou continuest holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Psalm xxii. 2, 3.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ; and art so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? Ps. xxii. 1.

Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me, and it will put gladness in my heart, more than in the time when corn and wine and oil increase. Psalm iv. 7, 8.

One in the midst of thee. Hos. xi. 7—9.

Howbeit thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee. Know, therefore, and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of Hosts. Jer. ii. 19.

If his children [Christ's people] break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take away, not suffer my faithfulness to fail. Psalm lxxxix. 31,—33.

CHAPTER XV.

God's gracious answer to this affliction.

1. WHY sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint. Isa. xl. 27,—31.

For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. Isa. liv. 7, 8.

I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you. John xiv. 18.

Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour. Isa. xlv. 15.

Return, for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance; our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary. We are thine; thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name. Isa. lxiii. 17, 18.

That I may shew forth the praises of Him who hath called me out of darkness into his marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.

CHAPTER XVI.

Holy pleadings with God in prayer.

1. O THAT one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth with his neighbour. Job xvi. 21.

The King is held in the galleries. Cant. vii. 5.

2. Will he plead against me with his great power? No, but he will put strength in me. Job xxiii. 6.

3. Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me, and fight thou against them that fight against me. Psalm xxxv. 1.

4. How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I seek counsel in my soul and be so vexed in my heart? How long shall mine enemy triumph over me? Psalm xiii. 1, 2.

5. In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever ; even the Spirit of truth. John xiv. 16.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Isa. l. 10.

I will appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. Isa. lxi. 3.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Lord's pleadings with his people, and kind answers to their prayers.

1. WHEREFORE will ye plead with me? Ye all have transgressed against me, saith the Lord. Jer. ii. 29.

2. Put me in remembrance, let us plead together; declare thou, that thou mayest be justified. Isa. xliii. 26.

3. Thy Redeemer is mighty, he shall plead thy cause. Prov. xxiii. 11.

4. How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee? Jer. iv. 14.

How long will it be ere they attain to innocency? Hgs. viii. 5.

How long will this people provoke me? How long will it be ere they believe me? Num. xiv. 11.

5. Therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you: and therefore will he be exalted,

name, and the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me I will seek thee early. Isa. xxvi. 8, 9.

6. The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond it is graven upon the table of our hearts, and upon the horns of our altars. Jer. xvii. 1.

7. I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord. Lam. iii. 18.

I said in my haste all men are liars. Psalm cxvi. 11.

8. Call to remembrance, O Lord, thy tender mercies, and thy loving-kindnesses, which have been ever of old. O remember not the sins and offences of my youth; but according to thy mercy think thou upon me, O Lord, for thy goodness. Psalm xxv. 6, 7.

Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good. Gen. xxxii. 12.

Remember thy word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. Psalm cxix. 49.

Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. Psalm lxix. 3.

9. And now for a little space, grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. Oh, our God, what shall we say after this? After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou, our God, hast punished us *less than our iniquities deserve*, and hast given us such a deliverance

that he may have mercy upon you ; for the Lord is a God of judgment. Blessed are all they that wait for him. Isa. xxx. 18.

6. In those days, (gospel days) and in that time saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none ; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found ; for I will pardon them whom I reserve. Jer. i. 20.

7. Let Israel hope in the Lord ; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. Psalm cxxx. 7.

O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt ? Matt. xiv. 31.

8. Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying, Where is He that brought them up out of the sea, with the shepherd of his flock ? Where is he that put his holy Spirit within him ? Isa. lxiii. 11.

Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember. Lev. xxvi. 42.

For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more. Heb. viii. 12.

Thus saith the Lord, the Holy one of Israel, and his Maker ; Ask me of things to come, concerning my sons ; and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me. Isa. xlv. 11.

9. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned ; for she hath received of the Lord's hand (that is, in the person of the Redeemer) double for all her sins. Isa. xl. 1, 2.

The Lord shall comfort Zion : he will comfort all her waste places ; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the

as this ; should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? Wouldst thou not be angry with us, till thou hast consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? Ezra ix. 8. 11. 13. 14.

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardonest iniquity, and passest by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage? Micah vii. 18.

10. O God, thou art my God ; early will I seek thee : my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth after thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is. Psal lxiii. 1.

I stretch forth my hands unto thee ; my soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land. Psalm cxliii. 6.

11. O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies? What wilt thou do unto thy great name? Josh. vii. 8, 9.

For thy name's sake, O Lord, be merciful unto my sin, for it is great. Psalm xxv. 11.

12. Our fathers trusted in thee ; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them ; they cried unto thee, and were delivered ; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. But I am a worm, and no man ; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. Psalm xxii. 4,—6.

Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles. Psalm xxv. 22.

13. O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee. O let my prayer enter into thy presence ; incline thine ear unto my calling, for my soul is full of troubles and my life draweth nigh unto the grave. Psalm lxxxviii. 1, 2.

Lord ; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. Isa. li. 3.

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed the transgressions of his people from them. Psalm ciii. 11, 12.

10. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them ; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of vallies. Isa. xli. 17, 18.

Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth on me (as the Scripture has said) out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. John vii. 37.

11. Thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes O house of Israel ; but for mine holy name's sake. Not for your sakes, do I do this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you ; be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. Ezek. xxxvi. 22. 32.

12. I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord ; thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me when ye shall search for me with all your heart. Jer. xxix. 11, 12.

But thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. Ezek. xxxvi. 37.

13. Fear not, For I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name ; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee ;

14. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Heb. ix. 24.

I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne stood a lamb as it had been slain. Rev. v. 6.

And I heard the voice of them which sang a new song, saying, Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. Rev. v. 9.

15. And I saw one in heaven clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head. Rev. x. 1.

Have respect unto the covenant, for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty. Psalm lxxiv. 20.



CHAPTER XVII.

God's unchanging love and faithfulness in covenanting mercies in Christ Jesus.

I WILL make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Jer. xxxii. 40.

My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing which is gone out of my lips. I have sworn once by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. Psalm lxxxix. 34, 35.

For this is as the waters of Noah unto me, saith the Lord, for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee. Isaiah liv. 9.

when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. Isa. xliii. 1, 2.

14. For Christ also hath suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. 1 Pet. iii. 18.

Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. Verse 22.

Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. Heb. x. 19. 22.

15. And God said, I do set my bow in the cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature. Gen. ix. 13, 16.

This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Matt. iii. 17.

CHAPTER XVII.

The soul arrived to a state of rest and assurance on living on the rich promises of God's faithfulness in Christ Jesus.

RETURN unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. Psalm cxvi. 7.

This God is our God for ever; he will be our guide even unto death. Psalm xlviii. 14.

Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his son, Jesus Christ. 1 John i. 3.

The Lord forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever. Psalm xxxvii. 18.

Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace. John i. 16.

Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. John xiii. 1.

I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded

The Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. Joel iii. 16.

I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord. Zech. x. 12.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 1 John iv. 4.

For sin shall not have dominion over you ; for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Rom. vi. 14.

And a man [Christ Jesus] shall be an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest ; as rivers of waters in a dry place ; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Isa. xxxii. 2.

And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. Verse 17.

In that day the Lord shall defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and he that is feeble among them at that day, shall be as David ; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them. Zech. xii. 8.

General conclusions to prayers.

Now the God of Peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will ; working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day. 2 Tim. i. 12.

The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Gal. ii. 20.

It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself. 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind. 2 Tim. i. 7.

I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine. Cant. vi. 3.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. viii. 35,—39.

General conclusions to prayers.

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace; comfort our hearts, and stablish us in every good word and work. 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17.

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abun-

Now God himself, and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way. 1 Thess. iii. 11.

May the Lord direct our hearts into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ. 2 Thess. iii. 5.

Grace be unto us, and peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness, and the first-begotten from the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Rev. i. 4—6.

dantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us; unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. Eph. iii. 20, 21.

May God supply all our need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus. Phil. iv. 19.

Blessing, and honour, and glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen. Rev. v. 13.

OCCASIONAL PRAYERS.

WHICH MAY BE ADDED TO THE FORMER, OR USED SEPARATELY IN A
WAY OF EJACULATION, AS CIRCUMSTANCES SHALL REQUIRE.

OCCASIONAL PRAYERS.

On awaking from sleep in the morning.

MY voice shalt thou hear betimes, O Lord: early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up. Ps. v. 3.

It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not; they are new every morning, great is thy faithfulness! Lam. iii. 22, 23.

The day is thine, the night is thine; thou hast prepared the light and the sun. Psalm lxxiv. 16.

O may the sun of righteousness arise *on my soul*, with healing in his wings. Mal. iv. 2.

May the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. Luke i. 78, 79.

O let me hear thy loving kindness betimes in the morning, for in thee is my trust; shew thou me the way I should walk in, for I lift up my soul unto thee. Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee, for thou art my God; let thy loving Spirit lead me forth into the land of righteousness. Psalm cxliii. 8, 10.

The Lord preserve me in my going out, and in my coming in, from this time forth for evermore. Psalm cxxi. 8.

On the Lord's Day Morning.

I would desire, like the beloved apostle, to be in the Spirit on the Lord's day. Rev. i. 10.

I would call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and would honour him; not doing mine own ways, not finding my own pleasure, not speaking my own words, but delight myself in the Lord. Isa. lviii. 13.

One day in thy courts is better than a thousand. Psalm lxxxiv. 10.

This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. Ps. cxviii. 24.

The Lord is risen indeed. Luke xxiv. 34.

Grant Lord that I may be risen with Christ, and seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Col. iii. 1.

That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death. Phil. iii. 10.

NOON.

IN the evening and morning, and at noon-day, will I pray, and he shall hear my voice. Psalm lv. 17.

Seven times a day will I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments. Psalm cxix. 164.

Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon; for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions? Cant. i. 7.

Lord, cause not the sun to go down at noon, nor darken the earth in the clear day. Amos viii. 9.

Make mine age to be clearer than the noonday, that I may shine forth, and be as the morning. Job. xi. 17.

EVENING.

THOU makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to praise thee. Psalm lxxv. 8.

Let my prayer be set forth in thy sight as the incense, and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice. Psalm cxli. 2.

At the evening sacrifice I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God, and said, O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up to the heavens. Ezra ix. 5, 6.

When Jesus had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the evening was come, he was there alone. Mat. xiv. 23.

I would call my ways to remembrance, and turn my feet unto thy testimonies. Psalm cxix. 59.

I would stand in awe and sin not, and commune with mine own heart in my chamber and be still. Psalm iv. 4.

I would offer the sacrifice of (the Redeemer's) righteousness, and put my trust in the Lord. Verse 5.

NIGHT.

WITH my soul have I desired thee in the night. Isa. xxvi. 9.

I will lay me down in peace and take my rest, for it is thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety. Psalm iv. 8.

Into thy hands I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord thou God of truth. Psalm xxxi. 5.

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Psalm xxxiv. 7.

Nay, the Lord himself is my keeper, the Lord is my defence upon my right hand; so that the sun shall not burn by day, neither the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve from all evil; yea, it is even he that shall keep my soul. Psalm cxxi, 5,—7.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. Isa. xxvi. 3.

If waking in the night.

MINE eyes prevent the night watches that I might meditate in thy word. Psalm cxix. 148.

I have thought of thy name, O Lord, in the night season, and have kept thy law. Verse 55.

At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous judgments. Verse 62.

I would arise and cry out in the night, in the beginning of the watches, to pour out mine heart like water before the Lord. Lam. ii. 19.

Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night? Job xxxv. 10.

My soul fleeth unto the Lord before the morning watch; I say before the morning watch. Psalm cxxx. 6.

My mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches, because thou hast been my help. Psalm lxiii. 5,—7.

On the entrance of public worship.

SURELY the Lord is in this place! How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. Gen. xxviii. 16, 17.

God is very greatly to be feared in the council of his saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him. Psalm lxxxix. 7.

Lord give me grace, therefore, to keep my foot when I go to the house of God, and to be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil. Eccles. v. 1.

Thou hast said, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. Lev. x. 3.

Let us not be as those who draw nigh to God with their mouth, and honour him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him. Matt. xv. 8.

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be always acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer. Psalm xix. 14.

Desiring God's Holy Spirit in seasons of public worship.

If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up. Exod. xxxiii. 15.

But thou hast said, My presence shall go with thee. Exod. xxxiii. 14.

And in all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. Exod. xx. 24.

We wait for thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of the temple. Psalm xlvi. 9.

O send out thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me and bring me to thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling; and that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness, and upon the harp will I give thanks unto thee, O God, my God. Psalm xliii. 3, 4.

Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, and blow upon thy garden, that the spices may flow. Cant. iv. 16.

Draw me, and I will run after thee: that while the king sitteth at the table, my spikenard may send forth the smell thereof. Cant. i. 4—12.

On departing from God's house.

LORD, I have loved the habitation of thine house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. This shall be my rest for ever ; here would I dwell, for I have delight therein. Psalm cxxxii. 15.

How amiable are thy tabernacles thou Lord of hosts ! My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord ; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Psalm lxxxiv. 1, 2.

I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the courts of ungodliness. Verse 10.

But, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace ; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. Luke ii. 29, 30.

Grant, Lord, to me the ear to hear what the Spirit hath said this day in his churches. Rev. iii. 22.

And as I have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, enable me so to walk in him. Col. ii. 6.

Let the peace of God rule in my heart, to the which also I am called ; and make me thankful. Col. iii. 15.

Let the word of Christ dwell in me richly in all wisdom. Verse 16.

And may the good Lord pardon every one that hath prepared his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his Father, though he be not cleansed altogether according to the purification of the sanctuary, 2 Chron xxx. 19.

AT MEALS.

In relation to ourselves.

EVERY creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God, and prayer. 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.

The eyes of all wait upon thee, O Lord, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and fillest all things living with plenteousness. Psalm cxlv. 15, 16.

The Lord is my shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing. He shall feed me in a green pasture, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort. Thou hast prepared a table before me against them that trouble me; thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup is full. Psalm xxiii. 1—5.

My lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground; yea, I have a goodly heritage. Psalm xvi. 7.

In relation to others.

WHILE I eat the fat, and drink the sweet, *do thou O Lord*, send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared. Neh. viii. 10.

Thou hast promised to the poor and needy, that his bread shall be given him, and his waters shall be sure. Isa. xxxiii. 16.

And give me grace, Lord, to deal my bread to the hungry, and to bring the poor, that are cast out to my house; that when I see the naked, I may cover him, and to hide not myself from mine own flesh; to draw out my soul to the hungry, and to satisfy the afflicted soul; that my light may rise in obscurity, and my darkness be as the noon day. Isa. lviii. 7—10.

That no abuse of God's creatures may be found at our tables.

GRANT, Lord, also, that our table be not made a snare to take ourselves withal, and that the good things of thy providence, which are given for our welfare, be not unto us an occasion of falling. Psalm lxix. 22.

May we take heed to ourselves, that our hearts be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness. Luke xxi. 34.

But whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, may we do all to the glory of God. 1 Cor. x. 31.

Of Thankfulness.

AND when we have eaten and are full, then give us grace to bless the Lord our God. Deut. viii. 10.

Of a spiritual sense of Divine Mercies.

ABOVE all, feed us with that bread of life which came down from heaven, and of which whosoever eateth shall never hunger. John vi. 51.

Lord evermore give us this bread. John vi. 34.

And grant, Lord, that we may be among those who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Luke xiv. 15.

Under Sickness.

O thou, who when upon earth didst go about healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people. Matt. iv. 23.

Speak the word only and thy servant shall be healed. Matt. viii. 8.

Thou art still touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Heb. iv. 15.

Hast thou smitten him, as he smote those that smote him? And wilt thou not stay thy rough wind in the day of the east wind? Isa. xxvii. 7, 8.

O let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and thy judgments shall help me. Psalm cxix. 175.

Let this sickness be not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby. John xi. 4.

Houbeit, not as I will, but as thou wilt. Matt. xxvi. 39.

That the sickness may be sanctified, Lord, let me hear the rod, and who appointed it. Micah vi. 9.

That affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground. Job v. 6.

And grant that I may not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when I am rebuked of him; knowing that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Heb. xii. 5.

May the Lord comfort me when I lie sick upon my bed of languishing: and make all my bed in my sickness. Psalm xli. 3.

I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee. Verse 4.

Let those light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

And finally, Lord, grant that I may one day come to that happy land where the inhabitant shall not any longer say, I am sick. Isa. xxxiii. 24.

N. B. The above may be used *for* the sick as well as *by* the sick, only making the necessary alterations.

For the Sick when there appeareth small hopes of recovery.

LORD, into thy hands we commend the spirit, for thou hast redeemed it, O Lord, thou God of truth. Psalm xxxi. 5.

We commit the keeping of the soul into thy hand, as unto a faithful Creator. 1 Peter iv. 19.

When the heart shall faint, and the strength shall fail, be thou the strength of the heart, and the portion for ever. Psalm lxxiii. 26.

Upon occasion of a Funeral.

I KNOW that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living. Job xxx. 23.

Lord, make me wise to consider my latter end. Deut. xxxii. 29.

O may it be revealed to *me* as it was to devout Simeon, that I may not see death, till I have seen the Lord's Christ. Luke ii. 26.

Grant Lord, that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, I may have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 Cor. v. 1.

In Prayer Meetings.

Thou hast promised that when two or three are gathered together in thy name, there art thou in the midst of them. Matt. xviii. 20.

And if two shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of our Father which is in heaven. Verse 19.

The Lord fulfil all our petitions *at this time*. Psalm xx. 5.

In hearing and reading the Word.

GIVE us, Lord, the hearing ear, and the seeing eye.
Prov. xx. 12.

Open thou our eyes, that we may see the wondrous things of thy law. Psa. cxix. 18.

Open thou our understanding, that we may understand the Scriptures. Luke xxiv. 45.

Thy word is a lamp to our feet, and a light unto our path. Psalm cxix. 105.

Enable us to receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save our souls. James i. 21.

In Meditating.

LET not the book of thy law depart out of our mouth; but may we meditate therein day and night. Josh. i. 8.

We would lay up these words in our hearts and in our souls, and bind them for a sign upon our hands, that they may be frontlets between our eyes. Deut. xi. 18.

That our delight may be in the law of the Lord; and in that law to meditate both day and night. Psalm i. 2.

In Religious Conversation.

LET no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Eph. iv. 29.

They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a

book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. Mal. iii. 16.

Grant, Lord, that as it came to pass, while thy disciples communed together, and talked of thy divine truths, Jesus himself drew near; so thou wouldst draw nigh to us, that our hearts also may burn within us, while thou speakest to us by the way, and while thou openest the Scriptures by the grace. Luke xxiv. 14—32.

In singing Hymns and Psalms.

MAY we sing with the spirit, and sing with the understanding also. 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts unto the Lord. And that whatsoever we do in word or deed, we may do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Col. iii. 16, 17.

Prayer for the Extension of the Church of Christ.

THAT the whole earth may be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Isa. xi. 9.

That the Lord may create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. Isa. iv. 5.

The Lord hath promised that he will keep it; and water it every moment: and lest any hurt it, to keep it night and day. Isa. xxvii. 3.

Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine

eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down. Isa. xxxiii. 20. See the whole chapter.

That the Gentiles may come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising—That they may fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows. Isa. lx. 3—8. See also Isa. liv. li. Jer. xxxi.

Thou hast said, O Lord, that it is a light thing for thy Son to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: but thou wouldst also give him for a light to the Gentiles, that he might be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. Isa. xlix. 6.

May the heathen be given for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. Psalm ii. 8.

Until all the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever. Rev. xi. 15.

For the prosperity of the nation to which we belong.

LORD, thou art become gracious unto this land; we dwell safely under our own vines, and under our own fig trees. 1 Kings iv. 25.

Thou speakest peace to him that goeth out, and to him that cometh in. 2 Chron. xv. 5.

The hill of our Zion is a fair place and the joy of the whole earth. We wait for thy loving kindness, O God in the midst of thy temple. Psa. xlviii. 2.

But, Lord, we have cause to be humbled before thee, in that we are a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers. Isa. i. 4.

Because iniquity abounds, the love of many is waxen cold. Matt. xxiv. 12.

But O thou, the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof

in the time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night? Why shouldest thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not. Jer. xiv. 8, 9.

O let thy salvation be nigh them that fear thee, that glory may dwell in our land. Psalm lxxxv. 9.

Though we have left our first love, remove not the candlestick out of its place. Rev. ii. 4, 5.

God will appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks. Isa. xxvi. 1.

Then in our time shall the righteous flourish; yea, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. Psalm lxxii. 7.

The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will give his people the blessings of peace. Psalm xxix. 11.

Praying for faithful Ministers.

THAT the Lord would give us pastors, according to his own heart, which shall feed his people with knowledge and understanding. Jer. iii. 15.

That the Lord may put words in their mouth, *when they stand up to minister in his name*, that they may not be afraid of the fear of men. Jer. i. 8, 9.

That they may not preach themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and themselves our servants for Jesus' sake. 2 Cor. iv. 5.

Knowing that they watch for our souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief. Heb. xiii. 17.

That the pleasure of the Lord may prosper in their hand.

That they may see of the travail of the Redeemer's soul, and be satisfied. Isa. liii. 10.

That they may feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. That when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they may receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 1 Peter v. 2—4.

For persons under awakening Convictions.

LET thy gospel come not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. 1 Thess. i. 5.

Translate them out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of thy dear Son. Col. i. 13.

That they may ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward: saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten. Jer. l. 5.

Quench not the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed. Matt. xii. 20.

Despise not the day of small things. Zech. iv. 10.

But let them be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and cause them to drink of thy pleasures as out of the river. Psalm xxxvi. 8.

Shew them wonderful things in thy righteousness, O God of our salvation; thou art the hope of all the ends of the earth. Psal. lxxv. 5.

And grant, Lord, that they who are by nature far off may be brought nigh through the blood of Christ. Eph. ii. 13.

Thou wilt feed thy flock like a shepherd: thou wilt

gather the lambs with thine arm, and carry them in thy bosom, and wilt gently lead those that are with young. Isa. xl. 11.

And grant Lord, *that it may be but* a little in passing *the enquiries* before they may find Him whom their soul loveth. Cant. iii. 4.

And may come up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved, *saying*, I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine. Cant. viii. 5. and vi. 3.

Acknowledgments for sin-preventing Providences.

SURELY the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. Gen. xxviii. 16.

Blessed be God, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us. 2 Cor. i. 10.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath kept me this day *from this sin*. 1 Sam. xxv. 32.

This is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in my eyes. Psalm cxviii. 23.

In hearing or seeing the Sins of others.

LORD, how is it that thou hast manifested thyself unto *me*, and not unto the world? John xiv. 22.

They that are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. 1 Peter i. 5.

Not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory. Psalm cxv. 1.

For journeying Mercies.

LORD, keep me in the way I go, that no evil thing may befall me. Gen. xxviii. 20.

Grant that I may have a prosperous journey by the will of God. Rom. i. 10.

And if thy presence go not with me, carry me not up hence. Exod. xxxiii. 15.

Lord, I bless thee that thou hast said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. Verse 14.

After a Journey.

BLESSED be the Lord God who hath kept me in the way that I go. Gen. xxviii. 20.

So that I am come again to my house in peace, The Lord shall be my God. Ve. se 21.

IT is presumed the above are sufficient examples for the purpose of forming prayers from Scripture, suited to the most general occurrences of life. More might certainly be added of a similar kind; but it were unnecessary.

May the Lord sanctify what is here offered, and awaken from us a spirit of devotion in the heart to keep alive the flame of devotion, from the morning oblation to the evening sacrifice, that "God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ!"

FRAGMENTS

FROM

HOLY SCRIPTURE:

WRITTEN ON THE MARGIN OF AN OLD BIBLE.



“Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.”—JOHN vi. 12.

P R E F A C E.

WHAT gave rise to this little publication was this: I have long been accustomed, when reading in the Bible, if a passage more than ordinarily struck my mind, to make memorandums of it in the margin. In process of time this hath amplified so much, that the Bible I commonly use, and which always stands on my table, is marked in most parts with these observations.

Some little time since, a young man intended for the ministry, happened to take it up as it lay before him, and observing what was written, requested permission to copy the remarks from the margin of my Bible into his own: and this having been followed by others, I have thought, if the same plan was more generally adopted, it might become, under the Lord's blessing, more generally useful. This is the history of these *Fragments*.

If God the Holy Ghost, the almighty Author and Giver of Scripture, shall graciously condescend, in a single instance, to shine upon it with his favour, the end for which it is sent forth into the church will be abundantly answered, and the name of the Lord be praised.

ROBERT HAWKER.

Plymouth, January, 1819.

FRAGMENTS

FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE.



GEN. i. 26.

“And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness.”

WHAT a blessed *us* is here! And what a blessed opening of the Bible with such an express revelation of the holy Trinity! And as the word of God thus opens with such a testimony of our holy faith, so is it no less blessed to behold the same glorious truth carried on through every part of it. “Behold the man is become as one of us.” (Gen. iii. 22.)

“Let us go down.” (Gen. xi. 7.) “Whom shall I send and who will go for us?” (Isa. vi. 8.) In proof of the Holy Three, all manifested in this Scripture, see the first verse for the person of Christ, with John xii. 41. The eighth verse for the person of God the Father, compared with John xvii. 3. 1 John iv. 9. And for the person of God the Holy Ghost, compare the ninth and tenth verses with Acts xxviii. 25, 26. Oh! the blessedness of this mighty *us*! “I in them (said Jesus, speaking of his people,) and they in me; that they all may be one in us!” (John xvii. 21, 23.)

2. "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." (Gen. vi. 8.) This is the first time that we meet with the word *grace* in the Bible, and Noah hath this distinguishing honour, concerning whom it is first spoken. Oh! the blessedness of finding grace in the eyes of the Lord! "And such honour have all his saints!" Hence in after ages it is said of Moses by the Lord, "I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight." (Exod. xxxiii. 12.) Hence Mary also "found favour (that is grace) with God." (Luke i. 30.) And hence the ordinary salutation of the church, "Grace, mercy, and peace, be with thee!" (Rom. i. 7.) Oh! the unspeakable "grace of God, and the gift by grace!" (Rom. v. 15.)

3. "Abraham the Hebrew." (Gen. xiv. 13.) There is more in the name *Hebrew* than merely to signify a nation. The Holy Ghost hath put his divine emphasis upon it, both in the instance of the great Father of the faithful, and his descendant Joseph! (Gen. xxxix. 14.) But to enter by grace into the right apprehension of the name, we must observe what the Holy Ghost said of Shem, in whom and with whom Christ, the blessing of blessings, was given. "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem." (Gen. ix. 26.) "Shem also the father of all the children of Eber." (Gen. x. 21.) Oh! precious Scriptures, thus blended and explained by each other! (1 Cor. ii. 10. to the end.)

4. "For the Lord's portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. (Deut xxxii. 9.) It is well worthy remark, that there are but *three* words in the Bible to express the right which the Lord hath in his people, and his people in him: and they are all brought forward in this verse of Scripture—*portion*, *lot*, and *inheritance*. It is a blessed thing, when a child of God hath learnt, under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, to say, "The Lord is my portion." (Psalm cxix. 57. Lament iii. 24.) But it is a much greater

thing when the Lord condescends to say, as in this verse, "The Lord's portion is his people." This is the *cause*, the other is the *effect*. Now God lives upon his portion, as a man lives upon his. If it be asked how? the answer is direct. As the glory of God is the first and last design of all things, the glory which is reflected back from the church in the innumerable objects of his love in Christ, in their holiness, and happiness, and glory in Christ, which Jehovah hath given them, is all "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Ephes. i. 6.) So that this is the Lord's portion and his inheritance. Let it be only added to this view, to make it completely blessed, that all the persons of the GODHEAD are thus spoken of as taking part in it. God the Father hath chosen his people for his inheritance in Christ. God the Son hath redeemed them as his own inheritance, when lost by his blood. And God the Holy Ghost giveth the earnest of this inheritance in the hearts of his people. (2 Cor. i. 22.) Oh! blessed security in a blessed covenant God!

5. "For their vine is of the vine of Sodom." (Deut. xxii. 32.) The margin renders it *worse than the vine of Sodom*. And the prophet in the name of the Lord, so reproves the church: "As I live, saith the Lord God, Sodom, thy sister, hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done—thou and thy daughters. Thou hast committed more abominations than they." (Ezek. xvi. 48—52.) How astonishing is the election of grace! The Lord's own testimony is, that no nation equalled Israel in abomination, and yet the charter of grace runs in these words: "Jacob have I loved; but Esau have I hated." (Rom. ix. 13.) Bow we down before this great God in silent adoration, who cannot do wrong, but "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will!" (Eph. i. 11.)

6. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness," (Psm. xvii. 15.) What likeness? Not from Christ's likeness in us; though that is most blessed. No, nor our being like him; though that is yet more blessed still: but neither alone would satisfy; for both together is not Christ. Nothing short of Christ himself can satisfy the regenerated soul. And therefore the full satisfaction, when awakening from the sleep of death and the grave, is the full knowledge and enjoyment of beholding Christ as he is in his own personal glory: in the contemplation of which the soul is swallowed up and lost in beholding his holiness, and from thence finds unspeakable joy and glory. Hence Jesus' own words as the supreme pinnacle to which his church is brought, at the final consummation of all things: "Father! I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." (John xvii. 24.)

7. "The hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness." (Prov. xvii. 31.) The hoary head and the renewed heart are beautiful when blended; but a white head, and a black heart, are awful companions. Hence that Scripture; "the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old is accursed!" (Isa. lxxv. 20.)

8. "Where I heard a language that I understood not." (Psm. lxxxix. 5.) Our God! our Lord Jesus is here blessedly speaking in the person of his people Israel. It is Israel of whom he speaks. In no other sense could it be said, that he heard a language which he understood not. And yet it is the Lord Jesus that is here speaking: because it was Israel's God, and not Israel himself, which ordained the law in Joseph for a testimony, who removed his shoulder from the burden of making the pots in Egypt, and to whom Israel called in trouble, and who delivered Israel,

verses 4 to 7. What a sweet Scripture ! to shew how highly the Lord takes part in the concerns of his people, that when speaking for them he speaks as in his own person !

9. "Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more !" (Psalm lxxxviii. 5.) What striking expressions the Holy Ghost makes use of, when at any time speaking of the uncircumcised as contrasted with the Lord's people ! —They are *free men*, that is, *citizens* by heirship, with them that go down to the pit : heirs of darkness and when slain by death, lie in the grave. (Psa. xlix. 14. Ezek. xxxii. 18, to the end.) Whereas on the contrary, while such are said to be remembered no more, and go to their own place, the righteous are had in everlasting remembrance. (Psalm cxii. 6. with Acts i. 25.) Reader ! of what city is your freedom ? Is it that city ? (Psa. xlvi. 4.—Heb. xi. 16.)

10. "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious." (Isa. xlix. 5.) In the margin, the words are rendered, that "Israel may be gathered unto him ! and I may be glorious : " or by way of question, shall not Israel be gathered unto him ? Yes ! he shall. In every sense, the passage is most blessed, in proof of the certainty of Christ's personal glory in redemption-work, which is subject to no peradventures, nor uncertainties. Israel shall be gathered, and the Lord Jesus shall be glorified. See with it the dying patriarch's prophecy. (Gen. xlix. 10. compared with John xi. 49—52.)

11. "Look unto Abraham your father and un'to Sarah that bare you, for I called him alone and blessed hm." (Isa. li. 2.) Called him *alone*, that is, electing grace manifested to him alone from the multitude of idolaters like himself which were then around him—to intimate the triumphs of distinguishing grace, which from the rock causeth the Lord's

choice to be hewn, and from the hole of the pit diggeth them. "Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" (1 Cor. iv. 7.)

12. "And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the Cherub." (Ezek. ix. 3.) What an awful Scripture is here? When the glory of the Lord is gone up from a land, in the withdrawing his upholding presence, the next thing we hear, (as in this Scripture) God's judgments follow. Then the messengers of God, with their destroying weapons, come on. "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone!" Oh! the trembling sentence! (Hosea iv. 1—7.)

13. "And this is the name wherewith she shall be called—The Lord our righteousness." (Jerem. xxxiii. 16.) It was blessedly said by this prophet in a former chapter, (Jerem. xxiii. 6.) that this glorious name should be given to our Christ, and he should be known by it, and his people should call him so! But who would have thought such grace should be extended to the church, as that *she* should be called by the same name? But so it is. And so the gracious Lord saith it ought to be. Every wife should bear her husband's name, for indeed and in truth they are no longer twain, but one flesh. And if Jesus would condescend to take his *wife's name*, as he hath done, when Jehovah said unto him, "Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified:" (Isa. xlix. 4.) shall it be thought incredible, or unbecoming, that her Lord will call her so himself, and also have her called by others, his? And if, as the prophet said, when closing up his prophecy, the "name of the city," (that is, the Lord's church, his Zion) "shall be called Jehovah Shammah; the Lord is there;" is it more to call her, "Jehovah Tzidkenu, The Lord our righteousness?" Oh! precious grace, in a most precious, precious Lord. Yes! the church shall be called, and

by the Lord God in covenant himself, and by all his people, "The Lord our righteousness." And he, her lawful, right, and honourable husband, shall be also called, as the foundation of her name, "The Lord our righteousness;" but they both shall have the name. For he is made of God to her "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. i. 30, 31.)

14. "For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye." (Zech. ii. 8.) Sweet Scripture! If Jesus takes it kindly in the cup of cold water, given to one of his little ones in his name, and as if done to himself; so equally doth he regard any injury done to them. The eye, and the apple of the eye, is the most apprehensive of all nature to hurt. The least touch, the smallest dust flying into it, produceth the greatest sensibility. So Jesus feels for his people: yea, he saith, the smallest offence he not only takes as done to himself, but it is in fact truly done to himself, (ut aliquid sui, that is, something of himself,) and that in the tenderest part—the apple of his eye. No child of God should lose sight of this union and oneness with Jesus!

15. "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matt. xi. 27.) The word in the original *no man* is *oudeis*, which not only means *no man* but *no one*; that is, no created being, whether angel, or man. And what an unanswerable argument is this in proof of the GOD-HEAD of Christ! And if the knowledge of the Son is limited to the Father; and the knowledge of the Father to the Son, (including the Holy Ghost, as that Scripture proves which saith, "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God; for the things of God knoweth no one but the Spirit of God.")

(1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.) What a blessed confirmation is this of that Scripture, in which Christ saith, "I and my Father are one!" (John x. 30.) And Reader! If you and I can say with Peter to the Lord's question, Whom say ye that I am? Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God! may we not take to us the blessing Jesus pronounced on him as our's also? for if none knoweth the Son but the Father, and the Father hath given us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, (Ephes. i. 17.) surely flesh and blood hath not revealed it, but the Father, which is in heaven. (Matt. xvi. 15—17.) Oh! precious testimony of the Father concerning the Son, and the Son concerning the Father; and God the Holy Ghost giving his illuminating grace in the soul to the enjoyment of both! (John xvi. 14, 15. Gal. i. 15, 16.)

16. "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you. Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels." (Matt. xxv. 34. 41.) It is worthy the observation of every renewed child of God, that when the Scriptures at any time speak of the state of the blessed, it is always spoken of as *prepared* for the Lord's people, and not for angels. But on the contrary, when speaking of the misery of the damned, it is not said to be *prepared* for *man*; but for the devil and his angels. Oh, what distinguishing grace is hereby manifested to fallen man!

17. "Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani!" (Matt. xxvi. 46.) It is strikingly remarkable, in this cry of our Lord Jesus, that he useth the word *Sabachthani*, which is the word the *Targum* of the Chaldee Paraphrase useth, and not the Hebrew *Azabthani*. So again when in the Jewish language as recorded (Luke iv. 18.) the Lord Jesus doth not use the very words of the Prophet Isaiah as in his writings, but as the Targums

or Chaldee Paraphrase of the Prophet. Probably in both instances, because this Paraphrase was better known and in more general use in the days of Christ than the Hebrew.

18. "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." (John xvii. 21.) One in Us! what a thought is here. One with Us, this oneness, this union in this glorious Us. Not only one with Christ by virtue of his having married our nature, and all the persons of his mystical body; but from this union with Christ being brought into such a oneness in Christ, that by his union with God the church hath an union also. Hence that blessed Scripture—As God hath chosen us in Christ, so hath he "predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will!" (Ephes. i. 4, 5.) Oh, the unspeakable blessedness of our oneness with this mighty Us!

19. "But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women!" (Acts xiii. 50.) What devout and honourable women were these? Not devout towards God, and honorable in his sight, as Israel of old, of whom Jehovah said, "he was precious, and the Lord had loved him." (Isa. xliii. 4.) Oh! no; for such would not have raised up a persecution against Paul. But devout by nature, not grace; honourable in the sight of men, while abominable in the sight of God. Oh! what multitudes have there been in every age of the church, whose devotion and honour are of this complexion. The whole is founded in nature and ends in nature, for nothing can rise above its source. Solomon hath accurately drawn such characters—There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. (Prov. xxx. 12.)

20. "Which he hath purchased with his own

blood. (Acts xx. 28.) His *own* blood! Yes! For though God the Father *prepared*, as it is called, a body, (Heb. x. 5.) and God the Holy Ghost overshadowed the womb of the virgin, (Luke i 35.) yet it was the personal act of God the Son himself, to assume our nature into union with himself. Hence it is said, that he *took* on him the seed of Abraham, consequently his *own* body. (Heb. ii. 16.) And hence, when he purchased the redemption of his church, he purchased it with his *own* blood. Oh! wonderful mystery! Oh! the infinite preciousness of the purchase! Oh! the infinitely more precious person of the Purchaser.

21. "The God of patience." (Rom. xv. 5.) The God of patience! What an endearing and persuasive argument, for inducing forbearance and compassion between brethren in Christ Jesus! As if the apostle had said: God, you know, is very patient towards you, though you differ from God more than the worst of your brethren differ from you: and yet there is no exhausting of his patience. And how delightfully the apostle follows up the argument when recommending a like mindedness, according to the lovely example of Christ Jesus!

22. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. x. 13.) This is a most precious Scripture, a precious assurance, and a precious promise. No temptation but what is common to man, the church of God, in her members, is liable to be exercised with. So that the sin against the Holy Ghost they are exempt from, for this is not a *common* temptation. It is not what is common to *human* infirmity, but is in itself devilish, coming from the devil, and against whose hellish

devices tempting to this sin, the Lord keeps his people from. Oh! how gracious the Lord is, who waters his church every moment, and keeps her night and day lest any should hurt her. (Isa. xxvii. 3.) Oh! faithful promise of the faithful Promiser: the faithful God! (Deut. vii. 9.)

23. "Behold Israel after the flesh. Are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" (1 Cor. x. 18.) What a direct reference is here made to the sacrifices under the law, by way of explaining the one all-perfect and all sufficient sacrifice of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ once for all! Now as the people *under* the law partook of the sacrifice, and by that act, as well as the High Priest which offered it, were considered as parties equally concerned: so by the Lord's supper, which is a feast of commemoration on the sacrifice, whoever by faith, given him from the Lord, partakes of it, doth to all intents and purposes become a partaker with Christ of all the benefits of Christ's sacrifice. Hence Tertullian, speaking of the supper of the Lord calls it, *participatio sacrificii*: that is, a partaker of the sacrifice. And all such real communicants who, by faith, eye Christ, and feed on Christ in that supper, are in Christ's view so truly partakers of this His sacrifice as if themselves had offered it. Oh! precious view of the supper of the Lord!—Lord! cause me always so to partake.

24. "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." (2 Cor. iii. 18.) What an effect, a wonderful effect, is here said to be wrought in the beholding of Christ. Whoever read of such things? Whoever heard of such things? Let a man look to the most beautiful object in nature, will it ever make him like it? What image, what picture, what glass hath such a property that by looking on it shall create a

likeness? But looking unto Jesus and beholding his glory, will beget all this and more. For the soul will go on from glory to glory swallowed up in the beatific vision, and as John saith, "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is!" Surely the people of God, for the most part, do not enter into an apprehension of this blessedness; they are looking more to some change wrought in them to prepare this glory, than to Jesus alone as the only source of glory—more to a work wrought *in* them, than to Christ as the glory *for* them. Precious Lord Jesus! give me to contemplate thy person as the source of all blessedness, and in this manner to be "filled with all the fulness of God!"

25. "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet from henceforth know we him no more." (2 Cor. v. 16.) By the expression of "knowing after the flesh," is meant, those carnal views which the Jews had of Christ, who looked for him only as a *temporal* Messiah. Now saith Paul, henceforth we look no more for the Lord Jesus Christ in this manner. I did so once, said Paul, in the day of my unregeneracy: but now no more. And though Paul had seen Christ speaking to him from heaven at his conversion; yet Paul valued the ordinary and more lasting sight of Christ by faith. This is the grand distinguishing sight of God's people. Carnal men saw Christ bodily when on earth. And Balaam saw Christ visionally. And a day is coming when every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him. But to all the unregenerated, these views are no saving sight. Whereas a sight of Christ by faith now is. Oh! the unspeakable blessedness of precious faith!

26. "To the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ." (Col. ii. 2.)

This is a blessed portion, and truly blessed are they who from the teaching of the Holy Ghost have a right apprehension of it. By *the mystery* of God must be meant the mystery of the Holy Ghost as a right in common with the Father and the Son, the one glorious undivided Jehovah. For the word itself hath an equal reference to each glorious person here named, and to all alike. And consequently the whole mystery of grace is the joint act of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And in proof that the whole Three persons are here named, it is observable that the conjunction *and*, to connect the whole, is that used *of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*. And it is worthy of farther observation, that this equality in the persons of the GODHEAD manifests their equality in essence and in the acts of grace. Here the Holy Ghost is *first* named, then the Father, and lastly the Son. In 2 Cor.xiii. 14, Christ is first named, then the Father, and lastly the Holy Ghost. And in Pet. i. 2. *first* the Father, *then* the Spirit, and *lastly* the Son. And wherefore all this, but to teach the church to look up to each glorious person, and to all with equal adoration, love, and praise, to “the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.”

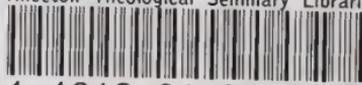
27. “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” (1 John iv. 20.) Observe it is a brother in Christ that is here spoken of: in whom is seen, or may be seen, the image of God in a life of grace and holiness. Now if a man behold these marks of the divine impression in his life and conversation, and doth not love him for them, certain it is, that he doth not love God for his holiness. For the love of God as God, is for the holiness of his nature. “He is glorious in holiness.” And hence on the

other hand, if a child of God loves a child of God, because he is a child of God, and the image of God is upon him; this becomes a precious testimony to our sonship also. And some of God's little ones have found comfort from this, that when the waters of the sanctuary have run low, and they could not discover such blessed signs in themselves as to afford strong assurances of faith, yet they have found an holy joy in beholding the image of God in others: and therefrom have known that this is among the spots of God's children.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.



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