Christ Crucified:

Or, the Marrow of the Gospel,

Evidently holden forth in

Seventy two Sermons

On the Whole Fifty third Chapter of Isaiah.

Wherein

The Text is clearly and judiciously opened up, and a great many most Apposite, profoundly Spiritual, and very Edifying Points of Doctrine, in a delectable Variety, drawn from it; With choice and excellent Practical Improvements made of them.

Wherein also several Adversaries of the Truth, as Socinians, Arminians, Antinomians, &c. are sharply, solidly and succinctly Reasoned with, and Refuted.

Wherein moreover, many Errors in Practice incident to Professors, otherwise Sound and Orthodox in their Opinions, are Discovered; And not a few grave, deep, and very concerning Cases of Conscience, soberly and satisfyingly Discussed.

By that able Minister of the New Testament, Mr. JAMES DURHAM, sometime Minister of the Gospel at Glasgow, and solemnly called to a publick Profession of Divinity in the University there, and also his Majesty's Chaplain in Ordinary, when he was in Scotland.

1 Cor. ii. 2. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

Gal. iii. 1. O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

1 Cor. i. 23. But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

2 Cor. v. 21. 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.

1 Pet. ii. 24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Augustinus in Psal. 120. Sacerdos nofter a nobis acceptit, quod pro nobis offerret: accepit a nobis carmem; in ipsa carne victima pro nobis factus est, holocaustum factus est, sacrificium factus est.

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Unto all afflicted and Cross-bearing serious Christians: and more particularly to the Right Honourable and Truly Noble Lord, WILLIAM, Earl of CRAWFORD.

It is one of the greatest practical debates and contents betwixt God and his own people, privileged with a special interest in him, which they are naturally inclined longest to keep up, and are loth to let fall, viz. Whether he shall guide and govern them, and shape out their lot to them, while they sojourn here in the world, as he himself, in his own infinite wisdom, shall think fit, having a blank submission put by them into his hand, to be filled up with what kind and quality, with what measure and quantity, and with what continuance and duration of troubles, trials and afflictions himself pleaseth? Or, whether he should, as to some things at least, consult their will and pleasure, and, as it were, take their advice, and allow them a liberty to prescribe to him, how he should guide and dispose of them? And, indeed, to be here denied to their own will, and absolutely submitted to the will of God, is one of the highest and most difficultly practicable points of self-denial, (to which, notwithstanding, all the disciples and followers of Christ are expressly called, and where-in he hath great delight and complacency, as favouring strong of intire trust and confidence in him) yet, if we consider these few things, it will be found that there is all the reason in the world, why they should come in his will, and sweetly submit themselves to it in all things, how crost soever to their own inclination, without any the least reluctation or contradiction; which is our privilege, and the restoration of our degenerated nature to its divine and primitive integrity.

First, If it be considered, that he hath most sovereign, absolute and incontrollable dominion over you, as the potter hath over the clay; for ye are the clay, and he is the Potter: Nay, he hath more absolute dominion over you than the potter hath over the clay, for the potter maketh not the clay, both the clay and the potter being made by him; but he hath made you, and not you yourselves: ye are all the work of his hands, Psal. 100. 3. Isa. 64. 8. He hath made you living creatures, rational creatures, and new creatures; If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, 2 Cor. 5. 17. which is the very flower of the creation: And ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, Eph. 2. 10. If therefore it be unsuitable and incongruous for the clay to say to him that fashioned it, What makest thou? or for a man's work to say to him, that he hath no hands, Isa. 45. 9. it's sure much more for you to say to your great Potter and Fashioneer, What makest thou of us? why dealtest thou so and so with us? Wo to him that striveth with his Maker; let the potter's hands strive with the potter's hand: Hath not the potter power over the clay? And are you not in the hand of the Lord, as the clay is in the hands of the potter? Rom. 9. 21. Jer. 18. 6. He might have made you vessels to dishonour, vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, without being justly chargeable with any injury done to you; and when he hath, in the sovereignty of his most wonderful free grace, made you vessels to honour, and vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory, will ye dare to quarrel with him for disposing in his own way of your external condition in this world, and of these moveables and accessories that are wholly extrinsic, and not at all essential to your salvation and true happiness? (For, let all the pleasures, riches and...
honours of the world, even all the delights of the sons of men, in their very extract, spirits and quintessence, and when in a manner distill’d in a lembick, till they be made to evaporate the purest perfumes of their utmost perfections, be heaped on the Christian; as they make him no better Christian, nor make any addition at all to his true happiness; so, when he is depumed and stripped naked of them all, every bird as it were of these earthly comforts taking back again from him its own feather, he is made never a whit the worse Christian, nor his happiness in the least impaired) It were certainly much more becoming you to say, It is the Lord, who can do us no wrong, and who hath undeservedly done us much good; let him do to us what seemeth good in his sight.

Secondly, If it be considered, that he is of infinite wisdom, and knows much better what is good for you, than ye do yourselves, who often mistake what is good for you, through your corruption, ignorance, partiality or prejudice; but he, by the most absolute perfection of his blessed nature, is infinitely removed from all possibility of mistaking what is good in itself, or good for you: And if you will adventure your estate and livelihood in the world on able and faithful lawyers, when ye yourselves are much unacquainted with, and ignorant of law, and are disposed to think that the suit that is commenced against you will ruin you, while they think otherwise; and if you will commit your health and life to skilful and painful physicians or chirurgeons, and receive from the one many unpleasent and lothsom potions and pills, and suffer from the other such painful incisions and injections, such searchings, lancings and pincings, such scarifications, cauterizings and amputations; from all which ye have so great an averation, if not abhorrence: Will ye not much rather, and much more confidently commit the conduct and care of yourselves, and of all that concerns you, to him, of whose understanding there is no search, as to what is good for his own people, and whose faithfulness in his dealing with them, reacheth to the very clouds, and never faileth? Psal. 36. 5. Psal. 89. 33. The skilfulest of these may mistake, none of them being infallible; and the most faithful of them may possibly at some times and in some things be found unfaithfully neglective, none of them being perfect: But it is simply impossible for him, either to mistake or to be unfaithful; for otherwise he should deny himself, and so cease to be God, whereof once to admit the thought thereof, is the highest blasphemy. Let therefore your confident trusting of men in their respective professions and callings, make you blush at, and be ashamed of your distrustings and jealousings of God, and of your quarrellings with him, even when ye know not for the time what he is doing with you, and when what is done would have been none of your own choice, but doth very much thwart and cross your natural inclination. Is it not enough that he is infinitely wise in himself, and for you? may you not therefore safely trust in him, and with unsolicitous confidence, commit the conduct of yourselves and of all your concerns to him, as knowing that he cannot himself be misled, nor misgovern you? may you not in faith, without distrustful and perplexing fear, follow him, as faithful Abraham followed him, not knowing whither he went, Heb. 11. 18. and cast all your care on him, who careth for you, 1 Pet. 5. 7. and hath made it your great care to be careful for nothing, Phil. 4. 6.

Thirdly, If it be considered, that ye have in your own experience (as the rest of the people of God have in theirs) found, that in all his bypast dealings with you, even these that for the time were most afflicting, his will and your true welfare have been unseparably joined together, and that but very seldom and rarely your own will and welfare have trydled together; so that ye have been constrained, when at yourselves and in cold blood, to bless him that you got not your will in such and such things, however for the time ye were displeased with the want of it, and have been made to think, that if ever ye had any good days or hours along your
The Epistle Dedicatory.

your pilgrimage, your most cross'd and afflicted ones, wherein God took most of his will, and gave you leaft of your own, have been your best days and hours: Dare you say, upon ser-
ious and just reflections, that it hath been otherwise? or that ye have not reason, as to all by-
gone croses providences, even the most apparently crushing of them, since the day that ye were
first brought under the bond of his covenant to this day, to set up as it were your stone, and
to call it Ebenezer, The stone of help, saying, Hitherto the Lord hath helped us? 1 Sam. 7. 12.
May you not, and should you not then humbly and confidently trust him, that ye shall thro'
grace have reason as to present and future ones, how sadly and surprizingly foever they are
or may be circumstantial, to say, Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will see or provide? Gen. 22. 14.
O but it be a sweet, pleasant, spiritually wholom and refreshful air that breathes in that
walk betwixt Ebenezer and Jehovah-jireh, wherein a few turns taken by the most afflicted
Christians in their serious, composed, spiritual and lively contemplation, would, thro' God's
blessing, very much contribute quickly to reconcile them to all their respective croses, how
croses foever, and to the keeping of them in better, firmer, and more constant spiritual health!

Fourthly, If it be considered, that by your pettish, fretful, male-contented and unsubmissive
contendings, strivings and strugglings with him, ye will not help yourselves, ye may well
make your own burden the more uneasy, and your chain the heavier; Should it be according
to your mind? Job 34. 33. Shall the earth be forfaken for you? or shall the rock be removed out
of his place? Job 18. 4. Will ye disannul his judgment? will ye condemn him, that ye may be
righteous? Job 40. 8. Will ye strive against him, who giveth not account of any of his mat-
ters? Job 33. 13. Will ye tax his wisdom, as if he did not understand what is convenient
for you? Will ye teach God knowledge? Job 21. 22. Is it fit that he should come down to
your will, rather than ye should come up to his? shall God change and break all his wisely
laid measures and methods of governing his people, and take new ones to gratify your peevish
humours? He will not be diverted from his purpose; When he is in one way, who can turn
him? what his soul defireth, that he doth; for he performeth the thing that is appointed for you,
Job 23. 13, 14. He is more just to himself, (to speak so) and more merciful to you, than to de-
grade as it were his infinite wisdom so far, as to suffer himself to be swayed against the dic-
tates of it, by such short-sighted and forward tutores as you; the great Physician of souls is
more compassionate and wise than to permit his-distempered, and sometimes even in a man-
ner distracted patients, to prescribe their own course of phisick; but he will needs do, what
he thought fit and resolved to do, whether ye choose, or whether ye refuse, Job 34. 33. only
he would (to say so) have your content unto, and your approbation of what he doth, for the
greater peace and tranquillity of your minds: Surely therefore it is meet, meekly and submis-
sively, to be said to God, whenever and however he chastiseth, I have borne chastisement, I will
not offend any more; that which I know not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do
no more, Job 34. 31, 32. It is the surest and shorteset way to get our will, in so far as may
be for our well, to allow him to take his own will and way with us; for he hath a special
complacency in this, and therein gives wonderful vent to the bowels of his tender compassion
toward his chastified and humbly submissive children: Surely (faith he) I have heard Ephraim
bemoaning himself thus, 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 af-
ter that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I
was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. 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 on him, faith
the Lord, Jer. 31. 18, 19, 20. Thus, when ye come submissively to his hand, he comes as
it were sweetly to yours: And as ye gain nothing by your striving with him, so ye lose nothing, but gain much, by your soft stooping and silent submitting to him; If ye humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, he shall lift you up, James 4. 10. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, 1 Pet. 5. 6.

Fifthly, If it be considered, that ye stand in need of all the troubles and afflictions that ye meet with; whenever ye are in heaviness through one or mo, or manifold temptations, it is alway, and only, if need be, 1 Pet. 1. 6. And if ye be well seen in the state and posture of your soul-affairs, what graces of the Spirit are to be quickned and drawn forth into more lively and vigorous exercise, what of these precious spices in your gardens are to be blown upon, not only by the more gentle and soft south-winds of consolations, but also by the more sharp and nipping north-winds of afflictions, and to be beaten as it were in the mortar thereof, that they may rend forth their pleasant and fragrant smell; what religious duties are either much neglected, or but very lifelessly, coldly, formally, lazily, superficially and heartlessly performed, and to what a higher pitch and peg of spirituality in the manner of performing them they are to be screwed up; what lusts and corruptions are to be further mortified and subdued; how little your hypocrisy, your self-love and self-seeking, your pride, passion, impatience, unqualified and unsubmittedness to the will of God, your carnalness, earthly-mindedness, your immoderate and inordinate love to the things of the world, your murmuring and fretting at, your dissatisfaction and discontent with your present lot; how little these and many other corruptions are crucified and brought at under: If, I say, ye be well seen and versed in the knowledge of your spiritual condition, ye will upon serious and thorough reflections find, that ye stand in need of every affliction ye meet with, as to all the circumstances thereof; or, if ye do not, in so far ye are unacquainted with, and strangers to yourselves, and to the state and posture of your spiritual affairs; nay, ye will easily find, that all, even your heaviest crovies and afflications, have enough ado to work you up to what you should be at; and tho’, sometimes ye may be disposed to think that ye could hardly bear any more, yet ye will upon search find that ye could have wanted nothing of what ye have met with, without a greater prejudice than the crovies hath brought along with it. We are naturally froward and peevish, bent to fretfulness and discontent, inclining rather to restless endeavouring to have our lot brought up to our spirits, than to be at suitable pains to have our spirits brought down to our lot, and therefore have much need to be tamed and calmed by the crovies; this rugged and uneasy temper of spirit being the great hinderer, yea, opposite of that stayed and sweet contentation of heart with and in every state, which is the very life of a Christian’s life, consisting (as the Lord faith) not in the abundance of the things which we possess, Luke 12. 15. But in our satisfiedness with them, whether abundant or not: To the attaining unto which blessed temper, the shortest cut, and most compendious way, is, in the first place, to be well-pleased and satisfied with God himself, and with a solidly secured interest in him; and to endeavour, in the next place, to be well-pleasing in his sight, to be gracious in his eyes, to stand well in his thoughts, even to do always these things that please him; John 8. 29. To which desirable frame of soul, if we were once thro’ grace brought, (whereunto our bearing of the yoke, and putting our shoulders under the crovies, is not a little thro’ God’s blessing contributive) O how good-natured then and easy to please would we be found to be, and how ready to construe well of all that he doth to us! Seldom out of humour, so speak we. Now, if we stand in need of all the affictions we are tried with, in all their most sad and sorrowful circumstances, (as certainly we do, because God, who cannot lie nor mistake, hath said it) why should we not submit ourselves to his will in measuring them out to us? Or what just reason can there be to be dissatisfied with, or to complain of God’s giving.to, or ordering...
Sixthly, If it be considered, that in all your chastisements and afflictions God is graciously driving the blessed design of your spiritual good and profit, making them all to work together for that desirable end, causing them turn to your salvation, thro’ the help of the prayers of others of his people, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, Rom. 8. 28. Phil. 2. 19. Giving you assurance by his faithful word of promise, that thereby your iniquity shall be purged, and that this shall be all the fruit (O strange and admirable condescension of grace! all the fruit!) to take away sin, Isa. 27. 9. and that he will not chastise you as parents according to the flesh do their children, to wit, for their own pleasure; who, however they may have a general design of good to their children in their chastising of them, yet, thro’ a remainder of corruption in the best of them, they are often subjected to such hurries and transports of passion, when it comes to the act of chastisement, that they much forget to consult the good and advantage of the chastized child, and too much gratify their own pleasure and humour; but that he will chastise for your profit, that ye may be made partakers of his holiness, Heb. 12. 10. Now, if this be his design in chastising, and if this be the promised fruit of your chastishments and afflictions, why should ye not therein submit to his pleasure, which hath your own profit inseparably joined within it, if ye your selves do not sinfully lay obstructions in the way thereof, as otherwise, so particularly by your being displeased with this his pleasure, which yet his grace in his own people suffers not to be invincible nor final? I do not say, that our chastisements and afflictions do of themselves produce this profit, and bring forth this fruit; for alas! we may from doleful experience have ere now arrived at a sad perfwasion, that we are proof against all applications, excepting that of sovereign, efficacious and all difficulty-conquering free grace, and that nothing will do at us save that alone; whatever means be made use of, this only must be the efficient producer of our profit: It is a piece of God’s royal and incommunicable prerogative, which he hath not given out of his own hand to any dispensation, whether of ordinances, never so lively and powerful in themselves; or of providences, never so crofs, loudly alarming and clearly speaking, abstracly from his own blessing, effectually to teach to profit, Isa. 48. 17. and therefore he doth (as well he may) claim it to himself alone, as his peculiar privilege, while he faith, I am the Lord thy God that teacheth thee to profit. Since then this is his design in all the chastisements inflicted on his own people, and since he only by his grace can make it infrustrably take effect, let him have our hearty allowance and approbation, to carry it on vigorously and successfully; and let us pray more frequently and fervently, that, by his effectually teaching, our profiting may be made more and more to appear under our chastisements; and withal, in the multitude of our sad thoughts about them, let his comforts delight our souls, and this comfort in particular, that in them all he graciously designs and projects our profit, even the making of us more and more to partake of his holiness.

Seventhly, If it be considered, that all our trials and troubles are but of time-continuance, and will period with it; they are but for a season, 1 Pet. 1. 6. yea, but for a moment, 2 Cor. 4. 17. He will not contend for ever, knowing well, if he should do so, the spirits would fail before him, and the souls which he hath made, Isa. 57. 16. Tho’ they should follow close on you, and accompany you to your very dying day, yet then they will leave you, and take their last good-night and everlasting farewell of you; sorrow and sighing will then for ever fly away, and all tears on whatever account shall then be wiped from your eyes, Rev. 7. 17. and 21. 4. It is a great alleviation and mitigation of the most grievous affliction, and of the bitterest and most extreme sorrow, to think, that not only it will have a term-day and date of expiration, but
but it will quickly, in a very short time, even in a moment, be over and at an end (as a holy martyr said to his fellow-sufferer in the fire with him, It is but winking, and our pain and sorrow is all over) and that there shall be an eternal lack of freedom from it; and that everlasting solace, satisfaction, and joy without the least mixture of sorrow and sadness, shall succeed to it, and come in the room thereof: It is but for the little space of threescore years and ten, or fourscore, Psal. 90. 10. (which length most people never come) that his people are subjected to trouble; and what is it that very short moment and little point of time, being compared with a vast and incomprehensible long eternity? in respect of which, a thousand years are but as one day, or as a watch in the night, when it is past, Psal. 90. 4. And no doubt the little while’s trouble, sadness and sorrow of sojourning and militant saints, is, in the depth of divine wisdom, ordered so, that it may the more commend and endear that blessed calm and tranquillity, that fulness of purest joys, and those most perfect pleasures at his right hand, that triumphant saints shall for evermore enjoy.

Eighthly, If it be considered, that all along the little moment that your trials and affictions abide with you, they are, even the faddest and most severe of them, moderate, and thro’ his grace portable and light: In measure be debateth with you, and stays his rough wind in the day of his east wind, Isa. 27. 8. And whatever difficulty ye sometimes find under fore presufures, to get it solidly and practically believed, yet God is faithful who hath promised, and will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able, but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. 10. 13. He is a God of judgment, (Isa. 30. 18.) and discretion, that suits his peoples burdens to their backs, and wisely proportions their straits to their strength: He puts not new wine into old bottles, Mat. 9. 17. neither doth he break the bruised reed, Isa. 42. 3. and even when he hides his face, and is wrath with his children, and finites them for their iniquity, Isa. 42. 17; 18. it is only fatherly wrath; And however dreadful that may be, and difficult to be born, yet there is nothing vindictive in it; it is a Father’s anger, but contempered with a Father’s love, where also love predominates in the contemperate. And indeed the most extreme, and the very heaviest of all our afflictions, are moderate, and even light, being compared, 18. With what your sins deserve, exceedingly far beneath the desert whereof ye are punished, Ezra 9. 23. even so far, that ye may without all compliment most truly say, That it is because his compassions fail not, that ye are not consumed, Lam. 3. 22. that ye are kept out of hell, and free from everlasting burnings, to which your many, various, and grievously aggravated provocations, have made you most justly liable: So that ye have reason to think any afflication, short of everlasting destruction from the presence of God, to be a highly valued piece of moderation, and to say, Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin? Lam. 3. 39. We will hear the indignation of the Lord, because we have sinned against him, Mic. 7. 9. 2dly, With what others of the people of God have readily met with; for we have not repented to the blood, striving against sin, Heb. 12. 4. We have it may be all this while been but running with the footmen, when they have been put to contend with horses, Jer. 12. 5. 3dly, With what ourselves have sometimes dreaded and been put to deprecate, when horrid guilt hath stared us in the face, and when God apprehended to be very angry, even threatening to smite us with the wound of an enemy, and with the chastisement of a cruel one, to run upon us a giant, to break all our bones; And again to shew himself marvellous upon us, by taking us by the neck, and shaking us in pieces, Jer. 30. 14. Job 16. 14. & 12. Job 10. 16. 4thly, With what our blessed Lord Jesus suffered for his people, who, all the while he sojournd here on earth, was a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, Isa. 53. 4. and might most justly have said, beyond all men, I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath: Is there any sor-
row like unto mine, in the day when the Lord hath afflicted me? And 5thly, Being compared with that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which they work for you, 2 Cor. 4.

14. Seeing then that the sharpest and forest of your afflictions are, in these and many other respects, very moderate, gentle, easy and light; is there not reason why ye should in them, without grudging, sweetly submit yourselves to his will, heartily saying, It might have been much worse, this falls infinitely short of what we have deserved, blessed be God that it is only thus, and no worse.

Ninthly, If it be considered, that often, when in any more than ordinary spiritual and lively frame of soul, ye have in prayer desired the Lord, that he would take any way, and make use of any means pleased (wherein your sin might not be) to make you more serious in the exercise of godliness, more effectually to mortify your corruptions, and to further your conformity to his image in holiness; and that ye should thro' his grace be content, putting as it were a blank in his hand, to be filled up as himself in his own infinite wisdom should think fit, declaring that ye were satisfied, on the terms proposed by Jesus Christ, to be his disciples, and to take up not only a cross, or the cross in general, but, Mat. 16. 24. your cross in particular, the cross that should be shaped out for you, however circumstanciated: And when under some very sad affliction, he on the matter bespeaks thus, I am now about to grant you your own desire, tho' it may be in such a way, and by such a mean, as either would have been none of your own choosing, had it been left to your choice, or possibly such as ye did not think of; will ye be displeased with me, or mistake my hearing of your prayers, fulfilling of your petitions, and granting you according to your own heart's desire, because I do it in my own way, and by means of my own choosing, wherein ye left and allowed me a latitude, and not in your way and by your means, which ye then renounced, as not thinking yourselves competent judges thereof? Alas! here we are often found at best to border upon a practical reining, retracting, and lifting up again of the blank submissition which we professed to lay down before him; and to say, by our fretting, repining, dissatisfaction, immoderate heaviness and despondency of spirit, that we were somewhat rash, and not so well advised, when we subscribed and gave in such a submissition and surrender of ourselves to him; that we did not think he would have taken such advantage of us, or would have put us thus to the issue; and that, if we had thought he would have done so, we would have been better advised, before we had thus submitted to him, and with our own consent put ourselves in his reverence; and that, if it had been any thing but this, we could have born it (whereas he saith, Nothing but this) Whereby we do not only, not a little reflect upon him, as dealing unkindly, and doing what we would not have expected at his hand; but also make a sad and humbling discovery of much unsoundness in ourselves, as to our offering up of such general desires, and as to our making of such absolute submissions to him; Let us therefore, in order to the justifying of him as both righteous and kind, and to the vindicating of ourselves, at least from allowing of any unsoundness, dissimulation, or unfair and merely complimantal dealing with God, in our submitting ourselves to him in the general, without any But's or If's, any restrictions or exceptions, hold at the submission given; sharply expostulating with, and severly chiding ourselves for this discovered practical contradiction and contravention; and we shall find that he hath done nothing unworthy of himself, nor in the least prejudicial to us, but what is according to our own most deliberate desires, and greatly to our advantage.

It were a very wide mistake, if, from what is discoursed in this Consideration, any should conclude, that we intend either to commend or allow christians praying directly and expressly for crosses and afflictions, let be for such and such afflictions in particular: For, beside that we neither find it commanded in the scriptures, nor allowedly (if at all) proceeded or practised by
The Epistle Dedicator.

The saints recorded there; and that it seems to be a sinful limiting of the sovereign God to a particular mean: We may easily know, from sad experience, with what difficulty, repining and fainting we often bear these crosses and afflictions that we are most clearly called to take on, and that are unavoidably laid upon us; and how lamentably little, for most part, we profit by them: What hope or assurance could we then have, that we should either carry Christianly under, or make suitable improvement of such crosses as we should unwarrantably seek, and pray for to ourselves? It is true, we find some of the saints, and these, stars of the first magnitude, as Moses, Job, Elias, David and Jonas, in their distempered, malecontent, or fainting fits, passionately, preposterously and precipitantly praying, or rather wishing for death; (for which they were not for the time in so good a case) but that was not for death, under the notion of affliction, but rather to prevent future and further afflictions, or to have a period put to presently incumbent ones. If it should here be said, Why may not saints pray for afflictions, since they seem to be promised in the covenant of grace, as Psal. 89. 30, 31, 32. Hos. 2. 6, 7. and v. 14. and since God hath graciously promised to blest all the afflictions of his people, and to make them turn to their spiritual good, profit and advantage, as Rom. 8. 28. and Heb. 12. 10. and elsewhere? To the first part of the objection, it may be briefly answered, That these, and other such, are not properly and formally promises of the covenant of grace, but rather covenant-threatenings, (for the covenant of grace hath its own threatenings, suited to the nature thereof, as well as the covenant of works hath its) tho' dipped (to say so) in covenant-grace and mercy: And to the other part of it as briefly, That God hath promised to blest and to cause to profit by such afflictions and chastenments as himself thinks fit to inflict and lay on, but not these which we seek and pray for to ourselves: Neither doth that scripture, Psal. 119. v. 75. I know—that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me, say any thing towards strengthening the objection, or invalidating the answers given to it; for, the Psalmist only there humbly and thankfully acknowledgeth God's faithfulness in fulfilling his threatening, in afflicting him when he went a-fray; and in performing his promise, in blesting his affliction to him for preventing his after-straying, and making him learn better to keep his commandments; in both which he is faithful. All that is either express or meant in this consideration, is, That the saints often pray God, that he would take his own way, and use his own means to bring about these great ends mentioned; wherein there is indeed at least a tacit insinuation, that if he in his wisdom fee it meet to make use of the rod and affliction in order thereto, that they will not allow themselves to decline the fame, nor to mistake him in it; but that rather they shall, through grace, be satisfied with, and blest him for fulfilling their petitions, and granting them according to their own hearts desires, tho' it be by such means: Which is not praying for afflictions, but a resolved and declared submission to infinite Wisdom's love-choice of his own midifes to effectuate and bring to pass the prayed-for ends.

Tenthly, If it be considered, that it now neither grieveth nor troubleth any of all the glorified, triumphing, and palm-bearing company before the throne of God, and of the Lamb, that they were exercised with so many and so great trials and tribulations, while they were here below: It troubleth not John the Baptist, that he was imprisoned, basely murdered and beheaded there in a hole, without having access to give any publick testimony before his death, and at thedesired of a wanton dancing damsel, thro' the instigation of her adulterous and incestuous mother: Nor Stephen, (commonly called the Proto-martyr) that he was Stoned to death as a blasphemer, for giving testimony to the most precious and comfortable truth of Christ's being the Messiah: Nor Paul, that he was thrice beaten with rods, and
and received five times forty stripes save one; that he was in so many perils by sea and land, in the city, in the country, and in the wilderness, by the Hcathen, by his own countrymen, and by false brethren; that he was stoned, and suffered all these other things, whereof he gives us an historical abridgment in his 2d Epift. to the Corinthians, chap. ii. Nor doth it trouble any of all these worthies, of whom the world was not worthy, that they were cruelly mocked, imprisoned, scourged, tortured, or tympanized and racked, stoned, tormented, fawn, affunder, killed with the sword, tempted, driven to dens and caves of the earth, and put to wander up and down in sheep-skins and goat-skins, whose martyrology the apostle briefly compendeth, Heb. i. Nor doth it trouble any other of all the martyrs, saints and servants of Jesus, who have in the several ages of the church suffered so many and so great things while they were here in the world; nay, all these their sufferings go to make up a considerable part of their song of praise in heaven: (where the history of these wars, of and for the Lord, will be very piaent to them to read, however fore and bloody they were on earth) And not only so, but these of them who have suffered most, wonder much that they have suffered so little, and that they are come to so excellent and glorious a kingdom, through so little tribulation in the way to it: Believe it, there will be as much matter of thanksgiving and praise to God found treasured up under the plynies and foldings (to say so) of the most cross and afflicted providences that ever the people of God met with here in the world, as under these for the time were more smiling and satisfying; Let us then, valuing all things we meet with, according to the aspect they have on our spiritual and eternal state, (which is sure the justest and safest valuation of them) heartily allow him to take his own will and way in afflicting us.

Eleventhly, If it be considered, that as this submission to the will of God, in cross and afflicting providences, is chronicled in the sacred records, to the perpetual commendation of several of the saints; namely, of Aaron, of whom it is said, when God had slain his two sons in a strange and stupendous manner, even by fire from heaven, for their presumptuous offering of strange fire before him, that he held his peace, Lev. x. 3. Of old Eli, when he received a sad message concerning himself and his house by the hand of young Samuel, who said, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good, 1 Sam. 3. 18. Of Job, after, by four several messengers, (each of them coming immediately upon the back of the other, so that he scarcely got leave to breathe betwixt, or the former to finish his lamentable narration) the terribly alarming tidings were brought him, concerning the plundering of his oxen and asses by the Sabeans, and the killing of his servants with the sword; concerning the consuming of his sheep and servants by the fire of God falling from heaven upon them; concerning the carrying away of his camels, and the killing of his servants by the Caldeans; and concerning the smothering to death of all his sons and daughters, while feasting together, by the falling of the house upon them; who said, The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord: In all this not sinning, nor charging God foolishly, Job i. 21, 22. Of David, who, in a crowd of crosses, faith to God, I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it, Psal. 39. 9. 2 Sam. 15. 25, 26. and who, when forced to flee from Jerusalem, by his unnatural and rebellious son Absalom, and fencing back the ark thither, with admirable compofure and sweet stooping of soul, said, If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation: But if he say thus, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do with me as seemeth good to him: Of Hezekiah, when that heavy message was brought to him by the prophet Isaiah concerning the Babylonish captivity, wherein his royal posterity were to have their deep share; who said, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken; who said moreover, Is it not good, if peace and truth
truth be in my days? 2 Kings 20. 19. if the threatened doom and sentence shall be for a while suspended, and not presently execute: And of these Chriftians, who, after they had with much weeping earnestly intreated the apostle Paul, deservedly very dear to them, not to go up to Jerusalem, where the prophet Agabus had foretold he shou'd be apprehended and put in bonds, and perceived that he was inflexibly resolved at any rate of hazard to go thither, ceafed, and submissively said, The will of the Lord be done, Acts 21. 14. As, I say, it is thus chronicled to their commendation, fo it is a piece of most beautiful and amiable conformity to the practice of our blessed Lord Jefus, of whom we ought to be followers as dear children (Eph. 5. 1.) in all these things, wherein he is propofed as a Pattern for our imitation, who in a great and grievous agony of trouble, and when most terribly assaulted by a strong combination of crosses and afflictive providences, and after conditionate depreciating of that bittereft cup and blackef't hour, pleasantly, sweetly and submissively subjoined, and faith to his Father, Neverthelefs not my will, but thine be done; Not as I will, but as thou wilt, Luke 22. 42. Mat. 26. 32.

Twelfthly and finally, If it be considered, that when the whole contexture and web of providences, and more especially about the catholick, visible, militant church, and every individual member thereof, shall be wrought out, and in its full length and breadth (as it were) spread forth in the midst of all the redeemed, perfected, glorified and triumphant company of saints, standing round about, and with admiration beholding it; there will not be found (to say fo) one misplaced thread, nor one wrong-set colour in it at all, but every thing will be found to have fallen in, in the fittest place, and in the moft beautiful faeon and order thereof: O fo rare, fo remarkable, fo renowned and fo ravifhing a piece, as it will by them all unanimously, and with one voice, be judged and declared to be, even worthy of the moft exquifite art and infinite skill of the great Worker thereof! The fevereft critics, and moft difficultly fatisfiable of them all, while here below, about more publick and more particular crosses providences, will then fully and to the height be fatisfied, and will all, with out any the leaft hesitation or jarring, readily and cheerfully bear him this concordant testimony, that he hath done all things well, Mark 7. 37. every thing in particular, and all things in general, tho', when he was a doing of them, they often prefumptuously took upon them rashly to cenfure, and to offer their impertinent and crabbed animadversions on, and their amendments and altera'ions of several of them; and will moft cordially blef him, that he wrought on in his own way, about his church, and each of themselves, without consulting them, or following their way, which would have quite marred the beauty, and darkned the lustre and splendor of that moft close and curious divine contexture.

Every one of these considerations hath much ra/on in it, to persuade to this intire and absolute submission to God's will and pleafure, in what is cros's to you, afflifted and sorrowful Chriftians; but O how much weight and strength of found spiritual ra'on is there in them all united together, (beside the many other excellent considerations, dispersed up and down these choice Sermons, stuffed full with strong cordials, fitten both to recover and preserve you from fainting under your many feveral affliffions) powerfully to persuade and prevail with you, even the moft averfe, untoward, wayward, and cros's-grain'd (to say fo) of you all, without further debate, demur, or delay, in these things that are moft afflifting to you, and do moft thwart your inclination, to come in his will, and pleasantly, without any the leaft allowed reluctance or gainfaying, to submit to him! How might you thus poft's your foulds in patience, and how quiet, calm, fedate and composed might ye be, more especially in troublesome times, amidft these things wherewith others are kept in a continual hurry, almost to the hazard of being distracted by them?
Let them all, my noble Lord, prevail with your Lordship in particular, reverently to adore, silently to stroll unto, and sweetly to acquiesce in, the Lord’s sovereign, holy, and wise ordering your many and various complicated trials; and more especially his late removing your excellent Lady, the desire of your eyes, the Christian and comfortable companion of your youth, by his stroke: As indeed all the ties of nearest and dearest relations, betwixt husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, &c. are capable of dissolution, and will all, ere long, by death be actually dissolved; there being but one tie and knot of marriage-union betwixt precious Jesus Christ and the believer, that by divine ordination is eternally incapable of any dissolution, even by death itself; which tho’ it dissolve the strait union that is betwixt the soul and the body, yet doth not at all loose the straiter bond of union that is betwixt him and both of them, but it remains still inviolable; and by virtue thereof, the believer’s vile dead body shall be raised again at the last day, conform to his own glorious body, and be re-united to the perfected-soul, which two old intimates will then meet in far better case than when they were parted and pulled asunder: For he is an Husband that cannot grow old, sick or weak, neither can he die; he is a Husband whose bride and spouse is never a widow, neither hath he any reliefs: The drawing on of which matchless match and marvellous marriage, is one great design of these sweet sermons, wherein pregnant reasons are adduced by this friend of the Bridegroom, to persuade sinners to embrace the offer thereof made to them in the gospel; and to make them, who, by his own gracious and powerful insinuations on their hearts, have entertained his proposal, toward making up, and final closing of the match, to bless themselves in their choice, and to bless him, that ever he was pleased to stoop so very low as to become a Suiter to them, with a peremptory resolution to admit of no refusal, but infrustrably to carry their hearts consent to take him for their Lord, Head and Husband, to be to them a Saviour, a Physician and Treasure, even their All in all, their All above all; which day of espousals, as it was the day of the gladness of his heart, so it will never be any grief of heart to them. Let all mutinous thoughts about his dealings wi, you be silenced with, It’s the Lord; let not too much dwelling on the thoughts of your affliction, to the filling of your heart still with fortow, incapacitate you for, nor divert you from, humble asking the Lord, what he aims at by all these dispensations, what he would have you to learn out of them, what he reproves and contends for, what he would have you amending your hands in, and what he would have you more weaned, self-denied, and mortified in, and what he would have you a further length and a greater proficient in: He hath told you the truth, that these things are expedient for you; study to find them to be so in your experience. Sure he hath, by them, written in great, legible and capital characters, yea, even as with a sun-beam, vanity, emptiness, uncertainty, mutability, unsatisfactoriness and disappointment upon the forehead of all creature-comforts, and with a loud voice called your Lordship, yet more seriously than ever, to seek after solid soul-satisfaction in his own blest and all-sufficient Self, where it is most certainly to be found, without all peradventure or possibility of mising: Make haste, my Lord, yet to come by a more close confining of all your desires and expectations of happiness and satisfaction to your soul, to God only, contracting and gathering them in, from the vaft and wearisome circumference of earthly comforts, and concentrating them all in himself as their point;uddy thro’ grace, in a sweet soliloquy, to bespeak your soul, thus, My soul, wait thou only up- on God, for my expectation is from him, Psal. 62. 5. O blessed confinement of desires and expectations of happiness and satisfaction to the soul! where it is as impossible to meet with disappointment, as it is impossible not to meet with it from every airdh whence it is look- ed for. Alas! it is the scattering of our expectations and desires of happiness among other objects
objects beside him, that breeds us all the disquiet, anxiety and vexation; whereas, if we kept ourselves thro' grace under a more close and constant confinement to him, when this and that, and the other creature-comfort, whether person or thing, were taken from us, there would be no deduction made from, nor any diminution made of our true happiness; none of these, how dear and desirable soever, being essentially constitutive of it, nor so much as tending thereupon; and he, in whom only all our happiness lies, being the same yester-day, to day, and for ever, without any variables or shadow of turning. There are some whom he loveth so well, that he cannot (to speak so) find in his heart to see them thus to parcel out their affections, and to dote upon any painted imaginary happiness in creature-comforts; and therefore, on design, he doth either very much blast them, as to the expected satisfaction from them; or quite remove them, that, by making such a vacuity, he may make way for himself to fill it, and happily to necessitate the person, humbly, prayerfully, and believingly, to put him to the filling of it: And it is a great vacuity that he, who fills heaven and earth, cannot fill; a little of whose gracious presence, and manifested special love, can go very far to fill up the room that is made void, by the removal of the choiceest and most desirable of all earthly comforts and enjoyments. Happy they, who, when they lose a near and dear relation or friend, or any idol they are fond of, are helped of God to make Jesus Christ, as it were, succeed to the same as its Heir, by taking that loss as a summons to transfer and settle their whole love on him, the Object incomparably most worthy of it, as being altogether lovely, or all desires! Cant. 5. 16. There is no earthly comfort, person or thing, but hath somewhat in it that is not desirable, and that it would be the better to want; but there is nothing in him that is not truly desirable, nor any thing out of him that is worthy to be desired.

I am, my noble Lord, the more easily prevailed with and encouraged to address the dedication of these Sermons to your Lordship, more particularly when I remember the unfeigned faith that first dwelt in your grandmother, as another Lois; and in your mother, as another Eunice; and more lately in your own choice Lady, who, as another beloved Peris, laboured much in the Lord: And thou' she had but a very short Christian race (in which she was much encouraged by coming into your Noble Father's family, and her beholding how hard your blest Mother did run and press toward the mark, even when in the last stage, and turning in a manner the last floop of her Christian course) yet it was a very swift one, where she did quite out-run many that were in Christ long before her; (all three Ladies of honour, almost (if I need to say almost) without parallels in their times, in the serious and diligent exercise of godliness, and patterns worthy to be imitated by others) and I trust in your Lordship's self also, yea, and in several others of your elder and younger noble relations (for grace hath such a draught of souls amongst you, as it useth not often to have in societies of so noble extract, for not many noble are called) which, as it deservedly draweth respect to such of you, as are thus privileged, from the observers of it, so it layeth a mighty strong obligation upon you, to be much for God, and in service to your generation, according to his will. Further, when I observe your Lordship's Christian and exemplary carriage, under such a conjunction and combination of so very cross, and almost crushing calamitous providences, choosing rather contentedly and satisfiedly to be (if it so please the Lord, and O! that it may not) the last of that ancient and honourable family, than to be found endeavouring to keep it from sinking by any sinful and unwarrantable course, particularly by defrauding just creditors (tho' the debt was not of your Lordship's own contracting) under whatever specious pretexts and advantages of law; whereof many make no bones, who,
if they may keep up their superfluities, care not to ruin their friends ingaging in suretyship for their debt, and to live on the substance of others. Moreover, when with great satisfaction I notice how much your Lordship makes it your business to follow your noble ancestors, in so far as they were followers of Christ, which many great men, even in the christian world, alas, do not much mind, not considering that it is true nobility, where God is the chief and top of the kin, and where religion is at the bottom; and what renown’d Raleigh faith, Hinc dictus nobilis quas pra aliis virtute notabilis; and what another faith, Qui ab illustrium majorum splendida virtute degenerarunt nobilia portenta sunt. And finally, when I consider, that in your Lordship’s retirement and abstraction from wonted converse and dealing in business, you will have access at leisure to read them, whereby you may thro’ God’s blessing be sweetly diverted from pensive and not so profitable poring on your affliction, and be much instructed, convinced, reproved, directed, edified, strengthened and comforted. Read them then, my Lord, carefully (as I take it for granted you will) ponder and digest them well, and I am hopeful, that they shall thro’ grace prove contributive to the bringing upon you a considerable growth of holiness, and to the making of your ways and doings more than ever such, that others of his people observing the same, shall be comforted, and made to think and say, Verily God hath not done in vain all that he hath done to yonder Nobleman.

That these substantial and marrowy gospel- sermons may come along to you all, nay to all the readers of them, and to your Lordship more particularly, with showers of gospel-blessings, is the earnest desire of,

Dearly beloved afflicted Christians, and my very noble Lord in particular,

Your Companion in Tribulation, desirous also to be in the Kingdom and

Patience of Jesus Christ, and your Servant in the Gospel for his sake.

J. C.
Unto the Readers, and more particularly unto the Inhabitants of the City of Glasgow, of all Ranks.

Though the whole field of the sacred and infallibly inspired scriptures, be very pleasant and beautiful (a spiritual cool and cleansing, a fructifying, fresh, refreshing and wholesome air, breathing continually there) yet if we may compare some parts thereof with others, those wherein the Treasure, precious Jesus Christ, lieth most obvious and open, are certainly most pleasant and beautiful; and amongst these, such as hold forth his sufferings, and himself as crucified, most evidently before men's eyes, have a peculiar and passing pleasantness and beauty in them: If so, then sure this 53d chapter of the prophecies of Isaiah cannot, but be looked at as a transcendently pleasant, beautiful, sweet-smelling and fragrant piece of divine scripture-field, wherein the evangelick prophet discourseth of the sufferings of Christ, as particularly and fully, as plainly and pathetically, even to the very life, as if he himself had been a spectator and eye-witness of them. However, this sweetest chapter from beginning to end, as also the three last verses of the foregoing, be by the greatly learn'd Grotius most miserably perverted, while he industriously diverts it from the Messiah, and by stretching and curtailing thereof at his pleasure, (as the cruel tyrant Mazentius did the men he laid on his bed, to make them of equal length with it) wholly applies it to the prophet Jeremiah in the first place only, not denying that it hath accommodation to Christ, of whom too he takes but little or no notice in all his annotations thereon: The impertinencies and wrestlings of which application, are convincingly holden forth by famous Doctor Owen (who looks on this portion of scripture as the sum of what is spoken in the Old Testament, concerning the satisfactory death of Jesus Christ) that mell of Socinians, in his Vindiciae Evangelicae against Biddle and the Racovian Catechism, who was a burning and shining light in the reformed churches, tho' now, alas! to their great losr, lately extinguished: And indeed the dealing of that very learn'd man professing himself to be a Christian, with this most clear, and to all true Christians most comfortable scripture, is the more strange and even stupendous, considering, 1. That several passages in it, are in the New Testament expressly applied to Christ, Matth. 8. 17. Mark 15. 28. Luke 22. 27. Acts 8. 28. &c. 1 Pet. 2. 22. & 24. but not one so much as alluded to, in reference to Jeremiah. 2. That the ancient Jewish Doctors and the Chaldee Paraphrafl (as Dr. Owen, in the fore- said learn'd and favoury book, gives an account) do apply it to him. 3. That a late Doctor of great note and honour among the Jews, Abarbinel affirneth, That in truth he sees not how one verse of the whole (several of which he toucheth on) can be expounded of Jeremiah; and wonders greatly that any wise man can be so foolish as to commend, let be to be the author of such an exposition, (as one Rabbi Gaon had been) which is (faith he) so utterly alien, and not in the least drawn from the scripture. 4. That several Jews do profess, that their Rabbins could easily have extricated themselves from all other places of the prophets (a vain and groundless boast) if Isaiah in this place had but held his peace, as Hulsius (very lately, if not present) Hebrew-Professor at Breda, declares some of them did to himself. 5. That a Rabbi, by his own confession, was converted from a Jew to a Christian, by the reading of this 53d of Isaiah, as the excellent
excellent Mr. Boyle, in his delicate discourses on the file of the holy scriptures, informes
us; yea, that divers Jews have been convinced, and converted to the Christian faith by
the evidence of this prophecy, as learn'd and laborious Mr. Pool affirms in his lately
published English Annotations on this scripture. 6. That the Socinians themselves have
not dared to attempt the accommodation of the things here spoken of, to any other cer-
tain and particular person than the Messiah, tho', being so much tortured thereby, that
they shewed good-will enough to it. And 7. That himself had before written a learn'd
Defence of the catholic faith concerning Christ's satisfaction against Socinus, wherein also
he improved to notable purpose several verifies of this same chapter: But, in these later
annotations, being altogether silent as to any use-making of them that way, he, as much
as he can, delivers that Desperado and his disciples from one of the sharpest swords that
lies at the very throat of their cause (for if the chapter may be applied to any other,
as he applies it wholly to Jeremiah, no solid nor cogent argument can be drawn from
it for confirming Christ's satisfaction;) and by his never re-inforcing of that defence of
his, against the assault made upon it by the Socinian Crellius, (tho' he lived 20 years
thereafter) he seems for his part quite to have abandoned and delivered it up into the
hands of those declared enemies of Christ's satisfaction, yea and of his Godhead. It's
true indeed, that the learn'd Voffins defends that defence, against the assault of Raven-
pergerus, a Groning Divine, but it is on a quite different account from that of Crellius;
by which annotations of his, as by several others on other scriptures, how much (on
the matter at least) great Grotius hath, by abusing his prodigious wit, and profound
learning, subserved the cursed cause of blasphemous Socinus, and further hardened the
already, alas much and long hardened poor Jews; and what bad service he hath done
to our glorious Redeemer, and to his church satisfied-for, and purchased by his blood,
by his sad sufferings, and sore soul-travel, most clearly and comfortably discoursed in this
chapter, let the Lord himself, and all that love him in sincerity, judge: I wish I could,
and had reason to say no worfe of this admirably learn'd person here, than that, Quandoque
dormitat Homerus.

Which very many and various, very great and most grievously aggravated sufferings,
were endured by him, not only in his body, nor only in his soul, by virtue of the
sympathy it had with his body, from the intimate strait union betwixt them; but also,
and mainly, in his blessed human soul immediately: Since he redeemed, satisfied for,
and faveth his people's souls as well as their bodies; and the soul having principally
sinned, and being the spring and source of sin; sinners withal deserving punishment in
their souls as well as in their bodies; and being, without the benefit of his mediation,
to be punished eternally both in their souls and bodies, and mainly in their souls;
there is no doubt, the same cogent reason for the Mediator's suffering in both parts
of the human nature assumed by him, that there is for that nature's suffering which
sinned: Which, his sad complaints of the exceeding trouble of his soul, putting him
to say these strange and stupendous words, What shall I say? and of the great sorrow
and heaviness thereof, even to death, his amazement, strong cries and tears, with his a-
gony and sweat of blood, John 12. 27. Mat. 26. 38. Mark 14. 33. Luke 22. 44. Heb. 5. 7. (and that before any pain was caused to his body by men) and his con-
ditional deprecatings of that bitter cup, put beyond all reach of rational contradiction:
And to think or say, that only the fear of his bodily sufferings quickly approaching
him, did make these sad impressions upon him, and draw these strange expressions from
him, would make him, who is Lord and Master, to be of far greater abjectness of Spi-
C
rit than many of his servants the martyrs were, and to fall hugely below that holy
heroick and magnanimous courage and resolution, wherewith they adventured on extream
sufferings, and most exquisite torments; which would be very unworthy of, and a
mighty reflection upon him, who is the vailant Captain of salvation, made perfect through
suffering, who drank of the brook in the way, and therefore lifted up the head, Heb. 2.
10. Plut. 110. 7. But here is the great and true reason of the difference betwixt his
sad and sorrowful deportment under his sufferings, and their folacious, cheerful and joy-
ful deportment under theirs; that they, through his sufferings and satisfaction, were
perswaded and made sensible of God's being pacified towards them, and were mightily
refreshed by his gracious comforting presence with them amidst their sufferings; while
he on the contrary looked upon himself as one legally obnoxious to punishment, sifted
before the terrible tribunal of the justice of God, highly provoked by, and very angry
at the sins of his people, who was in a most signal manner pouring out upon his foul
souls of his wrath and curse, which made him lamentably and aloud to cry out of
deferation, tho' not in respect of the personal union, as if that had been dissolved, nor
yet as to secretly supporting, yet as to such a measure at least of sensibly comforting
and rejoicing presence, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (here faith was
in its meridian, tho' it was dark mid-night as to joy) wherewith, as such, his body could
not be immediately affected, spiritual defention not falling under bodily sense. Whence we
may see how justly the doctrine of Papists is to be exploded, who deny all suffering in his
soul immediately, to save their darling dream of his local descent as to his soul, while his
body was in the grave, into hell, and to limbus patrum, to bring up thence into heaven the
souls of the fathers, whom, without giving any reason, or alledging any fault on their part,
they foolishly fancy, after their death till then, to have been imprisoned there, tho' quiet
and under no punishment of sense, yet deprived of all light and vision of God, and so un-
der the punishment of loss, the greatest of punishments, even by the confession of some of
themselves, whereby they put these holy and perfected souls (for there they say there is no
more purgation from sin, that being the proper work of their profitable Purgatory) in worse
cafe, all that length of time after their death, than they were when alive on the earth, where
doubtless they had often much soul-refreshing fellowship with God, and the light of his
countenance lifted up upon them.

Neither were these his sufferings in soul and body only to confirm the doctrine taught by
him, (if that was at all designed by him as an end of his sufferings, so much stumbled at in
the time, (which yet I will not debate, let be peremptorily deny) his doctrine being rather
confirmed by his miracles and resurrection) and to leave us an example and pattern how we
should suffer (as non christian and blasphemos Socinians aver) which were mightily to de-
pretiate, and disperage, nay, to enervate and quit to evacuate his sufferings, by attributing
no more to them than is attributable to the sufferings of his servants and martyrs; (its true
his example was an infallible directory, the example of all examples, but theirs not so;
yet this doth not at all influence any alteration of the nature of the end) but also and mainly
by them, undergone for his people, and in their room, and as sustaining their persons,
vice and place, truly and properly by the sacrifice of himself to satisfy Divine Jullice for
their sins: And who, I pray, can put any other comment on these scripture-expressions,
without manifest perverting and wresting of them, He hath made him to be sin for us, who
knew no sin: Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;
1He his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, 2 Cor. 5. 21. Gal. 3. 13. 1 Pet. 2.
24. (which is by the apostle subjoined as a superior end of his sufferings to that of leaving
us
us an example, discoursed by him immediately before) He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him; The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all; For the transgression of my people was be stricken; When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin; He shall bear the sins of many; In whom we have redemption through his blood; Who is the propitiation for our sins; Isa. 53. 5, 6, 8, 10, 12. Eph. 1. 17. Col. 1. 14. 1 John 2. 2. and the like.

Nor did he undergo these sad sufferings for all men in the world, to satisfy justice for them, and to reconcile them to God, but only for the elect, and such as were given unto him.

For, First, The chastisement of their peace only, was laid on him, who are healed by his stripes, as it is v. 5. of this 53d of Isaiah, For the iniquities of my people was he stricken, faith the Lord, v. 8. The same who are called the Mediator’s people, Psal. 110. 3. (for faith blessed Jesus to his Father, John 17. 10. All mine are thine, and thine are mine.) Who shall, without all peradventure or possibility of miscarrying, be made willing in the day of his power: He only bare the iniquities of these whom he justified by his knowledge, ver. 11. For, otherwise the prophet’s reasoning would not be consequent; he only bare the iniquities of as many transgressors as he makes intercession for, ver. 12. And that he doth not make intercession for all, but for these only who are given to him, that is, all the elect, is undeniably manifest from John 17. 9. where himself expressly faith, I pray not for the world, but for these whom thou hast given me. Now, God’s eternal electing love, and his giving the elect to the Mediator in the covenant of redemption, to be satisfied for, and saved by him, and his intercession for them, are commensurable and of equal extent, as is most clear from John 17. 6. where he faith, Thine they were, (to wit, by election) and thou gavest them to me, to wit, in and by the covenant of redemption, (God’s decree of election being in order of nature prior to this donation, or gift of the elect in the covenant of redemption) compared with v. 9. where he faith, I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me, for they are thine: It is observable, that he faith twice over, I pray for them, manifestly and emphatically restricting his intercession to them, and excluding all others from it. Why then should not also his sacrifice (the price of the redemption of these elected and given ones, agreed upon in that covenant betwixt these two mighty Parties) be commensurable with the former three? especially since he faith, v. 19. For their sakes sanctify I myself, or separate myself to be a sacrifice. 2. Christ’s satisfaction and his intercession being the two parts of his priestly office, and his intercession being founded on his satisfaction, as it’s clear, v. 12. of this 53d of Isaiah; yea, a very learn’d man affirms, That Christ’s appearance in heaven, and his intercession, are not properly sacerdotal acts, but in so far as they lean on the virtue of his perfected sacrifice: What just, relevant, or cogent reason, can there be, to make a disjunction betwixt these parts of his office, and to extend the most difficult, operous and costly part to all men, and to narrow the other, which is the more easy part, as that whereby he only deals for the application of what he hath made a purchase of by his satisfaction, which put him to much sad and sore soul-travel, and to restrict it to the elect and gifted ones? 3. Doth not the scripture hold forth his death, and the shedding of his blood, as the great demonstration of his special love to his own elect people? as is clear else-where, so particularly John 15. 13. Greater love than this hath no man, that a man lay down his life for his friends; nay, purchased reconciliation through the death of Christ, is by the Holy Ghost made a greater evidence of divine love, in some respect, than the glorification of the reconciled, according to what the apostle faith, Rom. 5. 10. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of
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Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. 4. All the other gifts of God to sinners, even the greatest spiritual ones, fall hugely below the giving of Jesus Christ himself, that Gift of God by way of eminency, as the apostle reasoneth irresistably, for the comfort of believers, Rom. 8. 32. 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? Will he give the greatest gift, and not give the lesser? as justification, adoption, sanctification and glorification; which, how great soever in themselves, are yet lesser than the giving of Christ himself to the death; and if it be undeniably certain that he giveth not these to all, which are the lesser and lower gifts, why should it be thought that he hath given the higher and greater? 5. Shall that grand expression of the special love of God be made common, by extending it to all the world, the greatest Profligates and Atheists not excepted, no not Pharaoh, nor Ahab, nor Judas the traitor, nor Julian the apostate, nay, nor any of all the damned reprobates, who were actually in hell when he died and shed his blood? 6. If he died thus for all, it seems that the new song of the redeemed, Rev. 5. would have run and sounded better thus, Thou hast redeemed us all and every man, of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, to God by thy blood, than as it there stands by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; but who may presume by such an universality to extend and amplifie what he hath so restricted, and to make that common to all, which God hath peculiarized to a few favourites? But the author having spoken to much better purpose on this head in these Sermons, I need add no more here.

I shall only further say of these astonishing, in a manner non-plussing and surpassing, great sufferings of blessed Jesus, that, as they were equivalent to what all the elect deserved by their sins, and should have suffered in their own persons throughout all eternity, consistently with the innocence and excellency of his Person, and with the dignity of his mediatory office; therefore it is said, v. 9. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in is death; or as it is in the original, in his deaths, in the plural number, as if he had died the death of every one of the elect; or as if there had been a conjunction and combination of all their deaths in his one death; and v. 6. That the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, or, as the word is, made the iniquity of us all to meet on him, there having been a solemn tryal, convocation and rendezvous (as it were) of all the iniquities of all the elect, more common and more peculiar, in all their various aggravating circumstances; not so much as one committed since Adam's first transgression, or to be committed to the day of judgment, being absent in the punishment of them upon his Person: No wonder that such a load of innumerable thousands and millions of iniquities made him heavily to groan, and that the consideration thereof made great Luther say, That Christ was the greatest sinner in all the world, to wit, by imputation of the guilt of all the sins of the elect to him, and by his having had the punishment of them all laid upon his Person: So we may from them be instructed in these things.

First, Concerning the height of holy disprislice and detestation, that the Majesty of God hath at sin, the only thing in the whole world that his soul hates, and which, in the vile and abominable nature of it, hath an irreconcilable antipathy with, and enmity against his infinitely pure, holy, and blessed nature; and hath a tendency, could it possibly be effected, to seek after the destruction and annihilation of the very Being of God, and is interpretatively deicide; the language of it being, O that there were not a God!
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God! that he cannot behold it in his own finless, innocent, and dearly beloved Son, tho' but by imputation (for he was not made formally the sinner, as Antinomians blaspheously aver) but he will needs in so terrible a manner, testify his great dislike of, and deep displeasure at it, and take such formidable vengeance on it, even in his Person: Ah! the nature of sin, which God, who is of pure eyes, cannot, wherever it be, behold, without perfect abhorrence of it, is but little thorowly understood and pondered; Would we otherwise dare to daily and sports with it, or to take the latitudes in committing of it at the rate we do? I have sometimes thought that it is an error in the first conception (to say so) of religion in many professors of it, and pretenders to it, that we have never framed suitable apprehensions of the most hateful, vile and abominable nature of sin, (which hath a great influence on the superfluousness and overlineis of all duties and practices of religion) and that many of us had need to be dealt with, as skilful school-masters use to deal with their scholars that are foundered in the first principles of learning, left they prove but smarrters all their days; to bring them back again to these, even to be put to learn this first lesson in religion better, and more thorowly, to understand the jealousy of God as to this curst thing Sin; for which, tho' he graciously, for the sake of these sufferings of Christ, pardon the guilt of it to his people, and hear their prayers, yet will needs take vengeance on their inventions, Psal. 90. 8. be they never so seriously, holily, and eminently serviceable to him, and to their generation according to his will; whereof Moses the man of God is a memorable instance: That Ancient conceived rightly of the nature of sin, who said, That if he behoved necessarily, either to commit the least sin, or go to hell to be tormented there eternally, he would rather wish to desire to go to hell, if he could be there without sin.

Secondly, Concerning the severity of divine justice in punishing sin, whereof its punishment in the Person of the Son of God, at such a rate, is one of the greatest, clearest and most convincing evidences imaginable, to whom he would not abate one farthing of the elect's debt, but did with holy and spotless severity exact the whole of it; and tho' he was the Father's Fellow, yet he would needs have him finneth with the awakned sword (Zech. 13. 17.) of sin-revenging justice and wrath: As if all the executions that had been done in the earth on men for sin, as on the old world of the ungodly, drowned by the deluge; on the miscreant inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, and of these other Cities, upon whom he showered down liquid flames of fire and brimstone, even somewhat of hell in a manner out of heaven (caelum plumbat Gehennam) burning them quick, and frying them to death in their own skins; on Corah, Dathan and Abiram, and their associates, upon whom the earth opened and swallowed them up in a most stupendous manner alive, the rest being consumed by fire sent down from heaven; on the one hundred eighty five thousand men of Senacherib's army, all slain in one night by an angel; and on the Israelites, who by many and various plagues were walled and worn out to the number of six hundred thousand fighting men in the space of forty years; reflections on which made Moses, a witness of all, with astonishment to cry out, Who knows the power of thy anger? Psal. 90. 11. As if, I say, all these terrible executions of justice, had been done by a sword asleep, or in the scabbard, in comparifon of the execution it did on Jesus Christ the elect's Cautioner against whom it awakened, was unsheathed, furbished, and made to glitter: So that we may say, Had all the sons and daughters of Adam, without the exception of so much
as one, been eternally destroyed, it would not have been a greater demonstration of the severity of the justice of God in punishing sin.

Thirdly, Concerning the greatness, incomprehensible vastness, and unparallelablences of the love of God to the elect world, which he so loved (O wonderful so! eternity will but be sufficient to unfold all that is infolded in that mysterious so; an, etc that hath not an as an ita that hath not a sic, a so that hath not an as) That he gave his only begotten Son, 1 John 3. 16. to suffer all these things, and to be thus dealt with for them: And of the Mediator, who was content, tho' thinking it no robbery to be equal with God, to empty himself, and be of no reputation, to take on him the shape of a servant; Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8. to be a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; to be chastized, smitten, wounded and bruised for their iniquities, Isa. 53. 3, 5. to step off the throne of his declarative glory, or of his glory manifested to the creatures, and in a manner to creep on the footstool thereof in the capacity of a worm, and to become obedient even unto the death, the shameful and cursed death of the crofs: This is indeed matchless and marvellous love, Greater than which no man hath, to lay down his life for his friend, John 15. 13. But he, being God-Man, laid down his life for his enemies, that he might make them friends, Rom. 5. 10. O the height and depth, the breadth and length of the love of Christ! Eph. 3. 9. 10. whereof, when all that can be said, is said, this must needs be said, That it's a love that passeth not only expression, but knowledge; it's dimensions being altogether unmeasurable: So that we may say, if it had seemed good to the Lord, and been compatible with his spotless justice, and with his infinite wisdom, as supreme Rector and Governor of the world, giving a law to his creatures, to have pardoned the sins of the elect, in the absoluteness of his dominion, that knows no boundary, but what the other divine attributes set to it, without any intervenient satisfaction to his justice at all, (which needs not to be debated here, especially since God hath determined, and in the scriptures of truth made publication of his determination, that he will not pardon sin without a satisfaction, and particularly without this satisfaction made by Jesus Christ) It would not have been a greater and more glorious demonstration of the freeness and riches of his love than he hath given, in pardoning them, thro' the intervention of so difficult and toilsome, of so chargeable and costly a satisfaction, as is the sad sufferings, and the fore foul-travel of his own dear Son; who yet is pleased to account sinners coming to him, and getting good of him, satisfaction for all that soul-travel: And indeed, which of these is the greatest wonder, and demonstration of his love, whether that he should have undergone such soul-travel for sinners, or that he should account their getting good of it, satisfaction of the same, is not easy to determine; but sure, both in conjunction together make a wonder passing great, even a most wonderful demonstration of love.

Fourthly, Concerning what dreadful measure all they may look for, who have heard of these sufferings of Christ, and make not conscience in his own way to improve them for their being reconciled to God thereby, and whose bond to justice will be found full standing over their heads uncancelled in their own name, as proper debtors, without a cautioner. When the innocent Son of God, who had never done wrong, and in whose mouth no guile was ever found, Isa. 53. 9. having but become Surety for the elect's debt, was thus hotly pursu'd, and hardly handled, and put (through sad soul-trouble) to cry, What shall I say? John 12. 27. and falling a-groof on the ground with the tear in his eye, in much sorrow and heaviness even to death, and in a great agony, causing a sweat of blood, tho' in a cold night, and lying on the earth, conditionally
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To pray for the passing of that cup from him, and for his being saved from that hour; so formidable was it to his holy human nature, which had a sinless aversion from, and an innocent horror at what threatened ruin and destruction to it self simply considered; and which, had it not been mightily supported by the power of the Godhead united thereto in his Person, would have quite shrunk and succumbed under such an heavy burden, and been utterly swallowed up by such a gulf of wrath: What then will sinners, even all the dyvous debtors, not having seriously sought after, nor being effectually reached by the benefit of his suretyship, do, when they come to grapple with this wrath of God, when he will fall upon them as a giant, breaking all their bones, and as a roaring lion, tearing them to pieces, when there will be none to deliver? Psal. 50. 22. Will their hands be strong, or their hearts be able to endure in the day that he shall deal with them? Ezek. 22. 14. Then, O then, they will be afraid, and fearfulness will take hold of them, and make them say, Who can stand before the devouring fire, and who can dwell beside the everlasting burnings? Isa. 34. 14. and to cry unto the hills and mountains to fall on them, and to hide them from the face of the Lamb, and of him that sits on the throne, for the great day of his wrath is come, and who is able to stand? Rev. 6. 16, 17. then it will be found in a special manner to be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, Heb. 10. 31. All such may see, in the great sufferings of Christ, as in the clearest glafs, what they are to look for, and most certainly to meet with; for If it was thus done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? Luke 23. 31. O it is a sad, even one of the saddest subjects of thought, to think, that a rational creature shall be eternally supported, preferred and perpetuated in its being, by the one hand of God's omnipotency, that it may be everlastingly capable of terrible vengeance, to be inflicted by the other hand of his justice!

Fifthly, Concerning the very great obligation that lieth on believers to love Jesus Christ, who hath thus commended his love to them, by undergoing all these sad sufferings for their sakes; even out of love to them to become a curse, to bleed out his precious life, and to pour out his soul to death for them; which to do he was under no necessity, nor in the least obliged by them, being infinitely removed from all possibility of being reached by any obligation from his creatures, whom he loved, and for whom he designed this grand expression of his love, the laying down of his life for them, before they or the world had any being; nay, being by their sins infinitely disoblige: Ah, that most of these whom he loved so much, should love him (who is altogether lovely) their duty, his friends and interest for his sake so little; even so very little, that, if it were possible, he could rue and repent of what he hath done and suffered, tocond his love to them, they would tempt him to it! And indeed there is nothing that more speaks forth the freeness of his love than this, that he should love them so fervently, and continue thus to love them, even to the end, who are often so very cool in their love to him: Sure such, when in any measure at themselves, cannot but love themselves the less, and loathe themselves the more, that they love him so little; and earnestly long for that desirable day, wherein he shall be admired in and by all them that believe, and when they shall get him loved as well as ever they desired to love him, and as well as he shall will them to love him, and when they shall be in an eternal extasy and transport of admiration at his love.

Sixthly, Concerning the little reason that believers have to think much of their small and petty sufferings undergone for him: For what are they all, even the greatest and most grievous of them, being compared with his sufferings for them? They are but
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as little chips of the cross, in comparison of the great and heavy end of it, that lighted on him, and not worthy to be named in one day with his: All the sad and sorrowful days and nights that all the saints on earth have had, under their many and various, and sadly circumstanced crosses and sufferings, do not by thousands of degrees come near unto, let be to equal that one sad and sorrowful night, which he had in Gethsemane (beside all the forrows and griefs he endured before that time) where he was put to conflict with the awakened sword of sin-revenging justice, that did most fiercely lay at him, without sparing him: Which terrible combat lasted all that night, and the next day, till three o'clock in the afternoon, when that sharpest sword, after many sore wounds given him, killed him outright at last, and left him dead upon the place (who yet, even then, when seemingly vanquished and quite ruined, was a great and glorious Conqueror, having by death overcome and destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and having spoiled principalities and powers, making a shew of them openly, and triumphing over them in his cross, Heb 2. 14. Col. 2. 15. the spoils of which glorious victory believers now divide, and shall enjoy to all eternity.) Ah that ever the small and inconsiderable sufferings of the saints, should so much as once be made mention of by them, where his strange and stupendous sufferings offer themselves to be noticed.

Seventhly, Concerning the unspeakably great obligations that lieth on believers, readily, pleasantly and cheerfully, not only to do, but also to suffer for Christ, as he shall call them to it, even to do all that lieth in their power for him, and to suffer all that is in the power of any others to do against them on his account, who did willingly, and with delight, do and suffer so much for them: They have doubtless good reason heartily to pledge him in the cup of his cross, and to drink after him, there being especially such difference betwixt the cup that he drank, and that which they are put to drink; his cup was sweeter thick with the wrath of God, having had the dregs thereof, in a manner, wrung out to him therein; so that it was no wonder, that the very sight of it made him conditionally to supplicate for its departure from him, and that the drink of it put him in a most grievous agony, and cast him in a top-sweat of blood: Yet, faith he on the matter, either they or I must drink it, they are not able to drink it, for the drinking of it will diistract them, and put them mad, will poison and kill them eternally; but I am able to drink it, and to work out the poison and venom of it, and though it shall kill me, I can raise up, and restore myself to life again; therefore, Father, come away with it, and I will drink it up, and drink it out, This to the everlasting welfare of these dear souls; Not my Will, but thine be done; for, thus it was agreed betwixt thee and me in the covenant of redemption; when as theirs is love from bottom even to brim (whatever mixture may sometimes be of paternal and domefick justice, proper and peculiar to God's own family, and which, as the Head and Father thereof, he exerciseth therein) not so much as one gut or scruple of vindictive wrath being left therein: Ah! it's both a sin and shame, that there should be with such, even with such, so much shyness and shrinking, to drink after him in the cup of his cross; especially considering, that there is such an high degree of honour put upon the suffering believer for Christ, above and beyond what is put on the simple believer in him, so that in the scripture-account, the suffering believer is not only, but also, according to what the apostle faith, Phil. 1. 29. To you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.

Eighthly, Concerning what mighty obligation lieth on believers to mourn and weep, to
be sad and sorrowful for sin: How can they look on him, whom they have thus bruised, wounded and pierced by their sins, without the tear in their eye, without mourning for him, and being in bitterness, as a man is for his firstborn, and for his only begotten son? when they think (as all of them, on serious consideration, will find reason to think) that if their sins kepted the tryst and rendezvous, when all the sins of all the elect did meet, and were laid on him; then sure, there came no greater company, and more numerous troop of sins, to that solemn rendezvous, from any of all the redeemed than came from them; and that he had not a heavier load and burden of the sins of any than he had of theirs, whereby he was even pressed, as a cart is pressed down under the sheaves, and was made most grievously to groan, even with the groanings of a deadly wounded man; and that if he was wounded and pierced by their iniquities, then surely he was more deeply wounded and pierced by the iniquities of none, than by theirs: O! what mourning should this caule to them? even such mourning as was at Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo, on the occasion of the sad slaughter and death of that good and desirable king Josiah? This is indeed one of the most genuine and kindly, one of the most powerful and prevalent, one of the sweetest and strongest springs of, and motives to, true gospel-repentance sorrow and mourning for sin.

Ninthly. Concerning the notable and none-such obligation that lieth on believers, to study the crucifixion and mortification of sin: Was it not their sins that crucified and killed precious Jesus Christ, the Prince of life? was it not their sins that violently drove the nails thow rhe blessed hands and feet, and thrust the spear thorow his side, to the bringing forth of water and blood? Shall they not, in their burning zeal and love to him, and in the height of holy indignation at themselves, be avenged on that which brought such vengeance on him? shall they not seriously seek to be the death of that which brought him to death, and whereof, the death and destruction, was one of his great designs therein, on which he was so intent, that in the prosecution of it, he did amidst his dying pangs and agonies breathe out his soul? O let it never be heard for shame, that ever any of them shall find the least sweetness in that accursed thing, that was so bitter to him; that ever any of them shall be found to dally with, or to hug that serpent and viper in their bosom, that so cruelly stung him to death.

But this being the great subject of these following sermons, wherein the preacher, being in a good measure wise, hath sought to find out acceptable words, (Eccl. 12. 10, 11,) and words I hope of uprightness and truth; (O that they may be to the readers as good, and nails fastned hy him who is the great Master of assemblies!) I shall insist no further; only I may humbly say, that to my knowledge, none hath preached on this whole chapter to better purpose every way; many may have done virtuously, but it's probable he will be found to excel them all: Nay, if I should say, that, for any thing I know, this book for so much is amongst the best books of this nature the world hath seen, I suppose hardly will any judicious Christian, thorowly exercised to godliness, after he hath read it all over, and pondered it, think that I have greatly, if at all, hyperbolized.

There are in these choice Sermons, depths as it were for elephants to swim in (whereof his surpring, sublimely spiritual, and very deep divine discourses, concerning the nature of Christ's intercession, and the right improvement of it, in the last six Sermons, is a notable instance) and shallows for lambs to wade in; there is in them milk for babes in Christ, and stronger meat for such as are of full age, who by reason of use have thei
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their senses exercised to discern both good and evil, Heb. 5. 13, 14. Nay, I may in a
good measure say of these Sermons, as it's said of the learned discourses of a late great
man, That in the doctrinal part of several of them, ye will find the depth of polemical di-
vinity; and in his inferences from thence the sweetness of practical; some things that may
exercise the profoundest scholar and others that may edify the weakest Christian; nothing
readily is more nervous and strong than his reasonings, and nothing more sweetly and power-
fully affecting than his applications: There is in them much for information of the judg-
ment, for warming of the affections, and for direction toward a gospel becoming con-
versation; there is much for clearing and expelling the doubts and difficulties of more
weak and darkned Christians, and much for edifying, confirming and establishing of more
grown ones; there is much for conviction, reproof, warfing, humbling, for stirring up
and provoking to the serious exercise of godliness, and much for the comforting and
refreshing of such as stand in need, and are capable of consolation; there is much for
discovering, rousing, awakening and alarming of carnal, secure, unfound, hollow-hearted
and hypocritical professors of religion, and much for beating and hammering down of
the pride of conceit self justifying professors; much for training up of young begin-
ners, and much for advancing and carrying on in their Christian course such as are en-
tred into it, and have made any tolerable progress therein: In a word, he doth in a
great measure approve himself to God, as a workman that needs not be ashamed, rightly
dividing the word of truth (2 Tim. 2. 15.) and as a skilful and faithful steward, giving
to every one his portion in due kind, measure and season.

It may be some readers will think, that there are in these Sermons several coinciden-
cies of purposes, and repetitions: To which I shall but premise to say, That, besid
that there is a great affinity amongst many of the purposes delivered by the prophet in
this piece of his prophecies, if not a holy coincidency of them, and a profitable repeti-
tion now and then of the same thing in different expressions; as there is in some other
scriptures, without any the least imputation to them, as that truly noble and renowned
Gentleman Mr. Boyle, sheweth, in his elaborate, eloquent and excellent Considerations,
touching the file of the holy Scriptures; and that the same midfes, and near-by the same
expressions, may very pertinently be made use of, to clear and confirm different points
of doctrine; It will be found, that if there be in so many sermons or discourses on
subjects of such affinity, any coincidences or repetitions, they are at such a convenient
distance, and one way or other so diversified, and appositely suited to the subject of
his present discourse, that the reader will not readily nauseate, nor think what is
spoken in its place, impertinent, superfluous or needless, tho' somewhat like it hath
been said by him in some other place: Or, if there be any not only seeming, but
real repetitions of purposes and expressions, as they have not been grievous (Phil. 3. 1.)
to the preacher, so he, with the apostle Paul, judged them necessary at the time for the
hearers.

And now, as for you, much honoured, right worthy, and very dearly beloved Inhabitants
of the City of Glasgow, let me tell you, that I have sometimes of late much coveted to
be put and kept in some capacity to do the churches of Christ, and you in particular,
this piece of service, in putting to the press these sweet Sermons on this choice Scrip-
ture before I die: And indeed, after I had gone thorow a good number of them, not
without considerable toil and difficulty (having, all alongit, had no notes of his own,
but the Sermons as they were taken, halfily with a current pen from his mouth, by
one of his ordinary hearers, no scholar, who could not therefore so thorowly and dif-
tinctly
To the Reader.

flintly take up several of the purposes handled by the preacher) the Lord was pleased to give me a stop, by a long continued sharp affliction, not altogether without some little more remote and gentle threatenings of death; but he, to whom the issues from death do belong graciously condescended to spare me a little, that I might gather some strength to go thorow the remainder of them. I have much reason to think, that if poor I had been preaching the gospel to you these twenty years past, wherein we have been in holy providence separated (which hath been the more afflicting to me, that ye were in my heart to have lived and died with you; and if it had so seemed good in the eyes of the Lord; it would have been to me one of the most refreshing and joyful providences I could have been tryed with in this world, to have had fair access, throu' his good hand upon me, and his gracious presence with me, to have preached the gospel to you a while before my going hence and being no more) I would not by very, very far, have contributed so much to your edification, as these few Sermons may, and I hope thro' God's blessing shall. Several of you heard them preached by him, when he was alive amongst you; and now, when he is dead, he is in a manner preaching them over again to you (O that such of you as then were not taken in the preaching of them, might be so now in the serious reading of them!) and by them speaking to these of you that did not then hear them, who, as I suppose, are now the far greatest part of the city-inhabitants: You will find yourselves in them again and again ranked and clasped, according to your different spiritual estates, and the various cases and conditions of your souls, and wonderful discoveries made of yourselves to yourselves, that I something doubt if there be so much as one soul among the several thousands that are in Glasgow, but will find itself, by the reading of these Sermons, spoken to, suitably to its state and case, as if he had been particularly acquainted with the person and his spiritual condition (as indeed he made it a considerable part of his work, as the observing Reader will quickly and easily perceive, to be acquainted very thoroughly with the soul-state and condition of such at least of the Inhabitants as were more immediately under his own inspection and charge) and, as if he had spoken to the person by name; O how inexcusable will such of you be, as had your lot cast to live under the ministry of such an able Minister of the New Testament, of such a Scribe very much instructed into the kingdom of Heaven, who as a good householder knew well how to bring out of his treasure things new and old! Mat. 13. 52. If you were not bettered and made to profit thereby; God and angels, and your own consciences, will witness, how often and how urgently the Lord Jesus called to you by him, and ye would not hear. And how inexcusable will ye also be, that shall disdain or neglect to read these Sermons (as I would fain hope none of you will) that were sometime preached in that place by that faithful servant of Christ, who was your own Minister, which layeth some peculiar obligation on you beyond others to read them? or if ye shall read them and not make conscience to improve them to your souls edification and advantage, which contain more genuine, pure, sincere, solid, and substantial gospel, than many thousands have heard, it may be in an age, though hearing preachings much of the while; even so much, that if any of you should be providentially deprived of the liberty of hearing the gospel any more preached, or should have access to read no other sermons or comments on the scriptures, these sermons, through God's blessing, will abundantly store and enrich you in the knowledge of the uncontrovertably great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh, 1 Tim. 3. 16. and according to the scriptures make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. 3. 15. much insisted on in them: I would there-
fore humbly advise (wherein I hope ye will not mistake me, as if by this advice I were desiring some advantage to my self, for indeed I am not at all that way concerned in the sale of them) that every one of you that can read, and is easily able to do it, would buy a copy of these Sermons; at least, that every family that is able, wherein there is any that can read, would purchase one of them; I nothing doubt, but ye will think that little money very well bestowed, and will find your old minister, desirable Durham, delightful company to discourse with you by his sermons, now when he is dead, and you can see his face, and hear him speak to you by viva-voce no more; whose voice, or rather the voice of Christ by him, was, I know, very sweet to many there, now asleep, and to some of you yet alive; who, I dare not doubt, never allow yourselves to expect with confidence and comfort to look the Lord Jesus in the face, but as seriously and sincerely ye make it your business to be found in his righteousness, so much cleared and commended to you; and in the study of holiness in all manner of conversation, so powerfully pressed upon you, here.

That these sweet and favourable gospel-sermons may come to you all, and more particularly to you, my dear friends at Glasgow, with the fulness of the blessing of the gospel, (Rom. 15. 29,) even of the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified, (Acts 20. 32.) is the serious desire of

Your servant in the Gospel,

J. C.

SERMON. I.
SERMON I.

Isaiah liii. 1. Who hath believed our report?

§isseth it shall not be needful to insist in
§opening the scope of this chapter, or
§in clearing to you of whom the pro-
§phet meaneth, and is speaking: It was
once questioned by the eunuch, Acts viii. 32. when
he was reading this chapter, Of whom do the pro-
hhet speak this? of himself, or of some other man:
And it is so clearly answered by Philip, who, from
these words, began and preached to him of Jesus
Christ, that there needs be no doubt of it now. To
Christians these two may put it out of question, that
Jesus Christ and the substance of the gospel is com-
pounded and summed up here. 1. If we compare
the letter of this chapter with what is in the four
evangelists, we will see it so fully, and often so li-
terally made out of Christ, that if any will but read
this chapter and compare it with them, they will
find the evangelists to be commentators on it, and
setting it out more fully. 2. That there is no scrip-
ture in the old testament so often and so convinc-
ingly applied to Christ as this is, there being scarce one
verse, at least not many, but are by the evangelists or
apostles made use of for holding out of Christ.

If we look then to the sum of the words of this
chapter, they take in the sum and substance of the
gospel; for they take’t in these two, 1. The right
description and manifestation of Jesus Christ, And,
2. The unfolding and opening up of the covenant
of redemption. Where these two are, there the sum
of the gospel is; but these two are here, therefore
the sum of the gospel is here. First, Jesus Christ is
described, 1. In his person and nature; as God,
being eternal; as Man, being under suffering. 2. In
all his offices; as a Priest, offering up himself as a
sacrifice to satisfy justice; as a prophet, venting his
knowledge to the justifying of many thereby; and as
a King, dividing the spoil with the strong. 3. In
his humiliation, in the cause of it, in the end of it, in
the subject of it, in the nature and rise of all, God’s
good pleasure. And, 4. In his exaltation, and out-
gate promised him on the back of all his sufferings
and humiliation.

2dly, The covenant of redemption is here described
and set out, 1. In the particular parties of it, God
and the Mediator. 2. As to the matter about which
it was, the seed that was given to Christ, and whose
iniquities meton him. 3. As to the mutual engage-
ments on both sides, the Son undertaking to make his
soul an offering for sin, and the Father promising
that the efficacy of his satisfaction shall be im-
puted and applied for the justification of sinners; and
the terms on which, or the way how this imputation
and application is brought about, to wit, By his
knowledge: All are clearly held out here.

This is only a touch of the excellency of this
scripture, and of the materials (to say so) in it, as
comprehending the substance and marrow of the
gospel. We shall not be particular in dividing
the chapter, considering that these things we have hinted
at, are interwoven in it.

The first verse is a short introduction to lead us
in to what follows. The prophet hath in the former
chapter been speaking of Christ as God’s Servant,
that should be exalted and made very high; and,
before he proceed more particularly to unfold this
mystery of the gospel, he cries out by way of regret,
Who hath believed our report? Alas, would he say)
for as good news as we have to carry, few will take
them off our hand! Such is mens unconcernedncs,
yea, malice and obfinacy, that they reject them. And
to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? To point
at the necessity of the power of God to accompany
preaching, and even the most lively ordinances to
make them effectual. How few are they, that the
power of God captivates to the obedience of this
truth?

For the first part of this verse, Who hath believed
our report? To open it a little, ye shall take the four
or five considerations, ere we come to the doctrines.

Confider, 1. The matter of this report, in re-
ference to its scope; ’tis not every report, but a re-
port of Christ, and of the covenant of redemption
and of grace. In the original it is, Who hath be-
lieved our hearing actively; that is, that which we
have proposed to be heard; and the wordis turned
tidings, Dan. xi. 44, and rumour, Jer. li. 46.
It is the tidings and rumour of a suffering Mediator,
interposing himself betwixt God and sinners: and it
may be hearing is mentioned, to point out the con-
fidence which the prophet had in reporting these
news; he first heard them from God, and in that was pa-
itive; and then, actively, he proposed them to the
people to be heard by them. 2. Consider that the
prophet speaketh of this report, not as in his own
perfon only, but as in the perfon of all that ever
preached, or shall preach this gospel; therefore this:
report
report is not peculiar to Isaiah, but it is our report, the report of the prophets before, and of these after him, and of the apostles and ministers of the gospel.

3. Consider that Isaiah speaketh of this report, not only in respect of what he met with in his own time, but as foreseeing what would be the carriage of people in reference to it in after-times; therefore, Jo. xii. 38. and Rom. x. 16. this same place is alluded to give a reason of the Jews unbelief, because Isaiah foretold it long before.

4. Consider, that when he complaineth of the want of faith to the report and tidings of the gospel, it is not of the want of historical faith, as if the people would not give Christ a hearing at all, but is of the want of saving faith; therefore, Jo. xii. 37, 38. it is said, Though he had done many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him; and this prophetic scripture is subjoined as the reason of it, That the saying of Isaiah might be fulfilled, who said, Lord, who hath believed our report? applying the believing, spoken of here, to that saving faith, whereby folk believe and rest upon Jesus Christ. 5. Consider, that tho' there be no express party named, to whom the prophet complaineth, yet no doubt, it is to God; therefore, Jo. xii. 38. and Rom. x. 16. when this scripture is cited, it is said, Lord, who hath believed our report? so it is the prophet's complaint of the little fruit himself had, and that the ministers of the gospel should have, in preaching of the gospel, regretting and complaining of it to God, as a fore matter, that it should come to so many, and so few should get good of it, so few should be brought to believe, and to be faved by it.

Tho' these words be few, yet they have four great things in them, to which we shall reduce them, for speaking more clearly to them. 1. That the great subject of preaching, and preachers great errand, is, to report concerning Jesus Christ, to bring tidings concerning him. 2. That the great duty of hearers (implied) is, to believe this report, and, by virtue of it, to be brought to rest and rely on Jesus Christ. 3. That the great, tho' the ordinary fin of the generality of the hearers of the gospel, is unbelief; Who hath believed? that is, it is few that have believed; it is a rare thing to see a believer of this report. 4. That the great complaint, weight and grief of an honest minister of the gospel, is this, that his message is not taken off his hand, that Christ is not received, believed in, and rested on; this is the great challenge ministers have against the generality of people, and the ground of their complaint to God, that whatever they report concerning Christ, he is not welcomed, his kingdom thrives not.

That we may speak to the first, considering the words with respect to the scope, we shall draw five or six Doctrines from them: The first whereof is more general, That the discovery of Christ Jesus, and the making him known, is the greatest news, the gladdest tidings, and the most excellent report that ever came, or can come to a people; there is no such thing can be told them, no such tidings can they hear; this is the report that the prophet speaks of by way of eminency, a report above, and beyond all other reports; these are news worthy to be carried by angels, Behold faith one of them, Luke ii. 20. I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. And what are these tidings, so prefixed to with a Behold! For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord, these are the good tidings, that Jesus Christ is come, and that he is the Saviour by office. We shall not infift on this; only, 1. We will find a little view of this subject in the following words, which hold forth clearly Christ, God and Man in one Person, so compleatly qualified, and excellently furnished for his offices. 2. It is also clear, if we look to the excellent effects that come by his being so furnished; as, his satisfying of justice, his setting free of captives, his triumphing over principalities and powers, his destroying the works of the devil, &c. there cannot be more excellent works or effects spoken of. 3. It is clear, if we look to him, from whom this report cometh, and in whose breast these news bred, (if we may speak so) they are the result of the counsel of the God-head; and therefore, as the report here is made in the Lord's name, so he is complain'd to, when it is not taken off the prophet's hand. And, 4. It is clear, if we look to the mysteriounfs of these news; angels could never have conceived them, had not this report come: these things tell, that they are great, glorious, and good news, glad tidings, as it is in the end of the former chapter, That which hath not been told them, shall they see; and that which they have not heard, shall they consider.

The first Use is, To draw our hearts to be in love with the gospel, and to raise our estimation of it. Peoples ears are itching after novelties, and ye are much worn out of conceit with these news; but is there in any news such an advantage as in these? when God sendeth news to men, they must be great news, and such indeed are these.

Use 2. Therefore be afraid to entertain loathing of the plain substantial truths of the gospel; if ye had never heard them before, there would be-like, be some Athenian itching to hear and speak of them; but they should not be the least thought of, that they are often heard and spoken of.
Serm. I. 1. Therefore think more of the gospel, seeing it containeth the substance of these good news and glad tidings; and think more of gospel ordinances, whereby these good tidings are so often published and made plain to you.

2. More particularly observe, That Jesus Christ, and what concerneth him, the glad and good news of a Saviour, and the reporting of them is the very proper work of a minister, and the great subject of a minister's preaching, his proper work is to make him known: or take it thus, Christ is the native subject, on which all preaching should run. This is the report the prophet speaketh of here, and in effect it was so to John and the other apostles, and should be so to all ministers; Christ Jesus, and what concerns him in his person, natures and offices; to know, and make him known to be God and man; to make him known in his offices to be Priest, Prophet, and King; to be a Priest in his suffering and satisfying justice; to be a prophet in revealing the will of God; to be a King, for subduing folks lusts and corruptions; and to know, and make him known, in the way by which sinners, both preachers, and hearers may come to have him to themselves, as follows in this chapter. This, this is the subject of all preaching, and all preaching should be levelled at this mark; Paul is 1 Cor. ii. 2. peremptory in this, I determined to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ and him crucified; as if he had said, I will meddle with no other thing, but betake myself to this: not only will he forbear to meddle with civil employments, but he will lay aside his learning, eloquence, and human wisdom, and make the preaching of Christ crucified his great work and study; the reason of this is, because Christ standeth in a fourfold relation to preaching: 1. He is the Text, to say so, of preaching; all preaching is to explain him, Acts x. 43. To him give all the prophets witness, and so do the four evangelists, and the apostolic epistles, which are as so many preachings of him; and that preaching which standeth not in relation to him, is beside the text and mark. 2. He is holden out as the Foundation and groundwork of preaching, so that preaching without him wants a foundation, and is the building as it were, of a castle in the air, 1 Cor. iii. 10.—I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon: but let every man take heed how he buildeth; for other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Importing, that all preaching should be squared to, and made to agree with this ground stone. 3. He standeth as the great End of preaching, not only that hearers may have him known in their judgments, but may have him high in their hearts and affections, 2 Cor. iii. 4. We preach not ourselves, that is not only do we not preach ourselves as the subject, but we preach not ourselves as the end of our preaching; our scope is not to be great, or much thought of, but our end in preaching is to make Christ great. 4. He standeth in relation to preaching, as he is the power and life of preaching, without whom, no preaching can be effectual, no soul can be captivated and brought in to him; hence, 1 Cor. i. 23, he faith, We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, they cannot abide to hear him; and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them that are saved, the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.

Ufe 1. For ministers, which we shall forbear inscribing on; only, 1. Were Christ the subject and substance of our report, were we more in holding out him, it is like it might go better with us. 2. There is need of wariness, that the report we make, suit well the foundation: And, 3. The neglect of this may be the cause of much powerlessness preaching, because Christ is not so preached as the subject, and end of preaching; many truths are (alas!) spoken without respect to this end, or but with little respect to it.

Ufes particular for you that are hearers, are these, 1. If this be the great subject of ministers preaching, and that which ye should hear most gladly, and if this be most profitable for you, we may be particular in some few directions to you, which will be as so many branches of the use. And, 1. Of all truths that people would welcome and study, they would welcome and study those that concern Christ, and the covenant of grace most, as foundation-truths, and seek to have them backed by the Spirit. We are afraid there is a fault among Chriftians, that most plain and substantial truths are not so heeded, but some things that may further folk in their light, or tickle their affections, or answer a case, are almost only fought after; which things (it is true) are good; but if the plain and substantial truths of the gospel were more studied, and made use of, they have in them that which would answer all cases. It is a fore matter, when folks are more taken up with notions and speculations, than with these soul-sparing truths, as, that Christ was born, that he was a true Man, that he was, and is King, Priest, and Prophet of his Church, &c. and that other things are heard with more greediness; but if these be the great subject of ministers preaching, it should be your great study to know Christ, in his person, natures, offices, and covenant; what he is to you, and what is your duty
to him, and how you should walk in him, and with him; this was Paul's aim, I count (faith he) all things lost and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, &c. Phil. iii. 8, 9, 10. It is my design, (as if he had said) not only to make him known, but to know him myself. There is little faith in Christ, and diffidence in life-making of his offices, and folks take but little pains to know these things: Therefore, on the one side, let me exhort you, to make this more the subject of your enquiry; and on the other side, take it for your reproof, that there is such a readiness to snuff when plain truths are insinuated on, or when they are not followed to some uncut or strange way; which says, we are exceeding unthankful to God for giving us the best things to speak, hear, and think of.

2. Think much of the preaching of Christ; and to have ministers to preach of him, he is the best news, and God hath sent ministers on this errand, to make them known to you: had he sent them to tell you all the secret things to come that are in God's purpose, and all the hid works of nature, it had not been comparable to these news; what would you have been! O what would sabbath-days and week-days, your lying down and rising up, your living and dying been, if these news had not been? ye should have had a spiritual and sad life, and a most uncomfortable and terrible death; therefore think this gospel a thing of more worth than ye do, and count their feet beautiful on the mountains, that bring these news and glad tidings, as it is Isa. iii. that good report of making peace between God and sinners should be much thought of, and prized, and counted a greater favour than we use to count it. 3. By this ye may know who thrives and profits best under the gospel, even these that learn most of Christ: which confuts not in telling over of words. But first, In actual improving of him, as it is, Eph. iii. 20. To have not so learned Christ, but so as to improve what is in him. 243, In an experimental finding of these effects in us, that are spoken of to come by Christ, which is that which the apostle meaneth, Phil. iii. 10. That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, that I may be conformed to his death. I am afraid that of the many that hear this gospel, there are but few that know Christ this way. But if he be the great thing that should be preached by us, and that ye should learn, (1) What is the reason that so many should be ignorant of him, that the most part look rather like Turks and Pagans, than like Christians? God help us, what shall we say of the condition of the most part of people, when the preaching the gospel has not gained this much ground on us, as to make us know Christ, in his person, natures, offices, our need of him, and the use we should make of him? But, 2. If we will try how he is improved, it is to be feared there be far fewer that know him in this respect; do not many men live, as if they had never heard tell of him? Though they hear that pardon of sin is to be gotten through him, and that virtue to fubdue sin must flow from him, yet they live as if no such thing were in him: if your consciences were pofed, besides the evidences that are in your practice, this would be found to be a sad truth. And, (3) If we will yet try further, what experience folk have of Christ, what virtue they find flowing from his resurrection, what fellowship there is in his sufferings, what conformity to his death, what benefit redounds to them from his offices of King, Priest, and Prophet, to the slaying of sin, and quickening to holy duties, what benefit of fruit from his death; alas! no more, with moth, than if he had never died: what profit or real influence, as to any spiritual change, do any to count upon find? and think ye all these things to be but words? they know him not, that feel not something of the efficacy of his death and resurrection in themselves.

3. Observe, That the report concerning Christ, is the main subject and errand that has been, and is, and will be common to all the ministers of the gospel, to the end of the world; it's our report, it was the report of all the prophets, Acts x. 43. To him bear all the prophets witness, that thro' his name, whoever believeth on him should have remission of sins: they all agree, and have a joint testimony in these. 1. In one subject, Christ, and the same things concerning him, as, that the pardon of sin is to be gotten in him, and through faith in him and no other way, &c. 2. In one commission, they have all one commission, though they be not all equal; all are not apostles, yet all are ambassadors, there is the fame authority for us to report, and you to receive the gospel, as if Isaiah or Paul were preaching; the authority depending on the commission, and not on the persons of men who carry it. 3. In one common end which they all have, and in one common object they are bent to. 4. In this, that they all hold of one common Master, being gifts of one and the same Mediator, Eph. iv. When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men, to every Apostle, &c.

The first use is, To teach you, not to think the less
S E R M O N II.

Isaiah lll. 

The prophet Isaiah is very solicitous about the fruit of his preaching, when he hath preached concerning Christ: as indeed it is not enough for ministers to preach, and for people to hear, except some fruit follow; and now, when he hath been much in preaching, and looketh to others that have been much in that work, he saith, little fruit it had, and would have among them, to whom Christ was and should be spoken of; a thing that in the entry should put us to be serious, let this complaint of Isaiah stand on record against us; seeing he complains of the hearers of the gospel, not only in his own time, but in our time also.

We told you, there were four things in this first part of the verse. 1. The great errand that ministers have to a people, it is to report concerning Christ; and beside that we observed from this head before, looking to the scope, we shall observe further, coin and counterfeit a religion of your own; and all ye legal persons, that lean to your own righteousness; what will ye say, when it shall be found, that ye have rejected all these testimonies? ye must either say, ye counted them false witnesses, which ye will not dare to say; or that ye accounted them true, and ye would not receive their testimony; and the best of these will be found false enough; for if ye counted them true, why did not ye believe them? this will be a very pungent dilemma.

Use 2. For comfort to poor believers. They have good ground to receive and rest upon Jesus Christ; there is never a prophet, apostle or preacher of the gospel, but he hath sealed this truth concerning Christ. What needs any sinner fear at him, or be fearful to choose with him? will ye give credit to the testimony of Isaiah and of Peter, Acts x. 42, and of the rest of the prophets and apostles? Then receive their report, and let yourselves to be among the number of believers, that their testimony may be rested on. We are persuaded there is one of two that will follow on this doctrine, either a strong encouragement to, and confirmation of believing, and quietly resting on Jesus Christ for pardon of sin; or a great ground of aggravation of, and expostulation with you for your guilt; who care not whether ye receive this report or not. We shall say no more for the time, but God bless this to you.

1. The end that ministers should have before them in preaching Christ and the gospel, is, that the hearers of it may be gained to Jesus Christ by hearing, so as they may be brought to believe on him; it is, in a word, to gaining them to saving faith in Christ.

2. It is implied, that Jesus Christ is only to be proposed as the object of faith, to be rested on by the hearers of the gospel; and is the only ground of their peace: there is no name that can be mentioned for the salvation of souls, but this name only; and there is no other gospel can be proposed, but that which holdeth him out to people.

3. Observe, (which is much the same with the former observation and to which we would speak a little more particularly) that by preaching of the gospel, Jesus Christ is laid before the hearers of it, as the object of their faith, and proposed to be believed.
I know there are two things necessary to the acting and exercising of faith. The 1st is objective, when the object or ground is propounded in the preaching of the gospel. The 2d is subjective, when there is an inward, spiritual, and powerful quickening, and framing of the heart, to lay hold on, and make use of the object and offer. It is true, that all, to whom the offer cometh, are not quickned; but the doctrine faith, that, to all to whom the gospel cometh, Christ is propounded, to be believed on by them, and brought near unto them, so that we may fay, as Christ said to his hearers, The kingdom of God is come near unto you: both Christ and John brought, and laid the kingdom of heaven near to the Jews, and it is laid as near to you in the preached gospel: This is it then that the doctrine says, 1. That the gospel holds out Christ, as a sufficient ground of faith to rest upon. And, 2. With a sufficient warrant to those who hear it to make use of him, according to the terms on which he is offered. And, 3. It brings him so pressingly home, as he is laid to the doors and hearts of sinners who hear the gospel; that who-

ever hath the offer, he must necessarily either believe in, and receive Christ, or reject him, and cut at the report made of him in the gospel.

I shall first a little confirm this doctrine, and then secondly make use of it.

First, I shall confirm it from these grounds, (1.) From the plain offers which the Lord maketh in his word, and from the warrant he giveth his ministers to make the same offers; it is their commiffion to pray them, to whom they are sent, to be reconciled; to tell them, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself; as it is, 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. and in Christ’s head to request them to embrace the offer of reconciliation; totell them, that Christ died for the sinners that will embrace him, and that he will impute his righteousness unto them; and Chap. vi. 1. We beseech you (faith he) that ye receive not this grace in vain; which is not meant of faving grace, but of the gracious offer of grace and reconciliation through him; this is ministers work, to pray people not to be idle hearers of this gospel; For, faith he, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in a day of salvation have I succoured thee; behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. The force of the argument is this, If ye will make this gospel welcome, ye may get a hearing; for now is the day of salvation, therefore do not neglect it. So Psal. lxxxi. 10. 11. (where God maketh the offer of himself, and that very largely) Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it. The offer is of himself, as the words following clear; My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me; for they that refuse his word, refuse himself; and hence, Isa. lxv. 1. he faith, 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; and to the Jews, I have stretched out my hands all day long to a rebellious people. (2.) We may clear and confirm it from these similitudes, by which the offer of this gospel is, as it were, brought to the doors of people; and there are several similitudes made use of to this purpose; I shall name but four. 1. It is set down under the expression of wooing, as, 2 Cor. xi. 2. I have espoused you as a chaste virgin to Christ; this is ordinary, and fuppofeth a marriage, and a bridegroom, that is by his friends wooing and fuiting in marriage; fo that (as we faw) wherever the call of the gospel comes, it is a bespeaking of quickned to him, as, Cant. viii. What shall we do for our sister in the day that she shall be spoken for? 2. It is set out under the expression of inviting to a feast; and hearers of the gospel are called to come to Christ,
as strangers or guests are called to come to a wedding-feast; Mat. xxii. 2, 3, 4. All things are ready come to the wedding, &c. Thus the gospel calleth not to an empty house that wants meat, but to a banqueting house where Christ is made ready as the cheer, and there wants no more but feasting on him: so it is set out under the similitude of eating and drinking. 1 John vi. 27. He that eateth me, even he shall live by me. 3. It's set out often under the expression or similitude of a market, where all the wares are laid forth on the stand, Ifa. lv. 1. Ho, every one that thirsts, come to the waters, &c. And, left it should be said, or thought, that the proclamation is only to the thirsty, and such as are so and so qualified; ye may look to what followeth, let him that hath no money come; yea, come, buy without money and without price. And to the offer that is made to those of Laodicea, Rev. iii. who, in appearance, were a hypocritical and formal people, yet to them the counsel and call comes forth, Come buy of me eye-salve, gold tried in the fire, &c. It says the wares are even in their offer, or even offered to them. 4. It is set out under the similitude of a standing and knocking at a door, because the gospel brings Christ as knocking and calling hard at sinners doors, Rev. vili. 20. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and sup with him, and he with me. So, Cant. v. 2. By the sleepy bride it is said, It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh; and Psa. xxiv. last four verses, 'tis cried, Lift up your heads, ye gates, and be lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in; which is an earnest invitation to make way for Christ Jesus, wanting nothing but an entry into the heart, whereby we may see how near Christ comes in the gospel, and is laid to folks hand. 5. We may confirm it from the nature of faith, and of the obedience that is required to be given to the command of believing: Wherever this gospel comes, it tyeth and obligeth all the hearers to believe on Christ, that is, to receive and welcome him; and there could be no receiving of him, if he were not making an offer of himself. Thus it is said, John i. 11, 12. He came unto his own, but his own received him not; but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. He came to both these who received him, and to those who received him not; but he gave to believers only this privilege of sonship. If we look to all the names of faith; as coming to Christ, eating and drinking of him, receiving of him, resting on him, &c. they all suppose that Christ is near to be caught hold of, and within speaking and tryingt"
unto you; the word of faith lays him so near, that ye have no more to do but receive the offer of him, to believe and close with him, and step in upon him, as it were, to come as living stones to be built upon him as a sure foundation.

But it will be asked, How comes this gospel so near? How does it bring in Christ so near to sinners? 1. In these five steps, 1. As it makes the report of Christ, and brings the tidings of such things, as that he is born, and that he hath suffered, and for such an end, that we may partake of the benefit of them on such terms; it makes the proclamation narratively, and tells what he did, what good may be gotten of him, and how we may come by it. 2. As it brings an offer of these good things on the terms on which they are to be gotten, so it never tells that Christ is come, but it says also, Here is life to be gotten in him by you, if ye will take the way proposed to come by it; therefore, when the proclamation comes forth, that all things are ready, the next word is, Come to the wedding; And when, in the one word, he says, I stand at the door and knock; at the next he says, If any man will open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me; and when, Ifa. xxxviii. it is said, He is a precious Corner-stone, a tried Foundation-stone laid in Zion; the next word is, He that believeth on him shall not make haste, or, as the Apostle hath it, shall not be ashamed or confounded; this makes the gospel glad tidings, because it comes always with an offer of Christ, and of life in him. 3. When the offer is made, and the precious wares are exposed to sale in this cried fair of grace, a command comes out, Choose life, come buy the wares, believe, receive the offer, as is clear in all the places we named before; it leaves not folk indifferent to receive or not, but chargeth them, as they would be obedient to a command, to receive him, 1 John iii. 23. This is his commandment that ye should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ; this is the great gospel command, and ministers have not only the telling of these news, and warrant to make the offer, but a commiilion to command to receive it; and therefore the setting and flighting of the offer, is a sin opposite to the command. 4. It not only makes the offer, and backs the offer with a command to embrace it, but itsweetens the command with many gracious promises knit to it, as Isa. lv. Hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David: And whenever the command of believing comes, it is always with a promise; as Paul deals with the jaylor, Acts xvi. Believe, and thou shalt be saved; and

Mark xvi. at the close, the Lord says, They that believe shall be saved, to encourage to faith in him. 5. It presses the offer, and commands embracing of it with the promise, with a certification; for the offer is not conditional, but alternative, Mark xvi. If ye believe not, ye shall be damned; so Deut. xxx. death and life are proposed, and they are hidden choose: If the gospel be not effectual in its commands and promises, it will be effectual in its threatenings; the word of God will triumph one way or the other, and not return to him void, as is very clear, Ifa. lv. 11. and 2 Cor. ii. 15. 16. it triumphs in some, while they are brought by the promise to give obedience to the command of believing, and to them it becomes the favour of life unto life; and to others it triumphs, as to the execution of the threatening on them for their unbelief, and to them it becomes the favour of death unto death. In a word, Christ Jesus comes so near people in this gospel, that he must either be chosen, and life with him; or refused, to the destruction and death of the refuser; ye have the same Christ, the same word, the same covenant, the same obligation to believe, proposed to you, that believers from the beginning of the world had; and another ye will not get, and what more can the gospel do to bring Christ near to you? when it brings him so near, that ye have him in your offer, and the authority of God and his promises interposed to persuade you to accept of the offer; and threatenings added, to certify you, that if ye accept it not, ye shall perish: in which respect, we may say, as the prophet Ifaiah doth, Chap. v. What could God do more to his vineyard, which he hath not done? as to the holding out of the Object of faith, Jesus Christ to be refled on by you.

But some will, it may be, object here, 1. But if there come not life and power with the offer, it will not do the turn; we cannot believe, nor receive the offer. Any: Whose fault is this, that ye want ability? It is not God's fault; ye have a sure ground to believe, his word is a warrant good enough, the promises are free enough, the motives, sweet enough; the great fault is a heart of unbelief in you, that ye will not believe in Christ, nor open to him when he is brought to your door. I doubt, yea, I put it out of doubt, when all that ever heard the gospel shail stand before the throne, that there shall be one found that shail dare to make this excuse that they were not able to receive Christ; the gospel brings Christ so near them, that they must either say, yea, or nay; It is not so much, I cannot, as, I will not believe: and that will be found a wilful and malicious refusal.
2. It may be objected, But how can this gospel come to all alike, seeing it cannot be, that thee that will never get good of the gospel, have it as near to them, as these that get the saving fruit of it? Anf. Not to speak of God's purpose, or what he intends to make of it, nor of the power and fruit that accompanies it to some, and not to all; it is certain, the gospel, and Christ in its offer, comes alike near to all that hear it: It objectively reveals the same glad tidings to all, with the conditional offer of life, and with the same command and encouragement, and certification, in threatenings as well as promises: In these respects, Christ is brought alike near to all; and when God cometh to reckon, he will let sinners know in that day, that the gospel came to their door, and was refused: yea, it comes, and where it comes will take hold of some, to pluck them out of the snare, and be ground of faith to them; and to others it will be a ground of challenge, and so the favour of death unto death: for tho' it take not effect as to its promises in all, nor in its threatenings to all; yet as to either death or life, it will take effect in every one, so as, if life be refused, death steps in the room of it.

But it may be asked, Why will God have Christ in the offer of the gospel brought so near the hearers of it? Anf. 1. Because it serves to commend the grace and love of God in Christ Jesus: when the invitation is so broad, that it is to all; it speaks out the royalty of the seat, upon which ground, 2. Cor. vi. 1; its called grace, the offer is so large and wide. 2. Because it serves for warranting and confirming the elect in the receiving of this offer; for none of the elect could receive him, if he were not even laid to their door. It is this, which gives us warrant to receive that which God offers: it is not because we are elected or beloved of God before time, or because he purposed to do us good, that we believe; these are not grounds of faith, being God's secret will: but we believe, because God calleth and maketh the offer, inviteth and promiseth, knowing that he is faithful, and we may trust him; hence David says, **I will never forget thy word, and In God will I praise his word**; for the word in its offer speaks alike to all, and to none particularly: Indeed, when it comes to the application of promises for consolation, that is to be made according to the qualifications in the person, but the offer is to all. 2. Because by this means the Lord hath the fairer access to found his quarrel and controversy against unbelievers, and to make their dittay and doom the sooner in the day of the Lord, when it is found that they never received the offer, **My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me; therefore I gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels:** and this is an approbation given to justice here, it's well-wair'd, seeing they would not receive thee, that they get worse in thy room.

**Use 2.** Seeing Christ comes near you in this gospel, and this is one of the market-days, I intreat you, while he is near, receive him, call upon him while he is near; or, take it in the plain words of the apostle, Open to him, take him in, give him welcome, while he bodes himself, to say so, on you. There is not a confidence in any man that hears this gospel, but he will have this testimony from him in it, that he came near them, was in their sight, and within their reach and grips, as it were, if they would have put out their hand to receive him: and seeing it is so, O receive this gospel, give him room; while he is content to flip with you, take him in, make sure your union with him: this is the end why this report is made, and Christ is laid before you, even that you may lay yourselves over on him.

I would follow this use a little, by way of exhortation and expostulation jointly, seeing the doctrine will bear both; for when Christ is brought so near, even to the mouth and to the heart, it will be great ground of reproof and expostulation, if he shall be rejected. Be exorted therefore to be in earnest, seeing, 1. It is a matter of such concernment to you: many nations, kings, and kingdoms have not had Christ so near them as ye have; neglect not such an opportunity. Do ye think that all that is said in the gospel, concerning this, is for nought? Is it for no use, that such a report is made, and preaching continued so long among you? And if it be for any use, is it not for this, that ye may receive the report, and may, by doing so, get your souls for a prey? To what use will preaching be, if this use and end of it be missed? Will your hearing the gospel make your peace with God, if Christ be not received? 2. Consider the advantage ye may have by receiving the gospel, that others have not. Is it a little thing to be called to God's feath, to be married to Christ, to be made friends with God, and to enjoy him for ever? The day comes, when it will be thought an advantage; and are there motives to persuade to any thing, like those that are to induce to that? 3. Consider what it is that we require of you: it is no strange nor hard thing, it is but believing; and this is nothing else, but that the report concerning Christ be received, yea, that he be received for your own good; that is it that the gospel calls you to, even to betake you to a Physician for cure,
betheke you to a Creditor for your debt. If you could escape a reckoning and wrath another way, it were something; but when there is no other way to obtain pardon of sin and peace, or to escape wrath, and obtain favour and friendship with God, but this, and when this way (to speak so) is made so easy, that it is but to stope down, and to take up Christ at your foot, as it were, or to roll yourselves on him, how inexculbable will ye unbelievers be, when ye shall be arraigned before his tribunal? But, 4. Look a little farther to what is coming: If ye were to live always here, it were hard enough to live at a feud with God; but have ye faith of a judgment after death? If so, how will ye hold up your faces in that day, that now refuse Christ? will not horrible confusion be the portion of many then? and will any ground of confusion be like this, the flighting of Christ? when he shall be seen coming to judge slayers of him, what horror will then rise in confidences, when he shall appear and be avenged on them that were not obedient to this gospel? as is most clear, 2Thess. i. Whenour Lord Jesus shall be revealed in flaming fire, with his mighty angels from heaven, to take vengeance on all that know God, and obey not the gospel. 5. Consider, that death and life are now in your option, in your hand as it were, chuse or refuse: I speak not, nor plead here for free-will, but of your willing electing of that which ye have offered to you; for one of two will be, either shall ye willingly chuse life, which is a fruit of grace, or refuse life, and chuse death, which will be found the native fruit of your corruption: ye may have life by receiving Christ, who is laid to your door; and if ye refuse him, death will follow it: as now in hearing this gospel, ye carry in chufing or refusing, so will the sentence pass on you at the great day; and lo your sentence, in a manner, is written down with your own hand, as it is said, Acts xiii. 46. Ye judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, not out of humility, but maliciously. Now, when the matter is of such concernment, beware of playing the fool; if ye will continue presumptuous and secure, following your idols, what will the Lord say, but, Let it be so, ye get no wrong when ye get your own choice; and he but, as it were, ratifies the sentence which ye have plant on yourselves. 6. I shall add but this one word more, and befeech you that ye would seriously lay this to heart, as a weighty thing, considering the certification that follows on it: It is not only death, but a horrible death, wrath, and wrath with its aggravation from this ground; like that of Capharnaum, that was lifted up to heaven in this respect, having Christ brought so near them. To whom this gospel is not the favour of life unto life, it shall be the favour of death unto death: and think not this a common motive, tho' it be commonly used; it will bring wrath upon wrath, and vengeance upon vengeance on the hearers of this gospel, beyond that of Sodom, if ye be rejecters of it. Sure, none of you would think it an easy thing to be punished as Sodom was, nor disagst well the curse that came on them: Is there any of you, but ye would think it uncouth and strange, yea stupendous, to enter into their judgment, and to have your lands turned into a flinking loch, and yourselves eternally tormented with them? But there is more wrath and vengeance following on the sin of unbelief, and rejecting of Christ, when he comes to your door in this gospel. To close up all, Consider, that Christ is near you, and hath been long near you, and wooing you: ye know not how many days or years ye shall have; how soon this gospel may be taken from you, or ye from it; how soon ye may be put in the pit, where ye will gnash your teeth, gnaw your tongues, and blaspheme God: therefore be serious while Christ is in your offer, and roll yourselves over upon him, while ye have him so near you; welcome this hearing or report, while it founds in your ears, that there may be no just ground of this complaint against you, Lord, who hath believed our report?

SERMON III.

Isaiah iii. 1. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

The most part of men and women think not much of the preached gospel; yet, if it were considered, what is the Lord's end in it, it would be the most refreshful news that ever people heard, to hear the report of a Saviour: that is, and should be, great and glad tidings of great joy to all nations; and we should be so composed to hear such news from God, and concerning his will and our own well, as to be suitably affected with them. It is a wonder that God hath sent such a report to people, and in it hath laid Christ so near them, that he puts him home to them, and lays him before them, even at their feet as it were; and as great a wonder, that when the Lord hath condescended to give such a Saviour, and brought
Ifaiah liii.

I shall take up this doctrine in three branches, which we will find in the words, and which will make way for the use. 1. That a people to whom Christ is offered in the gospel, may warrantably accept of Christ; or, The offering of Christ in the gospel, is warrant enough to believe in him. Otherwise there had been no just ground of expostulation and complaint for not believing; for thou the complaint will not infer that they had ability to believe, yet it will infer they had a warrant to believe; for the complaint is for the neglect of the duty they were called to. 2. That they, to whom Christ is offered in the gospel, are called to believe; it is their duty to do it: thus, believing, in all that hear this gospel, is necessary, by necessity of command; even as holiness, repentance, &c. are. 3. That saving faith is the way and mean, by which these, that have Christ offered to them in the gospel, come to get a right to him, and to obtain the benefits that are reported of to be had from him; thus, believing is necessary, as a mids, to the end of getting Christ, and all that is in him: this is also here implied in the regret made of the want of faith, which prejudgeth men of Christ, and of the benefits of the gospel.

We shall shortly put by the first of these, which is, That all that hear the gospel preached, have warrant to believe and receive Christ, for their eternal peace, and for making up of the breach between God and them: this preached gospel gives you all warrant to accept of Jesus Christ, and ye would not seek after, nor call for another. I shall first premise two distinctions to clear this, and then, secondly confirm it. As for the first of the two distinctions that serve to clear it, we may take up the gospel more largely and complexly, in a covenant form, holding out Christ and his benefits, on condition of believing; or, we may take it up as it holds out a promise, without particular mentioning of a condition: now, when we say, that the gospel commands and warrants all that hear it to accept the offer; we do not mean the last, that all that hear the gospel have warrant to accept the promise, without a condition, but the first, that is, that all the hearers of the gospel are commanded to accept of Christ offered; there is, by the preaching of it, a warrant to close with the report, and then to meddle with, and take hold of the promises, and the things promised: so that it is the gospel, conditionally proposed, that gives warrant to believe, as believing rests on Christ for obtaining life in him. The second distinction is, That we would consider faith, as its rests on Christ or obtaining union with him, and right to the promises; or, as it applies and makes use of the benefits to be gotten in and by Christ: the offer of the gospel gives not to all a warrant to apply the benefits to be gotten by Christ instantly; but it warrants them to close with him first, and then to apply his benefits.

Secondly, For confirmation of this truth, That the general preaching of the gospel is a warrant for believing and exercising faith on Jesus Christ, for making our peace with God; it is clear from these grounds, 1. From the nature of the gospel, it is the word of God, as really inviting to do that which it calls for, as if God were speaking from heaven; it is the word of God, and not the word of man, and hath as real authority to call for obedience, as if God spake it immediately from heaven; and the word of promise is as really his word, as the word of command, and therefore to be rested on and improved, as well as we are to endeavour obedience to the command: and if we think that God's testimonies are true, and if we lay any just weight on these three witnessless testifying from heaven, and on these other three testifying from earth, 1 John v. 7. then we may rest on Jesus Christ offered in this gospel, and believe, that these who rest on him shall have life; for it, as we said, as really God's word, as if he were speaking it audibly from heaven, 2. It may be confirmed from these solemn things, the word and oath of God, whereby he hath mightily confirmed the external offer of the gospel, even the two immutable things, wherein it is impossible for him to lie, that these who are fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them, may have strong consolation, as it is, Heb. vi. 18. And God having thus said and sworn anent this external covenant, for this very end, that the hearers of the gospel may know,
that they who receive Christ offered therein, shall have life, it is warrant sufficient to believe on him for life: it is also for this end that he hath put seals to the covenant, circumcision and the passover in the old, and baptism and the Lord's supper in the new testament; which are extended, not only to the elect, but to professors in the visible church, that every one, who is baptized and admitted to the communion, may have confirmation of this, that the offer, that God maketh of life through Christ, is a true and real offer, and will be made good to the persons that shall receive it, and so perform the condition. 3. It may be confirmed from the end for which God appointed the word and ministry in his church, even to make the offer of Christ and life through him, John xx. 31. These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name; the word is both written and preached for this very end. 4. And lastly, It is confirmed from the experience of all the saints, and from the ground on which they believed, which was the same that we have; they had no other ground but the same gospel and word that we have; it was not the secret operation or influence of the Spirit, it is that indeed which works faith; but it was the word which was the ground of their faith, for there is no warrant for faith but in the word: and as many believers as have gone before us, are as so many instances and experiences to confirm this truth to us.

Use. It serves for good use to such as may fall to doubt and dispute what warrant they have to believe: we say, ye have as good warrant as Abraham, David, Paul, or any of the godly that lived before you, had: ye have the same gospel, covenant and promises; it was always God's word preached, which was the ground of faith; and there needs not be much disputing, what is God's purpose; for we are not called to look to that in the matter of believing, more than in the matter of our duty: and as it were evil reasoning to dispute what may be God's purpose in the matter of our duty, when we are called to it; it is as bad reasoning to dispute his purpose in the matter of faith: And therefore we leave this use with a word of advertisement, that this gospel, as it lays Christ before you, it gives you warrant to receive him, and rest upon him; and we may say as Paul did, Acts xiii. 38, 39. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that thro' this man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of

verse 1.

Serm. III.

Moses. There is the way held out for obtaining pardon of sin, and peace; the Lord hath made the offer, and laid a fair bridge over the gulf of distance betwixt God and sinners, tho' ye should never get good of it, and tho' ye should never feel a foot on the bridge: none needs to fear to step forward; behold, our Lord Jesus hath holden out the golden scepter, his call may be warrant enough to come; the preaching of this gospel stops all disputing, and banisheth debating of the business: it calls all the hearers of it, and gives them warrant to come forward, and it is such a warrant, as they will be found slighters of the great salvation offered, who had this door opened to them, and did not step forward; for, as the apostle saith, 2 Cor. vi. Behold, now is the day of salvation, behold now is the accepted time: and Heb. ii. 2. If the word spoken by angels was fetdaft, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, &c. It is the same gospel that from the beginning hath been preached to sinners, and that is the reason why the gospel is called grace, in that 2 Cor. vi. 1. We beseech you that ye receive not this grace of God in vain; and Gal. ii. at the close, I do not frustrate the grace of God; For many get the warrant and pass to come and receive Christ, who put it up in their pocket, as it were, and make no use of it, as the man that hid the talent in his napkin; the banns of marriage are proclaimed, and the warrant given forth, and yet they halt, and come not to the wedding.

We shall add the second branch, which is, That this gospel where it comes and offers Jesus Christ to sinners, men and women are not only warranted to come; but required and commanded to come. The great duty that the gospel calls for, is believing; it leaves it not indifferent to believe or not, but peremptorily lays it on as a command: ye hear many preachings, and Christ often spoken of; now this is the great thing called for from you, even believing in Christ; and while it is not performed, there is no obedience given to the gospel.

We shall first confirm, and then make use of this branch of the doctrine.

1. For confirmation, take these grounds, 1. From the manner how the gospel propoundeth faith, it is by way of command in the imperative mood, Believe, Come, ye that are weary, &c. Come to the wedding, Open, &c. wherein somewhat of the nature of faith is held out, all these being the same with believing. 2. It is not only commanded as o-
other things are, but peculiarly commanded; and there is a greater weight laid on the obedience of this command, than on the doing of many other commanded duties: it is the sum of all Christ's preaching, Mark i. Repent ye and believe the gospel; it is the only command which Paul propofes to the jaylor, Acts xvi. Believe in the Lord Jesus, &c.

It is, as it were, the peculiar command that Jesus Christ hath left to his people, 1 John iii. 23. This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ; and this command of believing on him, is the peculiar command left to, and laid on ministers to prefr. 4. It will be clear, if we consider, that the great disobedience that he quarrel for, is, when there is not believing, when sinners will not come to him, this is his quarrel, John v. 40. Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life; and here, Who hath believed our report? so Mat. xxiii. I would have gathered you, and ye would not; and John xxi. 37. Tho' he did many mighty works among them, yet they believed not on him. 5. Look to the nature of the offer made by Christ, and to the end of it, and ye will find that the great thing called for, is the receiving of it, which is nothing but believing: and all our preachings of Christ, and his benefits, are useless without it: without this, he wants the satisfaction he calls for, for the travel of his soul; and without it the hearers of this gospel profit not, 1 Pet. i. 9. Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls; the subordinate end of preaching, to wit, the salvation of our souls, cannot be attained without faith.

The uses are three. 1. It serveth to be a ground for us to propofe the main gospel-duty to you, and to teach you, what is the great and main thing ye are called to; it is even to believe in Jesus Christ, to exercise faith on him: it is not only that your life should be civil and formal, that ye should read, pray, frequent ordinances, learn the catechism, and such like; but this is it, to believe on Jesus Christ for the obtaining of life and remifion of fins through him; and it is not a thing indifferent to you, but commanded, and with this certification, that if ye believe not, ye shall never get life nor pardon of fin: and therefore as we tell you that remifion of fins is preached to you thro' Christ, so we command and charge you to believe on him, and receive this gospel, wherein he is offered for the remifion of sins.

For clearing of this use, and that we may have the more ready access to application, we shall fpeak a word to these three, 1. To several kinds of true faith, three whereof are not faving; or to the ordinary diffinctions of faith. 2. To the scripture-expressions, that hold out the nature of faving faith. 3. To fome difference betwixt this faving faith, and falle and counterfeit faith, or these acts of true faith more generally taken, which yet are not faving.

For the first of these, When we fpeak of faith, we shall draw it to these four kinds ordinarily fhook of, and shall not alter nor add to the common diffinctions of faith, tho' there may be more given.

The first is historical faith: which may be called true, being it whereby we affent to the truth of a thing, because of his fuppofed fidelity that tell eth it; as when an author writes a history, we give it credit upon report that he was an honest man that wrote it: fo historical faith is, when people hearing the word preached or read, they affent to the truth of it all; and do not question, but that Christ came to the world; that he was God and Man in one perfon; that he died and rofe the third day, and ascended into heaven; that they that believe on him shall be faved, &c. and taking the word to be God's word, they may give to it a higher affent than they give to any man's word, because God is worthy, infinitely worthy of more credit than any man, yea than all men, and angels too: There may be, I fay, in this historical faith of divine truths, a higher or greater affent than there is in believing of any human history, which may be the reafon why many miftake historical faith, and yet it is but of the fame kind, and a thing which many reprobates have, as John ii. at the close, it is faid, Many believed on him when they faw the miracles which he did, but Jesus did not commit himself unto them: they were brought to believe, from the figns which they faw, that he was more than a meer man, and that it was the word of God which he spoke, and yet it was but a historical faith; yea this faith may be and is in devils, who are faid, James ii. 9. To believe and tremble. There are many, who, if they believe Christ to be God and Man, and the word to be true, think it enough; yet James, having to do with fuch, tells them, that the devils believe as much as that, and more thorowly than many that have hiftorical faith; he knows God to be true, and one that cannot lie, and he finds it to his cofl; he knows that fuch as believe cannot perifh, for he cannot get one of them to hell; he knows that there is a time fett, when Chrifl will come to judge the world and himself amog the rcf, and therefore he fays often to him, Torment me not before the time: and as the devil hath this faith, fo there are many in hell that have
Sermon IV.

Isaiah liii. 1. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

THE gospel is a sweet message, and ought to be glad news, when it comes to a people; and therefore, when this report of our Lord Jesus Christ is made to sinners, O! but it is a sad complaint that follows on the refusals and not welcoming of it: there is no better news a minister can carry, than these brought to the shepherds by the angels, Luke ii. 10, 11. Fear not, behold we bring you glad tidings of great joy to all people; unto you is born, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord: but, were it an Isaiah, it will weight him, when he looks on a fraildes ministry and

Sermon IV.

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and set out under the parable of the feed fown on ftony-ground, which soon springs up, but withers; so some hearers of the gospel receive the word with joy, and are affected with it, but endure not: The difference between this and historical faith, is, that historical faith, as such, consists in the judgment, and reaches not the affections; at best, it reaches not the affection of joy, for tho' the devils tremble, yet they are never glad; temporary faith reaches the affections, and will make a man to tremble at the threatenings, as Felix did; so some way to delight himself in the promises of the gospel, and to smack them, as it were, from the apprehension of the sweet taste and relish he finds in them. It is even here (as it were) told a whole man, that a Physician is come to town, he is neither up nor down with it; but tell it to a sick man, and he is fain, from an apprehended possibility of the cure, yet the apprehended possibility of the cure never sends him to the Physician, nor puts him to apply the cure. The fourth Iort is saving faith, which goeth beyond all the rest, and brings the sick man to the physician, and to make use of the cure: there may be some measure of true saving faith, where there is not much temporary faith, or moving of the affections; and there may be a considerable measure of temporary faith, where there is no saving faith at all; even as a fallen-star may seem to glance more than a fixed one that is overclouded, yet it hath no solid light. Know then, that faith is called for, but take not every sort of faith for saving faith: it would make tender hearts bleed, to see so many mistaken in the matter of their faith; there are some who say, they had faith all their days. O that ye were convinced of the lamentable deceit and delusion that ye are under, and that ye could distinguish betwixt faith and presumption, betwixt historical and temporary faith, and true saving faith: tho' the two former be not delusions; but in so far as ye rest on the fame, and take them for saving faith, ye are deluded; for saving faith puts you out of yourselves, to rest on Jesus Christ.
Serm. IV.  

The gospel, and despised gospel, and will make him complain, 

Who hath believed our report? That we may experimentally know the cheerfulness and gladness that follows the gospel where it is embraced; and that we may not know the sorrow and fadness that will follow the challenge for despising of it. One of these two the preached gospel will be, either it will be joyful news to you, or sad ground of complaint to God against you.

We entered to speak of the great duty of a people that hear the gospel, and the great mean whereby these news become delightfull, and that is by faith to receive the report of the gospel, or to believe on Christ reported of in it: This is clearly implied, for the regret which holds out the sin, is, Who hath believed our report? and therefore the great duty must be, to believe, and by faith to receive the report. We come now to speak of the verse. And because it is the great design of the whole gospel, yea, it is the design of the law also, both of which level at this end and scope, even faith in Christ; it will be expedient, and noways impertinent, that we infift a little on this, especially when so many thousands are utterly ignorant of faith, being strangers to what believing in Christ is, and so great strangers to the native end of the gospel, and out of the way of getting good by the preaching of it; so that, to this day, they have not learned this one lesson, to wit, concerning faith in Christ, and other lessons will be to little or no purpose, till this be learned.

We shall not infift to speak at large of the doctrine of faith, but only, in a plain way, glance at what this great duty is, that is required of the hearers of the gospel; it is believing in Christ savingly, or saving faith, for no other thing will hold off the complaint against you: ye will be complain ed of, tho' ye would believe with all other faith; therefore it is this faith that is here meant.

That we may come the sooner to that which we would be at, we shall premise two or three words.  

First, when we speak of believing here, we presuppose these things that are necessary for clearing the object of faith, and capacitating us to believe, tho' they be not saving faith: As namely, 1. That the offer of the gospel must come to people, that the Object of Faith be held out to them, that it be told them, that there is a way for a sinner's justification through Christ Jesus, and that sinners may be accepted before God on his account, or through him. There must also, 2. Be an understanding of this, a conceiving in the judgment what it is; folks cannot believe, except they hear, and understand what they hear, in fo far as distinctly to fix their faith on the thing known; they must know and understand the Mediator's fulness, the Covenant's freeness, and the efficacy of faith to make Christ theirs. Yea, 3. It is necessary there be some acquaintance with our own condition; as that we are naturally under sin; that we are lost, and under the curse; sick, and utterly unable, and even desperate to get ourselves recovered, by any thing that is in, or by any thing that we can do of ourselves; that we are for ever undone, if we get not a Saviour, that our mouth may be stitches. 4. Not only must we know this, but it is necessary there be a hisorical faith of it, to believe that there is fulness and sufficiency in Christ, that he is able to cure, and take away the guilt of sin in all that rest on him; these must be believed in general, ere ever sinners can rest on him for their own salvation; which supposes, that there may be an hisorical, where there is not a faving faith. Now, when all this length is gone, saving faith is that which the gospel calleth for, and it is the heart's acting, according to what sound light and conviction hath, on Jesus Christ, as holden out in the promis, for obtaining of life and salvation through him; so that, when the soul is lying still under its conviction, and knows it cannot have life but by resting on Christ, and hears that there is a sufficiency in him for up-making of all its wants, then the work of the Spirit prevails with the soul, to call itself over on him, for obtaining of life, and of every other thing needful; it brings the soul to embrace and lay hold on him, not only as one able to fave sinners, but to save itself in particular: and this is the native work of faith, that unites the soul to Christ, and puts it over the bound-road, or march of all delusion; it is like a sinking man's leaping to catch hold of a rock or rope; it is the bringing of a lost sinner, from the serious apprehension of his own naughtiness and undone estate, to call himself over on Jesus Christ, for the obtaining of life through him.

2dly, When we speak of faith, we would premise this, That even this true and saving faith, which is not only in kind true, that is, such as hath a real being, but is saving, may be considered in its different acts or actions, for its different needs or necessities: Tho' the covenant be one, yet the acts of faith are many, we having to do with pardon of sin, with sanctification in its parts, vivification, and mortification, with peace, &c. faith differently acts on Christ and the promis for obtaining of these. Now, the faith that we would insist on, is, the faith that rests on Christ for pardon of sin, on which all the rest of the acts of faith depend: it is that faith, where...
whereby a sinner receives Christ, and calls himself over on him; that faith, whereby union with Christ is made up.

Jes. lxi. We would premise, That there is a great difference between faith, and the effects of it, as peace, joy, assurance of God’s love, and these other spiritual privileges that follow believing. It is one thing actually to believe, another thing to have the peace and joy that follows upon, and flows from believing; the one being as the putting out of the hand to receive the meat, and the other as the feeding on it. It is the first of these we mean, and intend to speak of, even that faith, whereby we grip Jesus Christ himself, and get a right to all these privileges, in and through him.

4thly, We premise, That even this saving faith hath its degrees, as all other faith hath; some have more weak faith, some stronger; some have that full assurance, spoken of, Heb. x. or a plerophory, not only as to the Object, that it is sufficient; but as to the apprehending and obtaining of life through that Object; so that they are able to say, Neither height, nor depth, nor any thing else, shall be able to separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus. We say then, that saving faith hath its degrees, tho’ the degree be not that which we speak of; but it is the kind of this faith, whether weaker or more strong, whereby a loft sinner rolls itself over on Christ; the faith which puts the sinner off the ground it float on, over on him; the faith, which brings the soul from the covenant of works, to a new holding of life by Christ and his righteousness. We shall then speak a little, 1. To what we conceive this act of saving faith is not; for preconceiving of mistakes. 2. What way the scripture expresses it. When then we say that such a thing is not saving faith, ye would know that thing is not it that ye mutt lien to; and when we say such a thing is saving faith, ye would labour to act and exercise faith according to it.

1st. For what saving faith is not. 1. It is not the knowing that Christ is God and Man; that he was born, was crucified, dead, and buried, and rose again. Ask some, What true saving faith is? They will say, It is a true knowledge: Ask them again, How long it is since they believed? They will say, Since ever they knew good by ill. Ye would know that apprehensive or literal and speculative knowledge is needful, but it will not be taken for saving faith. 2. It is not a touch of warmness or liberty in the affections in a natural way, which may be in unregenerate men, yea possibly in Pagans, as in a Felix, who, in the mean time, had not so much as temporary faith; because it rises not from the word, but from dispensations of Providence, or from temporary things; and if it rise from the promises of the word, if there be no more, it is but temporary faith. 3. It is not convictions, which many take for faith, and take it for granted, if they be convinced of sin, they believe, and will say, Whom should they believe on but Christ? and yet they never follow the conviction, to put in practice what they are convinced of. 4. It is not simply a resolution to believe, as others take saving faith to be, who being convinced that their own righteousness will not do their turn, resolve to believe on Christ for righteousness, but they will take a convenient time to do it; and many maintain their peace with this, tho’ it be no true peace: but a bare resolution to believe is not faith; ye use to say, There are many good withers in hell. I remember the words of a dying man in this place, who thought he believed before; and being asked, What difference he conceived to be betwixt the faith he had before, and the faith he now had attained to? He anfwered, Before, I thought or resolved to believe, but never practifed it; now I practise believing. There is such a fiubtilty and deceit in the heart, that if it resolve to believe, and if it observably thwart not with faith, it will fit down on that, as if all were done; therefore the word is, To day if ye will hear his voice, that is, to day if ye will believe, harden not your heart. This resolving to believe, is like a man finking in the water, and having a rope cast out to him, he resolves to grip it, but does it not; so many think they have the promife beside them, and resolve to make use of it, but do not presently make use of it, and the ship sinks down, and they perish, while the promife abides and swims above.

5. It is not prayer. There are many, they think they believe, when they fome way repent, pray, and put their hand to other duties; and they know no more for believing but something of that kind. It is true indeed, prayer may help to believe, yet it is not always with faith: it is not every one that faith, Lord, Lord, that believeth; many will seek to enter, that shall not be able. Folks very often have thefe two miserable mistakes about prayer, either they put it in the room of Christ, or in the room and place of faith, not considering that they are different things; for faith exercifeth itself on Christ as Mediator, and prayer taketh him up as God, the true Object of divine worship; tho’ if it be founded on Christ as Mediator, it hath no access: the acting of saving faith is properly on Christ held forth in the word, and prayer is a putting up of suits according to the word. There are many, that
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that know no more what use to make of Christ, than if he had never been incarnate, nor had come under that relation of a Mediator, and make their prayers serve to make up all; whereas faith not only respects Christ as God but his merits as Mediator, and his offices. 6. Nor is faith only a believing this word of God to be true, tho' we could wish many were come that length; it would make a man tremble, to hear the blasphemous words that some will have, when they are asked concerning their believing the truth of the bible; but tho' ye were that length, it were not enough, the devils believe and tremble. The faith, that we call you to, is more than historical; it is to rest on Christ, to cordial receiving of the message which he sends to you: as, suppose a king should send an embassage to a person, to woo her to be his wife; it is one thing to know that there is such a king, another thing to believe that he is real in his offer, and that the woman by consenting to marry him, may be, and will be happy, and (which is yet more) actually to receive the message, and to consent to go and marry him. It is here as when Abraham's servant is sent to Rebekah, Gen. xxiv. She and her friends believe all the report that the servant made of his master and of his son, that it was true; and then it is given to her option, if she will go with the man, and she consents to go, and actually goeth; this is it we prefix you to, to go with us, and close the bargain, and to accept of him, and of life through him. By the same similitude ye may know what saving faith is, and what is the difference betwixt it and temporary faith: when the great, rich, and brave offer comes to be made to Rebekah, by a man with many camels, gold and bracelets; when she believes that it is true, and that it is made to her, she is fain, and it may be over fain, if not somewhat vain also; that is like temporary faith: But when it comes to the articles of the contract, it is said to sinners, Ye must be subject to Christ and follow his will, and not your own; this, this calls the bargain. Thus many, when they hear there is a possibility of life to be had in Christ, and much more when they hear it is to be had on good, easy, and free terms, it will make them smile; but when it comes to that, Psal. xlv 10. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, forfacke thy father's house, or the fashions of thy father's house; it halts there, and they suspend and demur to close the bargain; but saving faith goes further on, and with Rebekah, finally closes the bargain.

Secondly, The next thing is, What is saving faith? Or, What is it to believe in Christ? And would to God ye were ready to believe, and as ready to receive the invitation, as to ask the question, and that in asking the question ye were in earnest; for, by the way, many have asked the question, What shall we do to be saved? where, if they had been in earnest, they might have been soon solved: The answer is at hand, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. But, to them that desire further clearness or confirmation in this concerning business, we shall speak a little; yet ye must know, that it is such a thing as is impossible to be made plain to a proud-humoured or unhumble sinner; it is the poor humbled soul that will take it up; and, to such a soul, half a word will help to take it up.

The plainest way to set it out, as we conceive, is, to name some scripture-expressions, and similitudes, that hold it forth: The first whereof is in that of Mat. xi. 28. Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden; And John vi. 35. He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. Readily these expressions hold out these three; First, An evil which men cleave to. Secondly, A good that is offered to them. Thirdly, A passing from the evil to the good, and so, Come to me, implies, 1. A hazard that folks are in, by being at a distance from Christ. 2. That there is access to Jesus Christ for remedying that evil, and removing of that hazard. 3. A passing from the one to the other, a passing from our own righteousness to Christ's righteousness, a passing from our natural condition to Jesus Christ, a real passing from death in ourselves to life in him. Most part think faith to be a conceit, a humour, or a guessing, that they think they may have, and never know how; but it is a real thing, a coming from our own righteousness (as I said) to his, from a covenant of works, to rest on Christ and his righteousness, held forth in the covenant of grace. This is somewhat explained, Rom. vii. where two husbands are spoken of: a woman cannot marry another man till her first husband be dead; so, till a sinner be dead to the law, he cannot marry Christ; there must be a divorcing from the law and covenant of works, ere ye can close with Christ.

The second expression is, John i. 12. where faith is held forth as a receiving of Christ, To as many as received him, he gave them power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on his name: And it is well expres'd in the Catechism, to be a receiving of Christ as he is offered in the gospel; this supposes, that Christ is offered to us, and that we are naturally without him. The gospel comes and says, Why will ye die, O house of Israel? Come and receive a Saviour; and the act of
faith is a gripping to that offer, a receiving and embracing of it, a being well content to take a free discharge through his blood.

A third expression is, Phil. iii. 12, where faith is set out as an apprehending of Christ, and Heb. vi. 18, it is called a laying hold on the hope set before us, and Isa. lvi. 4, a taking hold of the covenant: All which suppose folk to have a choice, as it were laid to them, and Christ to be holden out as a city of refuge, and a shelter from that which we are in hazard of: Christ is held out in the gospel as the city of refuge; and the exercise of faith is to run from the hazard to him, as a child, that is chafed by an unknown and uncouth body, flees unto the mother's arms, or as the man-flayer fled from the avenger of blood to the city of refuge: And faith, having run to him, casts itself, on him, or trusts itself (as it were) into him.

A fourth expression is, rolling or casting of ourselves over upon the Lord, as Psal. lv. 22. Cast thy burden on the Lord; and Psal. xxxvii. 5. Commit thy way to the Lord; it is on the margin, Roll thy self on the Lord, or rest, as it is v. 7. and easeth-yself on the Lord. The gospel lays Christ, as it were, at folk's feet, and faith rolls them over on him; it is even the soul's finding itself through the work of the Spirit, unable to stand under the burden, rolling itself on Christ, as a crazy and weak body casts itself on a down-bed for eafe. This is a very emphatick, significant, and active expression of faith; setting out a man quitting his own legs or feet, as unable to stand on them; and laying himself over on Christ; this is it that we call you to, even to quit your own feet, and to roll yourselves over on Christ.

A fifth expression is, Rom. x. 3. where it is called a submitting to the righteousness of God; which is held out in the gospel thus, as if a king were proclaiming a pardon to rebels, and saying to them, For as many hainous crimes as ye have committed, and are guilty of, if ye will take with them, and be-take yourselves to my grace and mercy, sincerely re-solving to be henceforth faithful and dutiful subjects to me, I will freely pardon you; which gracious offer they most gladly accept of, and submit themselves to it. Submitting is an acquiescing in the terms of the gospel, as it is proposed; it is even as if ye should say, We hold the bargain, and are well content and satisfied with it. In a word, faith carries not to God the way to salvation, but sweetly submitteth to the way he hath carved out.

A sixth expression is, Hiding of ourselves in God, or in Christ; so the word, trufl in God, signifies, to hide ourselves in him as in a place of refuge, ac-

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cording to that, Prov. xviii. The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run into it, and are preferred, or hid; or, they flee to it, as doves to their windows: And this is it the apostle faith, Phil. iii. 9. That I may be found in him, not having my own righteousness, &c. So that, if ye ask, What is faith? It is a man betaking himself to Christ, that when he shall be called for, it may be answered, Lord, I am in Christ, not having mine own righteousness, &c. it is not to be lippening to the man's good hopes, to his good prayers, or to his good meaning, but to Christ's satisfaction, and God's promise; by faith, when rightly exercised, the inner holds and hides himself in Christ, till (to speak fo) a bit of the man cannot be seen; and this is well set out by the Lord, when he says, Isa. xxvi. 20. Come, my people, enter into your chambers, &c but the doors about you, hide yourselves for a little while, &c. Come in under the Mediator's wings, lock in yourselves by faith there, and so make all sure.

A seventh expression is, 2 Chron. xxx. 8. where, when Hezekiah is writing to the degenerate tribes to come home again, he bids them, Yield yourselves to the Lord; in the original it is, Give the hand to Lord: even as two men, who have been at odds and variance, or have broken the ties that were betwixt them, come to renew the friendship, they chop hands; now, God is brought in, stretching out his hands to you, Isa. lxv. 2. therefore come and clofe with him, yield to him, give him the hand, or chop hands with him, and make the bargain and engagement ficker for the time to come. All these similitudes, borrowed from men, are partly to make the nature of faith obvious and clear, partly to strengthen and confirm believers faith.

An eighth expression is, that of opening to Christ, Cant. v. 2. Open to me my dove, &c. Rev. iii. 20. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man open the door to me, &c. Acts xvi. 11. it is said, The Lord opened the heart of Lydia: When the word comes, sinners hearts are locked on God; Christ comes by his word, and knockes hard to be in, bids open and take in the Saviour; and faith discerns his voice, and gives him entry. It is the letting of the word sink, the making of him welcome; it is not only the crediting of the word as true, but the receiving of him whom the word offers, for the end for which he is offered; and this is, when the work of the Spirit, with the word, wakens up a flichil-ling, or flichtering (to say fo) within, and makes the heart to open to take in Christ; as one worded it well and significantly, My heart cleeaked as a lint-seed bolt to Chrifl. And wherever Christ hath a design of grace on the soul, and comes with power, he con-
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It and but In and an it And, When Ifaiah... of the Lord, and that upon deliberation, asknowing that we have need of him, that he is a Saviour fued compleatly to all the necessitics of our souls, and that we are warranted to believe on him; it is the native act and exercife of faith to choose Christ among all the wooers that are courting thefoul: So likewise it is fet out under trusting and committing, Pfal. xxxvii. Commit thy way to the Lord, trufi in him; I know, faith Paul, 2 Tim. i. 12. he is able to keep that which I have committed to him: it is to give Christ the credit of your falvation; it is one thing to give a man the credit that he is true, and another thing to con-credithim with our great ef concerns; we will credit many, whom we will not thus con-credithourselves to, nor commit our concerns to; the former (when thefe are applied to God) is hisorical faith, but this hitter is saving faith, when we dare trufi and lippen ourselves to him, and to his word; and we think this expression holds forth as much of the nature of saving faith as any of the former, if we could take it up, when we dare con-credithourselves to him, because he hath faid the word. Thus also, to act and exercise faith on him, for temporal, or for spiritual things, it is to expect the event from God, butfo, as we expect and look for it on this ground, that Christ hath purchased it, and we have accepted him on his offer, which gives us a right to these things needful for us, and purchased by him: It is faid, Matth. xxii. 5. when the invitation comes, that fome made light of it; but faith, on the contrary, is a laying weight on it, and con-credithourselves to God on that ground: it is called, Rom. vi. A delivering up of ourselves to the word, and to him in it; it is even to put a blank in Christ's hand, to be filled up as he pleafes.

Ye fee then what ye are called to, it is to open to Christ, to come to him, to marry him, to roll yourselves on him, to commit yourselves to him, to give him credit, &c. And is there any of these unreasonable or prejudicial to you? and if they be very reasonable and advantageous, (as indeed they are) we would exhort you to come to him, to receive him, to apprehend him, to flee to him, totake hold of him, to marry him, &c. believe on him, and by believing, be united to him, and get a right to him, and to all his purchase; give him the credit of saving your souls. This we call for from you; and if ye do it not, the complaint in the text will fland against you, Who hath believed our report?
S E R M O N V.

Isaiah liii. 1. *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?*

It is a great matter once to get the gospel brought amongst a people, and such messengers, as may make the favour y report of Jesus Christ unto them; yet this is not all, there is a greater work behind, and that is, to get Christ believed on, and to get the report concerning him received by the people to whom it is made: this being the greatest and greatest work of the prophets, and of the ministers of the gospel, and the most eminent, not so much to get a word to say, as to get the word believed; and this is Isaiah's complaint, that tho' he himself brought the report concerning Christ, and foresaw many more would bring it, yet, that the exercise of faith in these who should hear it would be very rare.

We spoke of the great thing called for from a people, to whom this gospel comes, and the report of Christ is made; and that is, to believe on him, to receive and rest on him, of whom the report is made; except this be, tho' there were never so many preachers, and encouragements to preach, tho' ye should flock to the ordinances every day, the ground of complaint will still remain, if there be not saving faith in Jesus Christ, which is the substance of the gospel.

After confirmation of this point, we shew what faith is, from the several names the scripture giveth it; and wherein the exercise of saving faith is holden out: All which imply these three. 1. A great hazard and danger that the hearers of the gospel are in, whether they be sensible of it in such a measure at least or not, we speak not now, yet they are so really; so much fleeing, coming, laying bold, apprehending, &c. inseminate. 2. A fulness and sufficiency in Christ Jesus, holden forth to them, as the object of their faith, as one that can deliver out of that danger, and can right whatever is wrong. 3. An act, wherein mainly the exercise of faith is holden forth, and 'tis the act of the soul under that danger and distress, betaking itself to Christ's fulness for help: it is a fleeing from the curse of the law to him, as to the city of refuge; so every name that faith gets, sets out a man acting and moving some way for Christ's remedi ng the evil and removing the hazard he is in.

Having spoken a little to this, that faith is the main duty that is called for, we may now follow the exhortation to press you to it; it being to no purpose to speak of Christ, and of faith in him except he be received. This is the end of the word written and taught, John xx. at the close, even to believe in the name of the son of God, and by believing to receive life in and thro' him.

And therefore, 2dly, Seeing this is the main duty called for by the gospel, that by faith ye should receive it, and Christ offered in it; we earnestly exhort you to it. It is not so much to this or that particular duty, tho' thes be implied; it is not so much to attendance on ordinances, nor to submission to discipline and censures, tho' these also be duties that we exhort you to; but it is to obedience to the great command of faith even to believe on him whom the Father hath sent and sealed: It is to receive this gospel, to submit to the righteousness of faith, to open to him that is knocking at the door, to yield to him, and to give him the hand, that bygone quarrels may be removed, and taken out of the way: except this be, we profess to you in his name, that ye bring not forth the fruit that this gospel calleth for from you, and that no less will be acceptable to God, nor taken off your hand by him.

And to add here the third branch of the doctrine, we say, That no less will do your turn, as a necessary mean for attaining the promise, and that which is promised: 1. Look to all the promises, whether of pardon of sin, or of peace with God, of joy in the holy Ghost, of holiness and conformity to God; there is no access to these, or to any of them, but by faith: this is the very proper condition of the covenant of grace, and the door whereby we step in to it; and if ye think pardon of sin, peace with God, and holiness to be necessary, then this great gospel-duty of believing is no less necessary; for the Lord faith, John iii. 36. *He that believeth not is condemned already.* 2. Look to the performance of any duty, or mortification of any lust or idol, and faith is necessary to that, 1 John iii. 5. *It is by faith we obtain victory over the world;* it was by faith (Heb. xi.) that all the worthies, spoken of there, wrought righteousness, &c. 3. When any duty is done, of whatsoever nature it be, there is no acceptance of it without faith; it is not our praying, or coming to the church, that will make duty to be accepted, but it is faith; *The word profited them not, faith the Apostle, Heb. iv. 2. because it was not mixed with faith.* And that, for making the duty acceptable, faith is necessarily requisite, we may clearly see, Heb. xi. 6. where it is expressly said, that *without faith it is impossible to please God;* and how is it that Abel offers a more excellent sacrifice than Cain? it was nothing sure
fure in Cain’s sacrifice itself that made it be called, nor any thing in Abel’s that made it be received or acceptable, but faith in the Messiah to come, that was found to be in the one, and was amiss in the other. Is there not reason then to press this duty on you, and to exhort you not to think this a common and easy thing, tho’ the most part think it to be so? If we look to the benefits of it, to the difficulty of it, and to the rarity of it in the world, there is no duty had need more to be press’d than this, even that Christ Jesus should get the burden of your immortal souls cast on him by his saving faith. I shall therefore, in the further prosecution of this, 1. Shew, what mainly you would eschew and avoid, as that whereat folk more ordinarily stumble. 2. What it is we would press to, and on what grounds.

For the first, I know the deceits and mistakes in men about the exercise of faith are so many, that they are more than can well or easily be reckoned up; yet we shall in some generals, spoken of before, hint at a few of them: For, so long as ye continue in the same snares, they must still be pointed out to you, and endeavours still used to undeceive and extract you out of them; and therefore, 1. Beware of resting on a doctrinal faith, which before I called historical. We know it is hard to convince some that they want faith, yet we would have you to consider, that it is not every kind of faith, but saving faith, that will do your turn; it is the want of that, which the prophet complains of: And therefore to open this a little, ye would consider, that there may be really such a faith, as is an affent to the truth of the word, in a natural man, yea in a reprobate; but that faith will never unite to Christ, nor be waited with the pardon of sin. (1.) I do not say, that every one that is in the visible church hath this doctrinal faith, to believe a heaven and a hell, that the scripture is the word of God, and that all that believe in Christ shall get pardon of sin, and life; the carriage, alas! of many testifies that they have not this much: whatever fleeting notions they may have of these things, or whatever elsemen they may seem to put on the gospel, and whatever profession they may make, that they believe the truth of it, yet in their deeds they deny it; for if there were a fixedness in the doctrinal faith of the gospel in men, they durst not for their souls live as they do. Neither yet, (2.) Do we say, that all they that have this doctrinal faith of the gospel, or somewhat of it, do believe every passage in it alike, but often as they please them, they believe them: Hence, many believe what the word speaks of mercy, and of pardon of sin, and will not question that, but what it speaks of holiness and of the severity of God’s reckoning with men for sin, they do not so credit that part of the word: it is true, where the faith of the one is, the faith of the other will some way be; but because the one agrees better with their corruption than the other, therefore the one is not received as the other: and it is very frequent with such, to beford diminishing from one place, and adding to another, of the word of God. Nor, (3.) Do we say, that all men do, in a like and equal degree, believe the truth of the word; there is in some more knowledge, in some less, in some more convictions, in some fewer; and tho’ we preach to you all, yet there are some that believe not this to be God’s ordinance, albeit there are many who will not be saved, that take this word to be the word of God, and believe what is the meaning of it, because the word itself says it is so: And the reason of this is, 1. Because there is nothing that is not saving, but a natural man may have it; now, this doctrinal faith is not saving, and so a natural man may have it, yea, the devils believe and tremble: and James does not dispute with these to whom he writes, on this account, that they believe not this, but tells them, that historical faith was not enough; and we think a man in nature may have a great persuasion of the truth of the word of God, and that which it says will come to pass, and yet still continue but a natural man. A 2d reason is, because the scripture speaks so often of many sorts of faith that are not saving, as Exod. xiv. at the close, it is said, The people believed the Lord, and Psal. civ. 12. Then they believed his word, and sung his praise; and John ii. 23. Many believed on Christ, to whom he did not commit himself; there was faith in them which his signs and miracles extorted from them, which was not saving; and Matt. xiii. two or three such acts of faith are spoken in the parable of the sower, that were not saving, however found they might be in their own kind; and, 1 Cor. xiii. we have such a faith spoken of, as a man dare not deny the truth of the word, tho’ he should bring his body to be burnt by his avouching of the same. A 3d reason is, because as much credit may be given to the word, as is given to any other history that is creditably believed; and it is on this ground that we believe there were such men as Cæsar, Pompey, Wallace, &c. and it being certain, that there may be impressions on the confidences of hearers, that this is God’s word, backed with some common work of the Spirit, and that is generally received to be the word of God in the part of the world we live in; what wonder is it, that folk believe thus, and drink in this historical or doctrinal faith of the word, so as they may even dare to suffer death for it? And yet in the
mean time, may want saving faith; the devils being as sure as any natural man is, that God is true, and that his word will be performed; and therefore they say to Christ, Art thou come to torment us before the time? The pangs of a natural conscience in men will assure them of a judgment coming, tho' they tremble to think on it.

And therefore, ere we proceed further, take a word of use from this, and it may let you see the great and very general mistake of the most part of the hearers of the gospel, in refting on this doctrinal faith. If ye tell them that they have no faith, they will not by any means take with that; they believe there is a Saviour, and that he is God and man, and that such as believe on him shall be saved; and on this they reft: It is such as thefe, who think they have believed all their days, since ever they had any knowledge; because the word was always, or very long since, received in the place where they lived, for the word of God; and they believe it to be fo also, and know no difference betwixt believing the word, and believing on Christ holden out in it: tho' alas! many of you believe not this much; for if ye were among the Jews, ye might be soon brought to queftion the truth of the gospel: but tho' ye had the real faith of the truth of the word, take not that for saving faith; for as there is a real forrow, that is not the saving grace of repentance unto life, fo there is a fort of real faith, that hath a real object, and a real being in the judgment, which yet is not a real closing with Christ, and fo not saving faith: as, suppose a man, pursed by his enemy, should fee a strong cATTLE-door flanding open, or one in hazard at fea should fee dry land, if he should fland still while the enemy were purfuing him, or abide still in the flaking vessel, the flight of the cATTLE-door open, or of the dry land, would not fave him; fo it is not the believing that there is a Saviour come into the world to fave finner, that will fave, except there be a refting on him, as he is holden out in the word of the gospel. Historical faith is only (as it were) a looking on the Saviour, but saving faith grips to him, and refts on him: Historical faith looks on Christ, but acts not on him, closes not with him; and therefore fuch as have it only, and no more, fink and perifh without getting good of him. We would think it a great matter, to get many of you as far on in believing as the devil is, who believes and trembles; the little trembling that is, fhews that there is but little of this historical faith: yet, as I have often faid, this is not all, ye may have this, and yet, if ye halt there, ye will certainly perifh, if ye were never fo confident to be faved; the Apostle doth well distinguish these,
Serm. V.

Ifaiah liii. Verse 1.

a physician, who is skillful and able to cure him, is come to town, he grows fain in the contemplation of a cure of his disease; but here is the stick, when the physician tells the man that he must be so and so abstemious, and keep himself under such a strict diet, he does not abide that, and so all his joy evaporates: There is something like this in temporary faith, where some remote expectation of salvation will cause a carnal joy and fainness: but when it comes to this, that a man is called to quit his lucre, or his estate, or in the world to undergo trouble and persecution for the gospel, by and by he is offended, he thinks (to say so) A fowl in his hand is worth two flying: and therefore, when the storm blows in his teeth, he turns his back, and runs away; especially we will find this to be with men in sickness, they will have mints at seriousness, and sometimes flashes of sorrow under convictions and challenges, and sometimes flashes of joy, that will evaporate when they come to health again. When we speak of some common work on the affections, we would take it in liberty, and some warmnes of spirit in prayer, which, no question, even unrenewed men may find more at one time than another; as when they are in some great hazard or Strait, they will be more than ordinary serious in that duty, and yet that may be but an effect of nature: This proves a great fumbling and neck-break to many, that they think they are well enough, if now and then they get utterance in prayer, as sometimes they will get words beyond what they expected; and when, upon reflecting, they find that they have been in earnest, tho' it hath been with moral seriousness, that blows them up; so they put prayer in the place of being faith, and when they pray with warmness, they tow they believe, when in the mean time they never knew what it was in good earnest to lay themselves over on Christ Jesus: Therefore, when we invite you to believe, this is another thing we would bid you beware of, that ye put not a flah of fene in the room of faith.

3. There is yet a more subtle, tho' no less dangerous mistake, that ye would beware of, and that is, when faith is confounded with obedience, and is looked on in justification as a piece of new obedience, with love, repentance, and other duties of holiness: so some think they believe, because they have some natural awe of God in their walk, and some fear of sin, and do perform some duties of religion, and walk honestly, as they think, according to the rule; which is to confound the covenants of works and of grace, and to make the covenant of works a covenant of grace, or to run the covenant of grace into a covenant of works; only with this difference, that tho' their works be not perfect, but defective, yet wherein they are defective, they think there is worth in their faith to make up that want, and to supply that defect; and so, by faith they think they will obtain the acceptation of their works, and of their persons on account of their works: they look upon their works as pleasing to God, but because they are not perfect, they will believe, or exercise faith, to make up their defects; to which the way of grace is quite contrary, which makes the tree first good, and then the fruit. This way, that many take, is not to draw the evidences of believing from works of holiness, which is warrantable; but the founding of faith, or their hope of heaven, on works: and the use they make of their faith, is, to ward off challenges for the imperfection of their works, and to make faith procure acceptance (as I just now said) to their works, and acceptance to their person for their works fake.

4. Beware of that which ye ordinarily call a certain assurance, or sure knowledge of your salvation, and that all the promises are yours, whereby ye think yourselves in no hazard; a hope and assurance of heaven that ye can give no ground for, nor proof of; only ye think ye are sure of pardon of sin, and coming to heaven, and that ye are obliged to maintain that groundless hope: but that is not saving faith, for it is a hope of heaven that can give you no right to Christ; there must first be a fleeing to him, and closing with him before ye can have any true and well-grounded hope of heaven: but your hope and confidence is, never to question the matter; ye are like Laodicea, who thought her self rich, and to stand in need of nothing, when she was beggarly poor; or like these men, who, when God was threatening them with judgment, yet would needs presume to think that they leaned on the Lord. I think, among all the persons that God hath indignation against, it is in a special manner against these who have this sort of hope, and to whom God discovereth the groundless of it, and yet they will still stoutly maintain, and stand fast by their hope: it is to the he speaks, Deut. xxvi. 16. who despise and trust at God's threatenings, and say, We shall have peace, though we walk in the imagination of our own hearts, and add drunkenness to thirst; the Lord then pronounces a curse, and to the curse addeth an oath, that he will not spare such persons, but will separate them for evil, and cause all the curses of the law to overtake them. Judge ye now, what a condition this is for persons to be in, to be believing that all the promises are theirs, and yet, instead of that, to be (in the mean time) liable to all the curses threatened in the word of God; it is this that we...
call presumption and hope of the hypocrite that will perish. Job. viii. 13. the confidence of such shall be rejected and swept away as a spider's web, and shall be rooted out of their tabernacles, and bring them to the king of terrors. They think they believe always; when they are not troubled nor disquieted, they never want faith, but have a great deal of it; which yet is but a guessing, which cannot support and uphold them when they come to a strait; when they are more secure, they believe very well, and they think when they are more waken'd and disquieted, they believe less, and their fancied faith ebbs quite on them: when they hear of any exercise of mind, or trouble of conscience in others, they wonder that they will not believe, and all this work is to maintain their deep security and strong delusion; this is then the fourth thing ye would beware of, for it is not the faith that will turn away the complaint, *Who hath believed our report?* and yet how many are there of this sort, who say they shall have peace, and please themselves with this their good hope, say the word what it will. O! be persuaded, that this is nothing else but woful unbelief and presumption; and we preach to you terror and the curse of God, tho' ye cry peace to yourselves: the Lord complains of such persons, Jer v. 12. saying, *They believed the Lord;* he sent his prophets to denounce judgments in the days of Jofiah, when there was a fair profession of religion and reformation, yet they would believe and hope that no evil should overtake them.

That which we aim at in this part of the ufeis, to make way for what follows, even to give you a cleanly ground for exercising of faith on Jesus Christ, when all these stumbleings and mistakes are rolled out of the way: We therefore exhort you, to lay your hand to your heart, and narrowly to try, if ye have called, or accounted any of these to be saving faith, for there are hundreds, nay thousands, that perish under these pretences, deceiving themselves, and deluding others, with a faith they were born and brought up with, and they have no more but their groundless hope to prove their faith by, and that they will flieck by it, be faid to them what will; but be not deceived, for God will discover you; ye think a strong presumption is faith, and that ye can by such a faith, drink in the promises; but God will make you vomit them up, and ye shall be declared to be void of faith in the great day: therefore be more jealous over your faith, and feek to have your grips of Christ fickered, which is done, when, from the belief of your hazard and self-emptiness, and of Christ's fulnefs, ye go to him, and clofe with him, to make up all ye want in him; and this faith is especially qualified by the account on which we go to him, and reft on him: even as a confcientious duty is that which flows from a command, as obedience to it, so one of the main things that qualifies this faith is, a receiving Christ as Christ, or as he is holden out in the gospel: which is therefore well put in the description given of faith in the Catechifm; and it is called a believing on him: when the Father hath fent, which is not to believe on Christ fimpfly, but as he is holden out in the word of the gospel. Premption may look on Christ and his fulnefs, and few or none will readily dare to give him a direct and down-right refufal, or to reject him profedly and avowedly, when they hear of such happiness that is to be had in him; but that which we fay qualifies faith, is, to defire, receive and embrace him, according as he is holden out in the gospel, for *wisdom, righteoufnefs, santification, and redemption.* 2. Cor. i. 30. when he is fippended to with an eye to the promife, and when that, which makes us reft on him, is the word of God: for, *zho* Christ be the material Object of faith, yet the word is the formal object whereby we get a right to him; and there is no gripping or getting hold of Christ, but in, and according to his word: and therefore the generality of people (who, on the matter, take the Antinomian way) think they have no more to do, but to apply Christ, and to count him their own at the very firit; but, thro' their not exercising faith on the word of promife they misf him. This is, as I have faid, a main qualification of saving faith, even to reft on Christ as he is holden out in the word, and by the word to take hold of him, and reft upon him: *Saving faith doth not simply reft on Christ because he is merciful,* and hath all fulnefs in him, but it refts on him and his fulnefs, as received in the word, and offered by God in his word; faith takes God's fulnefs in his word, and lays hold on him by that: Christ is the thing that makes happy, but God's faithful promife is the right by which we get a title to that thing. We would never love nor like that faith, that knows not the ufe of the word; that betakes itfelf to Christ, or the thing in the word, but meddles not, nor hath any dealings with the word that holds them out; when as it is only this word that gives us warrant to expect that his fulnefs shall be made forthcoming for our up-making, and for the supply of all our needs. Many desire, and expect good of God, but get it not, because their expectation is not founded on his word, and God's fulnefs in his word is not closed withal. In a word, I would have you to think
SERMON VI.

Isaiah liii. 1. Who hath believed our report?

If it were not recorded in the infallible scriptures of truth, we would hardly believe that there could be so much powerful and sweet preaching of the most excellent instruments that ever were employed, and yet that there should be so little fruit following on it; who would believe that Isaiah, so excellent, so sweet, and so evangelick a prophet, should have preached so many pleasanf, plain, and powerful sermons to a people from the Lord, and yet that he should have so many sad complaints as he hath? chap. vi. xxviii. and lviii. that he should be forced to bring in the Lord, saying, All the day long have I stretched out my hands to a rebellious people, chap. lxv. and that here himself should have it to say, Who hath believed our report? It is scarce one man here or there that hath savagely believed on Christ. And this is the third thing in the words, that now we would speak to; and it is a very sad, tho' a very clear truth.

The doctrine is this, That there may be much powerful preaching of the gospel, and yet unbelief generally among the hearers of it. Or, take it with dependence on the former two, Namely, 1. That the great work of the ministry, is, topropose and make Christ known to a people. 2. That the great duty of a people, that have Christ proposed to them, is to believe on him. Then this 3d follows on the back of these, That a people may have Christ proposed to them, brought to their heart and mouth; and tho' it be but believing that is called for from them, yet that cannot be obtained from most of them. This gospel-duty of believing is often flung over by the hearers of the gospel; this is clearly holden forth here, Who hath believed our report? we have called for faith, but it is a rare thing, among the multitude of hearers, to get one that believeth savagely.

To make out, and prove this a little further, we would consider this complaint, with these aggravations of it, which will make it the more clear, and so the more to be wondered at; as, 1st, These of whom the complaint is made: it is not heathens, but God's own people, as the Lord complains, Psal. lxxxii. 11. My people would not hearken to my voice and Israel would have none of me; our Lord Jesus complains of Jerusalem, Matt. xxiii. at the end, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee, and thou wouldst not! That the Lord's own professing people should not believe, nor receive the report that is made of him, heightens the complaint, and aggravates their guilt exceedingly.

2dly, It is not a complaint as to one sermon, or as to one time, but it is a complaint frequently repeated, as to many fruitless sermons, and as to many times, yea generations: Isaiah preached long, in many kings reigns; and yet all along in his prophecy he complains of it, as chap. vi. 11. How long Lord, shall their eyes be blind, and their ears heavy? &c. and chap. xxviii. 9. Whom shall I teach doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts; precept must be on precept, and line upon line, here a little, and there a little; and chap. lxv. 2. All day long I have stretched out my hands to a rebellious people; and here again, Who hath believed our report? Much and long, or many years preaching, much plain and powerful preaching, and yet little or no fruit, they are sordid and taken, and fall backward, for all that; and this was not in Isaiah's days only, but in Christ's days, John xii. 37, 38. and in Paul's days, Rom. x. 16. where the same very words in the text are repeated: nay it runs down from the first spreading of the gospel, even to these latter days wherein we live; many hear, but few receive the report. 3dly, Consider how many they are that complain: it is not one or two, or a few, but all the preachers of the gospel; it is not, Lord, who hath believed my report, but, Who hath believed our report? It is complained of by Isaiah here, and in several other places named before; it is complained of by Micah, chap. vii. 1. Wo is me, for I am as they who have gathered the summer-fruit, as the grape gleanings of the vintage, there is no cluster to eat, the good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none upright among men, &c. It is complained of by Hosea, chap xi. 7. They called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him, that is, none would give him the glory.
and you may be disposed to think, that under the gospel, when the veil is laid by, and when Christ himself, their Lord and Master, and his apostles come to preach the gospel, it should be otherwise: yet John the Baptist, who was Christ's harbinger, who was a burning and a shining light, a stayed and fixed man, not a reed shaken with the wind, (as many of us are) a prophet, yea, more than a prophet; yeit, when he preached, many of his hearers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, Luke vii. John comes preaching austerely, and they say he hath a devil; and if there was any rejoicing in his light, it was but for a season; and Paul that chosen vessel, how often was he persecuted? and he hath the same complaint, in the same words that Isaiah hath here of his hearers, especially the Jews, Acts xiii. 46. and xxviii. 28. and was constrained to tell them, that he and his fellow-preachers behaved to quit them, and betake themselves to the Gentiles; and how doth he complain of the Corinthians and Galatians, of their being bewitched, and suddenly seduced, and drawn away from the truth and simplicity of the gospel, by some self-seeking low ministers, coming with a glancing counterfeit among them. We shall close this with the consideration of our Lord Jesus, who was a none-fuch preacher, of whom it is said, Matt. vii. 29. that He spake with power, and not as the Scribes, and Luke iv. when he is opening that sweet text, Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3. it is said, They all wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; and the officers that came to take him, say, that never man spake as he spake; and yet this fame is his complaint, Matt. xxiii. 37. How often would I have gathered you, and ye would not! and, John i. 11. it is said, He came to his own, and his own received him not: Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum were lifted up to heaven by the Lord's preaching to them in person; and yet we after was denounced against them, because they believed not, for all his preaching and miracles; and it is a wonder, if we look thorow the history of the gospel, how many a sweet preaching he had, and with what weight and power he spoke, and sometimes with tears, and withal backed his word with miracles, that made his hearers acknowledge the finger of God; and yet how few were brought to believe on him? so that he was put to take up this very complaint of Isaiah here, John xii. 38. Is it not a wonder, when he and his apostles have preached so much, and so long, that the Church is so little a flock, and that believers are so few in number, even after his ascension? need we any further proof,
that the gospel, where it comes, gets but little welcome? the carriage of many among ourselves is a sad proof of it; for we are afraid that many of you do not believe to this day, tho' there hath been among you, much, long or many years, and powerful preaching of the gospel, but are still living without faith, and perishing.

If this be not enough to clear the doctrine, 1. See how Christ speaks of it Matt. xiii. in the parable of the tower of the seed, where there are three sorts of ground that never bring forth good fruit; and there he speaks not only of the time of his own personal ministry, but of all times. 2. Look to the ordinary and daily effect, or rather consequent, of this preached gospel, and it will prove it: Do not many perish? do not many crowd thick in the broad way that leads to destruction? do not but very few fruits of faith appear? is there not little, lamentably little, real change in the way and walk of most to be seen? To clear it yet further, go thro' the several ranks of persons, that in God's account are unbelievers, and lay them by; O! there will be exceedingly few believers in Christ found. First, Then, lay by the grossly profane, that are never so much as civilized: Secondly, The ignorant, stupid, and senseless, that never have mind they have souls, are never feared for wrath, nor in the least exercised to make their peace with God: Thirdly, The earthly minded, that mind no other thing save the world: Fourthly, These of a civil outward carriage, that have some good works, and as they think, good days too, and yet come not near to Christ to close with him: Fifthly, The hypocrites, and that of all sorts; both the presuming hypocrites, that will think God they are better than their neighbours, and yet lippen not to Christ, and free grace thro' him, but seek to establish their own righteousness, gross as it is; and the legal hypocrites, that never denied their own righteousness, nor submitted to the righteousness of Christ: Lay aside all these, I say, and we leave it to your own conscience to judge, how few will be found to have saving faith; and therefore I am persuaded, if there be any truth of God delivered to you, that this is a truth, that tho' the gospel be preached to many, yet there are but few hearers of it, that do actually believe in Jesus Christ, to the saving of their souls.

Use 1. The first use of it is, To befeech you to let this sink deep into your minds, as the truth of God, for these reasons. 1. Because it is a most useful truth; and if it were believed, it would make folks very watchful over themselves, and to tremble for fear lest they be found among the multitude that believe not; and put them to secure and ticker their interest in God, and not to rest on a fashion and form of religion, without observing what fruit followeth on the gospel. Among the many evils that undo not a few, we think this is not the least, that this truth is never thorowly fixed in them; they think there are many Heathens and Turks without the Church, and many gross swearers, drunkards, and others such within it, that will perish, but none others, or at least, that they are but very few, who among a professing people perish; neither can they be induced to think it is such a hard matter to get one, or a very few that are believers in a country-side; so that, if Isaiah were now alive to cry, Who believes our report? each of them would be ready to answer, I believe. 2. Because, for as certain and useful a truth as this is, yet generally it is not believed; folks cannot think that so few believe, and that believing is so difficult and rare a thing: I would ask you this question, Was it ever a difficulty to any of you to believe? if not, what is it that makes believing so rare? what should move the prophet thus to complain, Who hath believed our report? I shall shortly give you some evidences that many of you do not really believe this truth. The first is, That so few of you tremble at the word of God; the historical faith that the devils have, makes them tremble, but ye have not that much; this is given as a property of a suitable hearer of the gospel, to whom the Lord will look, Isa. lxvi. 1, 2. that he is one who trembles at the word; but the most part of you, that hear this gospel, are like these pillars on which this house stands, who are never so much as once moved at the word: ye either take not faith to be an absolutely necessary thing, and that ye cannot but perish without it, or ye think that the faith ye were born with will do your turn; ye do not believe that ye are naturally under the power of the devil, and led captive by him at his will, and that without holiness, and a spiritual gracious frame, and stamp on your heart and way, ye shall never fear God: what wonder then, that ye come not to rest on Christ, when the very letter of the gospel is not credited. A second Evidence is, That there is so little preparation made to prevent your eternal hazard: it is said of Noah, Heb. xi. that Noah, being warned of God, prepared an ark; and this is attributed to his faith; it is not possible that ye would live so negligently and carelessly, if ye believed that the curse of God were pursuing you, and that ye will be brought to reckon for that which ye have done in the body, and that ye will meet with God as an enemy; if this were believed tho' your heart
hearts were harder than they are, it would make you tremble, and put you to other sort of thoughts and seriouness. A third evidence is, That there is no fruit of faith among many of you; for, where it is, it will not be got altogether smothered, but will lyke, and shew itself one way or other: And if ye will still affer your faith, I would say to you, as James doth to thefe to whom he writes, *Shew me your faith by your works.* If ye shall say, God knows: I answer, that ye shall find that to be a truth, that he knows; and he will make you know that he does so; but alas! that poor shift will not avail you, when it comes to the pulle. O try your faith then by your works; see what mortification of luks, what repentance from dead works, what growth in knowledge, what fhining of holines in your conversation, is attainted to. Many of you, as to your very knowledge, are as if ye lived among Heathens, many of whom have been as free of vice, and more profitable to others, than many of you are, and cared as little for the world as many of you do. How comes it to pafs, then, that ye have lived as if ye could have faith, and yet have no fruit? Ye muft either say, that faith is not neceffary, or that ye may have faith without fruit; for we are sure your fruit is not the fruit of faith. To live honestly as you call it, what is that? There are many Heathens, who have gone beyond you in that. We will not say, that moral honesty is nothing, but sure it is not all; all the fruits of meef moral honestly are but fear fruits, that will fit your teeth on edge: neither is it your hearing of the word only, but your believing and doing of it, that will profit you. It is very sad, that most plain obvious duties are not at all followed, as the studying of knowledge, the exerciz- ing of repentance, one of the very first duties, which is never separated from faith; the humbling of the foul before God, the loathing of yourselves for all ye have done, the love of God, &c. for there may be challenges for grofs evils in Heathens; and fear is not repentance, but godly forrow, that caufeth repentance, not to be repented of. A fourth evidence is, The want of that work of God's Spirit that accompanies faith. Faith is a special work of the Spirit, and the gracious gift of God; it is wrought by the exceeding mighty power of God, whereby he raised Chrift from the dead; and by that fame power he worketh in them that believe. Now, knew ye ever what this work meant? Found ye it ever to be a difficult work to believe? knew ye ever what it was to have the Spirit of God con- strainsing your heart to believe? I speak not of any extraordinary thing; but certainly faith is not na-
there are few that believe our report. Think it not our word; the application flows natively from the text, not from necessity of the thing, but from the ordinary course of men's corruption. Are not the same evidences of the want of faith, which we spoke of, among you? how many are there in their life profane? how many rest on civility and formality? is there not as little repentance now, as was in Isaiah's time? as little denying of our own righteousness, and making use of Christ's; tho' the word be taught by line upon line, here a little, and there a little? It may be, tho' ye think that the doctrine is true in the general, ye will not, ye cannot digest the application, that among so many of you visible professors of faith there are but few real believers; therefore we shall follow the conviction a little further, by giving you some considerations, to make it out, that we have but too just ground to make application of the doctrine to you, especially confiding the abounding of corruption that is among you, that ye may be put to fear the wrath that attends sin, and to flee to Christ, for refuge, in time. 1. Consider of whom it is that the prophet is speaking, and of what time: Is it not the times and days of the gospel? had not the Spirit (in dictating this text of scripture) an eye on Scotland, and on Glasgow? and do not our Lord Jesus Christ and Paul apply it in their days? and why then may not we also in ours? and when the Spirit speaks expressly of the last times, that they shall be pernicious, and of the falling away of many, should it not give us the hotter alarm? 2. Do not all things agree to us, as to them? Is not this gospel the same? is our preaching any better than theirs? nay, had they not much more powerful preaching? and if that preaching, which was much more powerful, had not efficacy, as to many, to work faith in them, what may we expect to do by our preaching? are not your hearts as deceitful? are not your corruptions as strong? are ye not as bent to backsliding, as they were? what sort of folk were they; that were unfruitful hearers? were they not members of the visible church as ye are, circumcised under the Old Testament, as ye are baptized under the New? was it not those who had Christ and his apostles preaching to them? yea, they were not among the more ignorant sect, who did not believe, but Scribes and Pharisees, and these not of the prophane; and only, but such as came to church, and attended on ordinances, as ye do: yea, were such as had gifts, and call out devils, and preached in Christ's name, as ye may see, Luke xiii. 6. Now, when there are so many, and of such ranks, who get no good of the word, and of such, a great many that will seek to enter, and shall not be able, to whom Christ will say, Depart, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity; what can be the reason that many of you do so confidently affect your faith, when there are scarcely any characters of unbelief, but ye have them? Or, what can be your advantage, in keeping yourselves carnally secure, when the strong man in the mean time is in the house? and to shut your eyes, and make your necks stiff, and to resolve, as it were, not only to ly still, but to die in your unbelief? I persuade myself, that many of you, ere long, will be made to wonder, that ever ye thought yourselves believers, and will be galled when ye think upon it, that whatever was said to you, ye would needs maintain your presumptuous faith. When we bid you suffer the conviction to sink, let none put it from themselves to others, but let every one take it home to himself; altho' we would not have any of you calling loose what is indeed made fast and well secured, nor overturning a slender and weak building, tho', it were, to speak so, but of two stone height, if it be founded on a right foundation, on the Rock; but we speak to you, that cannot be brought to suspect yourselves, when ye have just reason to do so: sure, this challenge and charge belongs to some, yea to many, and we would ask what ground have ye to shift it? How can ye prove your faith, more than others, that have none at all? That ye hope ye have faith, will not do your turn, that's no solid proof: Ye cannot come to Christ, except made suitably sensible of your distance; and of that ye have never been convinced as yet. Do ye think to roll yourselves on Christ's sleeping, and ye knew not how? Certainly, when the pins of your tabernacle come to be a loosening, ye shall find that your fancied faith shall not be able to keep out a challenge: Ye could never endure to think yourselves to be Christ's enemy, or that ye wanted faith; but when death comes, conscience will awaken, and the challenge will needs be in upon you, whether ye will or not. Many of you think that ye get wrong, when your faith is questioned or reproved, as if it were an odd and rare thing to be graced, or to be living as members of the visible church, and yet want faith; and it irritates you, to be expounded with in private for your lying in unbelief; but suffer this word now to take hold of you, I beseech you; and if ye could once be brought to suspect yourselves, and to think thus with yourselves, What if I be one of those many that believe not? I fear I be in hazard to be mistaken about my faith; and from
SERMON VII.

Isaiah liii. 1. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

It's a sad matter, and much to be lamented, when the carrying of such good news, as is the report of Jesus Christ in the gospel, becomes unprofitable to them that hear it, and thereby burdensom to them that carry it; folk would think, that such glad tidings, as make the heavenly hoist of angels to sing, would be very joyful and welcome news to sinners, and also most heart-felt to them that carry them; and where the former is, there the latter will be also; where the word becomes useless and unprofitable to hearers, it is burdensom, as to the concomitant and effect, to honest ministers that speak it. Tho' Isaiah brought these news, in a very plain, powerful, pleasant, and sweet manner, to the people he preached to, and that frequently; yet, in the midst of his sweet prophecies, he breaks out with this complaint, *Who hath believed our report?* He is crying glad tidings; yet, taking a look of the unbelief of his hearers now and then, he complains of it to God, in his own name, and in the name of all the ministers of the gospel, that should come after him.

We saw, that it was a very ordinary thing, where the gospel comes in greatest plenty and power, for the hearers thereof to meet it with much unbelief; a truth that was verified in Isaiah his time, and that he foresaw would be verified in the days of the gospel: and therefore it is our report; not only is it the report of Isaiah, but it is the report of Christ and of Paul, who make the same complaint, and cite the same words of Isaiah; and, need we doubt of the truth of it, when Isaiah in the Old, and Paul in the New Testament, thus complain? Not to speak of their, and our Lord and Master, who came to his own, and his own received him not; and of whom, when he came, they said, This is the heir, come let us kill him: need we, I say, doubt of the truth of the doctrine, or to think it strange to see it so in our time, and that we have the same complaint, when the means (at least the instruments) are incomparably far below what they were then, who it be still the same gospel?

The prophet's scope is, to give advertisement and warning to the hearers of the gospel, for the time to come, of this rife evil, even the abounding of unbelief in them that hear it; 1. That he may prevent the scandal of the unfruitfulness of the word where it comes. 2. That he may add a spur of excitement to the hearers of the gospel, to endeavour to make use of it, and not to rest upon means, how powerful and lively forever they be, but to press forward to the end they aim and shoot at. 3. That he may give them, to the trial, and that they may be brought to look it upon themselves, whether they be in need, in this black roll of them that receive not the report: and we think, if any thing put folks to be suspicious of themselves, and to commune with their own hearts about their souls estate, this should do it; especially, when they consider how this evil abounds, not only among the prophane, but among those who are civil, and zealous too for the righteousness of the law: It should make them put themselves to the trial, and not to take every thing to be faith, that they fancy to be faith; for either this doctrine is not true, that wherever the gospel comes, it meets with unbelief in most part of its hearers, and cannot be applied to this generation; or, that there is much faith in this generation that we live in, that will not be counted saving faith: If all of you were believers, there were no ground for this complaint; and if we will take folks on their own word, we can hardly get a person, but will say, he believes; so that the generality of mens hearts run quite contrary to this truth; and therefore we say, it is the scope of this doctrine, and the like, to give folks the alarm, and to put them to suspect and try themselves. I do not mean, that any should cast the work of faith where it is indeed, for that is also a part of our unbelief; and ordinarily, when unbelief falleth on the one side, the devil maketh it up on the other, and makes tender
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tender souls question their faith, when they begin to believe, as if they could mend unbelief with unbelief: But it is to such that we speak, who cannot be brought to suspect their faith. Certainly ye will wonder one day, that ye should have heard such a plain truth, and yet would not so much as ask your own hearts, whether there was reason to suspect your want of faith; as it is said, that Christ marvelled at their unbelief who heard him, so may we at yours, and ere long ye shall also marvel at yourselves, on this account.

Before we prosecute this use and the rest any further, we shall speak to another doctrine, and it is the lait that flows from these words, tending to the same scope to make us fear at unbelief, which the prophet makes such a heavy ground of complaint.

The doctrine then is, That if there were never so many under unbelief, and never so many who refuse to receive Jesus Christ, yet unbelief is a sin, and a most sinful sin; which the people had no more, will scarcely them from heaven. There were no ground for this complaint, if it were not so; even as the prophet would have had no ground to complain of the people's unbelief, if there were not many unbelievers; so unbelief is a very great sin, in whomsoever it is, and makes them exceeding sinful. Or, take the doctrine thus, It is a very great sin for a people, to whom Christ is offered in this gospel, not to receive him, and rest upon him for salvation, as he is offered to them therein. And it ariseth from this ground, That where Christ is not received there the ministers of the gospel have ground of complaint; for it supposes a great defect of their duty, seeing it is their duty to believe, yea, the great gospel-duty, on which all other duties hang, and which is called for by many tics and obligations: This is his commandment, faith John, in his first epistle, chap. iii. 23. that ye believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, therefore it must be a great sin not to believe.

There are shortly three things comprehended in this doctrine (speaking now of unbelief, not only as opposite to historical faith, which we commonly call infidelity, but as it is opposite to saving faith, which we shew that is which is called for here) 1.

1. That unbelief, or not receiving of Christ, is a sin, or a thing in its own nature sinful: It is a sin, as well as adultery, murder, stealing, lying, Sabbath-breaking, &c. are; yea, and in the aggravations of it, a sin beyond these: it is as contrary to the word and will of God, and is as contrary to the Divine Majesty, as drunkennes, murder, adultery, or any other sin is; the positive command of believing being

Verse 1. as peremptory, plain, and particular, as these negative ones are, the breach of it must be as sinful.

2. That there is such a kind of sin as unbelief, beside other sins, and such a distinct duty as believing, that if folks could do all other duties, if this duty of believing be wanting, they will be still sinful, and there will be still ground of complaint: and if faith be a particular duty required, and distinct from other duties and graces, as it is clear Gal. v. 21. then unbelief must be a particular sin, distinct from other sins, tho' it hath influence on other sins, as faith hath on other duties; so, Rev. xxi. 8. it is ranked among the most abominable sins. The reason why we mark this, is, because there may be some, in whom some gross sins, as adultery, bloodshed, and the like, do reign, and they get that name to be called adulterers, murderers, &c. Others may possibly be free of these, who yet have unbelief reigning in them; and therefore they get that name to be called unbelieving, and are ranked with the grosser evil-doers. 3. That even many in the times wherein the scriptures were written, and in every age since are found guilty of this sin, and condemned for it, who are as to several other things commended: hence it is said, Rom. x. 3. of the Jews, that they had a zeal of God, which in itself is good, though not according to knowledge; yet it was their main let and obstruion in the way to life, that being ignorant of God's righteousness, they went about to establish their own: For as much zeal as they had for the law of Moses, seeing they did not receive Jesus Christ and his righteousness by faith, it made any other good thing they had unacceptable. And the reason why we mark this, is, that folks may see that it is not only for gross sins, and with gross sinners, that the gospel complains and expostulates; but it is also for not submitting unto, and not receiving the righteousness of Christ: and therefore ye are far mistaken, that think yourselves free from just grounds of challenge, because, forsooth, ye are free of murder, adultery, drunkennes, and the like. Do ye not consider, that unbelievers, are in the same rank and roll with abominable whoremongers, forcers, idolaters, and dogs? And is not unbelief contrary to the command of God, as well as murder, adultery, and these other great sins? And therefore folks think little of unbelief, theo' it be very rife, if they be free of other gross sins. 4. We shall add a fourth thing which the doctrine implies, That unbelief, tho' there were no other sin, is exceeding sinful, and is, First, the great ground that makes God expostulate with the hearers of the gospel, and that makes them come under the complaint, John v. 40. Ye will not
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Is this not? For, and for they would none of me: And then follows, O that my people had hearkened to my voice! There is no sin the Lord complains more of than this, and it is the great complaint of all his servants. Secondly, Behold how the Lord threatens this sin, and punishes for it; see Phil. iv. 7. and Heb. iii. 7. and Heb. iv. 8. where he swears in his wrath against unbelievers, that they shall not enter into his rest; adultery and murder do not more certainly keep men from heaven than this sin of unbelief doth, yea, they are classed together, Rev. xxi. 8. see also Luke xii. 46. where the fearful judgment that is executed is upon unbelievers; and in the man that had the offer of Christ, and did not receive it, and put on the wedding-garment, Matt. xxi. 12, 13. see it also in the words that are pronounced against Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, Matt. xi. and our blest Lord Jesus loves not (to speak so) to pronounce woes, but to bless his people; yet when they have the offer of life thro' him, and will not receive it, he pronounces wo after wo upon them; and of what sort were they? even beyond these that came upon Tyre and Sidon, upon Sodom and Gomorrah: we think such threats as these should make folks not to think unbelief a light, or little sin; or, that there is any ground of quietness so long as they are in a self-righteous condition, and have not their peace made with God through Christ. Thirdly, Look further, to the greatness of this, in the strange names that the Lord puts upon it, I John v. 11. He that believes not, hath made God a liar; and is there any sin that hath a groser name or effect than this? for it receives not the report which he hath given of his Son: he tells folks that happiness is to be gotten in him only, and they think to be happy tho' they take another way; they believe not the report, for if they believed it, they would receive Christ as their life. See further what names are given to it, Heb. vi. 6. and Heb. x. 20. which tho' they be there given, with other aggravations of sinning wiffully, with deliberate, &c. with respect to the unpardonable sin, yet who are they that live under the gospel and believe not, but in a great measure they will be found capable of most of them at least? It is called a crucifying of the Son of God afresh, a putting him to open shame, &c., and who are they that do this, and on what ground? It is unbelievers thro' their unbelief; they think not Christ worth the having, and reject all that is spoken of him, and cry, Away with him, as the Jews did; and as to their particular guilt, they crucify him, for they cannot refuse him, without affronting him; and can there be such an affronting of him, as when he condescends so very low, to think so little of him? Fourthly, Consider the expressions, under which he sets out his being affected (to say so) with this sin; he was so affected with it, Mark iii. 5. that it is said, He was grieved for their unbelief: He had had many sorrows and griefs, and suffered many things, but this grieved him someway more than all did, and it's said, Mark vi. 6. That he marvelled, because of their unbelief; it's not said that he marvelled at their adulteries, and their gross sins; but that, when he was taking such a convincing way to demonstrate to them his God-head, yet they would not believe on him, he marvelled at that; So, Luke xix. 41. it is said, that when he came near to Jerusalem, he wept over it; and why? the following words tell us, O that thou hadst known in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! That is, O that thou hadst believed, and received the gospel, at least in this thy day, (tho' thou did it not before) when thou wert, and art so plainly and powerfully called to this duty; and ye may know that it belonged to be some great thing that made him to weep, when all that the devil and Pontius Pilate, and the Jews could do, made him not to weep. It is said, Matt. xii. that he upbraided these cities that he had preached much in, on this ground; sure, when he that gives liberally, and upbraids none, does upbraid for this sin, it shews how much he was pitted with it. And, Luke xiv. 21. it is said of this sin, that it angered him, and he is not easily angered: Sinners need not fear to anger him, by coming to him; but when they come not, he is angry. It is said, Matt. xxiii. 7. He was wroth at this sin, and it is on this ground, that, Psa. ii. 12. we arebidden, Kifs the Son, lest he be angry, that is, to exercise faith in him; for if we do it not, he will be angry, and we will perish. There are other aggravations of this sin, which we leave till we come to the application.

Serm. VII.

Verse 1.

Use 1. Is there not as much here, tho' folks had no more but their unbelief, as may make them know, it is an evil and bitter thing, and as may make them fear at it, and flee from it, and to fear lest they be found under the guilt of it, when called to a reckoning; especially when unbelief is so rife, that but few suspect themselves or fear it; there is hardly any ill, but ye will sooner take with it, than this
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and there is no duty nor grace that ye more readily think ye perform and have, than this of faith; and it is come to that height, that folks think they believe always, and know not what it is to mistrust: Do ye think that this presumptuous and fancied faith will be counted for faith, or that Christ, who sifts faith narrowly, will let it pass for saving faith? no certainly.

USE 2. Is there not here ground of advertisement, warning, railing, and alarming to many, that think themselves free of other challenges: if the Spirit were coming powerfully to convince of sin, it would be of this, Because they believe not, as it is, John xvi. 9. and we are persuaded many of them have need of this conviction, that never once question your having of faith, or care not whether ye have it or not. Put these two doctrines together, That unbelief is an abominable sin, and that it is notwithstanding a very rife sin, and let them sink deep into your hearts, and they will put you to other thoughts of heart; if this plain truth of God prevail not with you, we know not what will do it:

But the time cometh, when ye shall be undeniably convinced of both, that unbelief is a great sin, and that it is a very rite sin; and of this also, that it is an abominable and loathsome thing, and very prejudicial and hurtful to you.

USE 3. And therefore, a third use, If it be so, let us ask this question, How comes it to pass, that so many, in trying their state, and in grounding of it, lay so little weight on faith, and think so little of unbelief? I am speaking to the generality of you, and let not others wrong themselves, nor mistake the intent of this scripture; how is it, I say, that the generality of you that hear this gospel come under this common and epidemic temper, or rather distemper, to maintain your peace and confidence, when ye can (in the mean time) give so little proof of it? Think ye that faith cannot be amissling, or mistaken, or that it is ordinary and common, or that it is indifferent, whether ye have it or not? we are persuaded that many of you think, that if ye have a good mind, (as ye call it,) and a square civil honest walk, and keep (fill your good hope, that all will be well; ye never doubt, nor question whether ye have received Christ or not: but if unbelief lay in your bosom, (I mean not, doubting desperation, or questioning of the God-head, but the not receiving of Christ, and his righteousness;) thou' ye had more than ordinary hypocrites have, ye will for this sin of unbelief find yourselfs under the standing curse of God; for our Lord says, John iii. 18. He that believes not, is condemned already; and v. 36. The wrath of God abideth on him.

In prefling of this Use, I shall shew, by a few aggravations of this sin, why the Lord layeth so much weight upon it, and that, not so much as it opposeth faith, as it is a condition of the covenant of grace, and a mean to unite us to Christ; but mainly as it is a sin thwarting his command: And, 1. It thwarteth with both the law and the gospel; it thwarteth with the commandments of the first table; and so is a greater sin than murder or adultery, nay than sodomy, tho' these be great, vile and abominable sins; which may be thought strange, yet it is true; it makes the person guilty of it more vile before God, than a Pagan-fodomite; the nature of the sin being more hainous, as being against the first table of the law, in both the first and second commands thereof; it being by faith in God, that we make God our God, and worship God in Christ acceptably. Next, it is not only a sin against the law, but a sin against the gospel, and the prime flower (to speak so) of the gospel; it comes in contradiction to the very design of the gospel, which is to manifest the glory of the grace of God, in bringing sinners to believe on Christ, and to be saved through him; but he can do no great things of this sort amongst unbelievers people, because of their unbelief; it bindeth up his hands as it were, (to speak so with reverence) that he cannot do them a good turn. 2. It strikes more narrowly against the honour of God, and of the Mediator, and doth more prejudice to the ministry of the gospel, and causeth greater destruction of souls, than any other sin. It's impossible, notwithstanding of other sins, that Christ may have satisfaction for the travel of his soul, and there may be a relation bound up betwixt him and sinners notwithstanding of them; but if this sin of unbelief were universal, he should never get a soul to heaven: the salvation of souls is called, the pleasure of the Lord; but this obstructs it, and cloatheth the door betwixt sinners and access to God. It strikes also at the main fruit of the ministry, it makes them complain to God, that the word is not taken off their hand: it frustrates the very end of the ministry, and it comes nearest the destruction of immortal souls; we need not lay, it brings on, but it holds and keeps on the wrath of God on sinners for ever, He that believeth not (as we shewed before from John iii.) is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him. 3. More particularly, There is nothing in God, (even that which is most excellent in him, if we may speak so, not excepted) but it strikes against it: it strikes against his grace, and frustrates that; when Christ is not received, some sort and degree of despite is done to the Spirit of grace; unbelievers...
thwart with him in the way of his grace, and will have no spiritual good from him: it comes in opposition to his goodnes; for, where unbelief reigns, he hath no access, in a manner, to communicate it: It strives against his faithfulness; there is no weight laid on his promises, it counts him a liar: In a word, it strives against all his attributes. 4. There is no sin that hath such a train of sad consequences following on it: it is that which keeps all other sins lively; for none hath victory over any sin but the believer: the unbeliever lies as a bound slave to every sin, and it is impossible to come to the acceptable performance of any duty without faith, for none can come suitably to any duty without a promise; and can any but a believer comfort himself in the making of any promise?

We shall close our discourse, with speaking a word to that which we hinted at before, even to let you see, not only the rifeness of unbelief, but the great hazard that flows from it, and the exceeding great evil of it. If we be only convinced of the rifeness of it, it will not much trouble us, except we be also convinced, and believe the hazard of it: but if we were convinced of both, thro' God's blessing it might affect us more, and necessitate us to make more use of Christ. Ye that stand yet at a distance from Christ, can ye endure to ly under this great guilt, and ground of controversy that is between him and you? do ye think little to hazard on his upbraiding and woes, even such woes as are beyond these that came on Sodom, the heavy curse and malediction of God? And yet we say to you who are moft civil, difcreet, formal, and blameless in your conversation, If there be not a fleeing in earnest to Christ, and an exercising of faith on him, the wrath of God not only waits for you, but it abides on you. O tremble at the thoughts of it; it were better to have your head thrift in the fire, than your souls and bodies to be under the wrath and curse of God for ever. It is not only the ignorant, profligate, drunkard, swearer, adulterer, whoremonger, &c. that we have to complain of, and expostulate with, but it is the unbeliever, who, tho' he be lift up to heaven, shall be cast down to the pit of hell. If ye ask, What is all this that we would be at? It is only this, in a word, We would have you receiving Christ: If ye think that unbelief is an exceeding great evil, and that it is a horribly hazardous thing to ly under it, then haste you out of it to Christ; O! haste, haste you out of it to Christ; kiss the Son left he be angry; embrace him, yield to him; there is no other possible way to be free of the evil, or to prevent the hazard.

**SERMON VIII.**

Isaiah. liii. 1. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

It is a great encouragement and delight to the ministers of the gospel, and it is comfortable and refreshing to hearers, when the message of the gospel is received, and our Lord Jesus Christ is welcomed; but on the contrary, it is burdensome and heavy, when there are few or none that believe and receive the report, when their labour and strength is spent in vain, and when all the assemblings of them together, that hear the word of the gospel, is but a treading of the Lord's courts in vain: if there were no more to prove it, this complaint of Isaiah, speaking in his own name, and in name of all the ministers of the gospel, is sufficient; for as comfortable messages as he carried (and he carried as comfortable messages as any that we hear of) yet there was a general not-profiting by the word of the gospel in his mouth. When we meet with such words as these, our hearts should tremble, when we consider how general and rife an evil unbelief, and the not receiving of Christ, is; how horrible a sin, how abominable to God, and how hazardous and destructive to ourselves, it is; and how rare a thing it is to see, or find any number believing and receiving this message of the gospel.

We spoke from these words to these doctines: First, That where the gospel comes, it makes offer of Jesus Christ to all that hear it. Second, That the great thing called for, in the hearers of the gospel, is faith in him. Thirdly, That yet notwithstanding unbelief is an exceeding great evil in the hearers of the gospel. Fourthly, That it is a very sinful, heavy, and sad thing, not to receive Christ, and believe in him. All which are implied in this short, but sad complaint, Who hath believed our report?

We would now prosecute the use and scope of this. The last use was an use of conviction of, and expostulation with, the hearers of the gospel, for their being so fruitless under it; serving to discover a great deceit among hearers, who think they believe, and yet do it not; whence it is, that so many are mistaken about their souls state, and most certainly the generality are mistaken, who live as if believing were a thing common to all professors of faith.
I Sam. VIII. 

faith; while, as it is so rare, and there are so very

few that believe.

The next use is, an use of exhortation to you,
That seeing unbelief is so great an evil, ye would
by all means eschew it; and seeing faith is the only
way to receive Christ, and to come at life thro'
him, ye would seek after it, to prevent the evil of
unbelief: this is the scope of the words, yea, and
of all our preaching, that when Christ, and re-
mission of sins thro' him, is preached to you, ye
would by faith receive him, and rest upon him, for
obtaining right to him and to the promises, and for
preventing of the threatenings and curfes that abide
unbelievers. We shall not again repeat what faith
is; only, in short, it comes to this, that seeing
Christ hath satisfied justice for sinners, and his fa-
\textit{tisfaction} is offered in the gospel to all that will re-
cive it, even to all the hearers of the gospel; that
sinners, in the sight and sense of their lost condi-
tion, would flee into him, receive and rest upon
him, and his satisfaction, for pardon of sin, and
making of their peace with God. Is there need of
arguments to persuade you to this? If ye be con-
\textit{vinced} of your sinfulness, and of your lost estate
without Christ, and that there is a judgment to
\textit{come}, when sinners must appear before him, and
be judged according to that which they have done
in the body; and if ye have the faith of this, that
sinners, that are not found in Christ, cannot stand
(as, by the way, wo to that man that is not found
in him, if it were a Paul; for even he, he is only
happy by being found in him, not having his own
righteousness, but Christ's) and withal, that there
is no other way to be found in him but by faith
(which is that which Paul hath for his main scope,
Phil. iii. 9, 10.) Then, to be found in him by faith,
\textit{should} be your main work and study; this is that
we should design and endeavour, and to this we
have access by the gospel; and it is in short, to be
denuded of, and denying to our own righteousness,
as to any weight we lay upon it for our justification
before God, and to have no other thing but Christ's
righteousness, offered in the gospel, and received
by faith, to rest upon for justification, and mak-
ing of our peace with God: This is it that we
command you to flee to, and by all means to seek
an interest in, that when the gospel makes offer of
Christ, and righteousness thro' his satisfaction, and
commands you to believe in him, when it lays him
to your door, to your mouth and heart, that ye
would roll and lay yourselves over on him, for the
making of your peace, and the bearing you thro' in
the day of your reckoning before the tribunal of God.

That we may speak the more clearly to this use,
we shall shortly shew you, 1. What ground a lost
\textit{sinner} hath to receive Christ, and to lippen to him.
2. What warrants and encouragements a sinner
hath to lean and lippen to this ground. 3. We shall
remove a doubt or two, that may stand in the way
of sinners reeling on this ground. 4. We shall give
directs some directions to further you to this. And,
5. We shall give you some characters of one that is tenderly
taking this way of believing. And because this is
the way of the gospel, and we are sure there is not
a word ye have more need of, or that, thro' God's
blessing, may be more useful, and there is not a
word more uncontrovertible, which all of you will
affix to the truth of, to wit, that there is a great
good in believing, and a great evil in unbelief, we
would exhort you the more seriously to lay it to
heart: O! think not that our coming to speak and
hear, is for the fashion, but to profit; cast yourselves
therefore open to the exhortation, and let the word
of faith sink down into your hearts, considering that
there is nothing you have more need of than of
faith, and that ye will not find it safe for you to
hazard your souls on your own righteousness, or to
appear before God without Christ's righteousness;
and that the only way to come by it is faith: This
may let you see the necessity of believing, and that
it is of your concernment to try how it is with you,
as to that; and therefore, again and again, we
would exhort you in the fear of God, that ye would
not neglect so great a salvation, which through faith
is to be obtained, but lay it to heart, as ye would
not have all the servants of God, who have preach-
ed the gospel to you, complaining of you. It is our
bane, that we suspect not ourselves; and indeed it
is a wonder, that these who have immortal souls,
and profess faith in Christ, should yet live so se-
cure, and under so little care, and holy solicitude
to know, whether they have believed or not, and
shou'd with so little serious concernedness, put the
matter to a trial: But we proceed to the particulars
we proposed to speak to.

And first to this, That ye have a good solid
ground to believe on; for clearing of which, we
would put these together. 1. The fulness and suf-
ficiency of the Mediator Jesus Christ, whom all the
riches of the gospel are treasured up, in whom, and
by whom our happiness comes, and who wants no-
ting that may fit him to be a Saviour, **who is able
\textit{to save} to the uttermost all that come unto God by
him.** 2. The well-orderedness, and ful-
ness of the covenant of grace, wherein it is tran-
acted, that the fulness, that is in the Mediator
Isaiah liii.

Chrift, shall be made forthcoming to believers in him; and by which loft sinners, that by faith flee unto him, have a solid right to his satisfaction, which will bear them out before God; by which transfiguration, Chrift’s satisfaction is made as really theirs, when by faith it is closed with, as if they had satisfeito and paid the price themselves, 2 Cor. v. 21. He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. And this consideration, of the legality and order of the covenant, serves exceedingly to clear our faith as to the ground of it, because by this covenant it is transacted and agreed upon, that Chrift shall undergo the penalty, and that the believer in him shall be reckoned the righteous perfon; if there be a reality in Chrift’s death and satisfaction to justice, if he hath undergone the penalty and paid their debt, there is a reality in this transfiguration, as to the making over of what he hath done and suffered, to believers in him; and the covenant being sure and firm as to his part, he having confirmed it by his death, it is as sure and firm, as to the benefit of it, to the believer in him. 3. The nature of the offer of this grace in the gospel, and the nature of the gospel, that makes the offer of the fulness that is in Chrift by virtue of the covenant: It is the word of God, and hath his authority, when we preach it according to his command, as really as when he preached it himself in Capernaum, or any where else: even as the authority of a king is with his ambaffador, according to that, 2 Cor. v. penult. v. We are ambaffadors for Chrift; as the God did beftech you by us; There is the Father’s warrant and name interpofed; and for the Son’s, it follows, We pray you in Chrift’s stead be ye reconciled to God. Add to this, the nature of the offer, and the terms of it; there is no condition required on our part, as the precise condition of the covenant, but believing: Now, when these are conjoined, we put it to your conscience, if ye have not a good ground to lippen to, and a sufficient foundation to build on; and if so, it ought to be a powerfully attractive motive to draw you to believe in him, and to bring you to reft on him by believing.

Secondly, We have also many warrants and encouragements to step forward, and when Chrift in his fulness lays himself before you, to roll over yourselves on him, and to yield to him: If we could speak of them suitably, they are such as may remove all fearing that any might have in coming to him, and may serve to leave others inexcusable, and unanimously to convince them that the main obstruction was in themselves, and that they would not come unto him for life; he called to them, but none would exalt him. 1. Do ye not think that the offer of this gospel is a sufficient warrant, and ground of encouragement to believe on him? and if it be so to others, ought it not to be a sufficient warrant and encouragement to you? when he says, Psal. lxxxi. 10. Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it: what excuse can ye have in shift or refuse the offer? if ye think Chrift real in his commands, is he not as real in his offers? 2. He hath so ordered the administration of this gospel, as he hath purposely prevented any ground that folks may have of scaring to close with Chrift; he hath so qualified the objects of this grace in the gospel, that thefe in all the world that men would think should be secluded, are taken in to be fharers of it; for it is finners, loft finners, self-destroyers, ungodly, the sheep that have wandered, the poor, the needy, the naked, the captives, the prisoner, the blind, &c. according to that of Isa. lix. 1, 2. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; he hath fent me to preach glad tidings to the meek or poor, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive, the opening of the prison to them that are bound, &c. And, Isa. lv. 1. these, who are invited to come to the cried fair of grace, are such as are thirfty, and such as want money; who among men ufe to be secluded, but in grace’s market they only are welcome; it is to them that grace says, Ho, come, and Rev. xxiii. 17. Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely. It is not only, to say so with reverence, thefe whom he willeth, but it is, whosoever will: and if thou wilt come, grace puts the offer into thy hand, as it were, to carve on; to let us know, that he allows strong confolation to believers, and that either the hearers of this gospel shall believe, or beleft without all excuse. He hath it to say, as it is, Isa. v. What could I have done to my vineyard, that I have not done? if ye had the offer at your own carving, what could ye put more in it? it cannot be more free than without money, it cannot be more seriously pressed than with a Ho, and Ojes, to come. Sometimes he complains, as John v. 40. Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life; and sometimes weeps and moans, because finners will not be gathered, as Luke xix. 41, 42. and Matt. xxiii. 37. Can there be any greater evidences of reality in any offer? A third warrant is from the manner and form of Chrift’s administration: he hath condescended to make a covenant and many promifes, to draw folks to believe; to which he hath added his oath, swearing by himself, when he had not a greater
greater to swear by, for our confirmation and con-
solation, as it is, Heb. vi. 16, 17. And among men,
ye know, that an oath puts an end to all contro-

vercy; and what would ye, or could ye feek more of God than his saying, writing, and swearing? he hath done all this, that the heirs of promise may have strong consolation, who are fled for refuge to the hope set before them. O! will ye not troth and credit God, when he swears? Among other ag-
gravations of unbelief, this will be one, that by it ye make God not only a liar, but perjur’d; a heavy, hainous, and horrid guilt on the score of all unbe-

lievers of this gospel. 4. To take away all con-
troversy, he hath interposed his command, yea, it is the great command, and in a manner, the one command of the gospel, 1 John iii. 23. This is his commandment, that ye believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ; and therefore the offer of the gospel, and promulgation of it, cometh by way of command, Ho, come, believe, &c. whereby the Lord would tell the hearers of the gospel, that it is not left to their own option, or as a thing indifferent to
them, to believe, or not to believe; but it is laid on them by the necessity of a command to believe; and if ye think ye may and should pray, sanctify the Sabbath, or obey any other command, because he bids you, there is the same authority enjoining and commanding you to believe, and as great ne-

cessity lieth on you to give obedience to this com-

mand, as to any other; do not therefore think it humility not to do it, for obedience is better than sacrifice.

For your further encouragement to believe, I would say three words, which ye would also look upon as warrants to believe, and by them know that it is a great fin not to believe. 1. Ye have no less ground or warrant than ever any that went before you had; David, Moses, Paul, &c. had no better warrant; my meaning is, ye have the fame cove-

nant, the same word and promises, Christ and his fulness, God and his faithfulness offered to you, the fame warrant that God hath given to all his people since ever he had a Church; and do ye not think but it will be a sad and grievous ground of challenge against you, when ye shall see others, that believe on the same grounds that ye have, sit down in the kingdom of heaven, and yourselves, as proud rebels, shut out? Whatever difference there be as to the main work of grace, and of God’s Spirit on the heart in the working of faith, yet the ground of faith is the word, that all hear who are in the visible Church; and ye having the same ground and object of faith in your offer, there will be no ex-
cuse for you, if ye do not believe. A 2d encour-
gagement is, That the ground of faith is so solid and good, that it never disappoints any one that leans to it; and count the gospel a ficklest and insignificant thing who will, it shall have this testimony, which damned unbelievers shall carry to hell with them, that it was the power of God to salvation to them that believed; and that there was nothing in the gospel itself that did prejudice them of the good of it, but that they prejudged themselves, who did not lippen to it: Therefore the word is called, God tried in the fire; all the promises having a being from Jehovah himself, one jot or one title of them cannot fail, nor fall to the ground. 3. If ye were to carve out a warrant to yourselves, as I hinted before, what more could ye desire? what misf ye in Christ? what clause can ye desire to be infert in the covenant, that is not in it? It contains pardon of sin, healing of your backslidings, and what not? and he hath said, sealed, and sworn it; and what more can ye require? Therefore we would again exhort you, in the name of Jesus Christ, and in his stead, not to to neglect so great a salvation, O! re-

ceive the grace of God, and let it not be in vain.

In the third place, Let us speak a word or two to some objections or scruples, which may be moved in reference to what hath been said. And, 1st, It may be some will say, that the covenant is not broad enough, because all are not elected, all are not redeemed nor appointed to be the heirs of sal-

vation; upon which ground, temptation will some-
times so far prevail, as to awaken up a secret enmity at the gospel: But, 1. How absurd is this reasoning? Is there any that can rationally desire a covenant so broad, as to take in all, as necessarily to be faved by it? there is much greater reason to wonder that any should be faved by it, than there is if all should perish: beside, we are not now speaking to the ef-

fects, but to the nature of the gospel; so that, who-
ever perish, it is not because they were not elected, but because they believed not; and the bargain is not of the less worth, nor the less sure, because some will not believe: and to say, that the cove-

nant is not good enough, because so many perish; it is even as if ye should say, it is not a good bridge, because some will not take it, but adventure to go thorow the water, and so drown themselves. 2. I would ask, Would ye overturn the whole course of God’s adminiftration, and of the covenent of his grace? Did he ever a priori, or at first hand, tell folks that they were elected? who ever got their election at the very firit revealed to them? or, who are now before the throne, that ever made the keeping
up of this secret from them, a bar or impediment to their believing? God’s eternal purpose or decree is not the rule of our duty, nor the warrant of our faith, but his revealed will in his word. Let us seek to come to the knowledge of God’s decree of election a posteriori, or by the effects, which is a sure way of knowledge; our thwarting with his word, to know his decree, will not excuse, but make us more guilty; He hath showed thee, O man, faith Micah, chap. vi. 8. what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, &c. And if any will scruple and demur on this ground to close the bargain, let them be aware that they provoke him not to bring upon them their own fears, by continuing them under that scrupling and demurring condition. Ye cannot possibly evite hazard, by looking on only, and not making use of Christ; therefore do not bring on your own ruin by your fear, which may be by grace prevented, and by this way of believing shall be certainly prevented.

But, 2dly, Some may object and say, I am indeed convinced that believing is my duty; but that being a thing that I cannot do, why therefore should I set about it? Anf. 1. This is a most unreasonable and absurd way of reasoning; for, if it be given way to, what duty should we do? are we not of ourselves able to pray, praise, keep the Lord’s day, nor to do any other commanded duty? shall we therefore abstain from all duties? Our ability or fitness for duty, is not the rule of our duty, but God’s command; and we are called to put our hand to duty, in the sense of our own insufficiency, acknowledging God’s sufficiency; which if we did, we should find it go better with us: and may not the same be expected in the matter of believing, as well as in other duties? 2. None, that ever heard this gospel, shall in the day of judgment have this to object; none shall have it to say, that they would faint have believed, but their meer infirmity, weakness, and inability, did impede them; for, tho’ it be our own sin and guilt that we are unable; yet, where the gospel comes, that is not the controversy, but that folks would not come to Christ, would not be gathered, that when he would, they would not; for, where there is a will, to will and to do go together: But it is enmity at the way of believing, security, stupidity, fenescefulness, and carelessness what become of the immortal soul, that ruins folks: for the soul, that would faint be at Christ, shall be helped to believe: the reason is, because the nature of the covenant of grace, and of the Mediator thereof, is such, that all to whom he gives to will, he gives them also to perform; and his faithfulness is engaged so to do. It must therefore return to one of these two, That either ye will not receive him, or else ye are willing, tho’ weak; and if ye be willing, Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it; but if it halt at your perverseness and wilful refusal of the offer, there is good reason that in God’s justice ye should never get good of the gospel: Nay, there is never one, to whom the gospel comes, and who doth not believe, but formally, as it were, he fafeth sentence on himself as the words, Acts xiii. 46. to judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life; which the apophle gathers from this ground, that they did not, neither would accept of Jesus Christ offered to them in the gospel: as the event is that follows on the offer, so will the Lord account of your receiving of it.

Fourthly, As for directions, to help and further you to believe; it is not easy, but very difficult to give them, it being impossible to satisfy the curiosity of nature; neither can any directions be prescribed, that without the special work of God’s Spirit can effectuate the thing; the renewing of the will, and the working of faith, being effects and fruits of omnipotent grace: Yet, because something lies upon all the hearers of the gospel as a duty, and it being more suitable and congruous, that in the use of means, than when means are neglected, believing should be attained; and because oftentimes these that desire this question to be answered, to wit, How they may win at believing? are such as have some beginnings of the work of grace and of faith; we shall speak a few words to such as would be at believing and exercising of faith on Jesus Christ: And, 1. Folk had need to be clear in the common fundamental truths of the gospel; they would know what their natural estate is, what their fin and misery is, and they would know the way how to win out of that state: Ignorance often obstructs us in the way of believing, How shall they believe on him, of whom they have not heard? Rom. x. 14. when folks believe not, it is as if they had never heard. 2. When ye have attained to the knowledge of the common truths of the gospel, as of your fin and misery, the nature of the covenant, the Mediator and his fulness, &c. labour to fix well the historical faith of them: We are sure that many never come this length, to believe the history of the gospel; and, till that be, they can advance no further; for, as the word is, Heb. xi. 6. He that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. I say; these common simple truths of the gospel would well
well be fixed by an historical faith; and yet this would not be reposed on, because, tho’ they be excellent truths, yet they may be known and historically believed, where saving faith and salvation follow not. 3. Be much in thinking, meditating and pondering of and on these things; let them sink down into your hearts, that the meditation of them may fix the faith of them, and that they may deeply affect us; we would seek to have a morally serious feeling of them, as we have of the common works of the Spirit. But there are many, like the 

side-bearers, who, as soon as they hear the word, some devil, like a crow, comés and picks it up; therefore, to prevent this, ye would seek to have the word of God dwelling richly in you; ye would meditate on it, till ye be convinced of your hazard, and get the affections some way stirred, according to the nature of the word ye meditate upon, whether threatenings or promises. The most part are affected with nothing; they know not what it is to tremble at a threatening, or smile, as it were, on a promise, thró’ their not dwelling on the thoughts of the word, that it may produce such an effect.

4. When this is done, folks would endeavour a full up-giving with the law of righteousness as to their justification, that if they cannot fo positively and stadyly win to rest on Jesus Christ and his righteousnes, yet they may lay the weight of their peace with God on no other thing; they would lay it down for a certain conclusion, that by the works of the law they can never be justified, and would come with a stopped mouth before God: Thus tender Christians will find it sometimes easier to give up with the law, than to close with the gospel, as to their distinct apprehension of the thing. 5. When this is done, go (as it were) to the the top of mount Nebo, and take a look of the pleasant land of promises, and of Christ held out in them; and let your soul say, O to have the bargain well closed, to have my heart stirred up to love him, and to rest upon him! O to have faith, and to discern it in its actions! for when the life of faith is so weak that it cannot speak, yet it may breathe; and tho’ ye cannot exercise faith as ye would, fo as to grip to and catch fast hold of the Object, yet essay fearlessly to do that far, as to efteem, love, and vehemently desire it; in this respect, the will is said to go before the deed; tho’, as to God’s begetting of faith, there be a contemporaneity of the will and the deed, yet, as to our sense, the will overturns the deed; even as in another sense (tho’ it makes well for this purpose) the apostle says, To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I know not; for we ought to have our will running after Christ, and believing on him, when we cannot attain to the distinct actions of it.

But it may be here objected and said, Is not this presumption? Anfw. If this were presumption, then all we have said of the warrant of the gospel to believe, is to no purpose; Christ never counted it presumption to desire and endeavour in his own way to believe on him, for attaining of life through him. To desire heaven and peace with God, and to milk Christ and pafs by him, were indeed presumption; but it is not so, to desire these through him. 6. When ye have attained to this heart’s desire, if ye cannot distinctly to your satisfaction act believing on Christ, ye would firmly resolve to believe, and effay it, and say, This is the way I will and must take, and no other, as David faith, Psal. xvi. 2. O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord. Hence the exercise of faith is called a choosing of God, Deut. xxx. 19, and Jofh. xxiv. And seriously, sincerely and firmly to resolve, this is our duty, when we can win to do no more; and it is no little advancement in believing, when such resolution to believe, is deliberately and soberly come under. 7. When this is done, folks would not hold at a resolution; for to resolve, and not to set forward, will be found to be an empty resolution: therefore, having resolved (tho’ still looking on the resolution as his gift) we would set about to perform, and believe as we may; and when we cannot go, we would creep; when we cannot speak words of faith, we would let faith breathe; when it cannot neither speak nor breathe distinctly, we would let it pant: In a word, to be effaying the exercise of faith, and often renewing our effays at it; which if we did, we should come better speed in believing than we do; Thus, tho’ ye were walking under a conviction, that ye could do no more at this, than a man whose arm is withered can do to stretch it forth, yet as the man with the withered hand, at Christ’s word of command, effayed to stretch it forth, and it went with him; or, as the disciples, when they had toiled long, even all the night, and caught nothing, yet at Christ’s word let down the net, and inclosed a multitude of fishes; so, tho’ ye have effayed to act faith often, and yet come no speed, yet effaying it again on Christ, calling to it, it may, and will, tho’ grace, go with you. 8. When yet ye come not speed as ye would, your short-comings should be bemowed and complained of to God, laying open to, and before him the heart, who can change it; and ye would have it for a piece of your weight and burden, that your heart
Ifaiah liii. 1. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

Ifaiah liii. 2. For the sake of the name's of Saviour was it not the heart, nor the wing of a fpirit that flew; but as a fmall fword, which fparrow hath found out it, and as a reed that is broken to pieces, and don't break. 

Ifaiah liii. 3. And the Lord was with him, and lifted him up in the fublimity of the path: and he fhowed him the path of life; and his glory was the glory of the Lord. 

Sermon IX.

VERSE I.

24. Be of good courage, and be thou strengthened in thy heart, all ye that hope in the Lord; that is, if ye be weak, wait on, and he shall strengthen you; believe, and give not over, thou to thy fentence, ye come not speed. Beginners that are looking conveniently to their way, thoy have but a glimmering weak light of Christ, and be as the man that at firft many walking as trees; yet, if they wait on, they may attain to a more luminous feeing, and to a more close and firm gripping of Christ.

We close with this word of advertisement, That as we speak not of these things as being in man's power to be performed, so neither can they be gone about to purpose, but where there is some faith and love; yet, when they are at firft looked on, they are some way more within our reach than the distinct exercise of faith, which is a great mystery. The Lord blest his word, and make it useful to you.
success he hath among a people, that he may know,
1. How to carry before God in reference to them, what to praise for, what to lament for, and what to pray for. 2. It is necessary, as to the people, that he may carry right to them, for the gaining of strangers to God, and helping forward those who are entered into the way, and that he may know what report to make of them. 3. It is necessary for a minister himself, tho' not simply as to his peace, for that depends on his faithful dischage of his office, yet as to his joy and rejoicing, to know when he labours in vain, and when not, among a people.

We would not then (as a passing word of use) have you to think it curiosity, tho' something be said now and then, and asked at you, that some of you may possibly think impertinent; for it becomes a physician to seek to know the state and condition of these whom he hath under his hand and cure; and ye would not take it ill, tho' after observation, we now and then speak and tell you, what we conceive to be your condition.

Observe. 2. The second observation is, That it is most sad to a tender minister, and will much affect him, to see and observe unbelief and unfruitfulness among the people that he hath preached the gospel to. This must be a certain and clear truth, if we consider what it was that put Isaiah to this, even to cry, *Who hath believed our report? Tho' a minister should have never so great exercise of gifts, never so much countenance and respect among a people, if he be tender, he will be more grieved and weighted with their unbelief and unfruitfulness, than with stripes and imprisonment; there will be no suffering to this in his esteem, nothing so sad a ground of complaint; this makes the prophet, Mica vii. 1. to cry, Alas and wo is me, I am as these who have gathered the summer-fruit, as the grape-gleanings after the vintage, there is no cluster to eat, the good man is perished, and there is none upright among men; and he infilts in this complaint. How often was our Lord Jesus, the most excellent and tender preacher that ever preached, put to this complaint? All the affronts and reproaches he met with, grieved him not so much as the unbelief and hardenes of heart that were in the people; it's said, Mark ii. 5. that He looked round about on them with anger, and was grieved for the hardness of their hearts; and it's said, Mark vi. 6. that He marvelled, because of their unbelief; it so affected him, that (Luke xix. 42.) it's said, that when he came near to the city, he wept over it, saying, O that thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! There is a fourfold reason of this, that hath a four-

fold influence on the fading of a serious and tender minister of the gospel. 1. Respect to Christ Jesus his matter, in whole head he comes to bespeak and woo souls to Christ. What would an ambassador think of personal respect and honour, if his matter were reproached, and his message rejected and despised? And can an honest and faithful ambassador of Christ look on, and his heart not be wounded, to see the gospel fruitless, the Lord's pleasure as it were married, and the work of gathering in of souls, obstructed in his hand, and his Lord and Master affronted and slighted? 2. The respect that a faithful minister hath to peoples souls, hath influence on this. A tender shepherd will watchfully care for, and with the sheep well, and be much affected when they are in an evil condition; and where the relation is of a more spiritual nature, and the flock of far, very far greater worth and concernment, what wonder the shepherd be more affected? as Paul bespeaks the Galatians iii. 16. *My little children, of whom I travel again in birth, till Christ be formed in you. To be travelling and bringing forth but wind, cannot but prick and wound an honest minister of the gospel at the very heart; 2. Cor. xi. 29. Paul faith, *Who is offended, and I burn not? The very hazard of a soul will be like a fire burning the heart that is tender and zealous of the spiritual good of souls.

3. The respect that a faithful minister hath to the duty in his hand, hath influence on this: for such a one loves to meet his duty, and to go neatly and lively about it; and the unbelief and the unfruitfulness of the people clogs him in his duty, and makes him drive heavily: hence it is said, Mat. xiii. 58. and Mark vi. 5. that our Lord could not do many mighty works there, or among that people, because of their unbelief. Unbelief straitens and shuts the door, and makes preaching become a very burden to a faithful minister; therefore the apostle exHORTS, Heb. xiii. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and watch for your souls, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you; a necessity lies upon ministers to go about their work; but when the word does no more but buff on them, so to speak, it makes them to cry as this same prophet doth, chap. vi. 11. *How long, O Lord? And 48thly, This also hath influence on their being so much weighted, even the concern of honest ministers own joy and comfort. It's true, as we hinted before, that neither a faithful minister's peace, nor his reward of grace, doth depend on it simply; I have spent my strength in vain, says Isaiah, chap. xlix. 4. yet my labour is with the Lord, and my reward from my God: As to that, there is
is no necessary connection, and it's of grace it is so; yet, as to a minister's satisfaction and joy, there is a connection, as we may see, Philip. ii. 16. where Paul faith, That I may joyful in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, and laboured in vain; and from his expostulation with the Galatians, chap. iv. 9, 10, 11. I am afraid of you left I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

I shall not prosecute the use of this neither; only see here, that it is no marvel tho' sometimes we be necessitate to complain of you, and to expostulate with you; and considering the case of people generally, if our hearts were suitably tender, it would even make us burft for grief, to see so many sleeping securely and felfeafly in their sins, and in that pitiful posture ponting to the pit, if God prevent not.

Observ. 3. The third observation is, That a minister may, and sometimes will, be put to it, to make report to God of what fruit his ministry hath, and sometimes to complain to him of the unbelief and unfruitfulness of the people among whom he hath long preached the gospel. Isaiah (sure) is not carried to this complaint out of hatred to the people, neither from any pleasure he hath in it, nor any delight to tell ill tales (to speak so) of them: The Lord needs no information, yet he complains, and that to the Lord, as we flew from Rom. x. 16. where it is said, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then, prophets and apostles complain of this; it is Ezekiel's complaint no doubt to God, as it was the Lord's to him, This people are a rebellious house, and they will not hear; and Isaiah speaks here in his own name, and in name of other ministers of the gospel, that they may join with him in this complaint; and there is reason for it, if we consider, 1. The relation that a minister stands to God; he ought to give an account to him, who gives obedience, and who not, and what is done by his embassage, there being no talent given, but a reckoning how it was employed will be called for. 2. The subordination that a minister stands in to Christ, wherein it is requisite he be kept, as knowing the work is the Lord's and not his, pleads for this. 3. That a minister may be kept from carnalness and vanity on the one hand, and from discouragement on the other; he ought to be acquainted with, and to hold up both the fruitfulness and unfruitfulness of the people to God. 4. It is meet for the good of the people it be so, not to irritate, but kindly to affect the people, that when he complains to God, they may be convinced that it is to get the evil complained of amended, if so it may be.

This complaining will, we fear, be the result of much preaching among you; for either there must be more faith and fruits, else we will have the more complainers, and the more complaints against you.

Observ. 4. The fourth observation is, That it is and ought to be a very sad and weighty thing to a minister, and also to a people, when he is put to complain to God of their unbelief amongst whom he is labouring. It is the last thing he hath to do, and he can do no more; and it the greatest and highest of woes and dittty against them, when a minister hath been preaching long, and observing the fruit of his ministr}' and is out-wearied with their unfruitfulness, and forced to cry, Lord, there are none, or but very few, that believe the report that I have brought to them: It is the heaviest and hardest word that Christ hath to say to Jerusalem, Mat. xxi. 37. and Luke xix. 42. when he complains of their unfruitfulness, harder and heavier than all the woes he pronounced against the Scribes and Pharisees, on other accounts, and at least equivalent to them pronounced on the same account; for the same word and wrath follows both, O, faith he, that thou hast known, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes! this comes as the last and faddest word, holding out the desperateness of their condition, when the powerful preaching of the gospel hath no gracious force, nor saving effect following it, when directions prevail not, when no sort of ministerial gifts do a people good, when it comes to that, Matt. xi. 16. Whereunto shall I liken this generation? it is like children sitting in the market-place, crying to their fellows, We have piped to you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not lamented: when both the sweet offers of grace, and the terrible threatenings of the law, come forth to a people, and both are followed for a long time without fruit, then comes out that word, Whereunto shall I liken this generation? John came neither eating nor drinking, and ye say, He hath a devil; his austerity of way of living and preaching did you no good, ye could not away with it: The Son of man came eating and drinking, in a familiar way, and ye say, Behold a man, glutinous, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners: they stumble on both unjustly; and so it is still even to this day, many stumble at the messenger, cast at the message, and then followeth the sad complaint.

It is meet that now we speak to a word of use: but we profefs we know not well how to follow it, there is so much ground to complain, and we are not (alas!) suitably sensible of our own unfitness to follow
follow the complaint, which makes us think that it
would become another better; but, what shall we
say? it is the word of the Lord; and it were need-
ful that both ye and we should forget and take our
eyes off men, and remember that it is the Lord God,
and some commissioned from him, that we have to
do with, that so we may accept of the message.
1. Then we may say, that it is no pleaure to us to
be hewing you, and speaking sadly to you (the Lord
knows) would to God there were more that needed
healing medicines, and that fewer had need of hew-
ing and wounding! But the truth is, carnal securi-
ty, spiritual pride, hypocrisy, and formality, are
fo-rife, and become so much the plague of this ge-
genation, that people believe not their hazard. Nei-
ther, 2. Is it our desire or design to speak to all of
you indifferently, and without discrimination; for,
as the Lord faith, Matt. xi. 19. Wifdom is justifed
of her children; Tho' the generality despise this
word, yet we are confident the Lord hath fome that
he allows not to be grieved; and we fhall defire, that
fuch may not wrong themselves, nor mar our
freedom in speaking the word of the Lord to others;
3. We fhall not defire to speak peremptorily as to
the cafe of particular persons, tho' we will not de-
ny nor conceal our fcares and fad apprehenfions as to
many of you; only what we have to fay, ye would
know and be afurred, that it is not fpoken at ran-
dom by us, but as having fome acquaintance with
many of your conditions, and we may gather from
thefe what is very probably the condition of others.

And now, as to what we would fay to you; fome
have been preaching this gospel to you, who are
flitted and removed to another part of the vineyard,
other fome are gone to another world, and fome
are yet continued preaching to you; but, what
fruit is brought forth by the miniftry of all? If we
were put to make a report of you, as we will be
put to it, what could we fay? We are afraid to
fpeak our apprehenfions: O how little is this gospel,
as to its ffruit and fuccesf, upon the growing hand
among you! we fhall therefore forbear to fpeak of
that which we think hath deep impressions on our-
foles concerning you, but we would have you to
look thorow matters, how they stand betwixt God
and you; and, if we may humbly lay claim to any
measure of the judgment of difcerning, may we not
aff, Where is there a man or woman, amongft
moll of us, that hath a converfation suitable to this
gospel? If we begin at the great folk, that have
the things of the world in abundance, it is their
work, for molt part, not to be religious, but to
gather and heap up riches, and to have somewhat
of a name, or a piece of credit in the world; this
is the farthest that many of fuch defign: And if we
come and take a look of the way of the poorer
fort, they live as if they were not called to be ex-
ercifed to godlinesfs: and this is the condition of
the generality, to live as if God were not to call
them to a reckoning: Ye will fay, We are poor
ignorant folks, and are not book-learned; but, have
ye not founis to be faved? and is there any other
way to be faved, than the royal way, wherein be-
lievers have walked? But if we fhojtd yet look a
little further through you, how many are there that
have not the very form of godlinesfs, who never
ftudied to be Christians, either in your fellowship
with others, nor when alone, or in your families?
There are fome, (O! that I might not fay, many!) who
are hearing me, that will not once in the year
bow their knee to God in their families! many of
you spend your time in tippling, jeffing, look-
speaking, which are not convenient; yea I dare fay
there are many that spend more time in tipling,
sjeffing, idle-speaking, than in the duties of reli-
gion either in public or in private. What report fhall
we make of you? fhall we fay that fuch a man
spent three or four hours every day in going up and
down the streets, or in tipling and sporting, and
would not fpend half an hour of the day on God
and his worship? And further, how many are yet
ignorant of the first principles of religion? a fault
that is often complained of; and yet we would be
afhamed to have it heard of, that fuch ignorance
should be under half a year's preaching of the gol-
pel, that is in this place under many years preach-
ing it, and even amongst thefe who hold their heads
very high, and are above others, who can guide
and govern their own affairs, and give others a good
counfel in things concerning the world; yet if we
come to fpeak with them of repentance, or of faith
in its exercise, of convictions and challenges for sin,
of communion with God, of the working of God's
Spirit in the regenerate, or of the fruits of the Spiri-
t, they have not a mouth to fpeak a word of thefe
things; and if they fpeak any thing, O! but it looks
worth, talknefs, and theivelfes like. Put them to
difcourfe of religion, it hath no guft, (to fay fo) it
relishes not, they have no understanding of it, at
least, that is experimental: doth this look like folks
that have heard and received the gospel? Let me
fay it, The wisdom of this world, and the know-
ledge of Christ, are far different things; and if
some of you go that length, as to get the qeotions
of the Catechifm, which is well done in itfelf; if
we put you but to express them in other words, ye
K 2
cannot;
cannot; which says plainly, that ye are not masters of your knowledge. And what shall we say of others? of whom we cannot say but we get respect enough from them, yet how do selfishnesses and worldly-mindednesses abound in them? and how graceless, and Christless are they found to be, when put to the trial? We would also say to you, that there is great difference betwixt civility and Christliness; fair fashions will never pafs in Christ's account for the suitable fruits of the gospel, and will never hinder us from having a just ground of complaint against you: How many have a form of religion, and want the power of it? who think themselves something, when they are indeed nothing; and their profession is so thin and hollow, to speak so, that their rottenness and hypocrisy may be seen through it. Tho' these things be but general, yet they will comprehend a great many of you that are here in this assembly; and if so, is there not just ground of complaint and expostulation with you, as a people among whom this word hath no suitable fruit? And as for you that live profanely and hypocritically, what shall we say to you? or how shall we deal with you? We bring the word to you, but ye make no more use of it, than if ye had never heard of it; no more religion sheweth itself in you, than if ye lived among Heathen: shall we say to God, The fruit of the gospel is there? Darc we be answerable to God, or can we be faithful to you, to flatter you over, as if all were well with you? And must not our complaint then rather be this, Lord, they have not believed our report? Tho' we be feckles, and tho' there be ground of complaint of us, yet the word is his word, and will take hold of you. I know that folks do not readily digest such doctrine well, and it may be some think that few ministers are better dealt with than we are; but we say, that is not our complaint: we confefs, if we look from the beginning of the world to this time, there will be few ministers of the gospel found to have been better dealt with, as to outward and civil things; but alas! should that stop our mouths? Yea rather, ought it not to be the more sad to us, to be dealt with, and live in civil love with men and women, who yet do not receive the gospel, nor deal kindly with our Mafter? Do not think that we will take external respect to as for the fruit of the gospel: As we have no cause to complain of other things, so let us not be put to complain of this, but receive Christ in your hearts; let him and his precious wares have change and go off amongst you; make use of him for wif-
SERMON X.

Isaiah lirii. 1. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

WE have spoken somewhat, these days past, to sundry doctrines, from this part of the verse, and particularly of the sad complaint which Isaiah had in his own name, and in the name of all the ministers of the gospel, that the favoury report concerning Jesus Christ is not received; and that, tho' life and salvation through him be offered to many, yet there are but few, scarce one here, and there one, that do embrace it: This is the sad result, Lord, who hath believed our report? Words that, being spoken by such a prophet, and so often mentioned in the New Testament, may and should, as often as we speak, hear, or read them, put both ministers and people to a holy demur, and to look what becomes of all our preaching and hearing, when this was all the fruit, even of Isaiah’s preaching, as to the greatest part of his hearers.

Ere we leave this part of the verse, it will not be unmeet that we speak a little to these three, 1. To what may be the causes why, when the gospel is powerfully preached, there are so few believers. 2. How it comes to pass, seeing so few believe, that generally so many think they believe, and so few suspect their own faith. And, 3. To the necessity that lies on the hearers of the gospel, to enquire at, and try themselves concerning their faith, and to have some solid satisfaction in it.

Altho’ we mention no particular doctrines now, yet, considering the doctrines we spoke to before, these things will not be unsuitable to them, nor impertinent to you.

For the first, The causes why so few believe the gospel: We cleared to you already, that generally the powerful preaching of the gospel hath been with little fruit; so that Isaiah hath this sad complaint, Lord, who hath believed our report? and our Lord Jesus hath it also on the matter, Matt. xi. 17. We have piped to you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not lamented; and in the same expres words, John xii. 38. And when it is so with sweet Isaiah in the Old Testament, and with our blessed Lord in the New, that spoke with such power and authority, ye may see there is reason for us to enquire into the causes why it is that so few believe. In speaking to which, 1. We intend not to touch on all the reasons, that may be gathered together, of peoples not profiting under the gospel; but of those that ye have most reason to look to, and that are most obstructive of faith in you. 2. Tho’ we might speak of reasons on the side of them that speak to you (for, who is sufficient for these things? and we shall not deny but we have culpable accession to your unfruitfulness) yet it was not much to your edifying to insist on these. 3. Neither will we speak to these sovereign causes on God’s part, who in his holy justice gives up people to unfruitfulness, when they receive not the truth in love. Neither, 4. Shall we insist on these causes that may arise from the devil, who waits on, wherever the word is preached, to mar the fruit of it, as we may fee, Matt. xiii. 19. the evil spirits, like as many crows, when the seed of the word is sown, waiting on to pick it up: and ye would know, that ye never come to hear the word, but there are, as it were, flocks of devils attending you; hence it is, that some are rocked and lulled asleep, some have their minds filled with worldly thoughts, some forget all that they hear ere they go out of doors; thus it is with many hearers of this gospel, their hearts are trod upon, as the way-fide, by devils and foul spirits, that never a word takes impression on them. And tho’ ye may think such expressions uncouth-like and strange, yet they are sadly true; Satan waited on when Christ preached, and sure he will scar no more to do so at our preaching than he did at his; if he stood at Joshua’s right hand to reft him, he will no doubt be at ours: but we say, we will not insist on these. But, 5. We shall speak a little to these causes that are common in you, which ye yourselves might know, if ye would observe them; and we would exhort you to take notice of them, when we tell you of them.

1/2. Then we offer, or rather assert this for a caufe, the want of serious minding the great concernment of the work of your salvation, and that this preached gospel is the word of the Lord, by which ye must be saved. Alas! tho’ ye have immortal souls, and tho’ this word be the mean of your salvation, yet there are hundreds of you, that never lay it to heart, that your souls are in hazard, and that this word must be it that ye must live by, and live upon: I appeal to your consciences, if ye think upon this seriously; want of this consideration offers security, breeds lazines, and makes and keeps you careless and carnal. I shall instance the want of it in three respects: 1. Look how ye are affected towards this word, and your own edification by it, before ye come to hear it; how few are hungering and thirsting, or preparing for benefit by it, or preparing to meet with God in it? In effect,
Ifaiah liii. 

ye come not with a design to profit; so that if it were known, it would be wondered at, wherefore ye come to hear the word: As Christ says of some, They came, not because they saw the miracles, but because they did eat of the loaves and were filled; so may we say of you, that ye come not to profit by the word, but on some crooked carnal design. 2. Look how ye carry when ye are come: how many sleep a great part of the sermon? So that it is a shame to look on the face of our meetings, when in every corner some are sleeping, whose confidences God will waken ere long, and the timber and stones of the house will bear witness against them. Were you in any other meeting about ordinary busines, there would not be such sleeping; but when ye are waking what is your carriage? for ye may be waking, and your heart far away, or fast asleep. How seldom can ye give account of what is said? tho’ your bodies be present, your hearts are wandering; ye are like these spoken of, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. who sat before the prophet as God’s people, but their hearts went after theircovetousnes: how often, while ye are sitting here, is your heart away? some in their thoughts running after their trade, some after their merchandize, some after one thing some after another. This is one sad instance of it, that there are many of you who have had preaching forty or fifty years, that can scarce tell one note of it all; and no wonder, for ye were not attentive in the hearing of it. 3. Look how ye carry after the word is heard: What unedifying discourse will ye be engaged in, ere ye be well at the door? how carnally and carelessly do many rush unto, and go away from hearing of the word! and when ye get a word that meets with your soul’s case, do ye go to your knees with it before God, desiring him to breathe on it, and to keep it warm? or do ye meditate upon it? Now, put these three together, your carriage before, in the time, and after your hearing the word, ye will find that there is just cause to say, that the most part that hear this gospel are not serious: what wonder then that it do them no good? In the end of that parable of the tower, Matt. xiii. Mark iv. and Luke viii. it is said by the Lord, Take heed how ye hear; for whosoever hath, to him shall be given, &c. if ye improve well your hearing, ye will get more; but so long as ye take no heed how ye hear, ye cannot profit.

A 2d ground or cause is this, That the most part of hearers never come to look on this word as the word of God, they come never almost to have a historical faith of it; it is said, Heb. xi. 6. He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him diligently: But when folk do not really believe that God is, what wonder they seek him not, that they fear neither judgment nor hell, and that they study not holiness? They say in their hearts, they shall have peace, tho’ they walk in the imagination of their own hearts, and that the way to heaven is not so narrow as ministers say it is, that God will not condemn poor christened bodies; this is the language of many hearts, and of some mouths: Need there any evidences of it be given? if ye believed that the way to heaven is so strait, and that holiness is so extensive, could ye possibly with any seriouness reflect on your heart and way, and not be affrighted? But the truth is, this word gets not leave to sink in you as the word of God; therefore, faith our Lord to his disciples, Luke ix. 44. Let these sayings sink into your ears. There are these things I fear ye do not believe, and let me not be thought to take on me to judge your confidences, when there are from many that profess they know God, but in works they deny him, as it is, Tit. i. 16. When we see such things in your carriage, we know that there is a principle of unbelief whence they spring, 1. There are many of you, that really believe not there is a God, or that he is such as his word reveals him to be, to wit, holy, just, powerful, &c. else ye durst not live at feud with him. The fool hath said in his heart, There is not a God, they are corrupt, &c. your practical atheism and prophecy fay ye believe not there is a God. 2. Ye never believed the ill of your nature: Do ye think (as James be speaks theste he writest o, chap. iv. 5.) that the scripture faith in vain, The spirit that is in you lusts to envy? Ye do not think that your heart is deceitful and desperately wicked? Tho’ we should preach never so much on this subject, yet ye lay it not to heart, ye take it not to you in particular. 3. We are afraid that many of you believe not a judgment, and your particular and personal coming to it; nay, there are among you, who are like to these mockers, spoken of by Peter in his second epistle, chap. iii. 4. who says, Where is the promise of his coming? And as there were in Paul’s days some that denied the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. so there are (till, who do it on the matter at least;) ye have the same corrupt nature: We would think that we had prevailed to some purpose, if ye were brought really to believe, that there is a God, a life to come, and a day of judgment; and if ye did so, ye would be more serious in duty, and would come more hungry and thirsty to the word. 4. The mean and mids of salvation is not believed, to wit, that the way to peace with God, is faith in Jesus Christ, and that there is no way to heaven,
Serm. X.

Isaiablii. Verse 1.

heaven, but the way of holiness; if all your thoughts were spoken out, it would be found that ye have another mids than faith, and another way than that of holiness: And, to make out this, we need go no further than to your practice; we are sure many of you live in prophaneness, and yet ye have all a hope of heaven: and what says this, but that ye think not faith and holiness necessary, but that ye may come to heaven another way? and this is an old fault and deceit; it was in Moses his days, for some are brought in (Deut. xxxix. 19.) saying, I shall have peace, tho’ I walk in the imagination of my own heart, and add drunkenness to thirst; tho’ I tipple daily at my four-hours, tho’ I follow my lusts and pleasures, and take my fouth and fill of the world, we cannot be all saints, &c. The Lord will not spare that man, but his anger and jealousy shall smite against him, and all the curses that are written in this book shall ly upon him, and the Lord will blot out his name from under heaven; and tho’ this be not now believed, it shall be found verified. There are many, when they come to judgment, that will know, to their cost, the truth of many things, they never believed before, as we find in that rich man, who says to Abraham, Send some to tell my brethren, that they come not to this place of torment; it says as much, as that he in his life-time did not believe how terribly tormenting a place hell is, and it is even so still; tho’ men and women have immortal souls, yet they go on following their sinful way, and believe not that any evil shall befal them, till God’s curse and vengeance overtake them.

A 3d ground or cause is, That folk never think themselves in hazard, nor suffer their hazard to affect them, and therefore they seek not after the remedy; hence the Jews, Scribes and Pharisees, rejected Christ; why? they were righteous persons, whole, and needed not the physician: and thus it is with many of you, ye will take with it that ye are sinners, but not with the gracelesness of your nature; and this makes it, that when life, and reconciliation with God, are offered, we have almost none to accept of it; why so? ye are generally, in your own opinion, good friends with God already; none of you almoft think that ye have hatred at God, and so ye carelesly and unconcernedly let the opportunity of making your peace with him slip over, even like these Jews, spoken of John viii. 44, 45, who, when Christ said to them, Ye have the devil to your father, answered, He had a devil, and that they were come of Abraham, and were not born of fornication: So it is with many of you, ye could never endure to even yourselves to hell, nor take with it, that ye were heirs of wrath, as if ye had been born with other natures than the ordinary race of mankind is: and this keeps so many of you that ye get no good of this gospel, for it seeks sinners to pardon them, and enemies to reconcile them; and, till the feudal be once taken with, the friendship will never be sought after, nor will it find merchants; tho’, when once the enmity is taken with, the gospel hath many sweet, peaceful, and comfortable words to speak to the man afterwards.

A 4th ground is, The love of money and of the world, which is the root of all ill. This is given as a main cause, Matt. xiii. why the word profits not, The seed is sown among thorns, and the thorns spring up and choke it, the cares of this life and deceitfulness of riches choked the word: This is not oppression nor stealing, but entanglement with, and addictedness to the things of this present world; folks allowing themselves too much satisfaction in their riches and pelf, counting themselves as if all were well if they have it, and grieved if they want it, as if there were nothing but that to make happy; being wholly taken up about it, and leaving no room for the concerns of their souls, for prayer, and seeking of God, nor for challenges to work on them, they are so wholly taken up with their callings and busines: for they lay it for a ground, that they must be rich, and then they give themselves wholly to all things that may contribute to that end; and that chokes and suffocates the word, that it never comes up, that nothing comes to perfection; therefore Christ says, Luke xxi. 34. Take heed ye be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life: I am afraid that many more among you, who are civil and esteemed virtuous and frugal, shall perish in this pit of worldly-mindedness, than shall perish by drunkenness, gluttony, fornication or the like, and yet there is nothing more frequent in scripture, than words spoken to fear folk from earthly mindedness; How hard is it (fays Christ,) for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven? and such a man is he, that is taken up with riches, and places his happiness and contentment in them whether he have more or less of them. We speake not this to foster idlenes in any, but to press moderation in the use of lawful things: ye think it enough if we cannot charge you with oppression, stealing, whoring and the like; but this gospel will charge you with the love of money; and if it find the love of the world in you, the love of the Father will not be found in you. Doth not your experience tell you, that it is not an easy matter to be much taken up with the world,
world, and to win at a suitable disposition for the duties of religion, and to be painful in them?

A fifth ground is, folks little prizing of the gospel and the benefits that come by it; they look not upon it as their happiness to have communion with God: they who are invited to the marriage of the King’s Son, Matt. xxii. will not come and the reason is given, they made light of it; the offer of the gospel hath no weight, it relieth not: if a market of fine things; at a cheap rate were proclaimed, ye would all run to it; but ye delight not in the word of God, ye prize not the gospel and the precious wares that it exposeth to sale amongst you; and to evidence and make out this, I would ask you these few questions; and, 1. I would ask you, How often, or rather how seldom have you taken down purposely and thankfully God for sending the gospel to you? ye have given thanks for your dinner, but how often have ye given him thanks that ye have the gospel, sabbath days, and week days? 2. How little do many of you wait on the preaching of it? were there a message sent to you but from some ordinary man, let be from a great man, ye would strain your selves and your business too somewhat, that ye might hear it; and yet it’s a wonder to think how some in this place, except on the sabbath, will hardly be seen in the Church from one end of the year to the other.

3. Had ye any evident to draw of house or land, ye would seek to have it drawn very well and sure; but many of you never sought to have the evidents of heaven made sure: Ye know, how interruptions of, and threatenings to remove the preached gospel from you, never troubled you; that business of the Tender gave a proof, that if ye might bruik your ease and the things of the world, ye cared not what became of the gospel and of the liberties of Christ’s kingdom among you: Nay we may say, the gospel was never left by, never more reproached, despised, and trod upon, than in the time wherein we live: and who lays it to heart? if it were well tried, there is more pains taken upon fleckles particulars in a week, than ye take upon your souls in a year; and (which may be spoken to the shame of some) more time taken up in tilting, drinking and debauching, than in prayer, of any other religious duty; And is not that an undeniable evidence, that ye make light of the gospel they made light of it, and went their ways, &c. saying on the matter, Care for yonder invitation who will, as for us, we have somewhat else to do,

A sixth ground or cause, why possibly it be not so wise, is a shifting of convictions and challenges, a quenching of any begun exercise in the conscience; Verse 1.

Serm. X.

some of you have been made sometimes to tremble as Felix did, but ye shifted it, and put it off to another time, and went away to some company or recreation, that so ye might stifle it, and drive it out of your thoughts. is there any of you, but in sicknels, or under some other sad cross, or at a communion, ye have had your own convictions, challenges, and frights about your soul’s estate and yet ye have smothered, extinguished, and put them out again.

A seventh ground or cause (which is as large and comprehensive as any) is folks reeling and sitting down, before they have any solid ground to rest upon, taking a counterfeit work for a real one, like these spoken of, Hosea vii. 16. of whom it’s said, they return, but not to the most High. Some attain to a fort of out-side reformation, and they show that on that account they are all well enough, and in good terms with God; and when such are called to return, they say as these do, Mal. iii. 7. Wherein shall we return? they think they are returned, and that their peace is made already; they cannot endure to be bidden believe, or to lay a new foundation, for they think it’s laid already: in a word, as Laodicea did, they think themselves rich and increased in goods, when yet they are poor, blind, miserable, wretched and naked, but they knew not, and so are well satisfied with themselves as gracious persons, reeling on these and the like grounds; as, 1. It may be they pray, and think something of that. 2. They think they have faith enough, if they have a historical faith. 3. It may be they have had some resolutions, and fits of a fort of tenderness, and these they rest upon. We shall not insist to shew the rottenness of these props, but shall only say, It was in some respect good for many of you, that ye had never had the little pieces of profession ye have; There is a fort of civil, legal, formal, fair fashioned men and women among us, whose conversation and communication relieth to none but themselves; and, speak the word who will, they think that they are without the reach of it: I must say this sad word, that I think many of you have as much believing as keeps you from faith in Christ; that is, ye have as much presumption and security as makes you that ye are never serious with the Lord to amend it, and to bring you indeed to believe; so that it’s a greater difficulty, to beat you off from your rotten grounds, than it is to get you right, tho’ both require the omnipotent power of God: ye think ye believe always, and ye have no doubts about it, and therefore ye think ye have faith enough to do your turn: Ah! when will ye know that security is no faith, and that there is a great difference
S E R M O N XI.

Isaiah liii. 1. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

If we would soberly consider the frame of the most part of men and women that live under the gospel, it would be hard to know, whether it were more strange that so few should receive the report, and be brought to believe, for all that can be said of Jesus Christ; or whether that among the generality of hearers that do not receive the report, there are so few that will let it light but that they believe: It is wonderful and strange to see unbelief so rife, and it is as strange and wonderful, that among these many unbelievers there are so few that think they want faith.

Ye remember, the last day, we proposed to answer this doubt or question, What can be the reason that, when so few believe, all almost think they believe; and then to speak a word to the last use that they could not enter in because of unbelief; let us therefore fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it; it is much, yea the first step to faith, to get folks made suitably afraid to miss the fruit and blessing of the ordinances while they have them: it is good to be afraid, to come to the church, and not to get good of the preaching, or to go and read a chapter of the Bible, and not to profit by it; always to put a difference, betwixt the ordinance and the blessing of it, and to be afraid in the use of the ordinances to miss the blessing of them.

There may be many other causes, and we would not hint and limit you to these, but sure these are causes why this gospel profits not; we may add these few, 1. There are some that stumble at the messenger, some at the message; some thought Christ a friend of publicans and sinners, and said he had a devil, and so they said to John Baptist: There are some that can abide neither free nor fair speaking, and they think it is not the word, but the speaker that they offend at; but prejudices against the carriers of the word have never done good, but much ill; and ye would guard against them. 2. Sometimes there is a stumbling at the spiritual truths of the gospel, and a sort of new-fangledness in the hearers of it, that laifs not; John’s hearers rejoiced in his light for a season; something of it also was in Christ’s hearers, but they soon turned the back on him, when he tells them of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, and of the necessity of it, else they could have no life in them; This (say they) is a hard saying, who can bear it? If we would confide these things, we might see convincing causes of our little thriving, and they might also (tho’ God’s blessing) be made use of for directions to thriving; and if we could once bring you to be single and serious in hearing, and spiritually thirsty in making use of every Sermon and Sabbath for edification, we had gained a great point of you.
that rises from the matter that formerly we have handled on these words. We shew you, and we think, the scripture is very clear for it, that among the generality that hear the gospel, they are very rare and thin fown that do believe; and yet, go thorow them all, there will not one among many be found, but will affert, they believe, and they will (to speake so) be crabbed and pieced, to tell them that they want faith, and so the most part of hearers live and die in this delusion; a thing that experience clears, as well as the word of God, and a thing that doleful experience will clear at the great day: therefore some arebrought in, saying, Luke xiii. 26. We have eaten and drunken in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets; to whom Christ will say, I know you not, depart from me; which doth import this much, that some will come (as it were) to the very gate of heaven, having no doubt of their faith and interest in God, or of their entry into it, and will therefore in a manner plead with Christ to be in, and who would never once doubt of it, nor put it in question, but they were believers and in friendship with him: Altho' there will be no such debate or dispute after death, or at the day of judgment, yet it says this, that many hearers of the gospel have drunken in this opinion, which goes to death with them, and no preaching will beat them from it, that they are believers, and in good terms with God, till the intimation of the sentence of condemnation do it, and the wrath and curfe of God meet them in the face: and O how terrible a disappointment will such meet with in that day! May it not then very reasonably and justly be enquired, what can be the reafon and caufe, when this is granted so generally to be a truth that there are few believers, that yet it should be as true, that few question or make any doubt of their faith, and how this comes to pafs? I shall give you some reafons of it, which if ye would think upon, and suffer to sink down in your hearts, ye would not marvel that so many are in this mistake and delusion; and it would put many of you to have quite other thoughts of your own condition than ye have. We shall only speak to such reafons as are sinful, and culpable upon your part.

The reafons then are these. First, The most part never seriously think on the matter, whether they believe or not, or they never put their faith to a trial. If the foolish virgin light her lamp, and never look whether there be oil in it, and take on a fair outward profession of religion, and never look what is within it, or how it is lined, to speak so, what wonder she go up and down with the lamp in her hand, and never know whether there be oil in her vessel or not, since she never considers, or puts the matter to proof and trial? The people are expostulated with (Isa. xliv. from ver. 9.) for making of images, that a man should cut down a tree, and with one piece of it should warm himself, with another piece of it should bake his bread, and of a third piece should make a god, and fall down and worship it; and this is given for the ground of it, v. 18. 19. They have not known and understood, and none considered in his heart; or as the word is, seest to his heart; they consider not that that cannot be a god; folks would think, that natural reason might easily discover this folly. We are persuaded that some of you will think your faith as great a folly, when there shall be as clear evidences to prove the rottenness of your faith and hope, as there were even to common sense, to prove the image made of a piece tree, not to be God; when it shall be found and declared, that tho' ye were never convinced of sin, nor of your misery and lost condition, were never humbled and touched under the kindly sense of it, never fled to Jesus Christ in earnest, nor never had the exercise of grace, yet out over the want of all these, ye would needs keep up a good opinion of your faith and hope. We say, the reason why ye entertain this conceit and opinion is, because ye never sit down seriously and soberly before God to consider the matter, nor do ye put yourselves to proof and trial. Let me therefore pose your confidences, if ye, who have this opinion, of your faith, durst affert to him, that this faith of yours is the result of your serious examination and trial; is it not rather a guessing or fanciful opinion that ye believe? And do ye think that such a faith as that will abide the trial before God, that never did abide your own trial? It will doubtless be a forebeguile, to go off the world with such an opinion of faith, and to have the door shut in your very teeth. Alas! there will be no amending or bettering of your condition after death: the day comes when many of you, if God graciously prevent not, shall curse yourselves that ever ye should have been such fools, as to have trusted to your own hearts, or to have taken up this opinion of your faith without ground. We would therefore seriously recommend to you the putting of your faith more frequently to the trial, and that ye would often read and think on that place, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves, &c. O! do not think that a matter of such concernment should be left lying at conjecture and utter uncertainty; Who loseth, when ye are so palpably accessary to your
own ruin, by not endeavouring to put yourselves to so much as a trial? Do not say here for excuse, We have no more grace than God gives us; when ye never endeavoured to be so much as at the form of the duty, or to go the length ye might have gone in putting yourselves to trial: The deceit then being desperate and irredeemable, if continued in, do not, for the Lord's sake, after all that is said to you, continue beguiling yourselves.

A second reason is, folks settling themselves on unfound evidences and principles of peace, that will not bear them thorow before God; I do not say that they have nothing to say in word for themselves, but that all they have to say will be no ground to prove their faith, or bear it thorow before God that they do believe indeed; it will be found at the last to be but a lie, as it is said of that man, Isa. xlv. 20. A deceived heart hath turned him aside; he feeds on afees, he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand? He may have a seeming reason for his faith, but it is no reason indeed. If many of you were going now to die, what reason have ye to prove your believing by? Some will say, God hath always been good, kind, and gracious to me; I was in many trials and difficulties, and I prayed and got many deliveries: Thus all the ground of thy faith is but temporal favours or deliveries, which is as if Israel should have made their receiving of temporal deliveries, and their acknowledging of them, and having some sort of faith of them, to be ground enough to prove their receiving of Jesus Christ savingly; there is a doleful proof of the unfoundness of this ground, Psal. lxxxviii. 34, 35, 36, 37. When he slew them, they sought him, and returned and enquired early after God; they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer: They looked to God's bygone favours for them, when they were in the wilderness, and at the Red sea, and they believed he could do so still; but they did flatter him with their mouth, and lie to him with their tongue, for their hearts were not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant; whereupon he destroyed them, and thrust their unbelief they did not enter into God's rest. It is also said a little before, in that Psalm, v. 32. For all this they sinned still; there may be many temporal favours and deliveries, and these acknowledged too, and yet no receiving of Christ, for making our peace with God, for removing the quarrel betwixt him and us, and for making us cease from sin. Consider, if it will be a good ground to plead with God upon, to say to him, Lord, thou must bring me to heaven, because I was in sickness and thou roused me up: I was in this and that strait, and under this and that cross, and thou carried me thorow, and brought me out of it. The Lord will say to such that have no more to say, Ye had so many evidences of my power, and yet ye sinned still; and yet this will be all the pleading and reasoning that will be found with many of you, and the sad reply you will meet with from God.

A third reason is, folks giving an external countenance to ordinances, and their formal going about of them: They imagine they have faith, because they keep the church, and are not open contemners and misregarders of ordinances, as some others are, because they pray, read hear, &c. It seems it was something like this, that the persuasion of these, spoken of Luke xiii. 26. is built upon; Lord, (say they) we have heard thee preach, and have eaten and drunken in thy presence; it is not simply, that they heard Christ preach, for many heard him preach whostoned him; but that, when others stoned him, they followed him, and were not openly prophane nor professed contemners of him and of his preaching, as these others were; such like words fall sometimes from your mouths. Ye will possibly say, What would we have of you? ye are not prophane, ye wait on preaching, and live like your neighbours, and ye content yourselves with that: Alas! this is a poor, yea, a doleful fruit of ordinances, and of your attendance on them; if there be more security, presumption, and deliberate hazarding on the wrath of God, and less taking with the quarrel betwixt him and you on that ground.

A fourth reason is, folks hope, even such a hope, that, contrari to the nature of hope, will make the most part of you ashamed. Ye imagine ye believe, because ye hope ye believe; and that ye will get mercy, because ye think ye hope in God's mercy; and ye will not let any thing light to the contrari; nor so much as think that ye may be deceived. The opinion that folk have of obtaining mercy, that is maintained without any ground but their vain hope, is the rifest, most unreasonable, and prejudicial evil that is among the professors of this gospel: hence, if any ground and evidence of their peace be asked for, they will answer, That they believe; if it be again asked, How know ye that ye believe? they answer, We hope and believe it is so, and can give no ground for it. Many are like these spoke of, Isaiah lvi. 10. Thou hast found the life of thine hand, therefore thou was not grieved; they have a faith and a hope of their own making, and this keeps them off, that the

L 2 word
word of God takes no hold on them. We preach that ye are naturally at feud with God, and offer peace and reconciliation thro' Jesus Christ; but ye are deaf, for ye think your peace is made already; and but very few come, sensible of a quarrel with God, to this word, as to the ministrv of reconciliation. This is wondered at (in a manner) by the Lord himself, Micah iii. 11, where we have a people whose way is very unlike the gospel; *The heads judge for a reward, and the priests teach for hire, and the prophets divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us. It is not for real believing that they are charged, but for their confident affenting their believing, when there was no ground for it: so it is with many; they will say, They hope to escape hell, and to get their sin pardoned, and to win to heaven, and they believe it will be so; when in the mean time there is no ground for it, but clear ground to the contrary.

A fifth ground is, folks spiritual and practical ignorance of the righteousness of God, whereof the apostle speaking, Rom. x. 3, faith, *Being ignorant of the righteousness of God, they go about to establish their own, &c.* that which I mean, is folks being ignorant of their natural condition, of the spiritualnes of God's law, what it requires, and of the way of faith, and of the command of believing, and the nature of it: It is from the ignorance of these three, to wit, of the mischief that is in them by nature, of the spiritualnes of the law, and of the spiritualnes of faith, and of the exercise of it, that they sleep on in security, and think they have faith when they have it not: And tho' sometimes they will say their faith is weak, yet they cannot be beaten from it but that they believe; and their faith is up and down, as their security stands or falls. This the apostle makes clear from his own experience, Rom. vii. 9, where before his conversion he says, he was a living man, but after his conversion he begins to think that he is a dead and gone man; the reason is, because, before conversion, he knew not himself, he knew not the law, nor the nature of the covenant of grace, *before the law came (faith he) I was alive; he knew not the spiritual meaning of it, and therefore he thought he observed it, and so thought himself sure of heaven, and had no doubts nor disputings concerning his interest in God; But (faith he) when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died; I saw myself then to be lost and gone, and in every thing guilty; that which I thought had been humility, I saw it to be pride; that which I took for faith, I found to be presumption and unbelief; and my holiness, I found to be hypocrisy: not that his sin grew more upon his hand, but the sin, that before was vailed, was now discovered, and feared him in the face. This is a sad truth, yet a most real truth: The good believing (as many of you call it) and the faith that ye have, is a furer ground of your frangenes to God, and of your unbelief, than any other thing ye have can be a ground whereupon to conclude, ye have faith, and are good friends with God: ye are yet alive, strangers to God, strangers to yourselves, strangers to the spiritual meaning of the law, and to the exercice of faith. If ye would feel yourfelves to ponder seriously this one consideration, I think ye might be somewhat convinced of it: do ye not see many that understand more of God than ye do, and that are more tender in their walk than ye are, who yet are loather, more difficult and afraid to affert their faith and confidence in God than ye are? and they are often brangled and put to question their faith: Will ye then consider what can be the reafon that ye have so strong a faith that ye never doubted, and they are troubled with doubting fometimes, yea often, tho' they pray more, and are more diligent in the use of all the means, and holier in their converfation than ye are, and ye will (it may be) fay, Well's them that are like fuch a perfon? this is the reafon of it, they fee their fin, and the spiritualnes of the law, and the nature of faith, and are dead to the law; but ye are yet alive in your own conceit. Do ye, or can ye think, that much prayer, reading, meditation, and tendernefs in folks walk, will weaken faith, and occasion doubting? or is it not rather like, that faith will be more confirmed by thefe, than by the neglect of them? How is it then that ye are fo strong in your faith, when they find themselves fo weak and doubting? or, have ye an infufed faith, without the means? or, doth God deal with you in a more indulgent way than he ufes to deal with his people? How is it then, that thefe, of whom ye cannot fay but they are more tender than ye are, cannot almost name faith, or affert their confidence in God, without trembling and fear that they premature; and yet ye dare very confidently take a mouthful of it, without any hink or hesitation, and yet live carnally and without fear? Do not many of you wonder what ails some folks, what need they be fo much troubled, and why do they stand in need of some to pray for them and with them, and to answer their doubts, and ye (mean while) need no such thing? and all your remedy is, that ye affure yourselves ye believe, and think the questioning of your security
security is the very undoing of your faith. God help, ye are in a woeful taking.

A sixth reason is, That folk drink in some carnal principles that have no warrant in the word of God, and accordingly square every thing that comes in their way. 1. They lay it for a ground, that folk should never doubt of God's mercy. We do not say that folk should doubt of God's being most real in his offer of mercy to sinners in the gospel; but from that it will not follow, that never one should doubt of God's love to them, or of their coming to heaven, whether they close with the offer or not, Are there not many whom God curseth? and should not these doubt? A 2d carnal principal is, That there is no such reality in the threatenings of God, as there is in his promises; as if he were utterly averse from executing a threatening, and as if it were a rare thing to him to condemn any: And, is there any thing more opposite to scripture than this principle is? Hath he not said in the same place, to wit, Exod. xxxiv, where he proclaims himself to be gracious, merciful, long-suffering, &c. that he is a God that will not clear the guilty? And hath not the scripture saith, it is but a remnant that are saved, but (as it were) here one and there one, and that there are many damned for one that is saved? But know it of a certain, that he will make you one day vomit up these principles, with exquisite torment, when out of your own mouth he will convince you of your mistake and delusion. When folks want many things, they supply all with an honest mind; this supplies your want of knowledge, your want of faith and repentance, and of every thing whereof ye are said to be short: Tho' ye live and shoulde die carnal and unrevenged, yet ye think still ye have an honest mind or heart for all that; and what, I pray, is your honest mind, but a rotten and prophan heart, that vails your hypocrisy with a pretext of honesty? Would ye think that man honest, spoke of Isaiah xlv. 19, who with one part of the tree warrsed himself; and with another part made a god, and fell down and prayed to it? and yet, in your sense, he hath an honest mind, for he followed his light, which is but darkness, and the deceit of his heart carrying him away from God, tho' he cannot see it; he discerns not, because he considers not that there is a lie in his hand, and that a deceived heart hath led him aside. So it is with you, and if many of you saw, what is latent under that honest mind and heart, there would be nothing that would make you loathe yourselves more. A little time will convince you, that that which ye looked for most good from, was your greatest and most traitorous enemy: He that trusts in his own heart is a fool, 1. 26. it supposes that folk are ready, to happen to their heart, and to hearken to the language of it concerning their spiritual estate; but it says also, that they are fools that so, do, for it betrays them; and there is no folly comparable to that, whereby a man betrays his own immortal soul; and that he doth, who trusts in his own heart.

A seventh reason is, from the deceitfulness of our heart, and the natural corruption that flicks to us: There is naturally in us, pride and self-conceit: we are disposed to think any thing that is our own, tho' it be but a shew, is as good as others reality; to think our own light and knowledge, our own other parts and gifts to be as good as those of any others, whatsoever they be. And with pride there is joined self-love; we cannot abide to think evil of ourselves, or to suspect ourselves: Than this self-love be indeed self-hatred, and is but love to our corruptions, and makes us, that when we live in hatred of God, to think that we love him; so that we cannot be induced to think that we love him not, for we know that love to God is good, and we love ourselves so well, that we cannot endure to think we want it: hence it is said of some in the last times, 1 Tim. iii. 2. 3. That they shall be covetous, proud; boasters, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, &c. having a form of godliness, and denying the power of it; and the fountain of all is self-love, for (faith he) men shall be lovers of their own selves. And as self-love is the fountain of much evil, so it is the fountain of self-deceit, and keeps out any thing that may make men question their own condition; so that if a word come in and say, Thou hast no ground for thy faith; the heart will be ready to answer and say, It cannot be that I am a self-deceiver; and self-love, as a partial judge, will offer to vindicate the man, and so make him shift the challenge. Now, when all these are put together, you may see how many grounds folk have to go wrong upon; and men having hearts disposing and inclining them to go wrong, and little pains being taken to discover the deceit of them, is it any wonder that they think they believe, when indeed they believe not, and be empty and room-headed, having little or nothing to rest upon, while they think they are rich and want nothing? These are not fancied and far-fetched things, but obvious, and at hand, and may easily be gathered from your daily practice; in all which, it is our design and scope, to bring you to try your
Isaiah liii. Verse 1.

S E R M O N XII.

W e have spoken at several occasions to this
first part of the verse; and, before we leave it, there is one use, several times hinted at
already, to which there is good ground to speak, it
being the design and purpose of these words, to
hold forth of what great concernment believing
is, and of what great difficulty it is; and so many
being, to the ruin of their souls, mislaken
about it, there is ground to draw this use of exhorta-
tion from it, to wit, That then all the hearers of
this gospel would be exhorted to advert well to this,
that they make faith sure in itself, and that they
make it sure to themselves, seeing, as I said, so many
are mislaken about it, and beguile themselves.
The more pressingly that the gospel calls for faith
in Christ, and the more weightily the Lord expostu-
lates
SERM. XII.

ISAIAH liii. Verse 1.

late with the hearers of the gospel, because of their unbelief, they are doubtless so much the more concerned to receive it in its offer, and also to look well that they content not themselves with guessing at faith, and that they never think that things are well with them, except they can give good proof and warrant that they are so, and that it is saving faith that they have. Seeing there are so many that satisfy themselves as being believers, when yet so few are believers indeed; the said mistake and disappointment of many, should have so much influence upon us, as to put us to more watchfulness; and to a more narrow trial of our own state and condition, that we may know how it is with us. All that we have spoken to the doctrines of this first part of the verse, may be as so many motives to stir you up to both these; and would to God we could be persuaded to this, as the use of so many preachings, once to admit and take it for granted, that it is the truth of God; that there is a necessity, an absolute necessity for us to be really rolled and eaten over upon Jesus Christ by faith, for attaining of life through him. This be a very common doctrine, and ye would think a very common use of it, yet it is the great thing that God requires in the gospel; and the neglect of it, or not receiving his Son, the very contest and quarrel that God hath with the hearers of it, and the cause of the ruin of so many souls that perish under the gospel; we shall therefore propose to you some considerations, that may stir you up to this; and briefly answer a question, in each of these two branches of the use.

And, First, For stiring you up to this receiving of Christ by faith, 1. Consider if there be not a standing quarrel and controversy betwixt God and you for sin; and if there be, as no doubt there is, consider how that controversy is to be removed; is there any other possible way but by faith in Christ? if we were preaching to such as had never sinned, and were never under the hazard of the wrath of God, there might possibly be a difficulty to persuade to a receiving of Christ; but when ye have all this in your conscience, that there is sin, and a curse following sin, and that there is no other way for removing that curse but by Jesus Christ, is there not reason to expect that ye should receive this truth? Will any of you think to stand and abide it out against God? and if not, then there is sure a necessity of believing in Jesus Christ, or of lying under the wrath of God for ever.

2. Consider, that this gospel and word of salvation is preached to you in particular: When we speak of salvation, we do not say, that Christ was once preached to the Jews, or that in such a far off nation there is a door opened for salvation in the gospel; but we would turn over the words of the Apostle, Acts xiii. 38. to you, and say to you in his words, Be it known to you therefore, men and brethren, through this Man (to wit, Jesus Christ) is preached to you remission of sins, &c. and this brings the gospel near you, even to your door; it lays before you the way of access to God by Christ, and puts it so close and home to you, that Christ must either have a refusal, or a welcome from you. The first consideration of your own finfulness and misery might put you to seek after a Saviour, the he were at a great distance; but this other brings him to your heart and mouth: and is it fit (think ye) to neglect such a fair occasion? and will it be wisdom, when salvation follows you, and cries after you, and wisdom lifts up its voice in the streets, saying, O ye simple ones, how long will ye love foolishness? &c. to stop your ear, or to turn away from Christ, and to run upon your destruction? Do ye think that this gospel will be silent always, or that your conscience will be deaf and dumb always? There are many nations that have not the gospel so near them: and it’s hard to know, but the day may come, when ye would be content to buy an offer of the gospel at a dear rate, and when there shall not be a tryer, nor a days-man to be had between God and you; and these days will then be remembered with horror, which now ye securely slip over.

3. Consider what will come of this, if ye do not believe the gospel. Know ye not that many perils that hear the gospel, and that upon this same very ground, that they did not receive Christ and salvation through him offered to them therein, and whereof they are now deprived? Are there not many this day cursing in hell, under the wrath of God, that they let slip and pass over so many golden opportunities of the gospel without improvement? and know ye not that it will come to the same sad pass with you, if ye do not receive it? Do men live always? Is there not an appointed time for all men upon earth? If, before we have savagely exercised faith on him for making peace with God, we be drawn to a reckoning before his tribunal, what will come of it? and are not our precious opportunities apace and always slipping by? and is not the work of faith by delays still the more difficult? are not our bonds still the more strengthened? and doth not our indisposition still grow the greater? and is it not very ordinary to see these, who have slighted the work of faith in their youth, to live stupid in their old age, and die senseless.
4. Consider what sort of folk they are, of whom the Scripture speaks as unbelievers, and whom the word of God holds forth to be eternally secluded from the presence of God for the want of faith. Many think that it is but the grovily profane, or such as never had so much as the form of religion, and such as others would scutter and lothe to hear them but mentioned; and it is (I say) only such that are accounted unbelievers: but the Scripture speaks of some, that seek to enter in, and shall not be able; that desire to be in heaven, and take some pains to win in, and yet are never admitted to enter into it; and what is the reason? because they took not the way of believing, for the obtaining of life, and coming to heaven; they took the way of works, they took the way of prayer, of purposes, promises and resolutions to amend and grow better, quite overlooking Christ and the way of believing in him; and so took the way of presumption, and promised themselves peace, when there was no true peace, nor any solid ground for it.

5. Consider (which is of affinity with the former consideration) them that are secluded from the presence of God for the want of faith: They are even men and women, as we are, that lived in the same kingdom and city with us, and prayed in the same company with us that thought themselves as sure of heaven as many of us do, that were guilty of the same or like sins that we are guilty of, that have heard many of the same preachings that we have heard, and yet they perish for want of faith, for not believing in the Son of God. Why then should we think that impossible to us, that is so common and frequent in others? Is not the same nature in us that is in others? and are not our hearts naturally as deceitful and corrupt, as those of others? and so, may not we be beguil'd, as well as others? and is it not the same rule that he will walk by in judging of us, that he walked by in judging of others? What can be the reason that folk will read and hear the word, and will promise to themselves heaven, when the same word clears it plainly, that destruction is that which they have to look for from the Lord? It is nothing else, but this confident and proud presumption that many take for faith. Let not your precious opportunities slip away, and beguile not your selves in such a concerning matter as faith is; ye will never get this loss made up afterwards, if ye misfaith here.

Lastly, Consider the great necessity that the Lord hath laid upon all men and women by a peremptory command and charge, to believe in the Son of God: he hath not with greater peremptoriness required prayer, nor dependence upon him, nor any other duty, than he hath required this, 1 John iii. 23. And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ; yea, it is singled out as his main commandment. If that great inquiry be made, What shall I do to be saved? This is the answer, Believe on Jesus Christ. Do ye think that our Lord (who hath so marked and signalized this command in so special a manner) will never take account for the slighting of it; or do ye think to satisfy him by your other duties, without minding this? It cannot be; suppose ye should mourn all your life-time, and your life were a pattern to others, yet if ye want this one thing, faith in Christ, ye would be found transgressors, as having neglected the main work.

Now, for the Question, ye will say, what is this we are bidding you do, when we bid you believe? Answer, when we call you to believe, we call you, 1. To be suitably affected with the sense of your own naughtiness, sinfulness, and hazard; till there be something of this, faith in our Lord Jesus hath no access, nor will ever get welcome; deep apprehensions of the wrath that is coming, and standing in awe at the thoughts of our appearing before him, contribute much to it. I am not preaching desperation to you, as some mutter; but we would press upon you the faith of the word of God, that tells you what we are; and livelincs under that impression; that ye may not be stopped or letted, till ye come to a thorow cloiture with Christ: the most part of hearers come never this length, and this is the reason why many stumble in the very threshold, and make never progress. 2. We call for, and commend this to you, that ye would study to be through and clear as to the usefulness and excellency of Jesus Christ, as to the efficacy of his death, as to the terms of the covenant of grace, whereby a sinner comes to obtain right to him: to be sensible of sin and hazard, without this, is only the way to make a man desperate and mad; but when this is clear, it makes an open door to the sinner, that he may see whither to run from the wrath to come. I do not only mean that ye would get the Catechism, and be able to answer to all the questions concerning the fundamentals of religion, contained therein, but that ye would also and mainly seek to have the faith of these things in your hearts, and to have faith in God, that ye may be persuaded, that he that was and is God, died for sinners; and that, by the application of his satisfaction, sinners may obtain life; and that there is a sufficient warrant given to a sinner to hazard himself upon him. The first of these speaks
speaks the necessity of some sense, the second holds out the necessity of a general faith, according to that word, Heb. xi. He that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. We must know that there is a warrant to come, and ground to expect acceptance from God upon our coming; else we will never come to, nor believe in Christ. The third thing that we call you to, when we call you to believe, is, that the sinner would actually stretch out that faith, as the soul's hand, for the receiving of Christ, and for the application of him to himself; and would actually call himself upon the satisfaction of Jesus Christ, for covering that sinfulness that is in him; and would catch hold of, and grip to him, that is an able Saviour, for keeping the sinner from sinking under the weight of fin that he lieth under: This is the exercise and practice of faith, when it flows from the general doctrine of the necessity of believing such things to be truths in themselves; and then it is extended and put forth in practice, that we, who are so certainly and sensibly lost, must needs share of that salvation which we believe to be in Jesus Christ, and so for that, roll ourselves on him: the first piece of sense may be in a reprobate, the second piece of faith, that there is a sufficient salvation in Christ to be gotten by them that believe in him, may be in a devil; but this third, of actual use-making of the satisfaction of Christ, for paying our debt, and rolling ourselves upon him, that is the faith and exercise of it that is particular to a found believer, and the very thing that constitutes a believer; and it is that which we commend to you, that ye may not stand and please yourselves with looking only upon Christ, but that ye may cast and roll yourselves over upon him, that Christ may get your weight, and that all your burdens and wants may be upon him; which to do, ye must be enabled by the mighty power of grace, whereof in the next part of the verse.

The second branch of the use, which follows upon this, is, That we would desire you, not only to follow this way of making your peace with God, but to follow the trying and proving of it to your own satisfaction, that ye may be warrantably confident that it is so. There is a great difference betwixt these, to believe in Christ, and to be clear and certain that we do believe in him; as there is a necessity of the first, without which there cannot be peace with God, so there is a necessity of the second, tho' not simply, as without which there can be no peace with God, yet upon this account, as without which we cannot be so comforted in God: and seeing there are so many who do not believe, who yet think themselves to be believers; and seeing there is nothing more common among the hearers of the gospel, than to reject Christ offered in it, and to misbelieve, and yet nothing more common than to be confident that they do believe; there is good ground here to exhort you to put your faith to the touch-stone, that ye may know whether ye can abide the trial, and whether ye may confidently assent your own faith upon good ground, and abide by it. We would think, if it were remembered, and seriously considered, how great a scarcity there is of believers, and how rare a thing it is to get any to receive Christ, that folk needed not be much pressed to put their faith to the trial; and when there will not be one among many found, who will pass under the account of a real believer with Jesus Christ, should not the most part suspend themselves. Seeing the most part that hear the gospel are the object of this complaint, Who hath believed our report? or very few have believed it: Ye would study to have some well-grounded confidence in this, that ye are not guessing and presuming, and going upon grounds that will fail you at last, but that ye be in a case to lay on solid grounds with the apostle, I know whom I have believed, &c. There is a faith and hope that will make many ashamed; and certainly in the day of judgment, when Christ shall have to do with these persons, that never once thought to be thrust away from him, they of all men shall be thrust away from him with greatest shame: O! the confusion that will fill and overwhelm them, who had a profession of Christ and yet had never the root of the matter in them, above and beyond many others. Dare many of you, upon the confidence ye have, look death in the face? It is no great matter to be confident in the time of health; but will ye then be able to comfort yourselves in the promises of God? Do not promise to yourselves the things in the covenant, except ye be endeavouring in God's way to be sure ye are believers indeed. Our life depends upon our faith, but our consolation depends much upon our clearness that we have faith, and that we are in Christ; and therefore there is much need to press this upon you: There is no way to rid you of the terrors of God, and to make you comfortably sure of your particular interest in the promises of God, but by making it sure and clear that ye are believers in Christ indeed.

There are three or four sorts of people, to whom we would speak a little here. 1. There are some who think, that if they could do other duties, tho'
they should never do this, to wit, to make their calling and election sure, they would be and do well enough: are there not many of you, that never so much as set yourselves to try whether your faith would abide God's trial or not? Ah! Ah! an atheistical indifferency, a slitting of the consolations of God, aboundeth among all many, so that they think the promises, and the consolations that are to be gotten in the promises, are not so much worth, as to be thereby put to take pains to try and see, whether they belong to them or not; but the day will come, that many of you will curse yourselves for your negligence and slitting of this. A second sort are these, who, because they were never sure of peace with God themselves, and because they were never sure of their own faith, neither ever concernedly endeavoured to be, they think it is all but fancy that is spoken of assurance of faith, and of peace with God; they think it is but guessing at the belt; there is such a sort of persons, who think they may be doing as they do, and need not trouble themselves with such fancies, or nice things; but if ye ask them, what will come of them at last? they will tell you, They will live in that to God. Think ye it for nought, that God hath laid so many commands on you to make your calling and election sure? and think ye it for nought, that he hath given so many marks to try it by, and that some of the people of God do holily and humbly glory and boast so much of their communion with God, of their assurance of his love to them, and of their special interest in him? do not all these say, that there is such a thing as this to be had? There is a third sort, that pleahe themselves with mere conjectures about this matter, and the greater their security be, they persuade themselves the more that they have faith: This is as far as any of the former, when they grant all, that folks should make their calling and election sure, and should endeavour to be sure of their faith, but in the mean time take peace with the devil, and peace with their lusts, for peace with God; and a covenant with hell and death for a real bargain with God: This is as true as this word of God is, that there are many that put by all challenges by this, and never suspect their faith; they hope that all shall be well, and they must always believe; as if that were the whole duty of faith, to keep down all challenges. A fourth sort is, even of the generation of them that have something of God in them, who fear in a manner to make all sure, and think it a piece of humility, and of holy and tender walking, to maintain doubting; even as others think it faith, to maintain pre-

Verse 1.

fumption: they are always complaining, as if all things were wrong, and nothing right in their cafe, and to foster and cherish disbelief. There is such a thing as this, that marreth even serious souls in their endeavours to make their calling and election sure; and, as long as this is, they cannot win to the suitable discovery of this excellent grace that God calls them to exercise, even faith in the Lord Jesu. Need we make use of motives to press you to this trial of your faith, and to this giving of all diligence to make it sure, who have especially hitherto neglected it? If ye knew any thing of the vexation that unbelief hath with it, and what horror in conscience from the sense of distance from God were, ye would think it a great matter to be clear in this thing; and if it were known and believed, how this delusion and unbelief of faith destroys the most part of men in the world, even of the visible church, durst men lay in their security as most do, without all endeavours to make it sure on good ground, that they do indeed believe? Durst they lay still under God's curse, if they thought themselves to be really under it, and did not foolishly fancy that it is otherwise with them? Durst men treasure up wrath to themselves? if they thought not that the hope they had were good enough? O! but presumption beguiles and destroys many souls; and particularly this same presumption, of folks thinking themselves right when they are wrong, hath destroyed, and doth destroy, and will destroy more members of the visible church, than prophaneness, drunkenness, whoredom, theft, desperation, or any other of these gross and much abhorred evils do: This is the thing that locks folk up in their sin, even their presumption, when they lay on the matter, We shall have peace, the we walk in the imagination of our own heart. It is this that makes men, without fear, steal, lie, and commit adultery, &c. that they say, Is not the Lord among us? Is not this the thing that keeps many of you, that ye never tremble at the word of God? We have faith in God, (say ye) we live and trust in him. Therefore, seeing presumption is so rife, have ye not need to try your faith? If there were so much counterfeit money in the country, that it were a rare thing to get one good and upright piece of money, ye would think yourselves greatly concerned and obliged to try it well, left ye were cheated with base and counterfeit coin; is there not need then, yea infinitely much more need, for them that would be so wise as not to be beguiled about the salvation of their souls, to search and try whether their faith will abide God's trial or not?

Ye
Ye will readily move this Question, What then are the characters or evidences of a solid and sincere faith that will abide the trial, by which the pretended faith that is among the men of this generation may be examined and put to just trial?

I shall first name some direct scriptures, holding out some things essentially accompanying faith; and then shall add others, having more condescending characters, for the more particular differing of this, helping to the decision of this great question.

The first mark, wherein ye may try your faith, is, the ground and rife of it, or that whereby it is begotten and cherished; _Faith comes_ (faith the apostle, Rom. x. 10.) by hearing; _doctrinal faith_ comes by the preaching of the gospel, and saving faith is wrought instrumentally by the name word of God, _it being the power of God to salvation_; it being this word that is the very ground of our faith. I would ask you, Wherefrom your faith comes, and what hand the word of God hath in it? There are many that have a sort of faith, not only without, but contrary to the word of God, whereby they believe that they will get heaven, while in the mean time the word of God does directly exclude them.

Get ye your faith maintained, without ever knowing the necessity of a promise for that effect? Can ye maintain your peace, and not have so much as any foundation in the truth and faithfulness of God to build it upon? Love never that faith which hungers not after the word, that is supposed to be lively without being ever fed by the word, that cannot claim either its rife and original, or its growth from the word? I will not say from this or that word in particular, or at this or at that time read or heard, but from the word of God; the word is the very foundation that faith builds upon: If we look to what either accompanyeth or followeth faith, there are some plain scriptures that will make that clear, as Acts xvi. 9. And _put no difference between us and them_, purifying _their hearts by faith_; (there was indeed once a great difference between Jews and Gentiles, but now, when he hath brought both to believe in Christ, the difference is removed) therein is an efficacy in it, to circumcise the heart, to purify it, and to banish lusts out of it; for it closes and unites with Christ, and so brings him home to dwell in the heart; and where Christ dwells he commands, and so whatever opposeth him is banished. Faith gives Christ welcome, and will give nothing welcome to dwell with him, that is opposite and displeasing to him: Faith improves Christ for the subduing of its lusts, and mortifying its corruptions; whereas before there might be a fair out-side of a profession, and something clean outwardly, and much filthiness and rottenness within; but when faith is exercised on Christ, it purifies from all filthiness of the spirit, as well as of the flesh; it applies the promises for that end, even to get the inside made clean, as well as the outside; yea, its main work is, to have the inside, the heart, purified, that being the fountain of all the pollution that doth the man, and brings the other necessarily along with it. Never love that faith, that leaves the heart as a wine-fry to lufts, that leaves it swarming with unclean and vain thoughts, or that leaves the heart just as it was before; or that faith, that only cleanseth the outside, and does no more; such a faith, however esteemed by man, will never be accounted for true saving faith before God. I do not, I dare not say, that believers will always discern this heart-purity or cleanliness, but this I say, that true faith will set the man a-work to purify the heart, and will be making use of Christ for that end, not only to have the arm of the dominion of sin broken, but to have the soul more and more delivered from the indwelling power of it; and this will be the design that he will sincerely drive, to get the heart purified within, as well as the outward man; inward heart-abominations will be grievous and burdensome to him, as well as scandalous out-breakings.

A second place is, Gal. ii. 20, 21. _I am crucified with Christ, nevertheles I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life, &c._ If ye would know a companion of true faith, here is one, it hath a life of faith with it: There is one life killed, and another life is quickened; the life that is killed, is that whereby the man sometime lived to the law, _I am dead to the law_ (fays the apostle) a man's good conceit of himself, that once he had, is killed and taken away; he wonders how it came that he thought himself holy, or a believer, or how he could promise to himself heaven, in the condition he was in. There is another life comes in the place of that, and it is a life that is quickened and maintained by, and from nothing in the man himself, but it is wholly from and by Christ: The believer hath his holiness and strength for doing all called-for duties, and his comfort also, from Christ; and he holds withal his very natural life, his present being in the world from Christ; his all is in Christ; his stock of life, strength, and furniture, is not in himself, but he lives by a continual traffick, as it were, on bills of exchange betwixt Christ and him; when he wants, he sends a bill to Christ, and it is answered in every thing that he stands in need of, and that is good for him: He is a dead man, and he is a living man;

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and wherever true faith is, there the man is dead, and there the man is living. Do not, I pray, mistake it, by thinking that true faith is but vented, puts forth itself only in reference to this or that particular, or at this or that particular time only; for faith must be exercised, not only at starts, as when we are under challenges for sin, or at prayer, but we must design and endeavour to exercise faith thro' all our life; that is, we must by faith look for everything, that is useful and needful for us, from Christ, and be always endeavouring to drive on a common trade of living this way; we must be habituating ourselves to seek after peace, strength and consolation, and what else we need, out of the fulness that is in him. This life of faith is, to fee the want of all things in ourselves, and yet to have all things, by making use of Christ in all things; contenting and comforting ourselves that there is strength in him, tho' we be weak in ourselves, and that he hath gotten the victory over all his and our enemies, and that we shall at last, through him, be victorious in our own persons; contenting and satisfying ourselves that he hath compleat righteousnes, tho' we be bankrupt and have none of our own, and be taking ourselves alienarily to that righteousness for our justification before God; thus, making a life to ourselves in him, he living in us by his Spirit, and we living in him by faith: O sweet and desirable, but mysterious life!

The third place is, Gal. v. 6. In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love: He doth not simply say faith, but faith that works by love; for faith is an operative grace, and this is the main vent of it, the thing by which it works, it works by love: faith is the hand of the new creature, whereby every thing is wrought, it having life from Christ; and we may say, that love is in a manner the hand of faith, or rather like the fingers upon the hand of faith, whereby it handleth every thing tenderly, even out of love to God in Christ, and to others for his sake; faith works, and it works by love: that's a found and good faith, that warms the heart with love to Christ; and the nearer that faith brings the believer to him, it warms the heart with more love to others. And therefore, love to the people of God, is given as an evidence of one that is born of God, 1 John v. 1. because, wherever true faith is, there cannot but be love to the children of God, flowing from love to him that begets them. That faith, that is not affected with God's dishonour out of love to him, and that can endure to look upon the difficulties, sufferings and afflictions of the children of God, without sympathizing and being kindly affected therewith, is not to be taken for a sound faith, but to be suspected for a counterfeit.

The fourth place is, James ii. 14. Show me thy faith by thy works, &c. True faith hath always found holiness with it, in all manner of conversation, in the design and endeavour of the believer; which is, withal, through grace in some measure attained. What avails it for a man to say, that he loves another, when, being naked or destitute, he bids him, Depart in peace, Be warmed, Be filled, and yet in the mean time gives him nothing that he stands in need of? would not such a poor man think himself but mocked? Even so, will not God reckon you to be but mock-believers, or mockers of faith, when ye profess yourselves to be believers in Christ, while in the mean time ye have neither indeed heart-purity, nor holiness in your out-side conversation? that is but such a faith as devils may have, that will never do you good. Ye would believe this for a truth, that there will never a faith pass for faith in God's account, and so there should never a faith pass for faith in your account, but that faith which sets the man a-work to the study of holiness, that faith which works by love, that faith which purifies the heart, and that faith which puts the perfon, in whom it is, to study to have Christ living in him, and himself living in Christ.

I promised to name a few scriptures, that speak out some more condescending characters of faith. And, 1. I would think it a good token of faith, to have folk feared for milking and falling short of the promises: which may be gathered from Heb. iv. 1. That flout confidence, that thinks it is impossible to mis the promises, is a supṣect and danngerous faith not to be loved; it is a much better faith that fears, than that faith that is more flout, except there be a sweet mixture of holy floutnes and fear together. It is said, Heb. xi. 7. that by faith, Noah, being moved with fear, prepared an ark, &c. Noah had the faith of God's promise, that he should be kept free from being drowned by the deluge with the rest of the world, and yet he was mourning and trembling in preparing the ark; if there were much faith among you, it would make many of you more holily feared than ye are: Love not that faith the worfe, that ye never hear a threatening, but ye tremble at it, and are touched by it in the quick. 2. It is a good token of saving faith, when it hath a discovery and holy suspicion of unbelief waiting on it, so that the perfon dare not so lippen and trust his own faith, as not to dread unbelief, and
to tell Christ of it; there is a poor man that comes to Christ, Mark ix. 23, 24. to whom the Lord faith, if thou canst believe, or canst thou believe? Yes Lord (fays he) I believe, help thou mine unbelief: there was fome faith in him, but there was also unbelief mixed with it; his unbelief was fo great, that it was almost like to drown his faith, but he puts it in Christ's hand, and will neither deny his faith nor his unbelief, but puts the matter sincerely over upon Christ, to strengthen his faith, and to amend and help his unbelief. It is a fufpect faith, that is at the top of perfection at the very firt, and ere ye wo: There are fome ferial founs, that think, because they have fome unbelief, that therefore they have no faith at all; but true faith is fuch a faith, that is by and beside fufpect and feared or feen unbelief; that faith is fureft, where folk fear and fufpect unbelief, and fee it, and when they are weighted with their unbelief, and cry out under it, and make their unbelief an errand to Christ, it is a token that faith is there. 3. The third character is, that it will have with it a ftick ing to Christ, and a fear to presume in flicking to him: There will be two things striving together, an eagerness to be at him, and a fear they be found premature in meddling with him, and an holy trembling to think on it; yet notwithstanding it must and will be adventured upon. The woman spoken of, Mark v. 28. lays this reckoning with herfelf, If I can but touch his clothes, I fhall be whole; and she not only believeth this to be truth, but crowds and thumes in to be at him; yet ver. 33. when she comes before Christ, the trembles as if she had been taken in a fault, not having dared to come openly to him, but behind him; she behav ed to have a touch of him, but the durft not in a manner own and avouch her doing of it, till fhe be unavoidably put to it. It is a fufpect and unfound faith that never trembled at minting to believe; there is reafon to jealan that faith not to be of the right stamp, that never walked under the impression of the great distance between Christ and the perfon, the fenfe whereof is the thing that makes the trembling, I fay not desperation, nor any utter diſtrust of Christ's kindnels, but trembling arising from the confideration of the great distance and disproportion that's between him and the perfon; faith holds the finer a going to Christ, and the fenfe of its own finfuelness and worthlcfnels keeps him under holy fear, and in the exercise of humility. Paul once thought himself a jolly man, (as we may fee, Rom. vii. 9.) but when he was brought to believe in Christ, he fees that he was a dead and undone man before. I give you these three marks of a true faith from that chapter. 1ff. It discovers to a man his former finfuelness, and particularly his former felf-conceit, pride, and prefumption, I was, faith Paul, alive without the law once, &c., a man living upon the thoughts of his own holiness, but when the law came, I died; he fell quite from these high thoughts. A 2d mark is, a greater reft lesness of the body of death, it becoming in fome respect worfe company, more frettful, and struggling more, than ever it did before; fin recibed faith Paul, tho' he had no more corruption in him than he had before, but it wakened and befirred itself more; I dare fay, that tho' there be not fo much corruption in a believer as there is in a natural man, yet it ftrugglef much more, and is more painful and disquieting to the believer, and breeds him a great deal of more trouble: for fays the apotle on the matter, When God graciously poured light and life into me, fin took that occation to grow angry, and to be enraged that fuch a neighbour was brought in beside it, it could not endure that; as an unfitly and curril dog barks molt bitterly when an honest guest comes to the house, fo doth corruption bark and make more noife than it did before, when grace takes place in the foul. There are fome that trow they have the more faith, because they feel no corruption fir in them; and there are others that think they have no faith at all, because they feel corruption struggling more, and growing more troublesome to them; but the ftrifing and struggling of corruption, if folk be indeed burdened, and affected, and afflicted with it, will rather prove their having of faith than their wanting of it. Love that faith well, that puts and keeps folk fickering (to fay fo) in the fight with the body of death; for though this be not good in itself that corruption fhirreth, yet fin is of that sinful nature, that it fies always more in their face that look God and heavenwards, than of others that are fleeping securely under its dominion. A third mark is, when the foul hath never peace in any of its conflicts or combats with corruption, but when it refolves in faith exerficed on Jefus Christ, as it was with Paul, in that chapter after his conversion: That is a found faith, that not only makes peace at firft by Christ, but that cannot (to fay fo) figh one fair froke in the spiritual warfare, nor look corruption in the face, nor promise to itself an outgate from any af fault of the enemy, but by faith in Jefus Christ; as it was with the apoftle: who, toward the end of that chapter, lamentably cries, O wretched man that I am, who fhall deliver me from the body of this death.
SERMON XIII.

Isaiah liii. 1. And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

There are many mistakes in the way of religion, wherein the most part are pellucid: and amongst the rest there is one, that generally the hearers of the gospel think it so easy to believe, that there is no difficulty in that by any thing: they think it hard to pray, to keep the sabbath, to be holy; but the most part think there is no difficulty in believing; and yet unbelief is so rife, and faith so rare and difficult, that the prophet Isaiah here, in his own name, and in name of all the ministers of the gospel, cries out, Who hath believed our report? he complains that he could get but very few to take the word off his hand: and, because it weighted him to find it so, and because he would fain have it to take impregnation on his hearers, he doubles expressions to the fame purpose, And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? which in sum is, There is much preaching and many hearers of the gospel, but little believing of it, few in whose heart the work of faith is wrought; it is but here one, and there one, that this gospel hath efficacy upon, for uniting of them to Jesus Christ, and for working a work of saving grace in them; the effectual working of God's grace reaches the hearts of but a few.

For the opening the words, we shall speak a little to thefe three. 1. To what is meant by the arm of the Lord. 2. To what is meant by the revealing of the arm of the Lord. 3. To the scope and dependence of these words on the former.

For the first, In general know, the arm of the Lord is not to be understood properly; the Lord being a Spirit, hath no arms, hands, nor feet, as men have: but it is to be understood figuratively, as holding out some property or attribute of God; by the arm of the Lord, then, we understand in general the power of God, the arm of man being that whereby he executeth his power, performeth exploits, or doth any work: so the arm of the Lord is his power, whereby he produceth his mighty acts; as it is said in the Psalms, cxviii. 15. The right hand of the Lord hath done valiantly; cxviii. 1. His hand and his arm hath gotten him the victory. And, because the power of God is taken either more generally for that which is exercised in the works of common providence, or more particularly for that which is put forth in the work of saving grace; we take it here in short to be the grace of God exercised, its power, in and by the gospel, for the converting of souls, and causing them savingly to believe: so, Rom. i. 16. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation to everyone that believeth; not simply as it confits in speaking of good, sweet and seasonable words, but as it cometh backed by the irresistible power of the grace of God, as the word is, 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. We preach Christ, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, the power of God and the wisdom of God; and that it is so to be taken here, the connexion of these words with the former will make it clear; for sure he is not speaking of the power of God in the works of common providence, but of his power in the conversion of souls to Christ, even of that power which works saving faith in the elect.

For the second, the revealing of the arm of the Lord: By this we do not understand the revealing of it objectively, as it is brought to light by the preaching of the gospel; for thus it is revealed to all the hearers of the gospel, it is in this respect not kept hid, but brought forth clearly to them in the word: And therefore, 2dly, The revealing of this arm of power of the Lord is to be understood of the subjective inward manifolding of it, with efficacy and life, to the heart, by the effectual operation of the Spirit of the Lord; as it is said of the great...
great things prepared for them that love God, 1 Cor. ii. 10. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: it is that which is called, 1 Cor. ii. the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, which makes plain and powerful to the spirit of the hearer inwardly that which the word preacheth outwardly to the ear, which without this would strike only on the ear, and yet remain still an hidden mystery; this is the revealing of the Lord’s arm that is here spoken of, because it is that on which believing dependeth, and of the want whereof the prophet sadly complaineth, even where there was much preaching. For the third, to wit, the scope, dependence and connexion of these words with the former: We conceive they come in, both for confirmation and for explication of the former words 1. For confirmation there are (as hath been said) but few that believe, for there are but few that have this saving and effectual work of God’s grace reaching their hearts; tho’ they have the word preached to them, yet they have not the arm of the power of God’s grace manifested to them: and so he confirms his former doctrine concerning the puerility of believers under the preaching of the gospel. First, By afflicting the fewness of them that are brought to believe, to be converted, and effectually called by the gospel; which comes to pass thro’ their own unbelief: And Secondly, By afflicting their fewness in respect of God’s sovereign applying of his grace in the gospel, which is but to few; it is but few that believe, for it is but few that he makes effectual application of his grace to. 2. We say it comes in to clear and explicate the former words whether we take it by way of a reason, or of an answer to an objection: For if it be said, How can it be that Isaiah, Paul, yea, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself, should preach so powerfully, and yet that so few should believe? He answers, It is not to be marvelled at, in respect of God, as if he were frustreate of his design; no such matter: It is because the power of Jesus Christ is revealed but to few. And we take this the rather to be the meaning of these words, because when Christ is preaching and many take offence and flumble, John vi. 43, 44. he says, Murmur not among your selves; no man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him; there must be an effectual work of the grace of God put forth on the heart, else none will believe on me: so it is said, John xii. 37, 38. That they believed not on him; that the saying of Isaiah might be fulfilled which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He hath

**Verse 1.**

blinded their eyes, &c. He speaketh not so, to apologize for, or to excuse their unbelief, but to shew the connexion that is betwixt these two, the not revealing of the arm of the Lord, and their not believing; even so here the Lord shews the connexion that is betwixt the efficacy of the work of grace, and believing or turning to God, that where the powerful and effectual work of his grace goeth not forth with the preached gospel, there will be then no believing nor conversion, no saving change of the person from nature to grace.

That which we would say from these words, may be drawn to three doctrines, which I shall first propose, and then clear and apply them for use. The first is, That in the work of conversion, and begetting of saving faith, there is requisite and necessary, beside the preaching of the word, a distinct inward, peculiar, real, immediate, efficacious, and powerful work of the Spirit of the Lord on the hearts of as many hearers as are converted by this gospel. 2. That it is but few of many hearers in whom the Lord thus effectually and effectually works by his Spirit, and the power of his grace: It’s but here one and there one, a very few who are thus wrought upon and converted. 3. That there is a necessary and inseparable connexion betwixt this inward and effectual work of the Spirit, and faith or conversion. Where this work of grace is not, there cannot be faith; and where it is, faith necessarily must be, otherwise these two could not be commensurable, of equal extent and reciprocal, Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? He is not, neither can be a believer, to whom it is not revealed; and he is and cannot but be a believer, to whom it is revealed. For the first, We say, There is in the work of conversion and begetting of faith, beside the preaching of the gospel, a distinct, inward, peculiar, real, immediate, efficacious and powerful work of the Spirit of the Lord requisite and necessary for conversion and begetting of faith, to convince of sin, and to humble for it, to enlighten the mind in the knowledge of Christ, to renew the will and affections, and to persuade and enable the soul of the sinner to embrace and receive Jesus Christ as he is offered in the gospel. We shall first take notice of, and clear, some words in the doctrine; and then confirm it. First, For clearing of some words in the doctrine, we say, it is a distinct work of the Spirit, distinguished and separable from the word, tho’ it goes along as he pleaseth with the word, yet it is not as if there were some power infused in to the word, and went always and necessarily along with the
the word, which is the foolish and groundless conceit of some; for albeit it accompany the word, yet it is from a distinct agent working, and a distinct work, and is separable (as I said) from the word, tho' it be wrought on the heart of the same sinner, to whose ear the word is preached. 2. It is an inward work of the Spirit; for, besides the outward and internal preaching and calling by the word, there is an inward, powerful, effectual work and calling of the Spirit in the conversion of a sinner, which speaks to the heart, as well as the word speaks to the ear: so that this work of the Spirit, that goes along in conversion, is much more than any external persuasion of the preached word can produce. 3. We say it is a peculiar work, to differencen it from what is common to the hearers of the gospel, for it's a work that is peculiar to them whom the Lord converts, and is applied to none other, but to those in whom he works faith, and whom he effectually calleth by his grace: it is a peculiar work then, and not common; for if it were common to all the hearers of the gospel, and not peculiar to some; these two could not go together and be commensurable (as we said) Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? 4. We say, it is a real work, as well as powerful; a real work of the Spirit, that is not only able and powerful to produce the effect, and to convert the sinner, but real and powerful in producing and bringing of it about, and to pass, by a real influence of the Spirit, actually renewing the will, infusing and creating the habits of grace, and particularly the very habit of faith amongst others in the soul; which is quite another thing than the supposing and saying that a man hath power to believe and be converted; that there is no more requisite to his conversion, but to persuade him to put forth that power or strength, which he hath into exercise or practice: it is a real work of the Spirit, and a powerful bringing about of the conversion of the sinner in a physical way, as they say in the schools. 5. We say, it is an immediate work of the Spirit on the heart, to difference it from a mediate persuasion or moral fusion (as it is called) as if there were no more requisite in conversion, but God's enlightening of the mind, and by that persuading the will to obey with Jesus Christ, without any immediate work of the Spirit on the will itself. In this doctrine, we take in all these, according to the scripture, in opposition to the several errors vented by men of corrupt minds, about the work of conversion and of saving faith: God's arm and hand must be revealed; the work and power of his efficacious grace must be put forth, for moving and inclining the heart and affections, and for determining the will itself.

We might further clear and confirm all these from that famous instance of Lydia, Acts xvi. 14, where Paul preaching to some women, it is said of her whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things that were spoken of Paul; where we find these things differed, 1. The Lord's powerful work on her heart, from Paul's preaching to her ear; the Lord opened her heart. 2. It is an inward work, for it is on the heart. 3. It is a peculiar work; it is not all who hear Paul preach whose hearts are opened, but it is the heart of one Lydia. 4. It is in the nature of a real work, that makes a real inward change on her. 5. It is an immediate work: for the Lord not only enlightens her judgment, but goes down to the heart, and opens it, and works a change in it immediately. Paul indeed, by his preaching, opens the way of salvation to all that heard him; from which, thou many go away with their hearts unopened, yet the Lord hath a secret, mysterious, real, inward work on her heart, which is evidenced by the effect; for he not only enlightens her mind, but makes her willingly yield to the call of the gospel, by opening of her heart.

In the second place, to speak a little for confirmation of the doctrine, we would consider these four or five grounds or reasons, to shew that there is such a work of the Spirit wherever faith is begotten, and that most intelligibly in them that are at age. It is clear from these places of scripture, where there is an express divinity and difference put betwixt the outward ministry of the word, and this inward, powerful efficacious work of grace on the heart, and wherein the great weight of conversion is laid on this inward work, and not on the outward ministry of the word; as Deut. xxix. 4. where the Lord by Moses tells the people, how many things they had seen and heard, and yet says he, The Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day: they had the outward means in plenty, when they wanted in the mean time the inward power; the gift of a spiritual life, and the making them spiritually active to exercise it, was with-holden, and therefore they did not favingly perceive, see nor hear, John vi. 44. Murmur not among yourselves; no man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God; every man, therefore, that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me; where there is very clearly a distinction put betwixt the outward teaching and the Father's drawing, betwixt
twixt the minister's teaching and God's teaching: it was one thing to be taught outwardly by Christ, as the Prophet of his church, and another thing to be drawn and taught inwardly by the Father; this inward teaching is called drawing, to shew that it is not external oratory or eloquence conluting in words, to persuade, that can effect the business, but a powerful draught of the arm of the Lord reaching the heart. There are several other scriptures full and clear to this purpose, as Psal. ciii. 3. and Acts xi. 21. A second ground, of kin to the former, is from the many and various expressions that are used in the scriptures for holding forth this work of the Spirit of God in conversion, that point out, not only an hand working, and a work wrought, but an inward powerful way of working and bringing about the work, as Jer. xxxi. 34. I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. Ezek. xi. 19. I will give them one heart, I will put a new spirit within them, and will take away the stony heart out of their fides. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. A new heart will I give unto you, and a new spirit will I put within you, &c. Jer. xxxiii. 40. I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from me. It is called the Father's drawing, John vi. 44. as I shew. In the saints prayers, as Psal. li. it is called even as to further degrees of this work, or restoring of lost degrees, creating of a clean heart, and renewing a right spirit within. And many more the like expressions there are, which shew not only man's impotency and inability to convert, or favingly to change himself; but also, that to his conversion there is necessary, an inward, real, peculiar, efficacious, powerful work of the Spirit of grace. 2. It is clear, and may be confirmed from the power of God, which he puts forth and applies in the begetting of faith, and in working conversion: It is not a mediate work, whereby he only persuades congruously, as some love to speak; but an immediate and efficacious work, whereby with mighty power he works conversion; It is God (faith the apostle, Phil. ii. 13.) that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure: and as he not only persuadeth, but effectually worketh; so he not only works on the judgment, to the enlightning of it, but on the will to incline and determine it, by curing of its crookedness and perverfenes, backwardness, obstinacy, and rebellion; and the power whereby he worketh this great work is said, Eph. i. 19. to be that same mighty power, which he wrought in Chrift, when he raised him from the dead: That ye may know, faith the apostle, what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Chrift, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, &c. It is such a power that works faith, and so exercized in the working of faith, as it was in raising of Chrift from the dead: Now, could there be use for such a power, if there were no more requisite to conversion but an objective suadion, or a bare proposal of the object, with external perauation to embrace it, wherein the soul is left to itself to choose or refuse as it pleaseth? certainly, if there were no more, considering our natural enmity at God and his grace, the devil and corruption would have much more influence, and a far greater stroke upon the heart to closing up of the fame in unbelief, than any outward perauation would have as to the opening of the heart, and the begetting of faith; therefore his power is neceffarily called for, and the Lord addeth it in converting sinners, else the work would for ever ly behind; and if men be spiritually dead in fins and trespasses, (as all men by nature are) as real a power must be exercized in raising and quickning of them, as there is exercized in raising and quickning of the dead. 4. It may also be cleared from some in whom this power is exercized; as some children, some deaf persons, and others, whom we cannot deny to be reached by the grace of God, and yet there can be no other way how they are reached, but by this effectual, efficacious, and immediate powerful work of the Spirit, they not being capable of reasoning or perauation by force of argument.

We shall only add two reasons further, to confirm, and some way to clear, why it is that the Lord works, and must work thus distinctly, inwardly, really, powerfully, and immediately, in working faith, and converting of sinners. The first is drawn from the exceeding great deadnes, indisposition, averfenes, perverfenes, impotency, inability, and impossibility that is in us naturally for the exercizing of faith in Chrift: if men naturally be dead in sins and trespasses, if the mind be blind, if the affections be quite disordered, and if the will be utterly corrupted and perverted: then that which converts, and changes and reneweth them, must be a real, inward, peculiar, immediate, powerful work of the Spirit of God: there being no inward seed of the grace of God in them to be quickned, that seed must be communicate to them and sown in them, ere they can believe, which can be done by no less nor lower than the power of God's grace: It is not oratory, as I said, nor excellency of speech that...
that will do it; it is such a work as begeth the man again, and actually reneweth him. The second is drawn from God's end in the way of giving grace, communicating it to some, and not to others: If God's end, in being gracious to some, and not to others, be to commend his grace solely, and to make them alone in grace's common or debt; then the work of grace in conversion must be peculiar and immediate, and wrought by the power of the Spirit of God, leaving nothing to man's free will to difference himself from another, or on which such an effect should depend; but if we look to scripture, we will find, that it is God's end in the whole way and conduct of his grace, in election, redemption, calling, justification, &c. to commend his grace solely, and to stop all mouths, and cut off all ground of boasting in the creature, as it is, 1 Cor. iv. 7. Who makes thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou hast not received? now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou didst not receive? This being certain, that if the work of grace in conversion were not a distinct, inward, peculiar, real, immediate work, and did not produce the effect of itself by its own strength, and not by virtue of any thing in man, the man would still be supposed to have had some power for the work in himself, and some way to have differentiated himself from another; but the Lord hath designed the contrary, and therefore the work of grace in conversion must be suitable to his design.

**Use 1.** The first use is for the refutation of several errors, and for the confirmation of a great truth of the gospel which we profess. It serves, I say, first, for the refutation of errors, which in such an auditory we love not to insist on; yet we cannot here, the ground being so clear, and the call so cogent, forbear to say somewhat briefly this way, and the rather that the devil hath taken many ways, and driven many designs to weaken the effimation of God's grace among men, and to exalt proud nature, and that there is here a collection and concatenation of those designs and ways against the truth, which this doctrine holds forth, vented by corrupt men. As, 1. They will have nothing to be necessarily applied for the working of conversion, but the preaching of the word; taking it for granted that all men have universal or common grace, which God by his sovereignty (say they) was obliged to give, else he could not reasonably require faith of them: and upon this comes in the pleaded-for power of free-will, and man's ability to turn himself to God: Others by pleading for this notion of a light within men, become to be patrons of proud and pernicious corrupt nature, as if there were need of nothing to beget saving faith but that common grace within, oratory or facTION of mouth from without; and hence they came to maintain the foul errors, which have not only been condemned by the church of God in all ages, but have even by some Papists been abominated; and many of these same errors are creeping in, even in these times wherein we live, the design whereof is to tempt folk to turn loofe, vain, and proud, and to turn the grace of God into wantonness, as if they needed not at all to depend on God and his grace, having a sufficient flock within themselves, on which they can live well enough: And it is not only the errors of Papists, Pelagians, Socinians, Arminians, or errors in the judgment, that we have to do with; but of such as overturn the very foundation of the work of man's salvation, and who, thou pretending to higher notions do yet go beyond all these: but if it be true, that in the work of conversion, beside the preaching of the word, there is a distinct, real, inward, peculiar, immediate efficacious work of the Spirit, necessary for bringing about such an effect; then there is no common or universal grace, that all the hearers of the gospel have, nor is there any power or ability in man to believe of himself; otherwise there were no necessity of such a work as this, for the converting of a sinner, the prophet need not to cry, Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? and Christ needed not say, No man can come unto me except the Father draw him: for men might come without the drawing, and believe without the revelation of God's arm: But, in opposition to that, we say, and have made it clear, that the work of conversion is brought about by a distinct, peculiar, powerful, real, and immediate work of the Spirit on the heart, whereby he not only enlightens the mind, but at the same time the mouth is opened, and new tongues are given, and the power of faith is imparted; and the more he performs these effects, the greater is the strength of faith and the surety of justification; for he who is not made wise and strong and sure in his own power, cannot bring the word of God to life. 2. There is another error that this refutes, which seems to be more subtle; for some will grant a necessary connection between the effect and the grace of God, who yet say that it is imitation or persuasion (for here we take these for the same) so and so tryst, so and so trybt, so and so tryest, so and so trysh; but this opinion lays not the weight of conversion on the arm of the Lord, but on some circumstances accompanying the word, and leaves still some ground of boasting in the creature. 3. A third error, which this doctrine refutes,
is that of some others, who will have grace necessarily to go along with the word in the working of faith, but so as it reacheth not the will, but that the will necessarily determines itself, as if the will were not corrupt, or as if that corruption that is in the will were indeed no corruption, as if that corruption that is in the will could be any more removed from the will without the immediate work of the Spirit upon it, than darkness can be removed from the judgment without the Spirit’s immediate work on it: but seeing the will is the prime seat of man’s perverfeness while in nature, and the principal part to be renewed; it is a strange thing to say, that in the work of conversion, other faculties and powers of the soul must be renewed, and yet that this which comes nearest to the life of the soul should be neglected, or not stand in need of renovation: but from this text it is clear, that in conversion the arm of the Lord must be revealed, and that there is a powerful work of grace, that not only presents reasons from the word to move the will, but really regenerates and renews the will: Now, what is for the refutation of these errors, serves also to confirm us in the truth of the doctrine opposite to these errors.

2dly, It serves to refute something in folks practice, and that is, their little sense of the need of grace. Most part come and hear preachings, as if they had the habit of faith, and as if it were natural to them; and pretend to the exercise of faith, never once suspecting their want of faith, nor thinking that they stand in need of such a work of grace to work it in them, as if it were impossible for them not to believe: hence many think that they have grace enough; and if they pray, it is that they may do well, never minding the corruption of nature that is in them: and indeed it is no wonder that such persons fall readily into error, when their practice says plainly they think they have grace enough already.

The second doctrine is, That this difficult, real, inward, efficacious, powerful work of the grace of God in conversion, is not common to all the hearers of the gospel, but is a rare thing applied by to few: It is even as rare as faith is. And what we touched on, to evidence the rarity of faith, will serve also to evidence the rarity of this work of grace in conversion; it is on as many as are believers, and are faved, that the work of grace is revealed, and no more. Jer. iii. 14. I will take one of a city, and two of a family, and bring you to Zion, faith the Lord; it is two or three in the corner of a parish, or in the end of a town, to speak so, who are converted, and the rest are suffered to ly in black nature. If the reason hereof be enquired after, this might be sufficient to stop all mouths, which the Lord gives, Mat. xi. 26. Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight, it is of the Lord, who is debtor to none, and who, as it is, Rom. ix. 15. shews mercy on whom he will, and whom he will be hardens: and here we must be silent, and lay our hand on our mouth, and answer no more; all being found guilty, he is just in what he doth, in calling or not calling effectually, as he pleaseth. And yet, 2dly, The Lord hath thought good to call few of many, for holy and wise ends; as, 1. To hold forth his sovereignty; and that he is free, and will walk freely in the dispensing of his own grace: hence, he not only takes few, but ordinarily these that are the most mean, contemptible, filthy, and in a manner foolish, of the multitude of hearers: It is not many noble, not many wise according to the flesh, not many rich, not many learned; that he chooseth and converteth; very ordinarily he hides his grace from these: it is but seldom that he calls and takes the stout and valiant man, and the learned scholar; but it is this and that poor mean man, the weaver, the shoemaker, the simple plough-man, &c. whom most ordinarily he calls, when he suffereth others to continue in their sin. 2. That he may make all the hearers of the gospel walk in holy fear, and awe of him, he reveals his grace in few; it is not the multitude that believes, but here one and there one, that all that have the offer of grace may fear lest they miss it and receive it in vain, and may be careful to entertain and make right use of the means of grace, and may withal cherish the Spirit in his motions, and not grieve him. O! if ye knew and believed what a rare thing the work of the Spirit of grace is, ye would be afraid to quench, extinguish, or put out any of his motions. 3. As to the godly, he does thus, to make them admire, adore, and praise his grace, and the power of it, so much the more.

The uses are three. 1. It serves to move all to reverence, adore, and admire the grace of God, and his sovereign way in it. Premise not to debate or dispute with him, because they are few that believe, and few that he hath determined his grace for; it is an evidence of his dread, a proof of his sovereignty, in which he should be silently flooped unto, and reverently adored, and not disputed with: we ought to bound all our reasoning within his good pleasure, who might have taken many, and left few, or taken none, as pleased him; and we should not think strange, nor fret that the gospel is power-
Verse 1. The second use is, to exhort you that are hearers of the gospel, and have not had this distinct and powerful work of grace begetting faith in you, to be persuaded of this truth, that faith and the work of grace is no common thing. The most part, alas! think that they have grace, and that it is not one of many that want it. They will readily say, It is true I cannot believe of myself, but God hath given me the grace. But I would ask you this question, Do ye think that grace is so common a thing, that it comes to you and ye never knew how, or if so common that never a body wants it? if not, how cometh it then to pass, that ye think and speak of grace as ye do? We would think it a great length, if many of you could be persuaded of your gracelessness; it is not our part to point particularly at the man and woman, tho' the deeds of many of you say, within your heart, that there is no fear of God before your eyes, and that many of you think ye have grace who never had it: And therefore we would say three or four words to you; 1. Begin and suspect yourselves that matters are not right betwixt God and you: we bid none of you despair, but we bid the most part of you be suspicious of your condition, suspect, nay, be assured, that hypocrisy is not grace, and that your presumption is not faith: for, if but few get grace, then many should suspect themselves; and seeing grace is so rare a thing, do not ye think it common. 2. Neglect no means that may bring you through grace to believe, but be diligent in the use of them all, of the word, prayer, sacraments, meditation, &c. It is by these that the Lord begets grace, and by neglecting of them ye may make yourselves guilty of destroying your own souls. 3. Beware of quenching the Spirit in any of his operations or motions, of smothering or putting out any challenges or convictions; if the conscience be at any time touched, or the affections tickled, go not away, as the temporary believer doth, sitting down there without going any further: fear to stay the beginnings of the life of grace, for grace may begin at little; and if you quench any motion, conviction or challenge, ye know not if ever ye shall meet with the like again, because when he knocked hard at your heart, ye held him out and kept him at the door; and ye may be in hazard of that terrible charge, Acts vii. 31. Ye uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye have always resisted the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye. Seeing this work is not common to all the hearers of the gospel, but peculiar to some, labour to have it made sure to yourselves, by putting it to proof and trial in good earnest.

Verse 3. The third use is for you that are believers, (and would to God there were many such) to whom I would speak three or four words. 1. Learn from this to be humble. What hath thou, man, but what thou hast received? and if thou hast received it, why dost thou boast, as if thou hadst not received? O! but it is unsuitable to believers, who are free grace's debtors and beggars (whereof none need to think shame) to be proud and forget themselves. Thou hast nothing, believer, to boast of, but that he hath shamed thee with his grace; and shouldst thou be proud of that, as if thou hadst made thy self thus? Therefore guard watchfully against all puffing-up, self-conceit, and high-mindedness, and study to be humble, and to carry a low fail. else thou mayst break out into some scandalous offence, and may become a shame and reproach to the gospel. We commend humility to you above many things; for we think that in these days, folks pride is like to break their necks; for, when once conceit creeps in, they begin to think they are so far advanced in holiness, that they must not keep company with others, nor join in worship with them; and from that they go to another thing, and from that to a third, that it is hard to tell where they will halt or end; they grow so giddy, that they are scarcely like to leave so much ground as themselves may stand upon. O! think shame of pride; it is a most intolerable thing to be proud of that which God hath given, wherein ye have no more hand, and whereof you can no more boast, than they who never had it. 2. Be thankful, and give God the praise of that ye have gotten: It becomes the upright to be thankful: It is no little matter, to have God's power manifested in the working of faith, and conferring grace; the temporal throne and kingdom, and great things in the world, are nothing to this, it is peculiar to the Lord's own, and not common: Many get their fill of the world, who never got, nor will get this; the world is of so little value with the Lord, that (to speak so) he doth not much regard who get it, tho' it be exactly distributed by his providence; but converting and upholding grace is peculiarized to his favourites. Being therefore
SERMON XIV.

Isaiah liii. 1.——And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

The way of the grace of God is a very difficult subject to be thought on, or spoken of, suitably, and as it becomes; grace having a sovereign and unsearchable channel of its own, wherein it runs: yet no doubt it is very useful, now and then, to consider it, if we knew how to make use of it aright; yea, even these steps of grace, that are most crooked and contrary to carnal reason, may not a little profit, when duly pondered. Thus, when the prophet hath been looking on the scarcity of faith, and on the paucity of true believers, he looks a little farther than on the external preaching of the gospel, even upon the way of God's grace; not out of any curiosity, nor from a fretting humour, because of the unsuccessfulness of his ministry, but that he may thereby get himself stayed and compos'd, and that he may bring both himself and others, to reverence and adore the holy and sovereign way of God therein: To whom (faith he) is the arm of the Lord revealed? it is a word like that which Christ had on the like occasion, John vi. 44. Murmur not among yourselves; no man can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him. We opened up the meaning of the words the last day; in short they come to this, as if he had said, How few are they that believe the gospel, and who take the word off the hand of his sent ministers? and how few are they, on whom the grace of God, that only can make them believe, does effectually work? the prophet pointing at a higher hand than that of the ministers in the success and fruitfulness of the gospel, and coupling these two together, the preaching of the word, and the power of God's grace, in the working of faith and conversion of sinners.

We proposed these three doctrines to be spoken to from the words. 1. That in the work of conversion and begetting of faith, beside the preaching of the word, there is a powerful, internal, immediate work of the grace of God, exercised within mens hearts, as well as the word that is preached outwardly to the ear. Wherever faith is begotten, these two go together, the word without, and the power of grace within, the one of which is distinct from the other.

2. That this powerful, internal and immediate work of grace within, is not common to all the hearers of the gospel, but a rare and peculiar thing to some; To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? it is but one, or few of many, to whom it is revealed. To these we have spoken already.

3. The third is (which indeed holds out the scope of all) That there is an ineradicable connexion betwixt these two, the begetting of faith in the hearers of the gospel, and the application of this powerful work of the grace of God for working of it; so, that where this powerful work of grace is, there is faith and conversion. The prophet makes them reciprocal and commensurable; Who is the believer? He to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed; and, Who is the unbeliever? He to whom the arm of the Lord is not revealed; These two are so conjoined and knit together, as they are never separated, and so they must stand or fall together. That we may be the more clear, we shall take up the doctrine in two distinct branches, the first whereof is, That except the powerful work of God's grace concur, the most powerful preaching of the gospel will never beget faith in the hearts of the hearers of it. The second is, That wherever this powerful work of grace goes along with the preaching of the gospel, or wherever the Lord applies his grace with the word preached, there faith is begot-
ten in the heart, and that soul is effectually united to Christ, and savagely changed. The one of these branches serves to shew the necessity of God's grace, from the consideration of our sinfulness and impotency or inability, and of the emptiness and ineffectualness of all outward means in themselves; and so to stop all men's mouths, as being utterly unable to contribute any thing to their own spiritual good or conversion, that being the product of the grace of God. The other branch serves mightily to commend the grace of God, as being the powerful arm of the Lord that brings to believe, that calls and converts such and such persons, according to a prior engagement and transmigration between the Father and the Son.

As for the drift of thefe, It will easily be believed among men and women, that have any true sense and feeling of the corruption of their nature, and find daily somewhat of the law of the members warring against the law of the mind; and we are persuaded, if all that ever received faith were brought to depose in this matter, they would bear witness, that there is no mean, that, without the effectual power of the grace of God, can bring a stranger barren to close with Christ and believe on him; and if all that are now before the throne of God in heaven, were called to speak to this great truth, they would put their seal to it, and say, "Not unto us, but to thy name be the glory of our believing; we had never believed, if it had been left to the power of our own free-will, and if the power of thy grace had not wrought in us the very will, as well as the deed or act of believing." Yet, because this doctrine (as we said) serves to discover the sinfulness and impotency of nature, and how little we are obliged to ourselves in this great work; and to hold forth the absolute necessity of the grace of God, and how much we are obliged to it in the work of faith and conversion, and to hold forth withal the emptiness and ineffectualness of all the outward means without this grace; and because it wants not its own considerable opposition from the enemies of the truth, we shall give you some grounds for confirmation of it. The drift whereof is drawn from these express instances of scripture, wherein it is clear, that there hath been much powerful preaching, and by the most eminent preachers, and yet the generality of people have been fruitless under it, and their fruitlessness hath been brought to this very ground, to wit, that the work of God's grace and his out-stretched arm went not along with it. The drift instance is, Deut. xxvi. 4. That Moses was a skill'd preacher, who will deny he being faithful in all the house of God; yet saith he, after much and long preaching, and after many signs and wonders wrought, The Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear, unto this day; where he not only puts a difference between the preaching of the word without, and the work of grace within, but shows the necessity of the concurrence of the work of grace, and lays the great weight of the peoples profiting, or not profiting, on the wanting or having of that. A second instance is in the prophet Ifaiah: Were there any among all the preachers, before or since, that preached in a more evangelical strain than he did? and yet, when he hath complained of the puerility of believers, saying, Who hath believed our report? he fixes and flays on this as the cause, To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? And chap. vi. 9, 10. he gives an account of the said commission he had from the Lord, who said to him, Go and tell the people, Here ye indeed but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not, make the heart of this people fat, &c. where there is also a clear distinction made betwixt the inwork working of grace, and the outward ministry. A third instance, and one that is beyond all exception, is in our blessed Lord Jesus, who spake as never man spake, and preached with such power and life, that even carnal hearers wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, for he preached with authority, and not as the Scribes; and yet, John vi. 44. when they began to murmur at him, what saith he? Murmur not at these things, none can come to me, except the Father draw him, none can believe, except the powerful grace of God work faith in him; there must be a higher hand than ought ye see or hear, a more powerful work than any external preaching of mine, as a Prophet of my Church, ere a soul can believe on me; and tho' his hearers were not free of the guilt of this their unbelief, but had their own sinful affection unto their continuing in it, yet our Lord looks in on the sovereign way and work of grace, and holds there, telling them that his external ministry will not do the turn, but there must be an inward, powerful, immediate work of grace for the working of faith. We add a fourth instance, and it is of that chozen vessel Paul, who laboured more abundantly than all the rest of the apostles, and yet, when he is preaching, Acts xxviii. 25. And some believed, and others believed not, before he dismantles the multitude; he adds this one word, Well, spake the Holy Ghost by Ifaiah the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive, &c. where he express
Serm. XIV.

Pres. differeth his external preaching from God's inward working, and tells, that so long as there was a judicial stroke on the hearts of the people untaken away, no external preaching could do the turn, as to their conversion and bringing of them to believe; which he also does, to guard against any offence that might be taken at the unsuccessfulness of his ministry by any who would be ready to say, What aileth these folk, that they will not receive the gospel? to whom he answears, Isaiah long before told the reason of it, to wit, that there is a plague on their hearts and minds, which God must remove ere they can receive it.

2. To these plain and clear instances, we may add two or three grounds or reasons; as, 1. The exceeding greatnes of the work of conversion, O how great and difficult is it! Therefore it is set out by the similitudes and expressions of raising the dead, creating a new heart, of removing the stony heart, and the like, all tending to set out the necessity of an omnipotent power, or a powerful work of grace, in the begettings of souls to Christ; and if it be so great a work, what can the outward ministry do, if the power of God be not added? or what can the man himself do here? can a man quicken, raise, create, or beget himself? It is true, these comparisons are not to be extended and applied in every respect; yet they hold out, that man, being naturally dead, can no more contribute to his own quickening and raising, and to the begetting of spiritual life in himself, than a dead man can contribute to his own quickening and arising to his natural life; for which cause, the holy Ghost hath made choice of these expressions, even to hold out the exceeding greatnes of the work. 2. Consider the condition that men are in when this work is wrought, and we will see they can contribute nothing to it; that they have no appetite for it, except that they are subjects capable to be wrought upon, being as it is. Eph. ii. 1. dead in sins and trespasses: being as to their souls effate, and to their spiritual condition, like Adam's body, before the Lord breathed in it the breath of life, and made him a living soul; as his body could not move, flir, nor act till then, no more can the natural man flir or act in the ways of God, till a new principle of spiritual life be put in him. To clear it further, we would consider, that the scripture speaks of these three in the natural man; 1. Of an utter inability and deadness as to that which is good, Dead in sins, Eph. ii. 1. We are not sufficient (faith the apostle, 2 Cor. iii. 5.) of ourselves as of ourselves, to think any good thing, not so much as a good thought. 2. The scripture holds him out, not only as unable for good, but perverse and bent to every thing that is evil, Col. i. 21. Alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works, the carnal mind being enmity against God, Rom. viii. 7. It is plainly opposite to any thing that is good, and so to the way of faith. 3. Man's mind is not only naturally perverse and stuffed with enmity, but in an incapacity to be healed while it remaineth such, Rom. viii. 7. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; and therefore, in the work of conversion, there is not only an amending, but also a renewing of our nature called for; there is more requisite than the rectifying of something in the man, even the creating of new habits, and the infusing of the principles of spiritual life and motion into the soul. It is true, in some sense, the whole image of God is not absolutely removed, the faculties of the rational soul still remain; for man hath an understanding and a will, and some part of reason, but without any tendency to spiritual life, or to any action for God; he hath an understanding, but it is wholly darkened; he hath a will, but wholly perverse, and not in the least inclined to good; he hath affections, but wholly disordered and corrupted, and yet wholly upon wrong objects: for that it is with man's soul as to good, as it is with spoiled wine; wine, when wholofom, serves to cheer, and refresh: but when it is spoiled, it is quite another thing, not only not conducing to health, but it is noisome and hurtful: It is just so, we say, with man's soul; it is by the fall quite spoiled and corrupted: it is not indeed annihilated, or made to be nothing, for it retains the same faculties still, it hath (to speak so) the same quantity still; but as to its qualities, it is utterly corrupted and carried quite contrary to God; It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: and renovation by grace, is the taking away of the corrupt qualities, in part in this life, and wholly in the other life; and the bringing in of new qualities, for recovering the beauty of that image of God which man hath lost. 4. Consider the end that God hath in the administration of his grace, and the glory that he will needs have it getting in every gracious work, and more especially in the work of conversion; and the silence, as to any boasting, that he will have all put unto, that shall partake of it: his end, in the administration of his grace, is to bring down pride, to stop all mouths, and to remove all grounds of boasting from the creature, that he only may have the glory of conversion; that whenever that question is proposed, What hast thou, O man, but what thou hast received? and if thou hast received it,
2. It teacheth you not to idolize any instrument or means of grace, how precious and promising forevcr: No preaching, if it were of a prophet, or an apostle, yea, of an angel, will do the turn, without grace come with it; there is a necessity of the revelation of God's arm, and of the abstinence of his grace, not only to your conversion, but every duty ye go about: Ye should therefore fear and tremble, when ye go about any ordinance, lest the arm of the Lord be not put forth in it.

3. It should make you more serious in dealing with God for his effectual blessing to every mean and ordinance, seeing without that no ordinance can profit you.

4. It serves to reprove and repress pride, and to promote humility in all such who have gotten good by the gospel. Have ye faith, or any measure of holiness? what have ye, but what ye have received? from whence came your faith and your holiness? ye have them not of yourselves; these are not fruits that grow upon the tree of nature, or in its garden; but on the tree, and in the garden of free grace, and ye have not yourselves to thank for them.

5. The main Use of it is for confirming and establishing you in the faith of the truth propounded in the doctrine, and for confuting and overturning the contrary error, that, as it were, in contempt of the grace of God, exalts proud nature, and gives man's free-will so great a hand in the work of conversion, that the main thing that makes the difference shall not be attributed to the grace of God, but to the free-will of the creature, which of it self chose the grace of God offered, when another rejected it. It may indeed seem strange, that the devil should so far have prevailed with Chriftians, that professes the faith of original sin, and of the necessity of a Saviour, as to make them look at grace as useless in this prime step of conversion and renewing of a sinner, that when the grace of God and man's free-will come to be compared, man's will should have the preference and preeminence, the highest place and commendation in the work, and that the great weight of it should lie there, and that proud nature should be thus bolstered up, that it shall stand in need of nothing for the man's conversion, but the right use making of what it hath in it self: and yet it's no wonder that the devil drive this design vigorously; for what shorter cut can there be taken by him to ruin souls, than to make them drink in this error that nature and free-will will do their turn, and fo take them off from all dependence on free-grace and on Jesus Christ, and give them ground
Mercy, as

A1. I saith, He ground of boasting in themselves? for when it is thus, of necessity they must ruin and perish: this should, sure, make you loathe this error the more; and we are persuaded, that the day is coming, wherein the truth opposite to this error, shall be confirmed on the souls and consciences of all the opposers of it, and wherein the maintaining of this error shall be found a confirmation of man's enmity at God's grace which is not subject to his law, nor indeed can be.

But there are three questions that may be moved here, to which we would speak a word. 1. If the preaching of the gospel cannot beget faith, without the powerful work of God's grace, what is the use of the gospel, or wherefore serves it? 2. If men cannot believe without the work of grace, which the Lord sovereignly dispenses, why doth he yet find fault and expostulate with men for their not believing? 3. If grace perform all, and men can make no mean effectual, nor do any good without it, what then should men do to come by believing, and this work of his grace?

For the first, We shall not say much unto it; only, seeing the Lord hath made choice of the gospel to be the ordinary external mean of grace, and of the begetting of faith, there is no reason to say that it is useless; for tho' it be not the main and only thing that turns the sinner, but the Lord hath referred it to himself as his own prerogative, to convert and change the heart of a rebel sinner, yet he hath appointed it to be made use of, as he hath appointed baptism and the Lord's supper, for many good and notable ends, uses, and advantages, that are reached and come at by the preaching of it: As, 1. By it the righteousness of God is manifested, that before lay hid; ye may by the preaching of the gospel come to the knowledge of the covenant of redemption, and of the great design that the Lord hath laid down for bringing about the salvation of loft sinners, Rom. i. 17, Therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. 2. By it the Lord reveals the duty he calleth for from men, as well as his will concerning their justification and salvation; he lets them know what is wrong, what is right, what displeaseth him, and what pleaseth him. Yea, 3. By the preaching of the gospel, he holdeth out what men's ability is, or rather what is their inability, and by his external calling gives them in it occasion to know their inability in not giving obedience to his call: and this is no small advantage, when by it they have occasion to know the necessity of a Mediator, and to seek after another way of justification than by their own works: for so it proves a notable mean to humble men, to stop their mouths, and to make them plead guilty before God.

4. It is profitable, as the Lord is pleased to make use of it, to call and gather in so many as he hath ordained to eternal life; for tho' in itself it be not able to convert, having the power of God going along with it, it is the instrument of conversion, and the Lord ordinarily makes use of it to the begetting of faith in them that believe, as it is Rom. x. 17. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, preached; and 1 Cor. i. 24, it is called the power of God to salvation; and it hath pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe; for tho' God can work without it, yet he hath thought good to make use of it, to inform the judgment, and to stir up the affections of hearers, and so it proves instrumental to the begetting of faith in them. 5. If it do not promote the salvation of all the hearers of it, yet it promotes it in all the elect, and serves to make others the more inexcusable; and in this respect it triumphs always, 2. Cor. ii. 15, 16. In some it is the favour of life unto life, in others the favour of death unto death, leaving them the more inexcusable, and the more obnoxious to wrath by their rejecting of the counsel of God against themselves.

I know this will be excepted against; we come therefore to consider the second question, which is this, How can the call of the gospel make men inexcusable, seeing they cannot without the effectual power of the grace of God believe? as Christ faith, John vi. 44. No man can come to me, that is, no man can believe in me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; yea, why doth God find fault with men for their unbelief? For answer, it hath been no new thing for men to flart questions and objections against the grace of God, and to be always striving to rub affronts and digrace upon it: see Rom. ix. 13, 14, &c. where this same objection is started, and answered again and again; for when the apostle hath said, v. 13. Jacob have I loved, and Ephraim have I hated; the objection is moved, Is there unrighteousness with God then? Folks readily think that there is a sort of unrighteousness in God, when he takes one, and leaves another; especially considering, that the leaving of the other infers (tho' it be not any culpable cause of) the ruin of the man's soul: He answers first with a God forbid, as if it were an absurd thing so to affect; and then endeavours to answer it from God's sovereignty, as being debtor to none, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that showeth mercy.
believe the gospel, when it shall be found that ye maliciously and deliberately chused to reject it? To make this out, consider but these few things. 1. Mens neglecting of the very outward means, that thro' God's blessing prove instrumental in the begetting of faith, as of hearing, reading, prayer, meditation, self-searching, slitting up themselves to repentance, &c. whereby the Lord ordinarily brings about and forthers the work of faith. 2. Consider the carnal, careless, and lazy manner of mens going about those means and duties, which, to their own conviction, are within the reach of that power which they have: ye might hear ofter and more attentively, ye might pray more frequently and more seriously than ye often do; ye want even much of that moral seriousnes in hearing, prayer, reading, &c. that ye have in other things of lefs concernment; ye will hear a proclamation at the cross with more attention than a preaching of the gospel, ye will hear a threatening from man with more fear than ye will hear a threatening from God's word, ye will be more serious in seeking somewhat from man, than in asking grace from God; the reason is, because your heart is more to the one than the other; Can ye then rationally think that ye are excusable, when believing is not a thing that is in your heart, and that takes you up, but ye go about the means that lead to it unconcernedly, carelessly, and negligently? 3. Consider how often ye do willingly chuse some other thing than Christ, to spend your time, and set your affections upon, laying obstructions and bars in the way of God's grace, setting up idols in the heart, and filling Christ's room before-hand with such things as are inconsistent with his company; and all this is done willingly and deliberately: ye have fain in your hearts, as these did, Jer. ii. 25. We have loved strangers, and after them we will go: And will ye, or dare ye make that an excuse why ye could not come to Christ, because your hearts were taken up with your lusts and idols? So then, the matter will not hold here, that ye were unable, and had not power to believe; but it will come to this, that your confience will have it to say, that ye willingly and deliberately chused to ly still in your unbelief, and that ye preferred your idols to Christ Jesus. 4. Consider, that sometimes ye have met with some more than an ordinary touch, motion, and work of the Spirit, that hath been born in upon you, which ye have slighted and neglected, if not quenched and put out, which is your great guilt before the Lord: Is there any of you, but now and then, at preaching, or when in some great hazard, or under lilkenees, or some other fat crofs,
ye have been under convictions of sin, and have had some little glimpses of the hazard ye were in of the wrath of God, more than ordinarily ye had at other times? and I would ask you, Have these been entertained and cherished, or rather have they not been slighted and worn out by you? and may ye not in this respect be charg'd with the guilt of refilling the Spirit of God, and marring the work of your own conversion and salvation? These things, and many more, which will cry loud in the consciences of men and women one day, will quite remove and take away this objection, that ye could not do better: ye might have done better than ye did; ye might have abstained from many evils that ye committed, and done many duties that ye omitted, and done them with more moral seriousness

S E R M O N XV.

Isaiah liii. 1. — And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

Ministers have not done with their work when they have preached, and people have not done with their work when they have heard: That which is of greatest concernment follows, which either hath, in the want of it, influence on the fading of both ministers and people; or, in the obtaining of it, on their consolation. This is the things that we find Isaiah upon here, who, having preached the gospel, looks what fruit it hath, and it had in his own time, and should have in our time: it weights him exceedingly; and indeed it is very sad that Isaiah should be so much weighted in foreseeing the unfruitfulness of the gospel in our days, and that we ourselves should be so little weighted with it, and stand so senseless under it.

He calls in this word, To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? partly to confirm the former word, Who hath believed our report? and partly to help to make the right use of it, by drawing men to the discovery of the sovereign hand of God in the matter, and of the necessity of his grace for making the gospel effectual in the hearers of it, wherever it comes; Who (faith he) hath believed our report? To whom is this preached gospel made effectual for faith and salvation? It is but to very few, even to as many as have the arm of the Lord; the effectual power of his special grace revealed to them, and no more.

The last Doctrine we proposed, and began to speak of as the scope, was, That believing and receiving of the gospel, and the Lord's exercising a powerful work of his grace with it, are ever still knit together; they are of equal extent. As many believe, as he stretched out his hand of power with the word to work faith in them; and as many by still in unbelief, as his hand of power is not revealed unto: This is his scope.

We took up this doctrine in two branches, First, That the most powerful means cannot work nor get faith in the hearers of the gospel, except there be an inward powerful work of grace on their hearts accompanying them: And this we cleared, and spoke a little to two Questions in the Use, and left off at a third, to wit, What the hearers of the gospel should do, that have the call and offer of the gospel, seeing without the effectual work of the grace of God they cannot believe, which we shall forbear to speak to, till we open the second branch of the doctrine, because this question relates to both.

The second branch then of the doctrine is, That wherever the Lord applieth the powerful work of his grace, there necessarily faith and conversion follow; or, The stretching forth of God's arm in the work of his grace, hath always the work of faith and conversion, and the engaging of the soul unto Jesus Christ, following on it. And indeed, if it be true that we cleared before, to wit, that there are as many unbelievers as there are persons on whom grace doth not thus powerfully work, or that they are all such that this work of grace is not manifestly on, then the work of conversion and believing is as broad as this work of grace is; for the prophet maketh them of equal extent; Who is he that believeth? Even he to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed: and on the contrary, Who is he that believeth not? Even he to whom the arm of

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the Lord is not revealed, and on whom this work of grace is not manifested. By which we may see it to be very clear, that the prophet hangs the believing of the gospel on the Lord’s manifesting his arm; so that, where it is not manifested, this work of faith is not brought forth; and where it is manifested, necessarily it is brought forth.

This being a doctrine concerning the efficacy of God’s grace, which ought not to be hid from the Lord’s people, we shall a little, First, clear it; and then, Secondly, confirm it to you.

First, For clearing of it’s meaning, 1. Ye would not take up our meaning in it so, as if we made every common work, that lively means may have on the hearers of the gospel, to be conviction: the preaching of the word will sometimes make folks tremble as we see in Felix, and will make convictions and terrors in them, and put them into an amazement, and yet leave them there; for all these convictions may be, and are often refuted, as to any saving fruit at least; which we conceive to be that which Stephen points at, Acts vii. 51. while he faith, Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye: and what he means by this, is explained in the words following, Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? &c. even their contending with the word of the Lord in the mouths of his servants: yea, in that same place where ’tis said, They gushed upon him with their teeth, ’tis insinuated that they came over the belly of the cutting conviction, which his preaching had upon them. Nor do we, 2. mean, That every common operation of the Spirit, whether illumination of the mind, or a touch on the affections (such as may be in temporary and apostates, is clear, Matt. xiii. 20, 21. Heb. vi. 4. and downward) is conviction; there is a great difference betwixt a common work or gift of the Spirit (which in a large sense may be called Grace, because freely given) and the saving work of grace, which before we called a peculiar work: and oftimes that common operation of the Spirit is quenched and put out, therefore the apostle, 1 Thess. v. 19. exhorteth thus, Quench not the Spirit. 3. When we speak of an effectual bringing forth of faith by this grace of God, we would not have you thinking, that we suppose no reluctance to be in the man in so far as he is unrenewed: for tho’, where grace effectually worketh, faith follows necessarily; yet corruption being in the man, it is disposed and apt to thwart with, and to oppose grace; and the will hath its overrefusals to yield: but the meaning of the doctrine is this, that

Ver. 1. tho’ there be such a strong power of corruption in the man to whom grace comes, and on whom it is put forth, yet the power of grace is such, that it powerfully masters and overcomes corruption, and wins the heart to believe in, and to engage with Christ; tho’ (to speak so) there be something within that strives to keep the door shut on Christ, yet when it comes to that, Cant. v. 3. He puts in his fingers by the hole of the lock, and makes the myrrh to drop, the heart is prevailed with so, as it is effectually opened, as the heart of Lydia was to receive the word which Paul preached. Thus, notwithstanding of corruption’s opposition, grace gains its point; and the Lord never applies his grace, of purpose to gain a soul, but he prevails. 4. When we speak of the power and effectualness of grace in conquering and gaining the heart and will of the sinner to believe in Jesus Christ, we do not mean that there is any force or violence done to the will, or any exerting of a coercive power, violating the will, contrary to its essential property of freedom, to close with Christ: but this we mean, that tho’ corruption be in the heart, yet grace being infused and acted by the Spirit, the pravity in the will is sweetly cured, and the will is moved and made to will willingly, and upon choice, by the power of the Spirit of grace taking in the strong hold; this great work is wrought by an omnipotent fluavity, and by a sweet omnipotency: and it needs not at all seem strange; for if man, in nature, be, by the power of habitual corruption, made necessarily to will evil; so that notwithstanding he doth freely and willingly choose evil; why should it be thought strange or absurd to say, that when a principle of the grace of God is infused into the soul, and acted by the Spirit of God, it hath that much influence, power and efficacy, as to prevail with the will, it keeping still its own freedom, to make it willing to embrace Jesus Christ, and yet not at all thereby wrong that essential property of the will? Sure grace is as powerful as corruption, and the Lord is as dextrous a worker, and can work as agreeably to the nature of the creature in this gracious work, as the creature can in its own sinful actions. So then, we say, when the Lord is pleased to apply the work of his grace to convert a sinner, that work is never frustrated, but it always hath necessarily the work of faith, renovation, and conversion following on the back of it.

Secondly, We shall a little confirm the doctrine; and the grounds of confirmation are these, the 1st, whereof is the express scriptures wherein this truth is affeeted, as John vi. 44. 45. It is said in the 44. verfe
Serm. XV.

Yeiih iii. Verse 1.

III. No man can come to me, except the Father draw him; and on the contrary, it is as expressly set down, verse 45. It is written in the prophets, They shall be all taught of God; every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me: And this being contradistinguished to external preaching, and being that which is called drawing, verse 44. he knits believing to it, and makes believing, called coming, a necessary effect of it, that to whomsoever God gives that inward lesson, they shall come: which confirms the doctrine, that whomsoever the Lord teaches and schools by his grace, and calls effectually, they do necessarily believe. Another passage we have Phil. ii. 12, 13. Work out the work of your salvation in fear and trembling: for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure: Where the apostle makes the work of grace not only to work ability to will and to do, but to work also to will and to do actually; and grace never worketh to will, and leaves the man unwilling, but necessarily supposeth the man's closing willingly with Christ, with whom he worketh thus. A 2d ground of confirmation is drawn from these expressions whereby this work is set forth, and the promises comprehending it in God's covenant, wherein it is called the giving of a new heart, a heart of flesh, the writing of the law in the heart, the putting of his Spirit within his people, and causing them to walk in his statutes, &c. Jer. xxxi. 33. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. and it is impossible to conceive aright of the fulfilling of these promises, without the including of the effect. The giving of a new heart, is not only a persuading to believe, but the actual giving of the new heart, whereof faith is a special part; which promise is peculiar to the elect, tho' the offer of it be more large, and be further extended: And what can that promise of God's writing the law in the heart be, but an effectual inclining of the heart to the will of God, or inward renovation, contradistinguished to the external ministry, that can only hold out his will in a book, and speak it to the ear? 3. This may be cleared and confirmed from the nature of the work of grace, which is such a mighty work, and so powerful, as it is impossible it can be frustrated, or disappointed; unless we could say, that grace in God, or the grace of God, is not so powerful as corruption in us, which were blasphemy: to this purpose the Apostle prayeth in behalf of the Christian Ephesians, chap. i. 19, 20. that they may know what is 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; he speaketh so in this high strain, to set out both the exceeding fruitfulness of our nature that needs such a work, and the exceeding great power of the grace of God that worketh irrefutably, not only in the conversion of the elect at first, but in all the after-acts of believing; so Eph. iii. 7. the same apostle hath it,----according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me, by the effectual working of his power; and Col. i. 29. according to his working which worketh in me mightily: The power, that worketh in believers, is God's omnipotent power, which worketh effectually and mightily; and if this power be exercised in the continuing and promoting of faith, as is said before, it must be much more exercised in the begetting of faith: yea, and what need is there that he should exercise it, if not for this end, that where he exerciseth it, it may also prevail? A 4th ground of confirmation may be drawn from the Lord's great end which he hath before him in this work, and that is the gaining of glory to his grace, and to have the whole work of conversion attributed to it; and if this be his end, he must and will prevail by his grace in throughing the work, in order to this end: If it were left indifferent to man, to yield, or not to yield to God, as he pleaseth, the whole weight of the work of conversion should not ly upon grace, man's mouth should not be stopped; but when that question should be asked, Who hath made thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou hast received? he should still have something to boast of, and the work of his conversion should at best be halfed betwixt grace and his own free-will: this would necessarily follow, if grace did not through the work, and so God should mis of his end. A 5th ground of confirmation is taken from the consideration of God's decree, of the covenant of redemption betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator, and of the power and wisdom of God in carrying on this work, which we put together for brevity's cause: From all which it will be clear, that there is, and must be a necessary connexion betwixt the work of grace on believers, and the effect; and that it is not in the power of man's free-will to resist it, which indeed is not freedom, but bondage. 1. Then, we say, that if we consider the decree of election, we will find, that where grace is applied, faith and conversion must follow; otherwise, if the work of grace were not effectual to convert, God's decree should be suspended on the creature's free will, and be effectual, or not effectual, according as it pleased; and is that any little matter, to make his decree depend upon, and be effectual, or not, according to
sidereth his decree, and makes it infructfully to take effect, is, that he hath effectual means to bring about his decree. 2. If we consider the covenant of redemption between Jehovah and the Mediator, we shall find, that upon the one side the mediator particularly undertaketh for them that are given to him, that he shall lose none of them; and upon the other side, we have (to speak with reverence of the Majesty of God after the manner of men) the Father's obligation to make such persons in due time believers, that Christ the Mediator may see of the travel of his soul, and be satisfied, according to that promise made to him, Psal. cx. 3. In the day of thy power thy people shall be willing: and that other, Isa. iii. 11. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, &c, and accordingly himself faith, John vi.

37. All that the Father hath given to me, shall come unto me; where it is clear, that these who are given must necessarily come: and he also faith, John x. 16. Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring: and it cannot be supposed, without horror and blasphemy, that this determinate, solid, and sure transaction, having all its midfes included in it, and being, as to its end, so peremptory, shall, as to these midfes, and that end, and as to their thoroughing, not be in God's hand, but in the hand of mans free-will? If it were there, O how unficker and loose would the bargain, and God's design in begetting faith, and in bringing souls through grace to glory be! 3. If we consider the Lord's power in beginning and promoting, and his wisdom in carrying on of this work, his power whereby he raiseth the dead, and his wisdom whereby he leads from death to life; is it possible to conceive or imagine these to be applied by the Lord in the conversion of a sinner, but this doctrine must needs hold, that the work of his grace powerfully applied, hath always faith and conversion following on it; and that the Lord leaveth not it to the option of elect souls, to believe, or not to believe, as they please? He must not, he cannot be frustrate of his end and design, but he must bring them to a cordial clothere with Christ by faith, in order to their salvation.

Use 1. The first use serves to fix you in the faith of this great truth: And tho we use not, neither is it needful to trouble you with long quæstions and debates; yet when the like of this doctrine comes in our way, especially in such a time wherein the pure truths of God, and this amongst the rest, are troubled and called in question, it is requisite that a word be spoken for your confirmation and establishment: and we would have you fixed in the faith of these two; 1. Of the impotency of nature in the beginning or promoting ought of the work of grace; which belongs to the first branch of the doctrine. 2. Of the effectualness and irrefistableness of grace; that wherever God begets and brings in a soul, he does it by his own powerfull grace; and wherever he applies that work, faith and conversion necceflarily follow; which belongs to the second branch of the doctrine: And we would the rather speak a little to this, because it is quizzed on by the enemies of the grace of God, than which there is nothing they set themselves more to dethrone and debase, and to exalt and cry up nature and free-will, as if it did fit on the throne, and grace behoved to come and supplicate it, and as if it might accept or reject its bill at pleasure, as to the conversion of a sinner: in opposition to which, this doctrine holds good, that wherever the Lord applies his grace, he effectually throughs the work of faith and conversion, and there is no soul that can utterly resist it; and whenever the Lord applies this grace, the grace that converts one cannot be frustrated by another: These things we hold, in opposition to the direct allersion of the enemies of grace, whereby they make the work of conversion, not ultimately to terminate on grace, but on man's free-will; and how dangerous and damnable this error is, may easily appear: For, 1. It overturns and runs crofs to the whole strain of the gospel; for if we loose but this one pin, in making faith and conversion not to depend on grace but on free-will, then the whole fabric of grace falls down flat; then God should elect us because we were to elect him, contrary to the scripture, which tells us, that he elects us, not we him; and that our closing with him by faith, depends on his electing of us. It overturns our free justification by grace; for, supposing faith comes in in justification, as it doth, none being justified but by faith, and that believing is of ourselves, and that it is in the power of man's free-will to close the bargain, all is not here of grace, our justification is not free, but someway depends on free-will. It overturns the perseverance of the saints; for, if believing depend on free-will, then our perseverance depends on it also; for, if the man's free-will change, he may fall back, and break his neck in a manner at the very threshold of heaven: whereas if it be the work of grace (as indeed it is) that brings forth faith, and carries it on, and if this work of grace cannot be frustrated or restrained by the malice and hardnecfs of any heart to which
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which it is applied, because it cures the hardness, and removes that malice; then certainly this error cannot stand. And we are persuaded, when we plead thus for grace, we have the best end of the debate, and the surest ground to go upon, most for God's honour, and most for the comfort of believers.

2. This error thwart the glory of the grace of God; for it is an error that strikes at the richest and most radiant diamond of the crown of the glory of Christ, it hangs election and the effectualness of God's decree, as to effectual calling, faith, justification, and perseverance, on the person himself, and makes God and Christ to be in man's common debt, and reverence, to make his decree effectual; whereas it is the glory of grace, to have all flesh allernatively in its debt and common, as having loved freely, elected, called, justified, sanctified, and carried on the work of grace, till it end and be perfected in glory, freely; which is the song of the redeemed, Rev. i. 5. 6. Unto him who hath 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. If eternal love be free, then the expression or manifestation of it, in making us kings and priests unto God, is also free.

3. This error is exceedingly destructive to the consolation of God's people: It is not a comfortable doctrine, that founds their believing and perseverance on their own free-will! If ye were to make the bargain of grace, whether ye would think it more comfortable and sure, that the effectualness of believing and perseverance should hang on the grace of God, or on your own free-will, especially considering the pravity of your will? Doleful would your condition be, if free-will were the base or foundation, and God used no more but external persuasion: How specious fover this opinion seem to be, because it puts it in man's option to believe, and convert himself, or not, as he pleaseth; yet it overturns the whole strain of the gospel, and quite eclipseth the glory of grace, and cuts the very throat of your consolation, and is the great ground of Popery, Pelagianism, and Arminianism: to which ye would therefore so much the more advert; and we do the rather speak to it, that ye may be guarded against it, and that ye may be settled in the truth, especially since the same errors are a reviving in another shape in these days, as is manifest in that fockey of Quakers, who talk of a light within them, and talk so of that light, as if it were of power sufficient to convert and guide them, if it be not refuted. As also that other conceit of being above ordinances, implies something of the same error; which ye would set yourselves to abhor, as that which the devil is again labouring to sow the seed of amongst us, and labour to be confirmed in the truth: For if there be any truth at all in Christianity, these are two main truths, the utter inability that is in men's hearts, by nature to exercise faith in Christ, and the efficacious and irresistible power of the grace of God, in the begetting of faith, where it is begotten; which, when we shall all appear before the tribunal of God, will be found to be so, and none will have a mouth opened to oppose them. And what absurdity, I pray, is there here, notwithstanding all the clamour of corrupt men, that God hath referred this work of converting sinners by his grace to himself, and hath not put it in the hand of their own free-will, which supposeth men to have a stock within themselves, and hath many fearful effects following it, tending to the depreciating of the grace of God, and to the drawing men off from dependence on Christ, and to the giving of them ground of boasting in themselves and of vanity and security, all which this doctrine of God's grace overthrows, and stops the mouth of the creature from all vain boasting, to the high exaltation of God's free, sovereign, and efficacious grace, and to the great comfort of his people?

Use 2. The second use serves to commend the grace of God to the hearers of the gospel, and especially to believers; There cannot be a greater commendation given to it, than this, that it works effectually; and indeed it could not be called grace, I mean, saving grace, if it should want this effect, even to save such as it is applied to; but this highly commends grace, that if there be mighty corruption in us, there is a strong arm of grace put forth by him, for perfecting that which concerns us, notwithstanding of this great strength of corruption. And if ye think yourselves not to be believers, and think this doctrine to be hard, that ye cannot believe without this grace, and yet would fain believe, consider that as none can believe, neither can believers stand without grace; for grace can help you to do that which ye cannot do, which is to the commendation of grace, and should make it more lovely to you: This gives encouragement to any poor soul, that is as it were in the place of the breaking forth of children, and layeth greater ground of confidence that they shall come speed, than if they had it in their own hand; and serves to obviate that grand objection of souls that would fain be at closing with Christ, and cannot come to him; here is a powerful arm reached forth to draw them.

Use 3. The third use serves to humble believers
who have any thing of the work of grace, and so to work them up to thankfulness to him that hath communicate ought of it to them. Is there any of you that have grace? who hath made you to differ from others? It was not yourselves, but free grace; and therefore ye have reason to acknowledge it with thankfulness, and to say, If this fame doctrine had not been true, I would have been a stranger to God all my days, and remained under the dominion of Satan and sin with these that are in nature; and with David, Psal. xvi. 7. to say, I bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night-seasons: This counsel was not the common advice that all got from the word preached, but the inward counsel of the Spirit, that made his reins instruct him, and made him inwardly to follow the advice that the word gave him outwardly: and it is this inward work of the Spirit that keeps in the life of grace, as well as begets it, as it is, Psal. lxxxiii. 23—26. Nevertheless I am continually with thee: Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? &c. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. The Psalms glorify in this, that the work of his through-bearing did not depend on his own flesh and heart, but on God, who was the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever. If believers would consider what they were in their natural condition, and how much they are obliged to the grace of God, that with power was applied in their conversion, it would stop their mouth as to boasting; make them admire grace, and found forth its praise: and they would think grace's sweet way of prevailing, to be no coactive forcing of their will, but the greatest part of their freedom; and so far would it be from being look'd on as a violating or wronging of their will, that it would be esteemed their truest and greatest liberty. We are persuaded that the fants in heaven count it no bondage, that God hath so freely freed them from all corruption, that they served him with delight, and do so necessarily; and shall any foungrily fants here below, count it a wronging of their will, that God takes such pains on them, to subdue corruption, and to bring them to some measure of conformity to them who are above? God forbid.

Verse 4. The fourth use is, To let us see, what great ground of encouragement there is here for the hearers of the gospel to set about the work of believing, and what ground there is to make them all utterly inexcusable, who shall continue in their un-

beliefs; which may be thought some-what strange, when we say that no means can be effectual for working of faith, without the effectual grace of God be applied: But let these two be put together, 1. That this grace shall be powerful to work faith in the hearers of the gospel, if they make not themselves guilty of frustrating this grace in the offer of it (as they may do.) These then, who will not believe, will be found most inexcusable. But to return to the main intent of this use, we say, that the encouragement lies here, that tho' we be unable, we have an able Mediator, and grace is powerful; and therefore we should with the greater encouragement set about the work of believing, as the Apostle reasons, Phil. ii. 12, 13. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Ye might possibly think it had been more encouraging to have said, Ye are able of yourselves to will and to do; but certainly, grace is a more encouraging motive than any thing in the creature: Say not then, ye cannot will nor do, for that excuse is taken away by God's offering to work both in you by his grace; but let me exhort all, both these that are begun to be believers, and those that are to begin to be believers, to be so far from disputing themselves from it, as that they rather encourage themselves to work out the work of their own salvation with fear and trembling, because God's grace, which ye have in your offer, is so powerful to work the work, and will admit of no utter opposition from corruption in you, if ye receive not the grace of God in vain that is offered to you in the gospel. If grace were so weak as we might call it back at our pleasure, and if it were but a helper in the work of faith and conversion, as Arminians make it, what encouragement could we have from it? And as to practice, is not this doctrine as encouraging? What advantage or comfort is it to undertake any thing in our own strength which is none at all? Is not this much more encouraging, to undertake in the strength of God's grace, knowing that the same work of grace, that begets faith, is as effectual to carry it on, and to make us to persevere in it, and to enable us to every good word and work: Let grace work then, and take a proof of it, and ye shall find it powerful. The Lord himself give you wisdom to do, for your salvation and consolation.

SERMON
SERMON XVI.

Isaiah, liii. 1.—And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

It is much to walk evenly and steadfastly under the pure doctrine of grace, and neither therefrom to take occasion to give way to looseness and carnal liberty, nor to become faint and discouraged, and fearful at the way of God. Corrupt nature is ready to abuse the best things: That word which we have, 1 Pet. iii. 16. that there are many that weld and pervert the scriptures to their own destruction, holds true, not only of doctrinal heresies, but it holds also true in respect of mens practice, or practical errors; for some, hearing of the impotency of nature, and of the power and perfection of grace in bringing about its designed effect, are ready to think that they need to do nothing, alledging, that if grace undertake the work, it will be wrought; and if not, it will not be wrought: and thus atheism and profanity steal in secretly upon the heart, and the sweet doctrine of grace is abused and perverted by such, to their own destruction. There are others again, who it may be will not dare so to top with God, who yet have their own fainting and discouragement when they hear of this doctrine, and think it hard that they themselves can do nothing, and fear that they will never win to believe, because they cannot do it of themselves; these also fail, and make not the right use of grace.

Ye remember the question which we proposed to speak a little to on the last doctrine, to wit, That facing both these branches of it are true, That except grace concur, the most powerful preaching of the gospel will not beget faith; and, That wherever the work of grace goes along with the gospel, there faith is begotten: What is called for from the hearers of the gospel, as the use of this doctrine?

Before we come to answer this question more particularly, we would, 1. Premise this word in general, That none would account the preaching or hearing of the word of God to be useles or fruitless, albeit, that without the work of grace men cannot yield the fruit which it calleth for from them: for our blessed Lord Jesus, Isaiah, and Paul preached this doctrine of grace, and the necessity of the Lord's arm to be revealed in the conversion of souls; and yet they taught the word in seafon, and out of seafon, and were gathering in some, and to some this doctrine was made the favour of life unto life, to others (thro' their enmity and corruption) it became the favour of death unto death: To conclude therefore, the inconsistency, or to deny the consistency of these two, to wit, of the necessity of preaching the doctrine of grace, and of the prefling in preaching the practice of holy duties, and the use of ordinary appointed means, would reach this dreadful length, even to condemn the prophets of old, yea, and our blessed Lord Jesus himself, who says, John vi. 44. after he had preached long, No man can come unto me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him: And ver. 65.—Therefore I said unto you, that no man can come to me unless it be given him of the Father. And will any think that his hearers, who accounted this, with some others, hard sayings, and from that time went back, and walked no more with him, were excusable in their doing so? or that his preaching was useles, needless, or impertinent, as having a tendency to tempt men to abandon all use of means, because he preached this doctrine of the impossibility of believing in him, without this pull and draught of his Father's arm?

But, secondly, We shall a little more particularly, in answer to the question, speak, 1. To what use folk would not make of this doctrine, or what things they would abstain from, as tending to a wrong use of it. 2. To some considerations for prefling this doctrine, and removing from it the construction of hardness that we are ready to put upon it. 3. To what is the native use it calls for. And, Lastly, To some considerations to press this.

For the first, When we say to all that hear this gospel, that there is a necessity of a powerful work of grace, ere this word can be profitable; ye would, 1. Abstain from, and lay aside curiosity, in seeking satisfying answers to all these objections that are moved against it, and absurdities that it is loaded with by the devil, and man's proud nature, and learn to sloop to, and reverence the sovereign dominion of God, and his deep and unsearchable wisdom and knowledge, in this sovereign way of his grace, as the apostle doth, Rom. xi. 33. 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! Ye would also consider that other word, Rom. ix. 20. Who art thou that replies against God? or expostulateth with him; Shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it? Why hast thou made me thus? It is good to enquire and to seek to know the use the Lord calls for of this doctrine with sobriety: but there is an enquiring to satisfy curiosity, which the Lord abhorreth; as we may gather from Exod. xix. 21.
where the Lord, being to deliver his will faith to Moses, Go down, change the people, (a word of peremptory command) left they break throw unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish: The Lord is not displeased that his people should endeavour to behold, and take him up aright; but when their end is not good, but to satisfy an itch of curiosity, it displeaseth him. This may be useful in many cases, and particularly in this we have in hand, to teach us sobriety in seeking to know the way of God's grace, as the Lord would have his people, Exod. xix. waiting for as much of his mind as he thought fit to acquaint them with, and to write on the two tables of stone; but he would not have them breaking in over the boundary or march which he did set to them, lest he should break them on them, and they should be made to perish: So would he have men, in their studying the knowledge of his ways, and particularly of the way of his grace, to keep his meafures, and to contain themselves within the limits that he pleaseth to set them.

2. Abstrain from carnal fretting at, and expostulating with the way of God, whether in the highest degree of upbraiding grace and snarling at it, that ye should not have the flock in your own hands; or in an inferior degree, having a heart inwardly discontent, that ye are not more able of yourselves than ye are to believe, which is the thing that the apostle oppofeth, Rom. ix. 20, 21. Should the thing formed, fay to him that formed it, Why haft thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over the clay, &c. especially since none can answer that question with any just reflection upon God. Who is to be blamed for that defect or inability? or whence did that inability or defect in man's nature proceed? God was gracious, free and liberal, in making man perfect; and whose fault is it that it is otherwise? 3. Abstrain from, and beware of drawing desperate conclusions as to the giving over the use of the means, or of becoming more lazy and fercue in the duties of holiness, and in the practice of piety, because of the necelity of his grace; but on the contrary, be the more diligent and fervious, that ye have so much need of grace, and that of yourselves ye can do fo little, or rather nothing that is truly good without it.

I know that profane hearts are very fertile and broody of arguments to plead this point of neglect of means, and will readily say, What is the fruit of diligence, and the prejudice of laziness? the one will do us no good, and the other can do us no ill, seeing it is grace that doth all the work. But, By your laziness ye mar your own fruitfulnefs, and that through your own fault, and make this addition to your guilt, that ye not only continue graceless, but do fo throu' your fin wilfully. 2. Ye may draw on to your natural impotency, habitual and judicial hardnefs of heart, and blindness of mind: It is on this very ground that many ears are made heavy, many eyes made blind, and many hearts made fat; and is that a little or light matter?

3. Tho' ye may think this little, yet that which will bear the weight of your sentence at the day of judgment, will not be your natural impotency, or that grace was not made efficacious to your conversion; but this will be it, that when God sent out his word to win you, and offered his grace for enabling you to yield, ye did maliciously and deliberately reject it. So that it will never be suffered to come to this, I was unable; because the word was wilfully rejected before it came to this.

But, Secondly, Because there are some others possibfly that have more ferioufnefs in the use of means, who, tho' they dare not quarrel with grace, yet it weighs and discourages them because they can do fo little, and they are made heartless to ef-fay, and hopeless to come speed; and it may be that this is in some whom the Lord allows not to draw any such conclusion, but would rather have encouraged: We would fay to fuch, that they would that they would beware of fattering or being discouraged, as if that were impoffible to God and his grace, which is impoffible to them; they would by all means beware of fitting up, and focking their hand in duty, because they can do fo little. We know there are fome that need not much to be spoken to, for satisfying them in this point; but there are others, who are weighted with this doctrine, to whom the Lord allows more tender ufage and would not have them to faint, nor be discouraged: You that are fuch (if any be) may know that there is ground for us to prefs this, and that we may remove the construclion of hardnefs from the sovereign way of God's grace, wherein he hath thought fit to draw men unto an absolute dependence on himself. In the difpening of it, we shall propofe thefe few confiderations: 1. That (which was hinted at before) never a man that hath heard this gospel, when he comes to count with God, shall have it to fay, that the reafon why he did not receive and embrace it, was his impotency and inability; but the real reafon shall be found to be his wilful rejecting of it: And upon the contrary it shall be found, that there was never one that would in earnest have had strength to run the way of God's commandments, and faith to grip to and embrace Jesus.
Jesus Christ offered in this gospel, that for want of ability came short; and if so, what reason is there to complain? If none want faith, but such as would not have him, and if none would have him complain of their want of him, upon these two we have great ground of encouragement to them that have a sincere affection to be at him, and there is no ground for folk to sit up, or fall lazy in pursuance after union and communion with him in the use of means. None shall have cause to complain of their want of him, but such as with their own consent gave him over: and any that would sin have had him, shall not miss him; for this real willingnes to close with Christ, being a work of the grace of God, and it being no less power that works this will than the power which doth effectuate the work of conversion, and bring it to perfection, he that begins the work will perfect it: and therefore, in this case, folk had more need to reflect upon their unwillingnes to have Christ, and to close with him on his own terms, than to dispute their impotency and inability. 2. Consider what they have been, whom the Lord hath brought thoro: Were they not such as had as much need of grace as ye have? had they not the same corrupt nature that ye have? were they not as impotent and unable to do for themselves? could any of themselves do more than ye can? Consider them all that are before the throne: Was it not this fame grace of God, and not their good nature, nor their free will, that did the work? and they were not expressly, or by name, included in the promisés more than ye are; and ye are not expressly excluded more than they were: The Lord brought forward the work of grace in them that same way that he dealth with you; by the preaching of his word, he brought them first to know their sinfulness, impotency, and weakness; to know that there was need of a Saviour, that their salvation was not of themselves, neither was it in them to make right use of the Saviour, and salvation offered, but in the power of his grace; and what if he be doing so to thee! and if thy condition be hard and hopeless now, it had been a hopeless and hard condition to these many that are now before the throne. 3. Consider, That there is no question but grace is effectual to carry on the work, and to make it go thoro: All the difficulty and dissatisfaction is, because God keeps the application in his own hand, which the man's heart would have in its hand; and which of them, do ye think, is most sure and encouraging? all your fainting and discouragement resolveth in this, because ye can do so little; if ye be in good earnest desirous to have

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grace thoro', the work of faith and conversion, would ye possibly make choice of another, or better hand than God's to put it in? Is it not as suitable and sure, that his wisdom should contrive and lay down the way, as it is to his power to set it forward, and to the freedom of his grace to make application of it, and all more suitable and sure than if it were in your own hand? May ye not think shame to be discouraged on this ground, because any thing ye do ye must needs get it from God, and that that should be an obstruction in the way of godliness, which is a main encouragement to it? Is the Lord an upbraider? is there any that can quarrel him as niggardly in dispensing of his grace? Dost not he give to all men liberally, and upbraideth no man? and doth it not become him well to have the conduct and guiding of his own grace? 4. Consider how many the Lord hath given grace to already; and how he hath given it freely, surprizingly, and unexpectedly: If ye could bring forth any proof that never one got good of God, ye might have a pretext for your discouragement and fearing; but when as many as are before the throne are proofs of his being gracious to sinners, when so many have gotten good of God before you; and when there are several, who, to your own certain knowledge, are daily getting good of him sensibly, freely, and unexpectedly, who were as undisposed to believe as ye are, and as much fainted and discouraged as ye are; and when he says, that he is found of them that sought him not; is it not as likely that a poor body, that is longing for his grace, shall be satisfied as well now as ever? according to that word, Matt. v. 6. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled; the soul, that faint would have holiness, shall get it. I know there will be a business made here, and a new objection started, Whether this longing or hunger be real or not? But if your longing and hunger be not real, it will not trouble you much to want; it is not to encourage or comfort such, that have no real longing, that all this is spoken; we know there is more need to make some vomit up the conceit of their ability, than to encourage them against any seen and felt inability. There are many, alas! that think little of the grace of God; with whom the error anent universal grace would agree well, they having a presumptuous conceit of faith, and that it is not so difficult a thing to believe as is alleged: We must profess, that we have not much to say to such for their encouragement; only we would let them know, that there is a time coming, when God will refute and silence them: But as for such as see their inability,
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hability, and are put to any measure of suitable seriousness and longing in earnest after believing, the Lord allows that they be strengthened and encouraged; and to such we would say this, If their missing of Jesus Christ weight them, if it be their burden, that they cannot believe, and if their longing, hunger, and thirst be some pain and piece of exercise to them, so as other things relish not with them, they are so taken up with that; and if they had their souls choice, it would be this, even a satisfying sight of union and communion with him; their longing and hunger is real, and we may turn over that just now cited word to them, 

But they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled; this hunger and thirst was never begotten without some spiritual physic from Christ, the great Physician, who hath provision for satisfying it: and as we use to say of the natural life, he sent never the mouth but he sent the meat with it; so we may say of this hunger, he that gives this spiritual mouth, gives always the meat with it. Would to God there were many enlarged appetites to receive; our Lord would no doubt be ready to satisfy them all: If the mouth were wide opened, the affections enlarged, and the soul sick under hunger and thirst for Christ and holiness, that sickness should not be found to be unto death, but to the glory of the grace of him who is the great Healer.

For the third thing that we propose, to wit, That seeing there are many ways how folk may go wrong, and yet none should give over hope, what is the native use and exercise that this doctrine calls for? I shall speak to this first in general, and secondly, in some few steps or particular directions. 

First, Then in general, Ye would consider that place, Phil. ii. 12, 13. Work out the work of your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure: where it is clear, that the exhortation given to them, to work out their salvation, is drawn from this same doctrine of the efficacious work of God's grace working in them to will and to do, as the great motive; God, faith he, worketh in you to will and to do, therefore work ye out the work of your own salvation: There are in this general exhortation four things implied: The first is the very entry or beginning of the work of salvation, that is, the excising of faith in Jesus Christ; it is of God, therefore work at that work; as if he had said, Believe to the saving of your souls, as the word is, Heb. x. ult. For it is God that worketh the will in you. The second is the work of repentance, this is also taken in here; for his bidding them work in fear and trembling, respects their sinfulness, and necessarily implieth repentance. The third is their aiming at perfection in holiness, the putting forth themselves in improving of all means, and in the exercising of all duties for that end; Work out, says he. And, fourthly, It looks to the manner, that it be not carnally, or in carnal confidence, but with fear and trembling; and if it should be asked, How doth that conclusion flow from this doctrine. It is God's work, or he works in you to will and to do, therefore work ye out your salvation? Folk would rather think that the conclusion should be, Since God doth all this, do ye nothing: No, but the just contrary conclusion is drawn; and it hangs on these two. 1. On the efficacy of grace, it is God that works to will and to do, it is his grace that strengtheneth you; and where he works the will, he works the deed; where he begins a work, he will also through and effectuate it, therefore take ye encouragement to work; as if he had said, Fight well, for ye have a brave second, tho' it be not proper to call grace a second; set yourselves to the exercise of holiness in earnest, and God will make it go with you. 2. On the consideration of sinfulness and weakness in them, which should make them work in fear and trembling; as if he had said, Seeing it is God, and the efficacy of his grace, that doth the work, be not ye vain and presumptuous: The first part says, It is God that works, and not ye, therefore be ye the more holily confident; the second part says, It is not ye, but God, and therefore do the work with fear and trembling; and both tend to this, that folk would be serious in minding and prosecuting the work of their salvation, from the first step to the last, in fear and trembling, on this ground, that they have nothing in themselves, yet there is enough in God and in his grace to do their turn. How is it then, or what can be the reason, that we in our hearts do draw the just contrary conclusion to that which the Spirit of God draws here from this ground? When we have the offer of grace, and hear of the power and efficacy of it, it should as to our part provoke us to be more busy, reasoning thus with ourselves, that tho' our corruption will soon overcome us, yet it will not, it cannot overcome grace; and tho' the exercise of faith be above our reach, yet it is not above the reach of grace; tho' we be weak, yet grace is strong, and therefore we will work it out. And upon the other side, we ought to continue humble, and in fear and trembling work it out, because it is not we, but grace, that doth the work: If grace were well considered,
there is nothing that would more strengthen folks hands to work; and upon the other hand, there is nothing that would make folks more watchful, and to walk in holy fear, considering that we are poor beggars, and through our unwatchfulness, or conceit and presumption, may mar the outlofings of his grace, especially if we grow secure, and ungratefully forget what we receive from him.

2dly, I come now to some steps or particular directions implied in this verse, because it will be asked, What then should folk do? And, before I touch on particulars, take these two caveats in the entry to them, 1. That we can propose nothing to be done by you, neither can ye do any thing of yourselves, that is a gracious act or deed. 2. That we understand not that any thing can be done by men in their natural state, that doth infer or procure, and far less deserve the giving of grace to any; but seeing God hath given directions to us how to walk in order to the working out of our salvation, we say, (1.) That it is safe to us to walk in the way he hath directed us to walk in, and in the use of the means he hath prescribed, and much more safe than to lay them aside. (2.) That there is greater suitableness betwixt the use of the means, and the finding of grace, than there is betwixt the neglect of means and the finding of it. (3.) That it agrees well with God’s way in bringing about the conversion of sinners, to bring them piece and piece forward; sometimes bringing them to the use of external means, and to the performance of outward duties; sometimes convincing them of sin, and letting them see their need of Christ; sometimes discovering the worth that is in Christ, and bringing them to fall in love with him, ere they actually cleave with him; and making them in their practice to follow any peep or glimmering of light that is let out to them, and go the length that light discovers the way, and makes it plain as to their duty.

Now, for particular directions, we would, 1. Bid you study to be fixed and establisht in the faith of these general truths that relate to man’s sinfulness and misery, and insufficiency in himself, that is, in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing; that naturally we are dead in sins and trespasses, and cannot quicken ourselves: and in the faith of the necessity and powerfulness of grace, and that it is Christ that must give and work faith, and that grace can do the turn, and prevail where it is put on work. Ye would also consider, and believe the great hazard of missing grace, and the advantage that cometh by it: ye would meditate on these things, and on the scriptures that hold them out, and on the experiences of the saints that confirm them, that ye may not only have a glance and transient view of them, but may be confirmed in the faith of the truth of them. 2. Content not yourselves with a general faith of the truth of this doctrine, but labour to be suitably affected with these things that ye believe; and tho’ every affectedness be not special grace, yet I speak to them that are ready to lay the blame and fault on the grace of God, and yet were never affected with their own gracedness. Ye would study to be affected with the gracefulness of your nature, and let it put you to some sanctified disquiet and trouble, till, with Ephraim, ye be made to sit upon your thigh, and till ye be put to a holy deliberation and consultation about your own condition. A man that is under the hazard of a civil penalty, will think on it again and again, it will affect him, and he will not be at rest till he be without the reach of it; much more should ye be with the hazard that your souls are in through sin; ye are not excusable, so long as ye come not this length. 3. Add to this, diligence in the use of all outward means and duties, whereby, and wherein, the Lord useth to communicate his grace, abounding always in the work of the Lord, as the apostle exhorteth, 1 Cor. xvi. 58. Be diligent in secret prayer, reading, meditation, conference, self-examination, hearing, keeping good company, and the like; which indeed hypocrites may do, yet they cease not for that to be duties. 4. Be sincere and servious in the use and performance of these means and duties; that which I mean is a moral sincerity and serviousness, such as a man will readily have in a civil cause that he hath depending before a civil judge, or in hearing of news, or the like, which is a thing that may be, and is often found in men that are void of a principle of grace; and yet folk are very often defective in this, and make themselves exceeding guilty before God, because they come not this length. 5. Take heed and beware of entertaining any thing that holds and bars out grace, or of doing anything that may mar or quench the working or moving of grace: If ye cannot get Christ entertained in your heart as ye should, be sure to give it to no other; if ye cannot get corruption thrust out, nor mortified, watch against the rising or harbouring of that which ye know to be corruption, and against the incoming or rising of such evils, as ye know will keep or put away the Beloved; guard also against the neglecting of such means, as by the neglect whereof ye may grieve his Spirit. 6. Study and seek after a composed frame of
spirit in your ordinary walk, and especially in duties of worship. Carnal mirth and jollity, loose company, and suffering the heart to go a-whoring after the things of the world, do not only provoke Christ as they are sins, but indispose us for duty, and mar the exercise of grace where it is, and keep it back where it is not; therefore the wise man faith, Eccl. vii. 3. That sorrow is better than laughter, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. Carnal sorrow is not to be commended, but sober sadness, or a grave and composed frame of spirit, is better than a light and unsettled frame; it being very hard, if not impossible, to keep the heart right, even where there is grace, but where there is some counterpoise or wither-weight; and it must be far more impossible to keep it right, where the work of grace is not, or but in the very first beginnings of it; and tho' I do not call this composedness of frame, Grace, yet it keeps folk in some capacity, as it were, to receive grace. It is said, Lam. iii. 27, 28. That it is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth; he sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath born it upon him; he putth his mouth in the dust, if so be their may be hope. For tho' crosses are not always blessed to conversion, yet we may see now and then that sad times are the beginnings of better times, and even in hypocrites their sad times ordinarily are their best times. I neither desire nor allow any to bring crosses upon themselves, yet I would desire all to make the best use of any crosses they are under, and to be acquainting themselves with their sin and infirmities, and with their hazard, and with such other things as may weight and compose them, without fostering discouragement and anxiety; and to love as well to speak and hear such things spoken of as may provoke to sighing and sadness, as those that may provoke to laughter; I said of laughter, (faith Solomon, Eccl. ii. 2.) It is mad; and of mirth, What doth it? and Prov. xiv. 13. Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness: tho' oft-times our laughter may not be so sinful, yet it readily more indisposed us for any spiritual duty than sorry doth; the heart is like a clock, whereas, when the inner wheels are set a reeling, it is not soon righted and settled. 7. I would propose Ephraim's example to you, Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. and desire that ye would, in the fight and feme of your sinfulness, weakness, and feckleness, be bemoaning yourselves and your sad condition to God, putting up that prayer to him, Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; these words, flowing from suitable feme, are good; and then follows, After that I was turned, I repented. It is observable, that in the very entry he is graciously taken notice of by the Lord; Surely I have heard Ephraim bewailing himself thus; so it is with God's people, when they consider how great strangers they have been to God, how sinful and stubborn, and how impossible it is for them to mend themselves of themselves, they retire themselves into some corner, and there bemoan their cafe, and cry out, O what a sinful nature is this! and when will it be got amended! I am as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, says Ephraim; and the Lord tells, he heard and observed it; when poibly he thought he was scarcely (if at all) praying, but rather fighing out as it were a short ejaculation to God, O that I were amended! the last words of his prayer are, Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; or, Convert thou me, and I shall be converted: he fees that when all is done, he must cleanse his hands, and leave the matter to God; I cannot, but thou canst work the work: And it ends sweetly in words of faith, for thou art the Lord my God; and where words of faith are after serious exercise, that exercise hath oft-times faith going along with it: hence are these words, Lam. iii. 20. If so be there may be hope. Pif. cxix. Incline mine heart, open mine eyes, &c. and Luke ix. 13. How much more will your heavenly Father give his holy Spirit to them that ask him? It is good to pray for the efficacy of grace, and to offer ourselves subjects to be wrought upon, and objects to receive what grace offers to us.

As we began these directions with a word of caution, so we would close them. Do not think that things in a natural man, following his sinful course, will bring forth grace; neither conclude, that where these things only are discerned and no more in some persons, that there grace is wanting, it being to help such forward that we mainly speak to them: Only, in sum, 1. Keep clean and clear the light ye have. 2. Improve the strength bestowed. And, 3. What ye have not, put it over on God, and seek from him, who hath grace to give for working that in you; and it would seem, that in reason ye should refuse none of these three. (1.) We say, Keep clean and clear your light; for if ye detain the truth of God in unrighteousnes, and make as it were a prifoner of it, by letting a guard of corrupt affections about it, ye may bring on blindness. (2.) Improve what strength ye have; for if ye improve not your strength, were it but in natural parts and endowments, that makes you inexcusable, when spiritual and gracious qualifications are denied to you:
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Isaiah liii. 2. For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

Verse 3. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

In the former Verse, the prophet hath afferted the rarity and scarcity of believing the gospel, and receiving of Jesus Christ offered therein; Who hath believed our report? faith he; Who hath made Christ welcome? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? To whom hath this gospel been made effectual by the power of God for the engaging of their hearts to him?

In these two verses, he gives a reason as it were of this, which runs upon these two, 1. The low appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, in respect of his outward condition; it hath no outward beauty, splendor nor greatness to commend it; but is attended with much meannesse, and with many afflictions. 2. The itching humour of men, who are taken up with worldly grandeur, or greatness and glory, and make little account of any thing that wants that; as if he said, It is no wonder that Christ get few to believe on him, and that few receive this gospel; for he will not come with much worldly pomp and grandeur, which the men of the world greatly affect, and are much taken up with.

To open the words a little, we shall first consider the matter of this reason, and then the consequence of it; or what influence it hath on men offending at Christ, and continuing in their unbelief; only we shall premise two or three words to both.

That which we premise, First, is this, That the He, that is here spoken of, is our Lord Jesus Christ, who in the New Testament hath this text applied to him; for albeit there be no He so expressly men- tioned in this chapter before, yet in the 15th Verse of the former chapter, to which this relates, the He, that is spoken of here, is called the Lord's Servant; and it is said of him, that He shall be exalted and extolled, and made very high: And it is not unusual to speak of Christ singularly by a relative without an antecedent, as Cant. i. 2. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; because Christ to believers is so singular an One, that whenever he is spoken of by way of eminency and excellency, as here, they cannot mistake him, or take another for him. 2dly, This want of form and comeliness is not to be understood of any personal defect in our Lord's human nature, but in respect of, and with reference to the tract of his life, and what accompanied his humiliation, to wit, that it was low and mean, without that external grandeur, pomp and splendor of outward things, which the world esteems to be comelines and beauty. 3dly, Where it is said, He shall grow up before him, &c. it relates to the hearers of the report of the gospel concerning him, or to the man that believes not the report spoken of before; and so relates to the words of the first Verse. Who hath believed our report? which is certainly meant of the man that hears of him, and to whom he seems nothing
nothing worth, because of his mean and low outward condition; for if we should apply it to God, we cannot see how it will so infer the scope, and be the reason of the unbelief asserted formerly, for which end it is brought in here.

We come now to open the words a little; and here we would know, that Christ's low condition is two ways set down in these two verses. 1. In the second verse, in respect of his want of the abundance of the things of this world. 2. In the third verse, in respect of the accession of outward crosses and afflictions; for not only doth he want credit, respect and esteem, but he hath contempt, despise and reproach; not only wants he great riches, but he hath poverty, and is in a poor and low condition. The first verse expresseth him negatively, to be no worldly great Man; the second verse expresseth him positively to be a mean and despised Man. 1. Then these words, He shall grow up as a plant out of a dry ground, are expounded by the words following, He hath no form nor comeliness; for as shrubs or scrogs growing up out of dry ground cryn and wither, when trees planted in a fat soil are fresh, fair and beautiful; so shall it be with Christ, when he cometh forth (faith the prophet) to the eyes of the world, he shall, as it were, be like a scrab in a moor-edge. Our Lord had personal and much divine comeliness in him, as we may see, John i. 14. where he faith, that the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; but the comelines, here spoken of, is that outward state, pomp and splendor which great men in the world ufe to have, which Christ wanted: this is confirmed by the following words, And when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. There is in men naturally a delight and complacency in that which is beautiful to the natural eye; but (faith he) there shall be no such thing seen in Jesus Christ when he cometh; and therefore no great wonder that few believe on him. And that he faith We, it is either according to the phrafe ufed in scripture, to make some hard thing digest and go down the better with the hearers, whereof the speaker is not guilty; or it is his exprefling what is the humour generally in all men naturally; as if he had faid, Had even we who are elect and godly no more but carnal eyes, we would think no more of Christ than other folk do; for we should get no satisfaction to carnal reafon.

The second thing, whereby his low condition is set out, is in these words, He is despifed and rejected of men, &c. Not only shall he want that which

Verfe 2, 3. carnal hearts and eyes seek and look after, but he shall be fo very low, that men shall fet him at nought, mock and rejef; and what wonder then that he be not believed on? A Man of sorrows; as for the tract of his life, it fhall be spent in sorrows; and acquainted with grief; he fhall not be a Man that fhall be a stranger to crosses, griefs and heavinesses, but he fhall be familiarly acquainted with them, and they with him. And we hid as it were our faces from him; a consequent of the former: as men will not give their countenance to them whom they despife; fo, faith he, we fhall think shame to fee or look at him: he fhall be the Object of mens contempt and scorn, and we fhall not fo much as countenance him; he fhall be despifed and set at nought by Herod and the Roman soldiers, and we esteemed him not; this we is the people of the Jews, who owe him more respect, esteemed him not: and hence he concludes, that it is no wonder that but few believe on him. And fo in the words following he goes on to describe his humiliation, and to remove the offence that might be taken at it, Surely he hath born our griefs, &c. as if he had faid, There is no fuch caufe to fcar and stumble at Christ for his lownes and base outward condition; for it was not for himfelf, but for us, that he became fo low; and therefore it did not become us to think fo little of him. His griefs and forrows are human infirmities, that he subjected himfelf to for our fake; for the wrath of God, which he suffered for us, is spoken of afterwards. And because there is great difference betwixt Christ's bearing of infirmities, and our bearing of infirmities, he being like to us in all things, except fin; I fhall, for clearing of this, name three diftinctions given by Givens, when they discourse of this purpose.

(1.) They diftinguifh and put difference betwixt the taking on of infirmities, and the contracting of infirmities; the taking on of infirmities, is the affuming of the effect without the caufe, of the infirmity without the sinful defect; contracting of infirmities, is the drawing on of the defect, with, and by the caufe: now, we draw on the caufe with the effect; Christ took on the effect, but he had no sinful defect in him to draw on such infirmities: he might have taken on the nature of man without the infirmities, if he had so pleased; but he took on the nature and infirmities, without the caufe. (2.) They diftinguifh betwixt these infirmities which are simply natural, such as a man might have had, though he had never finned; and these infirmities which flow from man's nature, as fallen and corrupted. The firft fort may be called Passive, and look to suffering, as to be hungry,
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Ifaiah liii.

hungry, thirsty, weary, sensible of that which hurst
the body: The second sort may be called Active,
and are sinfull, as flowing from sin, and tending to
sin; as inclination to ill, and indifposition to good,
dulness as to the uptaking of God's mind, &c. Our
Lord took on the first sort of infirmities, that are
simply natural, and may be without sin; but he was
free of the other, that imply corruption in the
nature: He was in all points temptet like as we are,
yet without sin, faith the Apostle, Heb. iv. 15.

(3.) They distinguish infirmities, into these that are
called natural and common to all men as men, and
these that are personal and acquired, as flowing
from some defect in generation, or are drawn on by
some impiemence, grossness in the life and conver-
sation; as some families are subject to deseases that
come by generation; others draw on deseases by
whoredom, drunkenness, and the like: now our Lord
was free of these last, because, being conceived by
the holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin, there was
no defect in his generation; and being blameless in
his life and conversation, he could acquire none of
those infirmities: and therefore the infirmities which
he bare are of the first sort, that is, such as are com-
mon to all men, and to men as men. And hence we
think it probable, which some fay, that as our Lord
was not sick, fo he was not capable of sicknes, be-
ing fo perfect in his constitution or complexion; which
makes for the glory of grace, and faith, That our
Lord behoved to die a violent death, there being
no principle in him tending to a natural death, tho'
notwithstanding he died most willingly to satisfy
juftice for sinners. And this may serve to explain
these words, That he was a man of sorrows, and
acquainted with grief.

We come now to observe some things from the
words. And, 1. From the condition our Lord is
described to come to the world in, observe, That
the Messiah, the Lord's Servant that was to redeem
his people, was to become Man; this is here supposet
and prophesied of, as the first step of his humiliation,
he is called a Man; and it is an aggravation of it,
that he was to be a Man of sorrows; or, taking
our Lord Messiah to be already come, we may take
the Observation thus, That the Lord Jesus Christ,
the eternal Son of the eternal Father, is also a true
and real Man: A common truth, yet a truth funda-
mental to the gospel, whereof we are not to think
the less or the more, because it is a common truth;
When the fulness of time came (faith the Apostle,
Gal. iv. 4.) God sent forth his Son, made of a
woman made under the law: Who, as it is, Phil.
i. 6. thought it no robbery to be equal with God,

Verfe 2, 3. yet took upon him the shape of a servant, and was
made in likeness of men; and being found in fashion
as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient,
&c. So, Heb. ii. 14. 'tis said of him, That for
much as the children are partakers of flesh and blood,
he also himself likewise took part of the same, &c.
Andiv. 11. Both he that sanctifieth and they that are
sanctified are all of one, for which cause he is not
ashamed to call them brethren. And, v. 16. He
took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on
him the seed of Abraham; wherefore in all things it
bowed him to be made like unto his brethren. He
was made even like unto us in all things, except
sin. And if we look to the way of grace, there was
good reason for this, that the Redeemer of sinners
behold to be Man, 1. If we consider the interpo-
aded or adjoined threatening to the covenant of works,
The day thou eateat thou shalt surely die; there
must be a satisfaction to jusiice, and the curse threat-
ened must be born. 2. The curse must be born
by man; the nature that sinned must die, the party
offending must satisfy in his own person, or in a
cauterizer. And, 3. By our Lord's becoming Man,
(1.) He came to have a right, as being near of kin
to sinners, to redeem them. And, (2.) By this the
law hath right to pursue and exact the debt of him.
And, (3.) By this, grace hath access to commend
the Redeemer of sinners to sinners, Heb. ii. 17,
18. and iv. 15, 16. Wherefore in all things it
bowed him to be made like unto his brethren, that
he might be a mercifull and faithful High Priest,
&c. And that we have such a Redeemer, it makes
God, to say so, trytable, and grace to have access,
1 Tim. ii. 5. There is one God, and one Mediator
between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus; and
this gives man access to flep in to God. (4.) This
makes the mystery of godliness to shine the more
radiantly, and the wisdom and love of God to shine
the more conspicuously thow it, 1 Tim. iii. 16.
Without controversy, great is the mystery of godli-
ness, God manifested in the flesh. And John i. 14.
The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,
and we beheld, as it is, glory, &c.-----Ufe 13. It servet
to be a prop and foundation to our faith. We may fay
of this truth, as the Apostle, speaking of the re-
urrection, 1 Cor. xv. 14. fays, If Christ be not
risen, then our preaching is vain, and your faith
is vain: If Christ were not Man, our preaching and
your hearing were in vain. 1. By this we have an
evidence that our Lord is the true Messiah, who
was to become Man. 2. By this we fee a clear way
how he was liable to our debt, and how his satis-
faction is communicable to us. And, 3. In this also
we see a main and most attractive argument to draw sinners into Christ for the actual application of his purchase: our Lord Jesus is Man, our Brother, and made of a woman, made under the law: O! this puts a sweetness and loveliness on the Mediator, to commend him to sinners, for the engaging of their hearts to him.

And therefore, as a second use of it, being there is a Man Mediator, 1. We pray you, men and women, neglected not such a salvation as is to be had by his becoming Man; but let this argument prevail with you to make use of him, that he is a true Man: and we may say, when this Son of man comes in the clouds to judge the world, it will be one of the greatest aggravations of the sin of unbelievers, that he came thus low as to be a Man for the good of men, and yet was not made use of by them. 2. Sinners, that would be at him, may on this ground be confident and cheerful: The Steward of grace is a Friend, he is a Man, their Brother, and claims kindred to them, that honestly aim to do the will of his Father; Wherever shall do the will of my Father, faith he, Matt. xii. the same is my brother, sister and mother. Sinners wrong Christ and themselves oft-times, when they fear at this cordial conclamation that by Christ’s becoming Man is allowed to them; indeed if we were immediately to go to God, who is a consuming fire, it were no wonder that we should be at a distance; but when God is in the Mediator Christ, God-man to reconcile the world to himself, as the word is, 2 Cor. vi. Let us, as the apostle faith, Heb. iv. ult. come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. O! make this use of it, because he is a Friend that sits on the throne.

2dly, Observe, That our Lord Jesus did not only become Man, but a Man in an exceeding low and afflicted condition. It had been much to the Son of God to have come in the shape of a Man, tho’ he had been Emperor of the whole world, but he thought not that meet; for since it was his errand in his first coming, not to judge, but to save the world, he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and therefore, John xiii. 12. he washed the feet of his disciples. We may take both the branches of the doctrine together; our Lord Jesus not only became Man, but he was a Man without all worldly grandeur and pomp, in a low and mean condition; and not only did he want that grandeur, but he had much affliction, shame and sorrow in the place of it. Need we to prove this? Any who are acquainted with the history of the gospel know it:

Verse 2, 3. Sermon XVII.

he was for the whole tract of his life, not only in a low condition, but a man of sorrows, griefs, and afflictions; under much persecution, contempt and reproach. We might instance this, 1. In his birth, 2. In his life, and 3. In his death. The meanest and lowliest of his condition, and the afflictions he met with, appear clearly in all these, wherein ye may behold the glory of grace and of truth; for the more low he became, the more doth the glory of grace shine, and the more also doth the glory of truth, in that he fulfilled all righteousness.

(1.) Then, for his low condition; and that, 1. In his birth, He was not born of any of the greatest queens; however the birth of Mary was noble, yet the was in a mean condition, for the time espoused to a carpenter: he was not born in a great palace, but in a common inn, which too being taken up with guests, his mother was thrust out, or constrained to betake herself to a stable, where our blessed Lord was brought forth and laid in a manger, crib or stall, out of which the beasts eat their meat, for his cradle; there the Lord and Heir of all things is laid, and hath no other cradle, neither was the room hung with rich hangings and tapestry, as the rooms of great ones use to be. 2. In his life, he was low: for no sooner is he born, but his mother is forced to flee away with him to Egypt; he dare not be seen: And when he returns, he cohabits with, and serves his supposed father and his mother, was obedient to them, ran their errands, and wrought their work; therefore he is called, Mark vi. the Carpenter; there is no outward nor worldly pomp and grandeur here; and thus he was for the space of thirty years: and then, when he came to his public ministrations, he hath no great folks for his followers and disciples, but a few poor fisher-men; over and above whom he exalts not himself loftly, but humbles himself to wash their feet, and to serve them. And to hold this forth a little further, ye may take notice of some scripture expressions to that purpose; as namely that of Luke, chap. ix. 58. Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head; That of John, chap. i. 10, 11. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not; he came unto his own, and his own received him not. Thou could have made a thousand worlds at a word; yet so low was he, that he had not a foot of ground to lay claim to, or to lean his blessed head on: and if we look to Luke viii, we will find that he was provided for in his necessities by some few women, such as Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and others,
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others, who ministered to him of their substance: He lived upon the charity of others; and yet, 2 Cor. viii. 8. By his poverty he made many rich: And when he went from place to place, his diet was often a seeking, neither do we read of any great cheer he had, but of some barley-loaves and fishes; and often the disciples were sent to seek for meat to him. And, 3. When it comes to his death, O how very low is he brought there! When he is crucified, they hang him up between two thieves, as the most notorious malefactor of the three; and he could hardly come under greater reproach than was cast upon him at his death: And as a dead Man, being really dead, he is laid in the grave and buried, as if death had gotten the victory over him; and so he dies a most shameful death, after he had lived a most mean and abject life.

(2.) For his afflicted condition, it is clear, if we consider, what troubles did accompany him in his life, and at his death. No sooner was he born, but (as I said) he is persecuted by Herod, so that himself and his parents must needs flee down to Egypt; and they, being but poor folks, behoved in so long a journey to meet with many difficulties: that they were but poor, may be seen by Mary’s offering after her purification. And when he came forth in his public ministrations, at his very entry to it, he was most terribly tempted of the devil, taking occasion of his hunger after long fasting; and all along the exercise of it, what contradiction did he meet with from the Scribes and Pharisees? How did he travel on his feet from place to place? often subject to weariness and fainting; sometimes men will not so much as give him lodging, which he suffers patiently, and rebukes his disciples for their impatience and preposterous zeal, Luke ix. Many calumnies and reproaches were cast upon him: He was called Belzebub, a deceiver, a friend of publicans and sinners: How did some of his friends according to the flesh snarl at him, and offer to bind him as a mad-man? What plots and conspiracies were laid and made to take away his life? and when it came to the upshot of all, Peter shamefully denied him, and all the other disciples forsook him and fled: Many other things befel him, as may be seen in the history of his sufferings, written by the evangelists. We read that he wept thrice, to let us know that it was his frequent and familiar exercise; and a little before his death we read that he was in a great agony, and did therein sweat blood, and offered prayers with strong cries and tears: but we read not that he did laugh, or that ever any worldly mirth was found in him; which clearly makes out this truth, That he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

For Use, It would take the tongues of men and angels to speak of it, it being the most remarkable and soul-refreshing subject that ever the world heard of, even that of which the angels sing, Luke ii. 10. 11. Good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, that unto you is born in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign to you, ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger. Sure we should not sing less, but more than angels, men being more concerned than angels in these things; and therefore, 1st, Behold, believe and wonder, that he that was rich became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich! That he was the infinite God, the express image of his Father’s person, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet humbled himself, and became of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, &c. Behold, (we say) believe, and wonder at this, 1. In respect of the cause it came from, to wit, everlasting love: he did and suffered all this most willingly, there was no constraint on him; but, as it is Psal. xl. He delighteth to do his Father’s will; he had power to lay down his life, and to take it up again. 2. In respect of the end: It was not to add to his own glory; for, as God, his glory being infinite, it was not, neither is capable of diminution or addition: but he became poor, that we might be made rich; he was a Man of sorrows that we might be made to rejoice; he wept, that we might laugh; he wanted, that we might have: Is not this love, flopping thus low, to be wondered at? Was there ever the like heard of, that God, the great Party offended, should come so low to recover the despis’d parties offending, and that even while they were rank enemies to him? God commendeth his love to us, faith the apostle, Rom. v. 8. that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us: and faith himself, John xv. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends; but when we were enemies, Christ died for us. Were it then an unsuitable use of this doctrine, to be beholding, believing, and wondering at his love, and to be often thinking and saying, What is man, that God should be so mindful of him, as to send the Heir of all things, his own Son, into the world, as his great Ambassador and Commissioner, to negotiate a peace between himself and rebel sinners, which he was to purchase...
Isaiah liii. 2. For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

Verse 3. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

If our hearts were suitably tender, the reading of these words, knowing of whom they are spoken, would some way prick and wound them: it is hard to determine, (tho' it may be we should not make the comparison) whether there is more grace in our Lord's condescension, or more wickedness and perverseness in the unkind and evil meeting that he gets from sinners; but surely there is much grace

more that he became a Man under griefs, afflictions, forrows, and temptations, and was subject to death itself: and that he hath bowels of sympathy from experience of these temptations, vexations and forrows, as they are sinlesf, as is clear from Heb. ii. 4. at the close; he knows what hunger, thirst, poverty, contempt, reproach, and perfection are; he knows what it is to be set upon with the violence of a temptation, tho' there was no fin in him to comply with it.

5thly, See here a most real Saviour, since he is a suffering Saviour. Why did our Lord become thus low, but that he might come under the curfe in the several degrees of it, for the satisfying of justice for our sins? And see, in every piece of Christ's sufferings a reality of the grace and love of God, a reality in the covenant and bargain of redemption, a reality in Christ's satisfying of justice, and performing his engagements according to the tenor of that tranfa{tion: And seeing there is a reality in this Saviour, and in his suffering and satisfying of divine justice, and in the price that he paid to the full; Put not this Saviour again to open shame, as the word is, Heb. vi. 6. Tread not the Son of God under foot, neither account the Blood of the covenant an unholy thing; do not defile the Spirit of grace, as it is, Heb. x. 29. He hath suffered enough already, let him not be a sufferer again: O! grieve him not by your unbelief, but give him credit, by adventuring your souls on him upon his own terms; yourselves will have the advantage, and he the glory. This is the pure simple truth of the gospel; do not only receive it as a truth, but receive him that it holds forth, and let your hearts close with him, and your faith feed upon him, who became poor, that ye through his poverty might be made rich. Happy they for evermore, who are made rich through his poverty; and miserable are they, and much more miserable eternally will they be, whose practive faith, that they think they have another way to be happy than by his suffering and satisfaction, and in disdain reject both him and it.
These are the two things that are spoken of here, his condescending to be a Man, and a mean Man; and, which is yet more, a Man of forrows and acquainted with grief; which if we believed, and knew really what he was, that it was even he, by whom all things were created, for whose glory the world and all things in it were made and continue, he for whom all things are as their last end, and thro whom they are preferred in their being, and governed in their operations, and shall be seen to tend to his glory in the close; we would certainly wonder more at this his condescension: And yet, alas! it is he that is despised and rejected, and that we bid as it were our faces from, and would not give our countenance: It is he by whom the world was made that is despised, and we esteemed him not: And this is the second thing in the words, which we are now to speak to, even the abominably unsuitable meeting that men give to our Lord Jesus, who hath so far condescended, as to leave some way his Father's glory, not to receive a kingdom of this world, but to be trod upon in it as a worm: he is despised and rejected, and we will not entertain him, nor make him welcome when he cometh: We esteem him not.

Only take this advertisement, for clearing of the words, and for grounding of the doctrine, That this, which is spoken of Christ's humiliation, and man's flumbling at it, is not precifely to be restric ted to his humiliation in his own person only, and men's flumbling at that; for it is given as the reason of men their flumbling and offending at Christ in all times: But is to be extended to Christ in his gospel and ordinances throughout all ages, and so it comes in as the reason why so few believe on him. If ye ask the reason why men do not now believe and receive Christ in the offer of the gospel? here it is, For we esteemed him not, for he shall grow up before him as a tender plant: he shall be mean and contemptible-like to the men of the world, and in an afflicted condition; therefore he is not esteem ed, therefore he is not believed on.

These two are the main doctrines to be spoken to here, 1. That Jesus Christ, who thus condescends and humbles himself for the salvation of lost sinners, is not esteemed of but despised and undervalued; which is implied in the words, When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him; and is more clearly holden out in the following words, He was despised, and we esteemed him not. 2. That this undervaluing and little esteeming of Jesus Christ, is the great ground of folks unbelief, or the reason why men do not believe on him, even because they think him not worthy the receiving: Two very clear truths in the words and in experience, tho' as sad in their conseq uents.

As to the 1st, which is this, That our Lord Jesus Christ is usually and ordinarily exceedingly undervalued, and little esteemed of by the men of the world, to whom he is offered in the gospel: There are two things implied and supposed here, in and about the doctrine, that will clear it, and be as two reasons of it. 1. That he hath no form nor comeliness, and no beauty wherefore he should be desired; which holdeth out this, that men are ordinarily taken up with, and seek after worldly grandeur or greatness, splendor, and beauty; that it is it that filleth mens eyes, and is that which Christ wanted: This we say, is one reason why Christ is so little thought of, even because he cometh not with external pomp, observation and grandeur, nor with great temporal gifts to his followers. That which mainly is desirable to natural men, is that which hath earthly beauty in it; a very deceitful consideration and ground, tho' such an one as men are often carried away with, and therefore they despise and reject the Saviour. 2. Which is another reason of the doctrine, and also clearly implied, That our Lord Jesus Christ's humiliation and coming so low for man's sake, his very condescending and stooping for their good, is the great ground of their flumbling at him, and because of that he is the lefs thought of; even the very height of his grace, and that great stretch thereof, that the Son of God became thus low as to become Man, a mean Man, and a Man of forrows, is a greater ground of flumbling to men, than if he had never become thus low. Now these two being supposed, and thus explained, the doctrine is clear, to wit, That Jesus Christ, that became Man, and performed the satisfaction due to the justice of God for our sins, is usually and ordinarily disesteemed and undervalued by them to whom he is offered in the gospel. (1.) It was so under the Old Testament, and is so likewise under the New: What is almo
all the gospel spent on, but to hold out Christ upon
the one side to be a Man of sorrows, and upon the
other side to shew that men esteemed him not? How
was he undervalued at his birth, when his mother
was thrust out to a stable, and he laid in a manger?
and no sooner doth he appear in the exercise of his
public ministry, but his friends offend at him, and
look on him as a distracted man, Mark iii. his coun-
trymen contemn him, and were offended at him,
Mark vi. Is not this (say they) the Carpenter, the
son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses? And
how was he esteemed, or rather disesteemed and
undervalued, at his death; so that it is said,
Acts xiii. 14. They denied the holy and just One;
and desired that a murderer should be granted unto
them. They rejected the Prince of Life, and chufed
Barabbas; and judging him not worthy to live,
they cry, Away with him: Hence our Lord faith,
Matt. xi. Blessed is he that is not offended in me,
which infinuates, that there were but very few to
whom his humiliation proved not a stumbling-block.
(2.) If we consult experience, we will find this to
be true. How little is he thought of among Turks,
amongst whom his precious name is blasphemed,
tho' they pretend more respect to him than meer
heathens do? How little is he thought of among
the Jews, who call him a deceiver! And if we
come nearer, even to the Christian Church, and to
such as profefs their faith of his being the eternal
Son of God, equal with the Father, that he is
judge of quick and dead, and they that look for
salvation through him; yet, if it be put to a trial,
how few are they that will be found to esteem of
him aright; since there are but few that believe the
report that is made of him, but few that receive
him as he is offered in the gospel, few that have but
such respect to him as to prefer him to their idols,
and that give him the first and chief seat in their
hearts? And if we consider how little eager pur-
suing there is after him, that he may be enjoyed;
and how indifferent folks are whether they have or
want him; how many things men dote upon and
prefer to Jesus Christ, as the Lord complains, Jer.
ii. 13. My people, have committed two evils, they
have forsaken me the fountain of living waters,
and have digged to themselves cisterns, even broken
cisterns that can hold no water, the thing will be
clear beyond all debate. We may take in another
branch of the doctrine here, when he faith, we es-
teemed him not; and it is this, That even believers
are, in so far as unenewed, inclined, and not
without culpable accession to this same sin of under-
valuing Jesus Christ. It is indeed true, that the a-
potle Peter faith in his first Epiftle, chap. ii. verse
7. To you that believe he is precious; Which place,
tho' it conform the first part of this doctrine, that to
them that believe he is not precious, but a stone
of stumbling, and a rock of offence; albeit, that
believers, being compared with unbelievers, have
some precious esteem of Jesus Christ, yet if we
consider the corrupt nature that in part cleaves to
them, the degree of their estimation of him, and
that it is but very little and low, in respect of what
it should be; and the many peevish fits, to's and
fro's, up's and down's that they are subject to, with
the many supicions and jealousies they have of him;
so that, tho' they were just now fresh and lively in
the exercise of their faith, and of their estimation
of Christ, yet within a little, even by and by, they
give way again to their jealousies; the doctrine will
also hold true of them, we esteem him not.

We shall give the second doctrine (and then speak
to the use of both jointly) which is this, That there
is more culpably acceditory to the abounding of un-
belief, than the poor thoughts and little estimation
that men have of Jesus Christ: The undervaluing
of him is the great ground and reason why they be-
lieve not on him: And on the contrary, if the
hearers of the gospel had higher thoughts, and a
more precious esteem of Christ, and valued him
according to his unvaluable worth, there would be
more believing in him than there is. When the
gospel comes to invite men to the wedding, Matt.
xxii. when Christ is rofeed and commended, as to
what he is, what he hath purchas'd, and what he
freely offereth to sinners; it is said, that those who
were bidden made light of it, and went away, one
to his farm, another to his merchandise, &c. When
Christ was spoken of, and the offer of life thro' him,
they undervalued and despis'd it, and made light of
the offer, and therefore turned their backs; for
they thought more of the house, of the oxen, of the
farm, and of the married wife, than they thought
of him: Acts xvii. when Paul is preaching Christ
at Athens, the philosophers and orators, these
learned heads, despis'd and disdain him, as a fet-
torth of some strange and uncouth god: If we com-
pare this with its contrary, it will be further clear,
to wit, wherever there is estimation of Christ, it
proves a help to faith, and a ground of it; fo,
wherever Christ is lighted, disesteemed and unver-
valued; it breeds in folk, and is a ground to them
of these three, 1. It cools, or rather keeps cool,
their love and affection to him; where he is dis-
esteemed and undervalued, he cannot be loved; and
people in that case become like these that are brought
in,
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in, Jer. xlv. 17, saying, It was better with us when we did bake cakes to the queen of heaven: The Lord is counted by them to be a wilderness and land of darkness; and they say, as it is Jer. ii. 31. We are lords, and will come no more unto thee. And when men esteem not Christ, they seek not after him, they care not for an interest in him, they trust not to him: when a man value a pearl, he will readily sell all that he hath, that he may buy it; but that which is not esteemed, there will be no care to come by it. 2. It hath influence to obstruct folks giving him credit, which is of the very essence of faith; so then, where he is not esteemed of, he is not taken up to be real, in good earnest, and faithful in what he says: his offers are looked upon as having neither solidity nor reality in them: Therefore, Rev. xix. these two are put together, first it is said, Bless are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb; and then it is subjoined, These are the true and faithful sayings of God: So that, when Christ is not esteemed of, he is not thought worth the crediting and lipping to; and it is on this ground that the Lord founds his controversy with his professing people, Jer. ii. 5. What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they have gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain? They undervalued his word, they thought him not worth credit, and therefore they turned the back on him; the same is inculcated by the Lord, Mic. vi. 3. O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me? 3. This little esteem of Christ weakens hope or expectation of any good that men may have from him: When we esteem him not there is no expectation of getting our need supplied, and our wants made up by him, nor of attaining in him the happiness that we would be at; and therefore there are no serious addresses made to him for the same: these three, love to him, trust in him, hope from and through him, being the prime graces in a Christian, when they are weakened, unbelief most certainly in so far prevails: and it being Christ’s worthiness, and the estimation thereof, that gives ground to all these; then sure, when he is not esteemed, but undervalued, these must also fail in their exercise, and be in utter nonentity, where he is altogether undervalued. Now, laying all these together, there can hardly be any thing more culpably accessory to the abounding of unbelief than the undervaluing of precious Jesus Christ; it is impossible that he can be cordially welcomed, where he is not at all esteemed of.

As for Uses of these doctrines, they are of large extent, serving to make manifest 2 root of bitterness, and a great neck-break of a multitude of souls, and which men and women will not easily be persuaded to believe. Let this therefore be the first use of it, To discover a great sin that is incident to the hearers of this gospel: Among many other things that may be charged on them, this is one, and not the least, even little estimation of Jesus Christ; so little, that when he is speaking, they count him scarce worthy the hearing; hence is the flumpering and slumbering of so many, when he is preached of; which holds out something of the nature of all men and women. This despising, undervaluing, and thinking little of Christ, is a sin that may for a long time cleave fast and close to the hearers of the gospel, and doth so to many to their dying day. It may be ye will think this a strange and uncouth charge, and that whoever desisteth him, ye do certainly esteem him much; but it were better ye were seriously and humbly laying with the prophet here, He was despised, and we esteemed him not. There are many who never once suspet themselves as guilty of, or chargeable with this evil; for whose conviction, let me speak but a few words: Is there not such a bitter root in you? If it be natural to all men and women, how comes it to pafs that ye are free of it? Is there nothing of the seed of the serpent in you? and if there be, will there not be hatred at the Seed of the woman in you? Are ye any other fort of hearers than they were to whom this is spoken? were they not hearers of the gospel as well as ye? nay, he speaks here of hearers of the gospel in all ages, and yet ye will disdain to take with this sin, and will account it to be an uncouth, if not an unjust charge and imputation, to say of you that ye are undervaluers and despeters of Christ; but the reason of it is twofold, the first whereof is, Because ye know not what Christ’s worth is, and therefore ye do neither esteem him, nor know that ye despise and undervalue him; whereas they, who have won to some knowledge of his worth, are always, or very often, complaining that they cannot get him suitably thought of and esteemed. The second reason is, Because ye know not yourselves, and therefore ye take self-love and estimation of yourselves to be love to him and estimation of him; ye think yourselves so well, that ye cannot endure to think that ye want any grace or good thing; and estimation of Christ being a good thing.
and ye thinking that ye could not hold up your face and own the reproaching and despising of him, ye will not let it light that ye want this grace and good thing, a precious esteem of him: But there is no greater evidence that ye are lying under the power of the deceit and delusion of your own hearts, that your natural disterper and fever is not cooled and calmed, but that ye are still roving in nature and therefore, tho' ye be living in enmity at God and Christ, yet ye cannot be made sensible of it. We really think it somewhat strange, that men and women should live twenty, thirty, forty or fifty years under the gospel, and yet never be brought to groan under this enmity, nor to lay to heart this sin of undervaluing of Christ: But if it be a truth that none naturally do love and esteem him, then certainly many of you are grossly mistaken, that think ye esteem highly of him; Ah? your fancied esteem of him will be counted an undervaluing of him.

And if ye ask, What is that to undervalue Christ? or, When is he undervalued? I answer, He is undervalued, 1. When he is not matched with, or married; when the match with himself, whereof he makest offer, is not closed with upon his own terms: For what I pray can hinder the ending of a bargain, or finishing a marriage-contrat, especially when it is so full, free, and rich on the Proposer and Suitor's part, but either that folk think it is not fit for them, or that they think nothing of it at all? and this is it that hinders closing with Christ, Matth. xxii. they made light of it, and went away, &c. and Pfal. lxxxi. My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me, 2. When any thing is made equal to Christ, much more when any thing is preferred to him, he is undervalued and not esteemed of; when he gets little or none of folks care and labour, little of their time, little of their love and delight, few or none of their thoughts, &c. but they are quite carried away after other things; for where the treasure is, there the heart will be also: and were Christ our Treasure, and precious in our esteem, our hearts would be more set on him; but it is strange, sad, and even astonishing, to think, how little our spirits are exercised with the thoughts of Christ; how little they are taken up with longing for him, and delighting in him and yet we will think that we esteem him. 3. Our Lord is undervalued, when he is not made use of, and employed, and lippened to, as an able and sufficient Saviour. If there be a learned and skillful physician in a city in all or most diseases, or an able lawyer to plead all causes; if folk have diseases to be cured, and causes to be pleaded, and yet do not employ such a physician or such a lawyer, but go to some other, tho' far less skillful and able, they undervalue him: it is even so here, when folks have many sins, and they seek not to him for pardon; many, not only temporal wants, but also, (and mainly) many spiritual wants, and do not acknowledge him in them, neither seek to him for supply of them; many predominant evils, and they seek not to him to mortify them; and many snares and temptations, and they do not make use of him to prevent and lead them by them; and many spiritual causes to be pleaded before God, or at his bar, and they do not employ him as Advocate to plead for them. 4. He is undervalued, when folk think not themselves happy enough in him, nor ficker enough in bargaining with him, and when he doth not satisfy and fully content them, as if he were yea and nay, and as if all the promises were not yea and amen in him: when he is not credited entirely, and relited upon, he is not esteemed of: hence he complains, John v. Ye will not come to me that ye might have life: and Matt. xxiii. How would I have gathered you, and ye would not! he would, to say so with reverence, fain do them a good turn, but they will not lippem to him. O how much of undervaluing of Christ is there among believers, when they hold and draw with him, entertain jealousies and suspicions of him, scarcely credit him, and when they do at any time credit him, are in a manner ready to take back their word again! How often are creature-comforts overvalued by them? And how often are the consolation of God small with them? These and many other ways are they, even they, in some considerable meafure and degree, guilty of undervaluing of Christ.

Use. 2. Take with this sin, acknowledge and seek pardon for it; it were a good token of some tender-ness, to be mourning for enmity against Christ, and for undervaluing of him, as well as for drunken-ness, fornication, theft, or any other gross sin: And where that gracious and right mourning, that is spoken of Zech. xii. 10. comes, it will be in special for this undervaluing of Christ to the height of piercing of him: We would ask any of you that think ye repent, if this sin of flinging him hath pierced you, as it did these? Acts ii. It may be, some think themselves so cleanly and perfect, that ye have not many sins to mourn for: O dreadful mistake! but tho' ye had no more, is not this enough that ever there should have been enmity in your bosom at Christ? And should not this prick you at the very heart, that ever ye should so undervalue him? But readily they that see fewest sins
IfalahXm. 

Ufe 3. It serves to be a warning to all men in nature to consider what their condition is. Do ye that have this enmity, and are undervaluers of Christ, know what is in your hearts? and do ye consider what posture ye will be found in, if grace make not a change, in the day of Christ? ye will be found amongst these defpiers and haters, that would not have him to reign over them: How will ye dare to appear, or in what posture will ye appear before him, when he, whom ye despised, shall come in the glory of his Father, with all the holy angels with him, and shall sit upon the throne of his glory? and yet appear ye must: How will the conscience then gnaw, and the heart be affrighted? how will challenges waken, yea, sting and prick you, on this ground, that the Son of God, the Heir of all things, the Lord of lords, and King of kings, who proposed marriage to you, was undervalued, and marriage with him made light of, and that a thing of nought was put in his room and place? will not this be a horrible challenge in that day? and if ye would consider what will be their posture that mocked and buffeted him, and plucked off his hair, that nodded with the head, and cried, Aha, and bad him come down from the cross, that did scourge him, and hang him upon the cross between two thieves; such a posture will all of you be in, who have despised and disesteemed him; ye will meet with that fame sad sentence, Bring out these mine enemies, that would not that I should reign over them, and lay them before me. O what a strange punishment suppose ye, will that be, when the Saviour of sinners shall stand by and look on, till he see vengeance execute on sinners that despised him. Think on it, for there is such a day coming, when ye will all appear before him, and when your reckonings will be cast up: suffer not yourselves to be cheated into an opinion, that it will be accounted a little sin to be found under this guilt of despising Christ; and let not one of you put it off himself, and over upon another: they will be found despisers of him, that would never let it light; nay, even many that have preached him, and that would have been angry at profanation in others, as may be gathered from Mat. vii. 22.

The 4th Ufe serves to commend this to you as a piece of your duty to study to know Christ, and to have the suitable impression of Christ and of his worth, as the great mean contributive to the bringing you to credit him, and believe on him, and to the removing a main obstruction that hinders your

ISAIAH LIII.

Verse 2, 3. faith, and that is the undervaluing of him: For if undervaluing of him be the great cause of unbelief, and that which mainly obstructs faith, then the esteeming of him, from a due impression of his worth, must be a great mean of, and help to faith; and the more he be esteemed of, the more will be be believed on: It hath an attractive vertue, to draw sinners to love him; a screwing vertue, to screw up the affections towards him; and withal a fixing and estabishing vertue, to settle and stay the foul upon him by believing: the soul that, from the right impression of his worth, esteems of him, knows that it may lippen to him, for he is holy and true; and hence it is, that the great thing that believers take to ground their prayers upon, is some excellency in God, some one or other of his titles and attributes upon which they fix, to bear them up, under, and against any difficulty that prefectly hard upon them; this fixes also their hope and expectation of attaining of any good thing that they want through him: and therefore upon the one side, we would commend to you the study of Christ's worth, and upon the other an high estimation of him, as that which will fix your faith, and love, and hope on him; this we fee to be in a high degree in Paul, Philip. iii. I account all things (faith he) to be but loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of him, and his transcendent worth. Ye would not think it loft labour, to read and study these places of scripture, that shew what our Lord Jesus is, in his person, natures, and offices, that ye may have the faith of his Godhead fixed, and may be clear as to the excelling fulness that is in him; as namely that of 1sa. ix. 6. To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counseller, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, of whose kingdom and government there shall be no end: And to study his excellent proprieties, his Eternity; Omnipotency, Faithfulness, Mercy, &c. common to him with the Father and Holy Ghost; and the excellent qualifications that as Mediator he is reple-nished with; being full of grace and truth, and in all things having the preheminency; see Col. i. John i. 14. and Heb. i. 2, 3. &c. The reason why we press you to this, is, not only that ye may have more theory and contemplation; but also, and mainly, that your affections may be delighted in him, and that your faith may, without hink or hesi-tation, come to give him credit. Ignorance of Christ breeds disesteemation, and disesteemation makes you not to give him credit, and thus ye are kept as a child.
a distance from him; there is no study more pleasant, more precious, and more profitable: There is here then a task for you, that ask what ye shall do? Even to read and study the excellency of Jesus Christ, and to labour to have it well fixed in the imagination of the thoughts of your hearts; it shall give you notable direction what to do, even that which is well-pleasing to God, and may be very profitable to you through his blessing.

Verse 5. See here the great necessity and convenience of studying the distinguishing of Christ that is in us, as well as of studying the worth that is in him, and what he hath out of love suffered for us; these two are put together in the text, it being needful for us to be as well acquainted with the one as with the other. We shall give you this use in two short doctrines; the first whereof is, That it is a necessary duty for the hearers of the gospel to study thoroughly, and to be convinced of, and clear in their distinguishing of Christ, as well as of his worth and excellency, because it wakeneth up repentance, and maketh it flow, and thoroughly humbleth the sinner, when he findeth this desperate wickedness and perverfenes to be in himself, and maketh him kindly to loathe and abhor himself; and unless this desperate wickedness be seen and felt, that great and bitter mourning, spoken of, Zech. xii. 10, will never flow forth.

The 2d is, That where folk have any just estimation of Christ, and of his worth, and are sensible of the evil of unbelief, there will also be some sense of the sin of undervaluing him; and the more sense they have of the evil of unbelief, they will be the more sensible of their undervaluing of him, and will with the prophet here cry out, He was despised, and we esteemed him not. And from both these ye may see the necessity of studying to find out this corruption; the search and discovery whereof will inflight you in the evil and perverseness of your nature, and to deeply humble you, and also serve highly to commend Christ and his grace to you; and without the discovery of this corruption, it is impossible ever to be humbled thorowly, or to have right thoughts of Christ and of his grace.

Verse 6. It serves to let us see the necessity of believing in Christ, and of the employing of him; because there is no other way to be free of the challenges of misprizing and not esteeming of him, but by receiving of him, and believing on him. A 7th Use may be added, and it is this, That the more there be that despise Christ, and the greater difficulty there be in believing on him, the more reason have they to be thankful that he graciously works any suitable estimation of himself in, and brings them to believe on him: These who have gotten any glimpse of his glory, which hath lifted him high in their estimation, to the drawing forth of their faith and love after him, would praise him for it: It is he, and only he, that opened your eyes to see him, and gave you that estimation of him, and circumcised your hearts to love him; let him therefore have all the praise and glory of it. This is the word of God, and himself blest it to you through Jesus Christ.

SERMON XIX.

Isaiah liii. 4. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Verse 5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

This is a most wonderful subject that the prophet is here discoursing of, even that which concerneth the sufferings of our blessed Lord Jesus, by way of prediction several hundreds of years before his incarnation: It was much that he was to be a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: but this was more, that he was despised, and we esteemed him not. There is wonderful grace upon the one side, that our Lord became so very low; and wonderful contempt and enmity on the other side, that we despised him, and esteemed him not, even-because of his lowness.

In the words now read, and forward, the prophet sets himself to remove the offence that men took at our Lord's humiliation, by shewing them, that although he became so low, yet he was not to be the less esteemed of for that: And the ground which he lays down to remove the offence, is in the first words of the text, which in sum is this, That there was nothing in himself wherefore he should have been brought so low; there was no sin in him, neither was there any guile found in his mouth: but he was graciously pleased to take on him that which we should have born: and therefore men ought not to flumble, and offend at his stooping to bear that which would with its weight have crushed them eternally, and thereby to make their peace with God. In the 6th verse he shews how it came to
to pass that he stooped so low, All we (faith he) like sheep have gone astray, and turned every one of us to our own way, and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all: we had loftourselves, but God, in the depth of his eternal wisdom, love, and good-will, found the way to save us; wherefore (to speak so) a covenant was transacted betwixt God and the Mediator, who becomes Cautioner for our sins, which are transferred upon him. From the 7th to the 10th verfe, he goes on in explaining the execution of this transactian, and how the Cautioner performed all according to his engagement; and from the 1oth verfe to the close, we have the promises made to him for his satisfaction: The scope is, as to remove the scandal of the crosses, so to hold out our Lord’s pursuing the work of satisfaction to the justice of God for elect sinners, and the good success he had in it.

In the 4. and 5. verses we have three things; 1. This ground asserted, Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows. 2. Men’s enmity heightened from this, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted: In the very mean time that he condescended to fliip so low for us, and to bear that which we should have born, we esteemed but little of him, we looked on him as a plagued man. 3. This is more fully explained, ver. 5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; he was so handled for our sins, and the chastisement of our peace was on him, that which made our peace with God was on him; By his stripes we are healed, the stripes that wounded and killed him cured us.

We have here then rather as it were a sad narration, than a prophecy of the gospel, holding out a part of our Lord’s sufferings; yet a clear foundation of the consolation of the people of God, it being the ground of all our faith of the pardon of sin, of our peace with God, and of our confident appearing before him, that our Lord was content to be thus dealt with, and to give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that pluck off the hair.

We shall clear the words in the afferation, which will serve to clear the words of the whole chapter, and also of the doctrines to be drawn from it. 1. The thing that Christ bare, is called griefs, and sorrows; by which we understand the effects that sin brings on men in the world, for it is the same that in the 5. verse is called his being wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquity; it is a wounding that iniquity causeth, and meritoriously procureth: It is not sin it-
them of Christ's removing our sorrows and griefs from us, or of his bearing of them for our sins, and bore really taking it away. And that this scripture means not of a simple removing of them, as he did sickness, Matt. viii. 17. but by a real taking them upon himself, and bearing of them, in order to the satisfaction of the justice of God for our sins; We shall give these reasons to confirm it: 1. Because these words are to be understood of such a bearing of sorrows and griefs, as made Christ to be contemnible and despised before others: This is clear from the scope; for they are given as a reason why Christ was rejected and despised, as a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and why men should not stumble at him for all that, because it was for them. Now, if he had only removed sorrows from them, as he did sickness, it had not been a cause of his sorrow and grief, nor of any man's stumbling at him, but had rather been a cause of his exaltation in mens esteele: But it is given here as a cause of that which went before in the first part of the 3d verse, and also a reason why men should not stumble at him, and withal as an aggravation of their guilt who did stumble at him. Now it is clear, that the ground of the Jews despising and mocking of him, was not his removing of sicknesses and diseases, but his seeming to be given over unto death's power. 2. Because that which is called here, bearing of sorrows and griefs, is in the following words called a being wounded for our transgressions; which imports not only that he was wounded, but that our iniquities were the cause of his being wounded, and that the desert of them was laid on him. 3. This wounding is holden forth to be the stripes whereby we are healed: and all we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all; we did the wrong, but he made the amends: And it was such a wounding, as proves a cure to us, and makes way for our peace and reconciliation with God; and such as without it there is no healing for us, for by his stripes we are healed: It is by his swallowing up of the river and torrent of wrath that was in our way, and would have drowned us eternally, had not he interposed for us, that we may escape. 4. Consider the parallel places to this in the new testament, and we will find that this place holds out Christ's real and actual bearing of our sorrows and griefs: I shall only name three; The first, is that of 2 Cor. v. 21. He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; which can be no other way expounded, but of Christ's being made an offering and a sacrifice for our sins: He not being a sinner himself, but becoming our Cautioner, and engaging to pay our debt, and to tell down the price for the satisfaction of divine justice; he is reckoned to be the sinner, and our sins are imputed to him, and he is dealt with as a sinner. A 2d place is that of Gal. iii. 13. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us; as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. The sorrows and griefs that Isaiah says here, he should bear, are there expost by the apostle, to be his being made a curse, or his bearing of the curse that we should have born; it is not meant simply of his removing the curse from us, but it also sets out the manner how he removed it, to wit, by his own bearing of it himself, being nailed to the cross, according to the threatening given out before. The 3d place is that of 1 Pet. ii. 24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree; where there is a direct reference to this place of Isaiah, which is cited for confirmation of what the apostle faith: and every word is full, and hath a special signification and emphasis in it; He his own self bare, the same word that is here, and our sins, and in his own body and on the tree; intimating the lowest step of his humiliation, by whose stripes ye were healed; for ye were as sheep going astray, &c. by his bearing of our sins, the burden of sin was taken off us, and we are set free.

I know that place of Matt. viii. 17. hath its own difficulty, and therefore I shall speak a word for clearing it; he hath spoken ver. 16. of Christ's healing all that were sick, and then subjoins in the 17. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our iniquities, and bare our sicknesses; whereupon these enemies of Christ would infer, that this place of scripture hath no other, nor further meaning, but of Christ's curing of some sick folks, and of the reputed or committed power which he hath to pardon sins: But we suppose, that the reasons which we have already given, make it clear, that this cannot be the meaning of the place; to which we shall add first a reason or two, and secondly give you the true meaning of it.

The reasons why this cannot be the meaning of the place, are, 1st. Because, Acts viii. 32. this scripture is spoken of as being daily a fulfilling by Christ, and therefore it could not be fulfilled in these few days wherein he was in the flesh upon earth. 2. Because this bearing of our griefs and sorrows is such a piece of Christ's humiliation, as thereby
thereby he took on all the griefs and sorrows of all
the elect at once, both of these who lived in 
his time, and of those who lived before, and since
his time; and therefore cannot be restricted to the
curing of temporal diseases in the days wherein he
was on earth, nay, not to the pardoning of the
sins of the elect then living, there being many elect
before and since comprehended in this his satisfac-
tion, which was most certainly a satisfaction for
the sins of the elect that were dead, and to be
born, as well as for the sins of them that were
then living.

2dly. For the meaning of the place, 1. We are
not to look on Christ’s curing of sicknesses and
diseases, Matt. viii. 16. as a proper fulfilling of this
place, Isa. liii. 4. but as many scriptures are spo-
ken by way of allusion to other scriptures, so is
this; there is indeed some fulfilling of the one in
the other, and some resemblance betwixt the one
and the other, and the resemblance is this, even
to shew Christ’s tendernefs to the outward con-
dition of folks bodies, whereby he evidenceth his
tendernefs and respect to the inward sad condition
of their immortal souls, whereinto they were
brought through their fin; the great thing aimed
at by the prophet. 2. If we consider the griefs and
sorrows that Christ bare and suffered, complexly,
in their cause and effects: He, in healing of these
diseases and sicknesses, bare our griefs, and carried
our sorrows, because, when he took on our debt,
he took it on with all the consequences of it; and
so, tho’ Christ took on no disease in his own per-
fons, for we read not that he was ever sick, yet in
taking on the debt in common of the elect, he vir-
tually took on all sicknesses and diseases, or what
they suffered in the diseases, or should have suffered,
had he took it on together; and hereby he had a
right, to speak so, to the carrying of all diseases,
and in carrying of them he had respect to the cause
of them, to wit, fin: Therefore to such as he
cured, he says very often, Thy sins be forgiven
thee; he studied to remove that in most of them he
did deal with: And fo, looking on our Lord as
taking on our sins complexly with the cause, and
as having a right to remove all the effects of sin,
seeing itself in the removing of these diseases,
whereof sin was the cause, these words may be thus
fulfilled; and fo they are clear, and the doctrine
also. We have here no mere exemplary Saviour,
that hath done no more but confirmed his doctrine,
and given us a copy how to do and behave; but he
hath really and actually born our sorrows and
sorrows, and removed our debt, by undergoing the
unishment due to us for sin.

Verse 4. 5. Observe here, 1. That sin in no flefs, no not in
the elect themselves, is without sorrow and grief:
tribulation and anguish are knit to it, or it hath
there following on it: Or take the doctrine thus.
Wherever there is sin, there is the cause of much
sorrow and grief; no more can the native caufe be
without the effect, than sin can be without sorrow
and grief: It is the plain assertion of scripture,
Rom. ii. 8, 9. Indignation and wrath, tribulation
and anguish upon every soul of man that doth
evil; which one place, putting the four words to-
gether, says, 1. That there is sorrow most cer-
tainly, and inseparably on every soul that hath
sinned. And, 2. That this sorrow is exceeding
great (which may also be the reason why this sor-
row is set out in two words in the text) therefore
four words are used by the apostle to express it. It
is not our purpose here to dispute, whether God in
his justice doth by necessity of nature punish the
sinner? These three things considered, will make
out the doctrine, which is, That there is a neces-
fary connexion betwixt fin and sorrow; and that this
sorrow must needs be very great, 1. If we consider
the exceeding unsuitableness of sin to the holy law
of God, and how it is a direct contrariety to that
most pure and perfect law. 2. If we consider the
perfectly holy nature of God himself, The righte-
ous Lord, faith the Psalms, Psal. xi. a. loveth
righteousnefs; and the prophet Hab. i. 13. says,
He is of purer eyes than he can behold evil, and
he cannot look upon iniquity. And though we need
not to dispute God’s sovereignty, yet it is clear that
he is angry with the wicked every day, Psal. vii.
11. and he will by no means clear the guilty,
Exod. xxxiv. 7. and that there is a greater suit-
ableness in his inflicting sorrow and grief on a fin-
nar, that walks contrary to him, than there is in
shewing him mercy; and there is a greater suitable-
ness in his shewing mercy to a humbled sinner, that
is aiming to walk holy before him. 3. If we con-
sider the revealed will of God in the threatening,
who hath said, The day thou eateft thou shalt sure-
ly die; We may say, there is, as they speak in
the school, a hypothetic necessity of grief and sor-
row to follow on sin, and that there is a necessary
connection betwixt them: And this may very well
stand with the Mediator his coming in, and inter-
poling to take that grief and sorrow from off us,
and to lay it on himself; but it was once ours,
because of our sin.

If it be asked, What grief and sorrow this is? We
said, it is very great, and there is reason for
it: For though our act of sin, 1. As to the subject
that
that sins, man, and, 2. As to the act of sin itself, a sinful thought, word or deed, that is soon gone, be finite; yet, if we consider fin, (1.) In respect of the object against whom, the infinite God; (2.) In respect of the absolute purity of God's law, a rule that bears out God's image set down by infinite wisdom, and that may be some way called infinitely pure; and fin, as being against this pure rule that infinite wisdom hath set down; and, (3.) If we consider it in respect of its nature, every sin being of this nature, that though it cannot properly wrong the majesty of God, yet as to the intention of the thing, and even of the sinner, it wrongs him; sin in these respects may be called infinite, and the wrong done to the majesty of God thereby, may be called infinite, as thes that who built Babel, their intention in that work breathed forth infinite wrong to God, as having a direct tendency to bring them off from dependence on him: And so every sin, if it had its will and intent, would put God in subordination to it, and set itself in his room: And therefore sin in some respect, as to the wrong against God, is infinite.

2. Observe, That the real and very great sorrow that the sins of the elect deferred, our Lord Jesus did really and actually bear and suffer. As we have exposed the words, and confirmed the expostion given of them, ye have a clear confirmation of the doctrine from them. 1. Grievs and sorrows, in the plural number, shew intenseness of sorrow and grief. 2. That they are called ours, it shews our propriety in them. And, 3. That it is said Christ bare them; these concur to prove the doctrine, that the same sorrow which the sins of the elect deferred, Christ bare: It not only says, that our Lord bare sorrows, but the same sorrows, that by the sins of the elect were due to them; and so there was a proportionableness between the sorrows that he bare, and the sorrows they should have endured; he took up the cup of wrath that was filled for us, and that we would have been put to drink, and drank it out himself. Suppose that our Lord had never died (as blest be his name, there is no ground to make the supposition) the cup of sorrow that the elect would have drunken eternally, was the same cup that he drank out for them. It is true, we would dillinguish betwixt these things that are essentially due to sin as the punishment of it, and these things that are only accidentally due to it; the former Christ bare, but not the latter. To clear both in a word or two, (1.) These things essentially due to sin, as necessarily included in the threatening, The day thou eatest thou shalt surely die: and in the curse of the law, according to that, CURSED is every one that abides not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them; are death and the curse; these are essentially the desert of sin; in which respect it was not only necessary that Christ should become Man and suffer, but that he should suffer to death, or should die; and not only so, but that he should die the cursed death of the cross, as the threatening and curse put together hold out: And as to all these things that he underwent, and met with before, and at his death, they were the accomplishment of the threatening due to us, and fulfilled in and by him in our room; so that, as he himself saith, Luke xxiv. 26. O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into his glory? Therefore he behoved to be in an agony, and to sweat great drops of blood, to be crucified, and die, and to be laid in the grave. (2.) These things which we call accidentally due to sin, are mainly two. 1st, That horrible desperation of the damned in hell, where they gnaw their tongues for pain, and blaspheme God; this, we say, is not properly and essentially the desert of sin, but only accidental; 1. In respect of the creature's inability to bear the wrath that sin deserveth; and hence ariseth not only a finless horror which is natural, but a sinful desperation. 2. Add to this inability of the creature, the enmity thereof, whereby it cometh to thwart with and contradict the will of God; hence the desperation not only ariseth, but is increased: Now, our Lord Jesus not being simply a Creature or a Man, but God and Man in one Person, he was able to bear the sorrow and wrath due to the elect for their sin; and there being no quarrel, nor ground of any quarrel, betwixt God, and him on his own account, though he had a natural and finless horror at the cup of his Father's displeasure, when put to his head; yet he had no sinful desperation. The 2d thing accidentally due to sin, is the eternal duration of the wrath, or of the curse; because the finner, being a mere creature, cannot at one shock meet with the infinite wrath of God, and satisfy justice at once; therefore the Lord hath, in his wisdom and justice, found out a way of supporting the creature in its being, and continuing it for ever under wrath, because it cannot, being finite, satisfy infinite justice: But our Lord, being God and Man, being of infinite worth and value, and of infinite strength, was able to satisfy justice, and bear at once, that which the elect could never have born: yet he had the essentials of that which sin deferred,
to wit, death and the curse, to meet with, and did actually meet with them; as the hiding of his Father's face, and the suspending and keeping back of that consolation, that by virtue of the personal union flowed from the God-head to the Man-head: And he also had the actual sense and feeling of the wrath of God, the awaked sword of the justice of God actually smiting him; so that men wondered how he could be dead so soon. We shall only add a word or two of reasons for clearing and confirming the doctrine; and for proof of it, these three things concur, 1. That sin's deserving, by God's appointment, is to have sorrow following on it. 2. That by God's appointment, according to the covenant of redemption, the Son of God undertook that same very debt that was due by the sinner. And, 3. That it was God's design not to pass one of their sins, without satisfaction made to justice, but to put at the Cautioner for them all, for the declaration of the riches and glory of the free grace of God, when the sinner is liberate, and not put to pay, and for the declaration of the holy severity and justice of God, when not one farthing is owing, but the Cautioner must needs pay it; and that both these meeting together, there may be, to all generations, a standing and shining evidence of the unsearchable riches, both of God's grace, and of his justice.

This is a sweet doctrine, and hath many mazy, substantial, and soul-refreshing uses: Out of this eater comes meat, and out of the strong comes sweet, this being the very marrow of the gospel, holding out not only Christ's sufferings, but that he suffered not at random, or by guess, but that he, suffered the sorrows and griefs that we should have suffered: and tho' the equivalent might have been received, yet he would needs undergo the same sufferings in their essentials; which may exceedingly confirm the faith and hope of believers in him, of their exemption and freedom from the wrath and curse of God, seeing he suffered the same that they should have suffered, had not he interposed betwixt them and it, as their Cautioner and Surety.

Use 1. Hereby we may know what an evil and bitter thing sin is, that hath such effects; would to God we could once prevail thus far with you, as to make you take up and believe, that sin hath sorrow and grief inseparably knit to it, and that the sinner is miserable, and liable to death, and to the curse of God; and there is no difference but this, that sinners are insensible how miserable they are, and so in greater capacity to be made obnoxious to that misery: Do ye mind this, O sinners, That God is angry with you every day? That indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, is to every soul of man that does evil? That God will by no means clear the guilty? Tremble to think upon it; many of you pass as gay honest folks, who will be found in this roll: and would ye know your condition, and the hazard that ye run? 'Tis of wrath and the curse of God eternally, with desperation and blasphemy; and if that be misery, sin is misery, or brings it: and the day comes, when there shall be a storm from heaven of fire and thunder, that will melt the elements above you, and not leave a stone upon a stone of these flatey buildings on earth about you; in which day, sinners will be confirmed in the belief of this truth, That it is an evil and bitter thing to depart from the living God.

To preface this Use a little, there are two sorts of sinners, who, if they would soberly let the truth of this doctrine sink in their minds, they would see their folly: The first sort are these who ly quietly under bygone guilt unpunished of, as if the sorrow were past, because the act is so; but think not so: Will the just God avenge sin on his Son, and will he let it pass in you? Ye that will grant ye are sinners, and are under convictions of sin, ye had need to take heed what is following it; as ye treasure up, ye are treading up wrath against the day of wrath: O wrath is a heaping up in store for you. A second sort are these that go on in sin, whatever be paid to the effect of it, and will confidently put their hand to it, as if there were no sting in it at all, and drink it over as so much sweet liquor: But these stolen drinks, that seem sweet in secret, will be vomited up again with pain, torment and sorrow; and either it shall be grief and sorrow to you in the way of repentance, or eternal grief and sorrow, when the cup of God's wrath shall be put in your hand, and held to your head for evermore.

Use 2. By this ye may see a necessity of making use of the Mediator Christ Jesus; it is God's great mercy that he hath given a Mediator, and that the Mediator is come; and that he hath taken on our debt. What had been our eternal perishing and wallowing in hell's torments with devils, to his sufferings! Always this doctrine faith, that there is a necessity of making use of him, and receiving of him; and therefore, either resolve to meet with this sorrow in your own persons, or betake you to him, that by his interposing it may be kept off you. Weigh these two, that sorrow, death, and the curse necessarily follow sin, and that Jesus Christ hath died, and undergone that curse for the elect sinners: and then ye will see a necessity of being found
SERMON XX.

Isaiah lii. 4. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Verse 5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

If we had the faith of that which the prophet speaks here, and the thorough conviction, who it is of whom he speaks, we would be in a holy transport of admiration and astonishment at the hearing of it; that it is he, who is the Prince of life, that was bruised and wounded; and that these bruises, wounds and stripes are ours, were for us, and the price and satisfaction for our iniquities to divine justice; and yet, that even he, in the performing of all this, is vilipended and despised by thofe, whose good he is thus purifying and seeking after: Oh, how should it be wondered at!

These words (as we shew) hold forth these three, 1. The caufe or end of Christ's suffering, Surely he hath born our griefs; and carried our sorrows; which is to remove and take away the scandal that might arise from Christ's humiliation, described in the foregoing words: he was low indeed, but there was no guile found in his mouth; it was for no quarrel that God had at himself, but he undertook our debt, and therefore carried our sorrows. 2. The aggravation of mens enmity and desperate wickedness; that yet, notwithstanding of all this, We esteemed him smitten of God, and afflicted. 3. We have the exposition of the first part more clearly set down, But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, &c. where more fully he expounds what in the beginning of the 4th verse he asserted.

We expounded the first part of the words, and shew, that these griefs and sorrows held forth the due defert of sin; called ours, because they are the due and particular defert of our sins, and that which they procured: and that Christ's bearing of them was not only meant of his taking away, or removing from us our forrows and griefs, as he did dasfeases, but of his real undergoing of that which we should have undergone, even such a bearing, as made others think him smitten and plagued of God, and such as wounded and bruised, even such as made him become a curfe for us, and such as procured healing to us: All which proves, that it was a real undergoing of sorrows and grief.

We spoke to two doctrines from this part. 1. That sin hath forrow necessarily knit to it, and never wanteth forrow following it. 2. That Christ Jesus undertook the fame forrows, and really bare these same griefs that sin procured to the elect, or that by sin were due to them.

That we may proceed to observe somewhat more, and for clearer access to the doctrine, we shall speak a word to a queftion that may be moved here,

What is meant by these words, our, we, and us? He hath born our griefs, the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, by his stripes we are healed. And the rather I would speake to this, because throughout the chapter we will find these Proverbs very frequent. We know, in scripture, our and us are sometimes extended to all mankind; so we are all loft in Adam, and sin hath a dominion over us all: and that part of the words, verfe 6th, All we like sheep have gone aftaray, may well be extended to all mankind. Sometimes it is to be restricted to God's elect, and so all comprehends only such, and all such: And in this refpect, our, us, and we, and all, are contradiftinguished from many others in the world, and take not in all men, as Gal. iv. 26. Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all; which is spoken, in opposition to the bond-woman and her children spoken of before; so that this our, us, and we, are not to be extended to all individual men in the world, as if Christ had satisfied the justice of God for all; but it is to be applied to God's elect, separate in his purpose from others, and in God's design appointed to be redeemed.
Serm. XX.

Isaiab liii. redeemed and satisfied for by Christ. And the words being thus expounded, they lead us to this doctrine.

That Jesus Christ, in bearing the punishment of sin, had a particular and distinct respect to some definite sinners. For confirmation of it, we shall not go out of the chapter, the scope whereof we would clearly see; and if we look through the chapter, we will find five grounds, to clear that these words are to be thus restricted.

For, 1. We are to expound this universal, with respect to God's purpose and covenant, the con- science of the elects redemption, and to the death of Christ, the execution of it; and to these words, our, us, we, all, are and must be restricted to these; and in them we are to find out, who they are: Now, who these are, we find clear, John vi. 37, 39. in the 37th verse, where he faith, all that the Father hath given me shall come unto me; and verse 39th, This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing: it is in a word, these whom the Father hath given to Christ, and as many as are given will believe; and certainly these are given to Christ, to be redeemed by him, are the same whose iniquities the Father makes to meet on him: and these are distinguished from these not given, John xvii. 6, 11. and are called his sheep, John x. 15, and 17. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, to wit, for my sheep. And all the strain of this chapter being to shew God's way of contriving and prosecuting the work of redemption, and Christ's executing thereof, according to the covenant of redemption; all this spoken of Christ's suffering must be expounded according to that engagement. 2. Whereas it is said, ver. 8. For the transgressions of my people was he stricken; it is certain, this our, and us, and we, for whom Christ was stricken, must be restricted to God's people, that is his peculiar people, who are his by election love, as Christ's faith, John xvii. 6. Thine they were, and thou gavest them to me: they are not his, as all the world are his, but are contradistinguished from the world, as his own peculiar, purposed, designed people; sure all the world are not God's people in this sense, therefore they are called his sheep, and contradistinguished from these who are not his sheep, John x. 17. And therefore we are to look on these words, our, us, and we, as of equivalent extent with the peculiar people of God; he carried the punishment of the sins of all God's people, that are his peculiar election. 3. So, verse 10th, When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed: hence we gather

Verse 4, 5. this, That these, whole iniquities Christ bare, are Christ's seed; and for these he purposefully laid down his life, as these whom he expected should be saved, for satisfying of him for the travel of his soul, and for no more; and these cannot certainly be all the world, there being such contradistinction between Christ mystical, or his seed comprehending the elect, and the seed of the serpent comprehending the reprobate and wicked, who are said to be of their father the devil: these are Christ's seed, who are spiritually begotten of him, and these doubtless are not all the world, and for these only he suffered; so that our sins here are the sins of all the seed. 4. Look to verse 11th, where it is said, By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities: where it is clear, whose sins they are that Christ bears; it is theirs who are justified by his knowledge, or by faith in his blood; and justification by faith in his blood, and redemption by his blood, are commensurable, and of equal extent. Now, it being certain as to the event, that not all the world, nor all in the visible Church, are justified by the faith of Christ, it must also be certain, that the sins of others, who are not, nor shall be justified, were never purposively born by Christ. And this ground, as all the rest, will be the more clear, if we consider, that it is given as an argument why they must be justified, because he hath born their iniquities. A fifth ground may be gathered from the last words of the chapter, He made intercession for the transgressors; whence we may reason, that Christ's intercession and his satisfaction, are of equal extent, he satisfies for no more than he intercedes for. Now, it was not for all the world, nor indefinitely, and by guesses, for all in the visible Church that Christ did intercede, but for them that the Father gave him out of the world, John xvii. verse 6. and 9. Thine they were, and thou gavest them to me; and verse 10. All mine are thine, and thine are mine; Christ's death being the ground of his intercession, and it being by virtue of his death that he interceded, his death and intercession must be of the same extent; he intercedes for such and such sin- ners, because he hath paid a price for them, that there may be a good account made of them at the last day.

The 1st Use of it serves to clear a great and precious truth concerning God's covenant, and discriminat- ing love, whereby he hath put difference betwixt some and others. 2. It serves to stir them up, who are thus differed, to admire at, and to commend his love, who hath been graciously mindful of them.
when others are past by. 3. It serves also to clear the other Scriptures, and this same Chapter, and to teach us, not to make common to all, the privileges bestowed on some peculiar ones, and to guard us against the vilifying and prophaning of our Lord's sufferings, as if he had no special and peculiar design in them, or as if they might be frustrated in the design of them, contrary to the promise made to him of the Father.

And therefore here, to obviate an objection, which is made from the 6 v. All we like sheep have gone astray; whence some would infer, that it is all who like sheep have strayed, whose iniquities Christ hath born: we say, That the All is not meant to comprehend them whose iniquities Christ hath born only, but to hold out the extent of straying; or the meaning is not to shew, that his suffering and satisfying of justice extended to all that strayed, but to shew, that the elect for whom he suffered had all of them strayed, as well as others: and this is like the reasoning which the apostle hath 2 Cor. v. 14. If one died for all, then were all dead; the meaning whereof is not, that Christ died for all that were dead, but this is the meaning, That all for whom Christ died were once dead: so here, while it is said, All we like sheep have gone astray, it is to shew, that the elect strayed, and esteemed him not, as well as others, and had God's curse lying on them as their due, till Christ interposed, and took it off them. The point might have also use for confirmation, but we do not follow these.

2. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows, that is our griefs and sorrows who are his elect, his people, his seed, who flee to him for refuge, and are justified by his knowledge, or by faith in him, and for whom he maketh intercession: hence observe, That believers would endeavour the strengthening of themselves in the faith of this, that Jesus Christ hath born their griefs and sorrows, and hath satisfied justice for them in particular; they would study to be in case on good ground, with the prophet, to say, Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows; to make it sure, that they are in the roll of elect believers, and justified persons; to say with the Apostle Paul, Gal. iii. 13. He was made a curse for us; and with the same Apostle 2 Cor. v. ult. to say, He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; and to say with the Apostle, Peter, 1 Pet. i. 24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree. They speak always by way of application. So these places, whereby we confirmed the doctrine, That Christ really bare that punishment of the sins of the elect, are express in an applicatory way: And that notable place, Gal ii. 20, where, as if it were not enough to say, he loved us, and gave himself for us, he draws it nearer and more home, and faith, Who loved me, and gave himself for me: but that ye may not mistake the point, my meaning is not, that every body off-hand should make application of Chrift's death: O the presumption and desperate security that destroys thousands of souls here, as if there were no such distinction as we held forth in the first doctrine, nor any bar to be put in the way of that fancied universal application of Christ's dying for all sinners! whereas we shew that it was for his sheep, and these given to him of the Father only, that he died, and for no more: but this is my meaning, that (as it is, 2 Pet. i. 10.) ye would give diligence to make your calling and election sure, and that in an orderly way, ye would secure and fix your interest in Christ's death: not to make this the first thing that ye apprehended for the foundation of your faith, that he died for you in particular, for that were to come to the top of the stairs, before ye begin to set foot on the first step; but the orderly way is, to make sure your fleeing to Christ in the sense of sin, and your clothing with him on his own terms, and your having the characters of his people ingraven on you; and then, from such premises, ye may draw this conclusion, as the result thereof, Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows; then ye may be satisfiedly confirmed in this, that when Christ transacted and bargained with the Father about the elect, when he prayed, and took the cup of his Father's wrath, and drank it out for them, he minded your names, and was made a curse in your room: the reason is drawn from the advantage of such a doctrine, as hath hanging on it the conflation of all the promises of God; for we can never comfortably apply, nor be delighted in the promises, till we come to make particular application of Christ's purpose and purchase in the work of redemption. This is it that rides marches, and draws a linebetwixt us and reprobate ungodly men, and that keeps from the fear of eternal death that purifies them; and it gives some ground of hope to lay hold on, and grip to, as to our enjoying of Christ's purchase. I know there is nothing that folk had more need to be sober and wary in the search of, and in the securing themselves in, than this: yet by the same command that enjoineth us to make our covenant-flate, our calling and election sure; we are bound to make our redemption sure; and having at some length spoken of the way of making sure.
Serm. XX.

Isaiah liii.

Sure our believing, on the 1st. v. we may infift the 1st on this, of making sure our redemption by Christ.

The 2d Use serves for information; to let you know, that there are many professing Chriftians, that account this a curious, nice, and conceit thing, to study to be sure, that Christ in his death and sufferings minded them in particular; others may be think it impossible; and all may think it a right hard and difficult thing, and indeed so it is: But yet we would have you to consider, 1. That simply it is not impossible, else we should say, that the comfort of the people of God were impossible.

2. That it is no curious thing; for the Lord doth not lay the obligation to curiosity on any, tho' we would with that many had a holy curiosity to know God's mind towards them, that they might not live in the dark about such a concerning business. 3. That the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, Psal. xxv. 14. and even this same secret concerning redemption is with them, and he will shew them his covenant: And indeed it were no small matter to have this manifested.

And therefore, as a 2d Use of the point, we would commend to you the study of making this sure; for it hath many notable advantages attending it: It would provoke to humility, and to thankfulness to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; it would make a comfortable and cheerful Christian life; it would warm the heart with love to God, and to Jesus Christ, who hath thus loved us, as to give himself for us. When we commend this to you, it is no uncouth, nice, needlely curious, or unattainable thing; nor would we have you, when ye cannot attain it, to sit down discouraged; neither would we have you take any extraordinary way to come by it; nor waiting for any new light, but that which is in the Bible; nor would we have, you resolvling to do no other thing till ye attain to this: But this we would have you to do, even to make faith in Christ sure, by fleeing to him, and calling your burden on him, by cordial receiving of him, and acquiescing in him; and then ye make all sure. The committing of yourselves to him, to be saved by his price paid to divine justice, and resting on him as he is holden out in the gospel, is the way to read your interest in his redemption; and this is it that we have Gal. iii. and ii. 19. where it is diptuted at length; that we are heirs of Abraham by believing; and, By the law (faith the Apostle) I am dead to the law, that I might live unto God: I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me, and the life which I live in the flesh is

Verse 4, 5. by the faith of the Son of God: Hence he concludes, Who loved me, and gave himself for me: And this he proves in the last words, I do not frustrate the grace of God, I do not disappoint it, mar it not in its end and design: It is (as if he had said) seeking a loft sinner to save, and I give it a lost sinner to be saved: For tho' God's decree be the first step to salvation, and the work of redemption follows on it, and then believing on both; yet to come to the knowledge of God's decree of election, and of our concern in the covenant of redemption, we lock downward, and seek first to know, if we have a right to make application of that which was thought upon long since concerning us; and this we do, by reflecting on the way we have come to believing: If we have been convinced and made sensible of sin, and of our lost condition by nature; if we have not smothered that conviction, but cherished it; if we have not run to this or that duty for satisfying of divine justice, and for making of our peace thereby, but were necellitate to betake ourselves to Jesus Christ made offer of in the gospel for the salvation of sinners; and we have closed with him as he was offered; and if we have done so, we may thence conclude that he hath loved us, and given himself to save us: Because he hath humbled me for sin (may the serious soul say) and given me this faith to believe in him; and this is his promise which I rest upon, that I shall be saved. Or thou mayst try thy interest in his redemption thus: Whether am I one of God's people or no? Whether do I walk like them? and go to throw the marks and signs of holiness, asking thy self, What sincerity is there in me? what mortification? what humility, meekness, love to God and his children? and what fruits of faith in new-obedience? These two, faith and holiness are the pillars that bear up the house of assurance; working and not refting on it, believing and yet not growing vain and light because of it, but so much the rather studying holiness; and to go on betwixt and with these two, till we come to read God's mind about our election and redemption: For neither believing nor holiness can make any alteration in the bargain of redemption, yet it will warrant our application of the bargain, and clear our interest in it; as the apostle Peter plainly in-irates, when he thus exhortts, Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: How is that? Will diligence make God alter his decree of election, or make it any furer in itself? No, by no means, but it will assure us of it; for by so doing an entrance shall be miniftered unto us abundantly into his everlasting kingdom; by giving all diligence
to add one grace to another, and one degree of grace to another, there shall be a wide door opened to us to go into heaven by; and there is no hazard in commending this doctrine to you all, even the study of faith and holiness, whereby to come to the knowledge of God's secret counsel concerning you.

And therefore, as a third Use of this point, Know that all of you, that prejudgeth yourselves of this comfort of your interest in Christ's purchase, do bring the blame of it on yourselves. If any shall profanely object, If God hath purposed, so many shall get good of Christ's sufferings, and no more, what will my faith and holiness do, if I be not elected? And what can my unbelief and negligence prejudice me, if I be elected? We shewed, in the former Use, what faith and holiness will do; and we tell you here, what your unbelief and negligence will do, and it is this, it will seclude you from all the blessings of the covenant, and bring you under the sentence of condemnation: For as the conditional promise looks to the believer and unbeliever; so it is not Christ's purchase, nor the difference God hath made in his purpose of election, that is the cause why ye are damned and not justified; but ye are damned, because ye transgressed God's law, and when salvation was offered to you through Christ, ye would not close with the offer; and ye are not justified, because ye betook not yourselves to him for righteousness, but continued in your sin, and in seeking righteousness by the law: For altho' this universal be not true, That Christ died for all men; yet this universal is true, that they are all justified that by faith come unto Jesus Christ for refuge: Hence these two are put together, John vi. 37. All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me; and him that cometh, I will in no wise cast out: For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the Father's will that sent me. If it should be asked, What is the Father's will? He answers, This is the Father's will that sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing: there are (as if he had said) some committed to me, to be redeemed by me, and I will lose none of them. And left it should yet be objected, But I was not if I be given to Christ, to be redeemed by him; he adds, And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: In which words, we have two wills to say fo, both having the same promise and effect; the first relates to the secret act of redemption, verse 39. and the second is his revealed will pointing at our duty, verse 40. And so, if any should say, I know not if I be given to Christ, I know not if I be elected: This answer is here given, What is that to thee? It is not to be searched into at the first-hand, and broken in upon per saltum, and at the broad-side; that is God's secret will, and that which is his revealed will belongs to thee, and that is, to see that thou believe; and if thou believest, the same promise that is annexed to believing is annexed to election, and they sweetly try it together, and are of equal extent, to wit, believing, and to be given to Christ? And therefore let me commend it to you, to hold you content with God's revealed will; for it is not the ground of your faith, I mean as to its first closing with Christ, that of all given to Christ, he should lose none; but this is the ground of it, That every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, shall have everlasting life: And we may add this word, as one motive amongst others to faith and holiness, That by your studying of these, ye may turn over the words of the Prophet here to yourselves, and say, Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and that of the Apostle, Gal. ii. Who loved me, and gave himself for me; also that word of Peter cited before, His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree. And O what consolation is here!

The 4th Use of it is, To commend the practice of this to the believer, that hath indeed fled to Jesus Christ; and to shew the great privilege that they have who are such: The practice of it is, that believers should seek to be established and confirmed in the particular application of Christ's death to themselves, not only to know that he suffered for the elect and for believers, but for them in particular, that, as it is, Heb. iv. 16. They may come with boldness to the throne of God, and confidently assert their interest; and as it is, Heb. vi. they may grow up to the full assurance of hope unto the end. We suppose there are many believers, that dare not declaim the covenant, and their interest in Christ, who yet are fearful to make this particular application, Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me: But if they could knit the effects, with the cause from whence they came, they might attain to it; for the man that can say, I am fled to Christ for refuge, he may also say, that he purposely laid down his life to pay my debt; and he is warranted of Christ to make this application of his particular intention towards him. Upon the other side, the more consolation be in this to believers, it speaks the greater ground of terror to unbelievers, because of the prejudice they sustain by the want of this; and as many of you as make not faith
SERMON XXI.

Isaiah liii. 4. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Verse 5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

these words, and all this chapter, look like a piece of the history of the gospel, than a prophecy of the old testament; the sufferings of the Messiah being so directly pointed at in them. We shewed that this first part of the 4th verse holds forth the cause of his sufferings, and it is applied to our Lord, Matt. viii. 17. and 1 Pet. ii. 24. As for the second part of the verse in these words, yet we esteemed him smitten of God, stricken and afflicted; any who are acquainted with the gospel, cannot but know that it was fulfilled in him: And it is an aggravation of their sin who did so undervalue and despise him, that though he condescended to come so low for us, yet we flighted him; and even then, when there was greatest love let out, we abused it, and made it the rise of the greatest malign: And for the 5th verse it is applied by Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 24. This whole chapter then being so gospel-like, and having a direct fulfilling in Christ, we may draw this general doctrine from it, That our Lord Jesus Christ, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried, and rose again the third day: is the same Messiah that was prophesied of in the old testament, and was promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, whom the fathers before his coming in the flesh were waiting for. And though this may be looked on as a very common and useful doctrine, yet it is the main ground and foundation of our faith: We may take many things for granted, wherein if we were well tried and put to it, we would be found unsicker, and in this among the rest. Now, for confirmation of it, this same one argument will make it out; we shall not follow it at length, but in the prosecuting of it shall restrict ourselves to this chapter: The argument runneth thus, if in Christ Jesus, that which was prophesied of the Messiah, and promised to the fathers, have its fulfilling and accomplishment; then he must be the same Messiah that was prophesied of, and promised to them; for these things spoked of the one and alone Messiah, can agree to no other: But whatever was prophesied and spoked, or promised of the Messiah to the fathers, to the least circumstance of it, was all fully accomplished and fulfilled in Christ; therefore the conclusion laid down in the doctrine follows, to wit, That our blessed Lord Jesus is the same Messiah that was prophesied of, promised to the fathers, and whom they before his coming were looking for: So that that question needs not now be propoded, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Co, says Christ, Mat. iv. 4, 5. 6. And tell John, The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, and the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised, and the poor have the gospel preached to them, and blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me: Blessed is he, who because of my humiliation is not stumbled. Now, not to make a rehearsal of the general prophesies in scripture, all of which have their exact fulfilling in Christ, we shall only speak to two things here for making out of the argument propoded. 1. That this chapter speaks of the Messiah. 2. That which is spoked in it, is literally fulfilled in Christ.

1. That this chapter speaks of the Messiah; though of old the blinded Jews granted it, yet now they say that it spokes of some other: But that it speaks of him, these things will make it evident, If we look to the 12th verse of the former chapter, where it is said, My Servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high; There our Lord Jesus is spoked of as the Father's Servant or great Lord-deputy; and the Jews themselves grant that this is meant of the Messiah; and there is nothing more clear than that what is spoked in this chapter relates to him, who is called the Lord's Servant in the former chapter, as we shewed at our entrance to speak of it. 2. If we look to the description of his person, it can agree to no other; for it is said, There was no guile found in his.
his mouth, he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth, &c. He had no sin of his own, which can be laid to no other; therefore this chapter speaks of him. 3. If we consider the ends and effects of his sufferings, for it is for the transgressions of his people; and as it is, Dan. ix. 26. He was, to be cut off, but not for himself: The effects, He shall see his seed, and by his knowledge justify many. And the new testament is full to this purpose, there being no scripture in all the old testament more made use of, nor oftener applied to Christ, than this is.

2. What is spoken in this chapter is really and literally fulfilled in Christ; and we may shortly draw what is in it to these five heads, all which we will find clearly fulfilled in him. 1. To his sufferings. 2. To the ground of his sufferings. 3. To men's account and examination of him. 4. To the promises made to him. 5. To the effects that followed on his sufferings. (1.) For his sufferings, it is said, that he should be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: that he should be despised and rejected of men, and not be esteemed; that he should be looked on, as stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted; that he should bear our sorrows and griefs, and be wounded for our transgressions; that he should be oppressed and afflicted, and brought as a lamb to the slaughter, that he should be numbered amongst the transgressors; and that he should die, and be buried, make his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death; all which are clearly fulfilled in him: And the clearing of his sufferings, whereof we spoke before, clears this, that not only he suffered, but that he was brought so low in suffering. 2. For the ground of his sufferings, it is said to be the sins of his own elect: He bare our griefs, and carried our sorrows: he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; there was no guile found in his mouth: The greatest enemies of our Lord could impute nothing to him; Pilate was forced to say, that he found no fault in him; all which shew that it was for the transgressions of his people that he suffered. (2.) As for men's little esteem of him, it is also very clear; for he was despised and rejected of men; we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not: The world thought little of him; and what is more clear in the gospel than this, where it is told, that he was reproached, buffeted, spitted on, despised? they cried, Away with him, crucify him; he trusted in God, let him deliver him; but God hath forsaken him.

(4.) As for the promises made to him, He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands; he shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied; and by his knowledge shall many be justified, &c. What mean all these, but that he shall die, and rise again, and have many converts; that God's work shall thrive well in his hand, and that he shall have a glorious kingdom and many subjects? Which is called afterward his having a portion with the great, and his dividing of the spoil with the strong: All this was accomplished in Christ, when after his resurrection many were won and brought in by the gospel to believe on him; and though the Jews and Heathens concurred and conspired to cut off all Christians, yet his kingdom spread, and hath continued these sixteen hundred years and above. (5.) As for the effects that followed on his sufferings, or the influence they have on the elect people of God; as many converts as have been and are in the world, as many witnesses are there, that he is the Messiah; every converted, pardoned and reconciled soul feals this truth: Hence, 1 John v. 7, 8. There are isit said, three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit in his efficacy, the Water in the sanctifying virtue of it, in changing and cleansing his people, and the Blood in the satisfying and justifying virtue of it; and these three agree and concur in one, even this one, to wit, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God: And then it follows, He that believeth hath the witness in himself, because he hath gotten pardon through him, and therefore can set to his seal to this truth, and say, Truly Christ is the Messiah.

The Use is, To exhort you to acquit yourselves with these things that serve to confirm this truth; the book of the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, are much spent upon it, even to hold out, and to prove Christ Jesus to be the true Messiah, and Saviour of his people: if this be not made sure and ficker, we have an unfalse ground for our faith; and though it be fure in itself, yet so long as it is not so to us, we want the conformation of it: And there is a twofold prejudice that cometh through folks want of thorow clearness in, and assurance of this truth. 1. To the generality of hearers there is this prejudice, that they are so careless and little solicitous to rest on him: And as it made the Jews to reject him, who to this day stumble at him on this very famous ground, that they know him not to be the Messiah, the Christ of God,
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God; in whom is accomplished all that was spoken of the Messiah: So Christians not being through in it, they do not rest on him, nor close with him as the true Messiah. 2. There is a prejudice also from it to believers, who having only a glimmering light of Christ's being the Messiah, come short of that consolation that they might have, if they were through in the faith of it; there is this great evil among Christians, that they study not to be solidly clear and through in this point, so that if they were put to reason and debate with a Jew, if there were not a witness within themselves of it, the truth of the faith of many would be exceedingly shaken.

From this, that he never speaks of Christ's sufferings, but he makes application of them, he carried our griefs, he was wounded for our transgressions, &c. Observe, That believers would look on Christ's sufferings as undergone for them, and in their room and place. We cleared before, 1. That Christ suffered for some peculiarly, and not for all: and, 2. That believers would endeavour the clearing of their own interest in his sufferings, and that they have a right to them. Now we shortly add this 3d, of kin to the former, That believers, and such as are fled to Christ for refuge, would look on his sufferings as come under for them; and these same scriptures which we cited to confirm this, will confirm this. The reason why we would have you confirmed in this, is becaufe, (1.) It is only this that will make you suitably thankful; it is this which is a notable ground of that song of praise, Rev. i. 4. To him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, &c. (2.) This is a ground of true, solid, and strong consolation, even to be comforted in the applicative faith of Christ's purchase. (3.) It is the Lord's allowance on his people, which they should reverently and thankfully make use of, even to look on Jesus Christ, as wounded, pierced, and lifted up on the cross for them; and by doing this, according to his allowance, there is a paved way made for application of all the benefits of his purchase.

3. From the scope (looking on the words as spoken to remove the scandal of the cross) observe, (which may be a reason of the former) That folk will never take up Christ rightly in his sufferings, except they take him up as suffering for them, and in their room. This look of Christ, leads, 1. To take up much of the glory of grace, and conducing love to sinners. 2. It leads to take up Christ's faithfulness, that came to the world on sinners errand, according to the ancient transfaction in the covenant of redemption, as he is brought in,

Isaiah liii. Verse 4, 5.

saying, Psal. xl. Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God. 3. It leads to a stayed look of God's holiness, justice, and goodness, in exacting satisfaction of his own Son, and in accepting of that satisfaction. 4. It gives a right view of the way of grace, and leads in to see it to be a most real thing; God the offended Party, accepting of the price, and Christ paying it; thus the believer's faith gets a sight of Christ satisfying, as if he saw his own debt satisfied by himself; it sees him undergoing the curse, and justice inflicting it on him, that the believer may go free.

The Use is, To shew the necessity of studying the well grounded application of Christ's sufferings, as for us: Much of the reason, why Christ is not more prized, lies here, that he is not looked on as paying our debt; otherwise, when challenges of the law and of justice take hold on the soul, if Christ were seen interposing, and saying, A body hath thou prepared unto me; and if justice were seen exacting, Christ performing, and God accepting his satisfaction; and that, in sign and token that justice is satisfied, he is raised from the dead, justified in the Spirit, and is entered in possession of glory, as believers Fore-runner, in their name; it would afford precious and lovely thoughts of Jesus Christ, and humbling thoughts of ourselves: Therefore there is a necessity, if we would consider his sufferings aright, and prize and esteem him, that we endeavour to make particular application of them to ourselves on good grounds. 2. Upon the other hand, know, ye who have no ground to make this application, that ye cannot esteem aright of him or his sufferings, nor of the grace that is in him, because ye have no title to, nor can, while flesh, have any clearness of interest in them. 3. For you that would fain have a high esteem of Christ, and yet are all your days calling at this foundation, never think nor expect to win rightly to esteem of him, so long as ye fear to make application of his purchase; and therefore, that ye may love and prize him, and esteem rightly of him, labour to come up to the making of this application on solid and approved grounds.

4. More particularly, from this part of the aggravation, Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted: We have a fourfold confirmation of truth, or four precious truths confirmed. (1.) That our Lord Jesus in his sufferings did really suffer, and was really brought low in his sufferings, so as onlookers thought him a most despicable Man, and one that was smitten and smitten of God, and afflicted: Of this we spoke on the beginning of the fourth.
fourth verse. (2.) We have here an evidence of the exceeding great freeness of grace, and of the love of Christ in his sufferings, in so far as he bare their sorrows, and paid their debt that counted him smitten; there was no good thing in us to deserve or procure his sufferings, but most freely he undertook these sufferings, and undertook our debt, Rom. v. 8. God commends his love towards us, in that whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And v. 10. While we were yet enemies, we were reconciled by the death of his Son. Can there be a greater proof of infinite and free love, than appears in our Lord's sufferings? There was not only no merit on our side; but on the contrary, despising, rejecting, being ashamed of him, reproaching him, kicking against him, and rubbing of affronts on him; Paul and others having their hands hot in his blood.

Use 1. Consider here, behold, and wonder at the free love of God, and rich condescending love of Christ: He stands not at the bar and prays for them that were praying him to pray for them; but, as it is in the end of the chapter, it was for transgressors: It was even for some of them that were seeking to take away the life of the Prince of life, and for other transgressors.

2. Know, that in them to whom the benefit of Christ's death is applied, there is no more worth than there is in others who do not share of the benefit of it. It is the opinion not only of heretics, but some way of many ignorant professors, that there for whom Christ died were better than others; but here we see a proof of the contrary; he dies for them that accounted him smitten of God: And this he doth for two reasons, 1. To shew the riches, and freedom of his grace, that could overcome man's evil and malice, and outreach the height of the desperate wickedness that is in man, and that stands not (to speak so) on stepping-stones, but comes over the greatest guilt of sin and enmity in the creature. 2. To comfort and encourage his followers, when engaged to him, against and out-over their greatest failings and greatest miscarriages: He that loved them, when they were despising and rejecting him, and spitting in a manner in his very face, will he now give up with them, when they have some love to him, for this or that corruption that may break forth in them? Thus the apostle reasons, Rom. v. 10. If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled shall be saved by his life: We were enemies when Christ gave himself for us; but thro' grace we are somewhat better now: Enmity and despite in us was then at an height; now it is weakened, restrained, and in some measure mortified: And if while we were at the height of enmity against him, he died for us to reconcile us to God, how much more now, being reconciled, may we expect peace and safety, and all the benefits of, his purchase thowr him? Thus there is a notable confection, from this bent of malice that was sometime in us, compared with the victory that grace hath now gotten over it; and the gradation is always comfortable, to wit, that those faults that once did reign, and were without any gracious opposition made to them, or any protestation entered against them, prevailing it may be publicly, are now opposed and protected against: And if Christ flood not on the greater, will he stand on the lesser? And our Lord allows this sort of reasoning so much the more, that he may thereby strongly engage the heart of the believer against sin, and to the admiring of grace, and withal to the serious study of holiness.

3. It serves to let you know how much ye believers are engaged and obliged to grace, and what things you owe to it. (1.) Look to what satisfies for your debt: ye pay not one farthing of it, our Lord Jesus paid all. (2.) Look to the moving cause, it is to be attributed to nothing in you, but altogether to free grace: Some poor dyyour may by his pleading prevail with an able and pitiful hearted man to pay his debt; but there was no such externally moving cause in you to procure this of him, but he freely and willingly, and with delight paid your debt, when ye were in the height of malicious opposition to him, doing all that might fear him from it: And had it been possible that man's malice, despising and despite could have scarred him, he had never died for one sinner; but he triumphed openly in his grace over that, and all that flood in his way.

4. We have here a confirmation of that truth, that holds out man's malice and desperate wickedness; and can there be anything that evidenceth man's wickedness and malice more, than 1. To have enmity against Christ; 2. To have it at such an height as to despise, and count him smitten and plagued of God; And. 3. To be at the height of malice, even then when he out of love was condescending so low as to suffer and satisfy justice for him? Ye may possibly think that it was not ye that had such malice at Christ; but faith not the prophet, We esteemed him smitten of God? Taking in himself and all the elect, Which might give us this observation, " That there is nothing more detestably wicked, and filled with more enmity against Christ in his condescending love, and againf; God"
5. From considering that it is the prophet that expresseth this aggravation, we may observe, “That the believer that is most tender, and hath felt right to Jesus Christ and his satisfaction, and may upon best ground apply it, will be most sensible of his enmity, and of the abominable guilt that is in despising and wronging of Jesus Christ.” Therefore the prophet brings in himself as one of those that by Christ’s stripes were healed, taking with his guilt; we esteemed him not, we judged him smitten of God: the reason is, Because interest in Jesus Christ makes the heart tender, and any wrong that is done to affect him the sooner and the more deeply, the scourf that sometime was on the heart being in a measure taken away; and interest in Christ awakeneth and raifeth an esteem of him, and produceth a holy sympathy with him in all the concerns of his glory, even as the members of the body have a fellow-feeling with the head. Make a supposition, that a man in his madness should smite and wound his head, or wrong his wife, his father, or his brother; when that fit of madness is over, he is more affected with that wrong, than if it had been done to any other member of his body, or to other persons, not at all, or not so nearly related to him: There is something of this pointed at, Zech. xii. 10. They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, as a man doth for his only son; as if he had said, the strokes they have given the head shall then be very heavy and grievous to be born, and will be made to their feeling to bleed afresh: they thought not much of these woundings and piercings of him before; but so soon as their interest in him is clear, or they come cordially to believe in him, they are kindly affected with the wrongs done to him.

The Ufe is, That it is a mark, to try if there be indeed an interest in Christ, and if it be clear. The man whose interest is cleareft, 1. His wrongs

T
Isaiah liii.

Verse 5.

by men in his most glorious and gracious works.

Can there be a greater mistake than this? Christ suffering for our sins, and yet judged smitten and plagued of God by us; or, more home, even Christ Jesus is often shamefully mistaken in the work of his grace, and in the venting of his love, towards them whose good he is procuring, and whose iniquities he is bearing.

The Use of it. 1. To teach us, when we are ready to pass censure on Christ's work, to stand still, to animadvert on, and to correct ourselves, lest we unsuitably construct of him: He gets much wrong as to his public work, as if he were cruel, when indeed he is merciful; as if he had forgotten us, when indeed he remembers us still: And as to his private work in particular persons, as if he did fail in his promise, when he is most faithful, and bringing it about in his own way. And, 2. (which is of affinity to the former) It is a warning to us, not to take up hard constructions of Christ; nor to mis-construct his work, which when mis-constructed, himself is mistaken and mis-constructed. How many think that he is breaking, when he is binding up; that he is wounding, when he is healing; that he is destroying, when he is humbling? Therefore we would suspend passing censure till he come to the end and close of his work, and not judge of it by halves; and then we shall see there was no such ground for mis-constructing of him, who is every day holding on in his own way, and steadily pursing the same end that he did from the beginning; and let him be doing so. To him be praise forever.

SERMON XXII.

Isaiah liii. 5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

It is hard to tell whether the subject of this verse, and almost of this whole chapter, be more fat or more sweet: it is indeed a fat subject to read and hear of the great sufferings of our blessed Lord Jesus, and of the deftiful use of that he met with, and to see such a speat of malice spued and spitted out on that glorious face; so that, when he is bearing our griefs and carrying our forrowes, we do even then account him plagued, smitten of God, and afflicted, and in a manner look upon it as well befrowned: Yet it is a most sweet subject, if we either consider the love it comes from, or the comfortable effects that follow it; that hath been the vife, the cause, and the occasion of much singing to man here below, and the cause and occasion of so much singing among the redeemed that are this day before the throne of God: and as the grace of God hath overcome the malice of men, so we are persuaded this cause of rejoicing hath a sweetness in it beyond the fadnefs, tho' often we mar our own spiritual mirth, and know not how to dance when he pipes unto us.

These words are an explication of the 4th verse, where it is afferted, that Christ's sufferings were not for himself, but for us: From, and by which, the prophet having heightened mens malice, who notwithstanding thereof esteemed him not, yea, judged him smitten of God; he comes again, for furthering and carrying on of this scope, to shew more particularly the ground, end, and effects of Christ's sufferings.
Serm. XXII.

Isaiah liii.

Sufferings: Where ye would remember what we hinted before in general, That folks will never think nor conceive of Christ's Sufferings rightly, till they conceive and take him up as suffering for them; and when we consider this, we think it no wonder that the most part esteem but little of the Sufferings of Christ, because there are so few that can take him up under this notion, as standing in their room, and paying their debt, and as being put in prison for them, when they are let go free.

In this 5th verfe we have thefe three, 1. A further expreffion of Christ's Sufferings. 2. The caufe of them, or the end that he had before him in them. 3. The benefits and fruits or effects of them.

There are in the words four expreffions which I fhall clear. (1.) He was wounded, to fhew the reality that was in his Sufferings; he was actually piercèd, or (as the word is rendered in the margin) tormented, and the caufe is our tranfgreflions: and while it is said, He was wounded for our tranfgreflions, he means, 1. That our tranfgreflions procured his wounding; and, 2. That his wounding was to remove them, and to procure pardon to us. (2.) He was bruifed, that is, poffed as grapes in a wine-prefl, he underwent such a wounding as bruifed him; to fhew the great defert of fin, and the heaviness of wrath that would have come on us for it, had not he interposed: and the caufe is our iniquities. And thofe two words, tranfgreflions, and iniquities, fhew the exceeding abominablenefs of fin; tranfgreflions or erring, pointing at our common fins; iniquities or rebellions, pointing at greater guilt. (3.) The chaftefiment (or, as the words bear, the discipline) of our peace was upon him: It supposes, 1. That we by nature were at feud with, and enemies to God. 2. That, before our peace could be procured, there behaved to be a fatisfaction given to justice, the Mediator behaved to come under discipline and chaftefiment. (4.) And by his stripes we are healed; he was fo whipped, that (to fay fo) the marks of the rod remained behind. The firt benefit looks to pardon of fin, and peace with God, in the firt three expreffions; the second, in this laft expreffion, looks to our fanctification, and purging from the dominion and pollution of fin: By Christ's becoming fin for us, there is a way made to wash us from all the guilt of fin, and from all the foul spots and stains that were on us by fin; and he hath thus procured holinefs to us; we come eafily by it, but it cost Christ dear, yea very dear.

These very fad, but moft sweet, and foul-fainting words, hold out a short fum of the fmante Verfe 5.

and marrow of the gospel; and because they do fo, we fhall fhew of them fummarily together: and ye would the more ferioufly attend, especially fuch as are more ignorant, that by the reading and opening up of this verfe ye may be brought and kept in mind of the sum of the heads of the gospel. And to make the matter the more clear, I fhall endeavour to make the doctrines drawn from it, as fo many anfwers to fix or feven questions; as, 1. What is man's condition naturally, and what is the condition of all them that get not benefit by Christ's death? 2. How is man redeemed and freed from that condition? 3. By whom is he freed, or who makes the fatisfaction? 4. How doth he perform that fatisfaction? 5. What are the benefits that flow from, and come to us by the fatisfaction performed? 6. Who are the perfons for whom Christ hath performed the fatisfaction, and to whom he hath procured these benefits? 7. What is the way how these benefits are transferred or derived to those perfons? And putting thefe seven together, we may have a short catechism in one verfe.

1ft, Then, What is man's condition by nature? 1. He is under tranfgreflions. 2. Under iniquities. 3. At feud with God. And, 4. Under wounds and moft lothfom diseafes of a sinful nature. In a word, Man by nature is a finner, guilty, greatly guilty, under God's wrath and curfe; and at feud with God; of a moft sinful and abominable nature, even fick of, and lothfom because of fin. The firt is implied in this word, He was wounded for our tranfgreflions, that is, our common fins; the fecond is holden out in the next word, He was bruifed for our iniquities, or rebellions, which holds out great guilt; the third in that word, The chaftefiment of our peace was on him, which supposes that we were once without peace with God; the laft word, By his stripes we are healed, fuppofeth that we continue in that condition filthy and polluted, and polluting ourfelves more and more, greedy to drink in fin, and wounded and finking ourfelves by fin: Now, lay thefe four words together, they clear this truth to our judgment, and ferve to point out to us the necefly of a Mediator. Again, consider them in a fecond notion, and they tell us, that even the elect themselves are by nature in the fame sinful and rebellious condition with others, at feud with, and under the curfe of God, and abominably polluted, before they be washed and healed; as the apostle afferts, Eph. ii. "We are by nature children of wrath even as others;" and here it is plainly declared, "He was wounded for our tranfgreflions, he was bruifed for our iniquities, he was pierced for our transgressions, he was straitened and bruifed for our iniquities."
Isaiah liii. Verse 5.

Serm. xii.

Verse 5.

"who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we "might be made the righteousness of God in him," as it is, 2 Cor. iv. ct. even he of whom the Apostle hath been speaking here, while he says, "We "as ambassadors for Christ, as though God did bid "beech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead be "ye reconciled unto God." And when we say it is Christ that is meant of, we are to understand it as well negatively and exclusively, excluding all others; as positively including him: When we make him to be the only Saviour, we exclude all that men can do, with their penance, prayers, good works; and all that the angels can do: Neither man nor angel could satisfy divine justice, and make our peace with God; and therefore is is said, Acts iv. 12. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Je- "fus," where it is clear that all others are excluded, as it is, Psal. xl. 6. "Sacrifice and offering thou "wouldst not," &c. Neither penances, performances, nor any other thing will do it; but it is, "Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book it is writ- "ten of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God." Take this then as another ground of faving knowledge, that it is our blessed Lord Jesus that satisfies justice, even he who, being God, was content to become Man, and is God and Man in one person; he, and he only, undertaking the debt, satisfies justice.

4. How does he satisfy justice? Anfw. "He "was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised "ed for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace "was on him, and by his stripes we are healed:"

In which words, observe these three things. 1. In Christ's satisfaction for us, there is an actual undertaking, he becomes Cautioner, and enters himself in our room; when all other things are cften, an- "gels, men with their sacrifices, thousands of rams, "ten thousand rivers of oil, and the fruit of the body, "then our Lord Jesus comes in and undertakes, Psal. "xl. 7. "Lo, I come," he satisfies for our transgressions; "which supposes that justice could not have fought our debt of him, if he had not undertaken it; therefore, Heb. vii. 24. he is called the Surety of a "better testament, for he comes in our room and place, and undertakes to pay our debt: Even as if a man under debt were a-carrying to prison, and another able rich man should undertake to pay the "debt; although the debt should ly over for a while unpaid, yet the creditor will get a decreet on the "cautioner for payment of the debt, when he pleases "to put at him; so Jesus Christ enters Cautioner for "our debt, and becomes liable to the payment of it."
2. Christ’s performance and payment of the debt according to his undertaking, implies a covenant and transac-tion on which the application is founded; which we shewed was also implied in the foregoing words, v. 4. “He hath born our griefs, and car-ried our forrows.” God the Father, Son, and holy Spirit, are the Party wronged by sin; Jesus Christ, confidered personally and as Mediator, is the Party undertaking: The terms are, That he shall suffer, and satisfy justice for us, and that we shall go free, that his paying shall be our freedom, that the debt which he pays for us, shall not be exacted off us ourselves, 2 Cor. v. ult. “He, who knew ‘no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,” and here, “the satisfaction of our peace was on him;” it was transferred from us to him, “that by his stripes we might be healed;” by his stripes and blanes, health was procured and brought to us. (3.) Our Lord Jesus, in fulfilling the bargain, and satisfying justice, paid a dear price; it was at a very dear rate that he bought our freedom; he was wounded, bruised, suffered stripes and punishment: So that ye may take the answer to the question in sum to be this, Our Lord Jesus performed and satisfied for all that was due by us, by undertaking our debt, and paying a dear price for sinners, according to the covenant of redemption; he came under the law, and the law, struck at him as Cautioner, and he answered the law’s demands, and fully and con-dignly satisfied the justice of God for us.

As for that question, Whether Christ might not by one drop of his blood have satisfied? and such like; we think them very needless, too curious, and little or not at all edifying: But if it be asked, Why Christ paid so much? We anwer, 1. It be-hoved Christ to pay a condign price, to give a con-dign satisfaction to justice. 2. It was meet that he should pay all that he paid. First, We say, it be-hoved to be a condign satisfaction; For, (1.) It behoved to be a price equivalent to all that the elect should have suffered, had not he interposed, (2.) It behoved to be proportionable to the justice of God; for God having laid down such a way of shewing mercy, that his justice should be satisfied, there behoved to be condign satisfaction, for the vindication of justice: which was done by Christ’s suffering to the full undoubtedly; if we consider, 1. The excellency of the Person that suffered, God and Man in one Person. 2. If we consider the na-ture of his sufferings, that they were exceeding great, heavy, and pressyng. And, 3. If withal we consider the manner of his sufferings, that it was

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with much readiness and cheerfulness of obedience to the Father’s will: That such and so excellent a Person should suffer, and suffer so much, and suffer in such a way, this sure makes condign satisfaction; and so justice is thereby fully satisfied, and made as glorious as if all the elect had suffered eternally: Therefore we say, that his sufferings were a condign and proportionable satisfaction to justice for them whole debt he paid; by this justice is completely and gloriously satisfied, Secondly, We said, that it was meet that he should pay all that he paid: and so it is, if we consider, (1.) The excellency of immortal souls; a little price (as all that men or angels could have paid would have been, the finest gold, sliver, or precious stones) could not have done it; The redemption of the soul is precious, and ceaseth for ever, to wit, amongst all the creatures, Psal. lxxix. 8. (2.) The severity of justice on the just account of sin, called for such a price, (3.) God’s end, which was to make both his grace and justice glorious, required, and made it meet that our Lord should suffer condignly, and in his sufferings suffer much, even all that he did suffer; and in this ye have an answer to this question, Why Christ suffered so much as the losf (to speak fo) of his declarative glory for a time, outward sufferings and inward sufferings, even the bruising and squeezing that his soul was under, which made him to say, that it was heavy unto death, and exceeding forrowful? Let not sinners then think it a little or a light thing to get a soul saved, the redemption whereof ceaseth for ever as to us or any creature: Behold herein the glory of grace eminently shineth forth, when there is such a price paid for that which in some respect is of so little worth; and also the glory of justice, when so great a price is demanded and paid down for its satisfaction, by so worthy and excellent a Person; and let none think little of sin, the guilt whereof could not be otherwise expiated, the claflisement of our peace behoved to be on him.

5. What are the benefits that come by these sufferings? Answer. 1. The benefits are such, that if he had not suffered for us, we should have suffered all that he suffered ourselves. 2. More particularly, we have (1.) Peace and pardon of sin. (2.) Healing by his sufferings; so that if it be asked, What procured pardon of sin, and peace with God? We answer, It is Chrifl’s sufferings: Or if it be asked, What is the caufe of God’s justifying sinners? We answer, it is Christ’s satisfaction or sufferings: And it is (by the way) much to be regretted, that such is the ignorance of some, that if a question be proposed in divers words or expressions, as if it should
should be asked, Wherefore are we pardoned? Wherefore are we justified? which is one and the same; they know not how to answer: But here ye are called to remember, that Christ being wounded, and his bearing the chastisement due to you, is the cause of your pardon and justification. 2. Healing looks to sanctification, as we hinted in the exposition; so that if it be asked, How comes it to pass that a sinner is made holy? we have it here answered, that the eff of it comes by the Spirit, and by his work, yet meritoriously it comes by Christ’s sufferings, he bought it, by his stripes we are healed: And under these two words, peace and healing, we take in all things needful or pertaining to life and godliness; for by peace the feud and enmity is taken away, and we are reconciled to God, as Eph. ii. 14. he is said to be our peace, and he who came to speak peace to all that are afar off and near-hand; and also by peace we understand all the effects of peace. (1.) Pardon of sin, justification, adoption, communion with God here and hereafter; peace with our own conscience, and with the creatures; eternal peace and glory, and all good things purchased by Christ’s death: For the Hebrews, under peace, comprehended all these good things. And under healing, we take in sanctification (as distinguished, though not divided, from these other things mentioned) dying to sin and living to righteousness, with the several degrees of their advance and progress, and the making of us to be without spot and wrinkle, or any such thing; so that folks have much advantage by Christ’s purchase, and much prejudice thorow the want of it. By his death we are kept out of hell, and admitted to peace with God, and every thing that is good; we have liberty to pray for all that is good, and are brought in his own time and way to the possession of it: It is by the blood of sprinkling that we have a new and living way made patent to us unto the most holy, and holiness, in the way whereof we enter in thither.

6. To whom hath Christ procured all these good things? The text faith, It is our and see, the chastisement of our peace was on him, and by his stripes we are healed, to wit, the elect. Whence observe, 1. That the benefits of Christ’s purchase redound only to the elect: There is a certain elect number to whom they are applied, and not to all indiscriminately; it is only of as many as are healed, whose chastisement he hath born; it is only they whom the Father hath given him, to them he gives eternal life, and they shall never perish, John x. 28. They are effectually called, justified and sanctified. 2.

Observe, “That what Jesus Christ hath purchased, and the benefits of his purchase, redound and are extended to them that are guilty of hainous sins;” to them that are under transgressions and iniquities, that are at feud with God, and under many pollutions, and most lothsom spiritual diseases; to them who contemned and despised Christ and judged him smitten and plagued of God, as is clear from the foregoing words; and to them who have gone straying like lost sheep, as is clear from the words following.

This points at these two or three things very useful, 1. That the elect are by nature, and before Christ do them good, no better than others. 2. It shews the freedom of the grace of God, that comes over that, and freely gives pardon, peace, and healing to them. And, 3. It serves to strengthen a sinner’s faith, who is sensible of his enmity and sinfulness, and to be a ground of encouragement to him to step to, and lay hold on Christ’s purchase, because it was for such that he died; he may humbly, yet confidently say, Christ died even for such as I am, for them that wounded and pierced him by their transgressions and iniquities, for them that were at enmity with God, &c. and alas! I am such, and will therefore on the call of the gospel come to him, and on his own terms endeavour to call myself on him.

7. How are these benefits, this justification, pardon of sin, peace and healing, and all that is comprehended under them, derived from Christ to the sinner that by faith fleeth unto him for refuge? Answer, These two generals will clear it, 1. They are derived to us justly and in a legal way; Christ steps in our room, that we may come in his room. 2. They are derived to us freely; he was wounded and bruised, that we might go free; he endured stripes, that we might be healed; he got the buffets and bare the burden, and we get the benefits; there is not a grain-weight of it laid on us, as it is satisfactory to divine justice. To clear this a little more, anent the deriving the benefits of Christ’s purchase to us, there must be a respect had, 1. To the covenant of redemption, the ground of his suffering for us. 2. To the covenant of grace and reconciliation, wherein the offer of these sufferings, and the benefits purchased by them to us, and the terms of both, are made.

(1.) I say, that respect must be had to the covenant of redemption, wherein it was acted in the council of the God-head, that the Son of God should become Man, and suffer, and condively satisfy divine justice by paying the price due by the elect; and
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Isaiah lili.  

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that that price being laid down, it should be made forthcoming for them for whom he paid it, and be reckoned theirs, and they set actually at liberty, when having recourse thereto by faith: And here is a legal ground for transferring Christ's purchase to and upon us; the Cautioner satisfying, we the debtors are on that account absolved in his own order and method, and have a right to seek the application of the price, and the benefits purchased by that price: Christ stands in our room at the bar, and sentence passed on him to pay our debt; he satisfied according to his undertaking for us: And upon the other hand, we are brought in, and the sentence of justification passed on us on that account: He, faith the Apostle, who knew no sin, is made sin for us, that in him we may be accounted righteous, and may be declared free (as we are) by vertue of his satisfaction.

But it may be objected here, What are we then absolved from the very time of Christ's death, and forward? For answer, we would distinguish betwixt a right to the thing, and a right in the thing (as we use to speak) betwixt ju$ ad rem, and ju$ in re; the elect from Christ's death forward, and before too, have a right to the thing, but not in the thing, as to the application of it to themselves: An elect person, by vertue of Christ's satisfaction, hath a legal right to his purchase before believing; but when he comes to believe, the obstruction is taken away that hindered his application, and then he hath a new right, not only to, but in Christ's purchase; even as a perfon that is minor or mad, may have a right to a great possession, but by the law he is excluded from the use of it, till he come to majority, or have the use of reason: and this distinction we have as one of the clauses of the covenant, John vi. 39, 40. where i. in the 39 v. Christ says, This is the Father's will that sent me, that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day: It is the Father's will that eternal life be given to as many as are given to Christ on his satisfaction, and Christ hath purchased it to them by his satisfaction absolutely as to the event; and therefore they have an accessible-nes to it, a right to it, and cannot but partake of it, yet not finnily, but in the way that he hath laid down: And therefore, 2. In the 40 ver. he faith, 'This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that feeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have eternal life; by believing they come to the application of that to themselves, which they had a legal right to before by Christ's death.

(2.) Respect must be had to the covenant of grace, which is not quite another thing than the covenant of redemption, but the making offer of it, and the benefits contained in it, in the preached gospel, when Christ sends out his ambassadors to woo and invite sinners to Christ, and to bring them to the application of his purchase: and it is by clothing with, and receiving of Christ's offer, that the actual cure comes, and that by Christ's stripes our torts are healed; even as when a child that was minor becomes major, he comes to have a right to possess the same lands or sums of money, by the same law that gave him a legal or simple right to them before; or he comes, to have a right in that, which before he had a right to: so elect souls, that have a right to Christ's purchase before believing, while they are mad in nature, are under the curse and wrath threatened in the word of God, for not believing; but when they come to believe, they come to get an extract from the same word of their right in Christ's purchase, because the word says, 'He that believes, is paft from death to life, and shall not come into condemnation': and so the same word that did condemn before believing, doth now absolve upon a finner's believing; and we come at this absolution, by receiving of Christ's offer in the covenant of grace. And if it be asked, How comes it, that the receiving of Christ's free offer in the covenant of grace gives a right to Christ's purchase? We answer, It is by vertue of the covenant of redemption, wherein it is so tranfacted betwixt God and the Mediator: so that there is the offer of the covenant received, and the covenant itself, that concur for making over and deriving a complete right to wretched sinners in Christ's purchase.

Let the 1st Use of this be for your instruction and information, which is the end wherefore we have chosen, in this way, by this short view, to give you, in a very short sum the marrow of the gospel; and if ye remember these few quaffions, ye may be in a capacity, not only to answer us, but through grace to exercife faith on Christ: and we think ye will all readily grant, that these who cannot at all answer them, should not go to the communion; and therefore, that ye may take them with you, we shall shortly refute them. 1. What condition is man in by nature? Answer, Under sin and misery, even under the curse of God: or thus, every man is a finner, and hath a finful nature; or he is under transgressions and iniquities, is naturally lothfom, wants peace with God, and hath need of healing; let this, in the first place sink in your hearts. 2. How is man freed from this finfulness and misery? Answer, He cannot be free from it, till there be a condign
condign satisfaction made to divine justice; wounding and bruising must be to procure pardon, and stripes must be to procure healing, and chastisement must be to bring about our peace: That word, Exod. xxxiv. Who will by no means acquit the guilty, would always be remembered, and faith would look to a Saviour for satisfaction. 3. Who can satisfy? Answer, Neither man nor angel can do it, no penances, no prayers, nor performances of any mere creature will do it, but he only that was wounded and bruised, he who by nature is the Son of God, the express image of the Father's Person, and who, in respect of his human nature, was born of the Virgin Mary, like to us in all things except sin; it is he that satisfies justice, and it is by no other way that we get pardon, and peace with God, and holiness. 4. What way doth Christ satisfy justice, and make peace betwixt God and sinners? Answer, He entred himself in our room, and as Cautioner undertook our debt, suffered the condign punishment that was due for our sins, and paid the price that we should have paid; he in a manner left heaven, and became Man, had a mean life in the world, drank the cup of his Father's wrath, was wounded, bruised, chastised, and died a cursed death, whereof his hanging on the cross was but a sign. 5. What benefits come to us by his sufferings? Answer, Pardon of sin, peace with God, and healing; the conscience by his blood is sprinkled from dead works, the person absolved, reconciled to God, made whole, and made at last to be without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; and this is not, as Papists blasphemously speak, a putative effect, but a most real one. 6. Who are made partakers of this pardon, peace and healing? Answer, The elect have right to it, and by believing they make the application; therefore it is paid here, our and we; and we may look upon the prophet, speaking in the name of all the elect, or in name of the believing elect, who on believing are actually healed: the elect then are healed; and the way how, is by faith making application of Jesus Christ. 7. How in justice can he be condemned, that was free of fin; and how can we be absolved, that were guilty? Answer, He in justice was condemned, because, as our Cautioner, he came in our room, and undertook to pay our debt; and on the same ground, we wretched sinners may in this way make application of his purchase, because it was on these terms that he undertook the debt, that we might be set free; and it is on these terms that it is offered in the gospel, that seeing he hath paid for elect sinners, they may, upon the hearing of the offer, close with it. But how may the finner apply it? Answer, Not only because it is free and freely offered, but by gripping to it by faith, as the prophet doth here, it is not only to apply it simply, but to step in, and rest upon it, in the terms it is made offer of. So that as, on the one part, Jesus Christ became really liable to suffering, and satisfied for our sins, when he said, “Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will.” So upon the other part, the believing sinner comes to apply the price paid, by embracing the price, and acquiescing in the satisfaction, and gripping to it as his own, and by his being brought to lay in faith, Let his wounding be my pardon, let his chastisement be my peace, and let his stripes be my healing. By this means, as the law had a right to Christ for his paying the elect's debt, so they, by believing, get a right to the promise of pardon and healing: for if the bargain was sticer on the one side, to procure wounding to Christ, as if he had been the sinner himself; so on the other side, the bargain is as sure; the believer is set free, and may be as really comforted, as if he had a righteousness of his own, or had never sinned.

**Use 2d.** Therefore there is here wonderful matter of consolation to believers, that what was justice to Christ, is grace and mercy to us; that which was pain to him, is pleasure to us; his forrow our comfort, his wounding our pardon, his stripes our healing, &c.

**Use 3d.** As ye would not prejudice yourselves of these benefits which Christ hath purchased, make your peace with God through Christ; if your pardon and peace be not obtained this way, ye will never get it, but ye shall be made to pay your own debt, and be liable to wrath eternally, because of inability to pay your debt to the full: therefore step to, and make the offer welcome, how sinful and undone forever ye be; the more sensible ye be, ye are the more welcome. This is the particular use of the doctrine. O let these things sink in your hearts, that ye are sinners, great sinners, under wrath, and at feud with God; that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of lost sinners, and that there is no way to pardon and peace, but by closing with him, and laying hold on his satisfaction, that ye may be drawn to call yourselves over on this everlasting covenant, for obtaining the benefits that Christ hath purchased. And himself blest what hath been spoken for this end and use.
Sermon XXIII.

Isaiah liii. 5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

It were no small progress in Christianity, to know and believe the truths that are implied and contained in this same verse; the Lord, by the prophet, is giving a little compend of the work of redemption, by his saving of sinners from death, through and by the wounding of the Mediator. We did a little open the meaning of the words, and gave a sum of the doctrines contained in them, at least of some of them, which do contribute to this scope.

The prophet is here speaking of Christ's sufferings, with a respect to the cause of them, and the effect that followed them; and shews how this was indeed the rightful and blasphemous imputation that we had of, and were ready to put on him, even to judge him smitten and plagued of God for his own sins, whereas God hath another design: he was altogether without sin, but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; we were at feud with God, and he took on him the chastisement of our peace; and this is the effect, to procure healing to us.

We shall now speak a word to three doctrines further, besides what we spoke to the last day, which are these: 1. That there was an eternal design, plot and transacti on between God and the Mediator, as to Christ's suffering for the redemption of elect sinners, before he actually suffered. This the prophet speaks of as a thing concluded; for the cause of his sufferings was condescended on, and the end and fruit of them was determined, which implies an antecedent transaction betwixt the Father and him, for putting him in the room of sinners: and by this transaction, justice hath access to exact the payment of this price; he interposed, and the Father exacts of him the payment of their debt, and seeks satisfaction from him for all that he bargained for. 2. That this transaction or design, concerning the redemption of elect sinners, is, in respect of Christ's suffering and satisfying of justice, fully and actually performed; he undertook to be wounded and bruised, and he was accordingly actually wounded and bruised: the transaction, as to the engagement in it, and efficacy of it, took place in Isaiah's time, and before his time; but as to the actual performance of what the Mediator engaged himself to suffer, it is spoken of prophetically by him, as a thing done, because to be done; and now it is done, and indeed long ago. 3. That the satisfying of justice, by the Mediator's sufferings, according to his engagement, proves as effectual to absolve, justify and heal these, even the grossest sinners, that come under this bargain and transaction, as if they had actually suffered, and paid and satisfied their own debt themselves: their sins are pardoned through his sufferings, their deadly wounds are healed by his stripes, as if they had never had a wound; their count is dathend and scored as clean out, as if they had never had any debt; they are acquitted and set free, as if they had never been guilty.

These three doctrines lie very near the life of the gospel; and the prophet, in this chapter, and particularly in this verse, is often on them. Our purpose is only shortly to explicate them to you, as a short sum and compend of the tract of the covenant of redemption; the first of them shews the rife of the work of redemption; the second shews the mids by which it is executed; the third holds out the effect and consequence, and the end of all.

For the first then, there is (we say) an eternal transacti on betwixt God, and Jesus Christ the Mediator, concerning the redemption of sinners; his actual redeeming, by being wounded and bruised, supposeth this; for the Son is no more liable to suffering (not to speak of his suitableness) than any other of the Persons of the blessed Godhead, had there not been an antecedent transaction; there was no obligation nor tye on him to be wounded, and to enter into the room of sinners as their Cautioner, for payment of their debt, if there had not been a prior engagement; neither could his wounding and bruising have proven useful, or have brought healing to us, if this prior engagement had not been; and this is it which we call the covenant of redemption, which we would not extend so, in all things to stretch it to the properties of these covenants and bargains which are amongst men, it being in some respect an expression used to make grace more discomportable to us, that can conceive so little of grace's way. This transacti on, or covenant of redemption, is sometimes called the Father's will, and his law, as Psal. xl. 8. I delight to do thy will, O my God, yeat thy law is withiny heart; and John vi. 38. it is called so, I came from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; so also, John xviii. 14. it is called the Father's work in one respect, and the Son's work in another respect, I have finished the work thou gavest me.
to do; which is the prosecution of the same contrivance usually called a covenant, because, as to the essentials, it hath the nature of a covenant, to wit, two parties agreeing, and terms whereupon they agree, and is well order'd in all things for prosecuting and carrying on the design of saving lost sinners, called, Acts ii. 23. the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God; there was a plot and design in God's counsel, concerning Christ's sufferings, whereof his sufferings were the execution.

To clear it a little, we would consider these five things in it, 1. The parties. 2. The matter about which it is. 3. The rise and occasion of it. 4. The terms wherein the form of it stands, or the middle whereupon it is undertaken. 5. Some properties of this covenant.

1. For the parties; upon the one side is God essentially considered, or all the three Persons of the glorious Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who are all concurring in this covenant, it being the act of the determinate counsel of God; and in this respect God is the Party to whom the satisfaction for lost sinners is made, and he is also the Party condescending to accept of the satisfaction: and upon the other side, the Party engaging to make satisfaction, is Jesus Christ, the second Person of the blessed, dreadful, and adorable Trinity, personally considered, now becoming the Head of the elect, that he may have them all with himself to be one mystical body; in the first respect, all the three Persons, that same one blessed God, give the command or require a satisfaction as God, and concur, as the infinitely wise Orderer of the decree: and in the second respect, Jesus Christ, as Mediator, undertakes to make satisfaction, Psal. xi. 6. 7. Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; God, as it were, making the offer, What can, or shall be given to me, for the redemption of sinners? Sacrifice and offering will not please, nor are accepted by me. Then follows the Mediator's part, Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: for thou in the first respect, all the persons in the Trinity be on the one side, being of one will; yet in the other respect Christ Jesus, as Mediator, comes in on the other side, to do his will.

2. As to the matter about which this covenant is: it is about the satisfying of justice, and making of peace between God and lost sinners; it is that we might be pardoned, justified, have peace made with God, and be healed. It is true, there is an end above and beyond this, even the glory of God's rich grace, and condescending love, that stoops so low to save sinners; but sinners pardon, and peace with God, and their healing, is the immediate end: or, if we come nearer, the matter about which it is, is the redeeming of the elect; for these words in the text, we and us, are of equal extent with them that are justified and reconciled, and whom he actually healed by his wounds and stripes; so that whoever they be who are never justified and healed, they are not comprehended in this bargain.

3. The rise and occasion of this covenant may be gathered from these three. 1. There is the fulfilling of man's sin and fall; for, whatever election doth, redemption doth most certainly supposeth man to be lost, and under sin. 2. There is God's decree, not to pardon sin without a satisfaction. 3. There is God's election preceding, or his purposed to save some, for the glory of his grace, which are the elect, who are said to be given to Christ. These three are the rise and occasion of the covenant of redemption; man hath sinned, the threatening must be executed, and justice satisfied; and yet God hath, for the glory of his grace, elected a certain number to life, and that must needs stand firm; and these three seeming to thwart one of them with another, gives occasion and rise to the excellent and admirable contrivance of this way, how the lost sinner shall be faved, yet so as justice shall be satisfied, and not wronged in the least, and justice so satisfied, that yet the decree of election by grace shall stand.

4. As for the terms (wherein the form of the covenant stands) and the middle by which these ends may be brought about, to wit, how the redemption of lost sinners may be obtained, justice may be satisfied, and the glory of grace made to shine, and how anything that makes these seem to jumble and thwart might be guarded against; and that was it, which (to speak fo with reverence) put God to the confutation about it, which shews the excellency of the covenant of redemption, and the deep draughts that are about it; for otherwise, and properly, God needs not consult or advise: They are shortly these, 1. God's offer to redeem man, if his justice may be satisfied, and if any responfal person will become cautioner, and undertake to pay the elect's debt. 2. The Son's accepting of the offer, and undertaking or engaging to pay their debt, upon condition that his payment and satisfaction shall be accounted the elects, and accepted for them. 3 The Father's acception of this engagement and undertaking according to his offer, and the Mediator's accepting of it, and acquiescing in it; he holds the bargain,
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(to speak so) and so it is a closed covenant: the first is comprehended in these words, Sacrifices and offerings thou didst not desire, Psal. 22. infinuating that God did desire something; the second in these words, Mine ears thou hast opened, thou saidst, Lo I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will; which implies the Father's acceptation, as well as Christ's undertaking; and it also points at the way how the satisfaction is made effectual: especially if we compare these words of the Psalm with Heb. v. 5, 6. we will find that they relate to Christ's humiliation in general; for it is in the Psalm, Mine ear hast thou opened; but in Heb. v. 5, it is, A body hast thou prepared me: and where it is said in the Psalm, I delight to do thy will, the Apostle says, By the which will we are sanctified. The Father makes the offer on the terms of a satisfaction to justice: the Son as Mediator accepts the offer, and undertakes for the elect: Here am I, to do thy will, on the same terms that the offer is made; and the Father accepts of the Son's engagement, according to that word, Matt. iii. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; he offers himself Surety for sinners, and the Father is content to accept of him as their Surety: In the one respect it is called the Father's pleasure, verse 10th of this chapter, Yeit it pleased the Lord to bruise him, &c. because the terms were so proposed: and in the other respect, its called the Mediator's pleasure, or satisfaction, verse 11th, because the condition proposed is satisfying to him, The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He undertakes to pay, and God accepts of his undertaking, and obliges himself to absolve the believer: and the words following, He shall see his seed, and of the travail of his soul, and by satisfied, and by his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, are promises made to him, on supposition of his making satisfaction, 2 Cor. v. ult. the first part of the transactin is, He hath made him to be sin for us, that knew no sin; and the other part of it is, That we might be made the righteousness of God through him: he accepting of the bargain, obtains a right to a justifying and absolving sentence, by virtue of his suffering; for which cause these words are added, in him, or through him: This shews the clearness of God's justice in proceeding with the Mediator; the ground of sinners justification through him; and gives sinners a warrant to make use of Christ's satisfaction as theirs, because it was so agreed upon in the counsel of the Godhead.

5. We come now to speak a little to some pro-

properties of this covenant, and shall content ourselves with three or four of them that make for the scope: As, 1. The justice and equity of it. 2. The faithfulness of it. 3. The freeness of it. And, 4. The wisdom that shines in this bargain; passing by the bell.

(i.) The justice and equity of this transaction may appear in these respects; 1. That the Father should be satisfied; and that he that was wronged, should have his honour restored; that the threatening given out in his law should light and take effect; that the soul that sins should in his own, of the Surety's person die; and that a suitable recompence should be made to justice, before the sinner should be absolved. 2. Justice appears in this respect, That when the Son of God, the Mediator, offers to become Man, and to endure and suffer all that the elect should have suffered, his sufferings should be accepted as a satisfaction; because the justice of God, yea, the holiness, power, and greatness of God, are as gloriously manifested in Christ's satisfaction, as if man had suffered; nay, there would not have been such an amends and satisfaction made to justice, if all creatures had suffered: Justice by this means hath more satisfaction than it could have had otherwise; and hereby the holiness of God, and the severity of his justice, as well as the condescending love of God, is the more manifested, that he himself should condescend to satisfy; therefore, Rom. iii. 26. it is said, That he might be just, the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus: God is just, in that he will not only have satisfaction, but an equivalent satisfaction, for the restoring of his justice to its declarative glory, wherein it suffered by man's fall. 3. Justice appears in this respect, That the Mediator satisfying justice, these for whom he suffered should be acquitted, and have the sentence of abolution past in their favours; which the rather we would take notice of, that we may know the redemption purchased and bestowed by the Mediator, is by an exact satisfying of justice, and not by removing of our sins, as he did our diseases, nor by pardoning of them by an authority committed to him; but, as I said, by a real and actual satisfying of the justice of God for them: therefore, Luke xxiv. it is said, He believed to suffer these things, and then to enter into his glory; there was a necessity of it, because of the justice of this covenant, for the Son, not only to become Man, and be in a low condition, but to become a curse, and to die the curfed death of the cross.

A second property is faithfulness on all sides; faithfulness on the Father's side, in his word and promise
promise to the Son; All that are given of the Father, are made to come to him; and there is nothing left, John vi. 37, 44, 45. Faithfulness on the Son's side, performing all according to his undertaking, fulfilling all righteousness; Therefore when in the one word he says, Deliver me from this hour; in the next word he says, But for this cause came I unto this hour; it was my errand into the world, and now I am to go about it by and bye: And I lay down my life for my sheep myself, no man taketh my life from me, but I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. His faithfulness also appears in keeping all that are committed to his trust, None of them shall perish, but he shall raise them up at the last day. Therefore he is called the good or faithful Shepherd.

3. It is a free covenant: it is just, as between God and the Mediator; but as to the elect, it is most free: By his wounds we have pardon, and by his stripes we have healing; The chastisement of our peace was on him; there is not one grain weight or worth to be satisfied by us: He was made sin for us, he was made the curse, even the wrath-paying-sacrifice and offering; That we might be made the righteousness of God, not thro' ought in ourselves, but thro' him, 2 Cor. v. ult.

4. It is a most wise contrivance, for if the Son had become Man and Mediator, how could justice have been satisfied, or the elect pardoned and healed? They could not satisfy for themselves, and no creature could satisfy for them; therefore the only wise God finds out a wise mid for such an end, as is the saving of the elect, in a way wherein justice and mercy, or free grace, sweetly kiss each other, and wherein they both shine forth conspicuously and radiantly.

That which we would say, in short, concerning this covenant, is this, That Jesus Christ hath undertaken to pay the elect's debt, and hath stepped in unto their room; and God hath imputed unto him their sin, and accepted of a satisfaction from him for them; and all this in a legal and just way, so as there is access before the throne of God for them to plead for the application of his righteousness by virtue of this covenant; that as really and faithfully as Christ performed his undertaking to God, and his satisfaction was accepted for them, they may as really and on good ground expect the application of it to them: For tho' all be of grace to us, yet it is a bargain on just and legal terms between God and the Mediator; therefore there is a title and right in justice for the elect, when they come to Christ, that his satisfaction shall stand for them, as being members of his Body, and in whose room and place he satisfied; Hence it is said, 1 John ii. 1. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and whereon is this righteousness founded? The next words tell us, He is the propitiation for our sins; he hath paid the price that was due by us, and we may seek the application of it to us, according to the transaction past betwixt the Father and him, now performed; which is the next point.

The 2d Doctrine is, "That this transaction and design concerning the redemption of sinners, is now not only undertaken, but fully performed;" as is clear, Acts ii. 23. Him, being delivered by determinate counsel of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; the eternal purpose concerning this is now execute: As to the efficacy of his sufferings, He is indeed the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world; Because neither the Son's undertaking was questioned by the Father, nor the Father's promise questioned by the Son. To speak so with reverence of such a mystery, the Father, before his coming, trueth him upon his engagement with the salvation of so many elect souls as he had given him; and the Son, considered as Mediator, trueth the Father with the justifying of them, according to the promise made to him in the 11 verse of this chapter; but the actual performance of the undertaking was not till Christ suffered. This actual performance of the covenant comprehends these things shortly; 1. That this plot and design of redemption was laid down, so it hath the performance by all the parties covenanting: It is actually performed according to the terms of it. 2. That it hath the real effects covananted for, actually and really brought about: It hath with it a most real and effectual following, to speak so, whereof Christ's actual sufferings was a part, and a main part.

I say, it is performed by all parties according to the terms, and hath its real effect, in these respects: 1. Christ Jesus hath, according to this covenant, lifted himself before the bar of justice, and undertaken our debt. 2. Justice hath pursued Christ for our debt, and hath exacted payment of it from him: The cup that belonged to us was put in his hand, and he was made to drink it: In which respect, it is said, He was made a curse for us, Gal. iii. The sword of divine justice awakened against him, and did smite him. 3. Jesus Christ, according to his undertaking, doth accept of the claim, undergoes the debt, and satisfies justice; therefore, when he stands in our room, as if he had been the guilty Per son, he opens not his mouth to justify him-
Ifaiah liii. himself; he says not, these are not my sins, but is as dumb, as the sheep is before the shearer, because
he was our Cautioner: The everlasting covenant, to pay so, stood ratificare over his head, and he is
made to count for all that was due by, and to us. 4. It is performed in this respect, that the Father
pursues not the elect on this account to be satisfied of them, who, as soon as they accept of the coven-
ant, are actually justified and abolished. Indeed, while they are in nature, the sentence still stands,
Curset 5 is he that sineth and believing not; yeu, by
virtue of his performance of the transacti0n, they have a legal right to justification, and the promise to
him stands good, that the elect by his knowledge
shall be justified; and it hath an actual performance in all them that believe, they are really made free
as he was made the sinner. 5. In respect of the man-
ner, (1.) It is performed exactly according to the
covenant, even as it was agreed upon, that for so
many he should suffer and procure eternal life, and
so it is; eternal life is given to so many, according
to the condition of this covenant and bargain. (2.)
As it was a bargain whereunto he was to be satis-
fi es; so it was exactly satisfied: Christ Jesus gets
nothing down, not one furthing is remitted, but
satisfies all, pays down the full price; he drinks out
all the wrath contained in the cup, till it come to
that sweet word, uttered by him amongst his last
words on the crofs, It is finished.

The 3d Doctrine is, That the elect sinners, be
as well sinners by nature, and as gross sinners as
others: yet by virtue of this covenant, and upon
condition of their accepting of it, they may obtain,
and do actually obtain, peace with God, pardon
and healing, as if they had never sinned, or as if
they had satisfied the justice of God themselves.
This is the very end of this transacti0n, He was
wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our
iniquities, the satisfaeion of our peace was upon
him, and by his stripes we are healed; His wounds,
bruises and stripes, effectually procured justification
and healing to us: And this is the ground of that
which we call imputed righteousness, and shews how
it comes to pass that we are made righteous by the
righteousness of another, scornfully called putative
righteousness by Papists: But considering what is
in the former doctrines, and in this, we will find
it to be a clear truth, on which our justification,
and the whole weight of our salvation hangs; that
the believing sinner, closing with Christ's satisfa-
tion, is as effectually abolished from sin, as if he had never
sinned; Christ's satiasfaion becomes as really his,
as if he had paid the debt himself: And if we con-
sider these three, 1. The great design of the cove-

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nent of redemption betwixt God and the Mediator.
2. The faithfulness of God in this covenant, in per-
forming his part on the terms on which the Media-
tor laid down a price for the elect. 3. The excel-
licity and efficacy of the price paid with respect to
the covenant; we will find that there is a clear access
in law, or according to the decree of God manifest-
ed (the decree is called a law, Thy law is within
my heart) for the grooest sinners that come under
this bargain, and close with this covenant, their
obtaining peace, pardon, justification, and heal-
ing, as if they had never sinned, or had satisfa-
ted themselves, and that they may confidently expect
it on this ground.

1. I say, if we consider the great end and design
of the covenant betwixt God and the Mediator, we
will find it to be the justification of the elect: Christ
suffered, not for any sin that was inherently in him-
self: He had no sin; there was no guile found in
his mouth, no quarrel betwixt God and him on his
own account; but he was wounded for our tran-
gressions, the satisfaion of our peace was on him:
To make peace betwixt God and us by his wound-
ing, was the great design of the covenant of redemp-
tion; and can that design hold, if his satisfaion
come not in the room of ours, and stand not for our
satisfaction and payment? In man's law, the cau-
tioner paying the debt proves valid for the principal
debtor: And when this is the design of God in the
covenant of redemption, how to get the debt of dy-
uour sinners paid, and themselves set at liberty,
and when this is found out as the mids, a body half
thou prepared unto me; the covenant must be as
real on the one side as it is on the other; that is, as
real and effectual to make the believer in Christ
just, as it was real and effectual to make Christ to
be accounted the sinner, and to be dealt with as
such. We may clear it further in these two, 1. By
looking to Christ typified in the offerings under the
law: When the sinner came with his offering, he
liad his hand on the head of the beast, especially
of the scape-goat, to shew that Jesus Christ, who
was to come to be both Priest and Sacrifice, who
was to bear the sins of the elect, as they were to be
set free; that he was to lay his neck down to the
knife of justice, that the stroke might be kept off our
throat. 2. We are so justified by Christ, as Christ
was made sin for us: Now our sins became really
Christ's, not that he was made the sinner inherent-
ly, that were blaspheous to be thought or spoken
of; but he was reckoned the sinner, and was sub-
fitted in the room of sinners, as if he had been the.

finner.
Isaiah liii. Verse 5.

Serm. XXIII.

ledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; he shall be the caufe of the justifying of many, and they shall be actually absolved in due time: And what is the ground of it? For he shall bear their iniquities: And therefore, as God is faithful, he shall get that, which he merited and purchased for them, applied unto them.

3. If we consider the excellent and equivalent price that Jesus Christ hath paid, and that with respect to the covenant, we have a clear ground why the believer may expect and be confident to be absolved and declared free: It is no mean price, gold, silver, or precious stones, but the blood of him that was and is God; which we fancy would be considered not simply, but with respect to the covenant, and to the end wherefore he suffered and shed his blood: For though it be no comfort to a sinner simply that Christ suffered; yet when he considers that it was for this end, to wit, that justice might be satisfied, and that these for whom he satisfied might be justified, and made free; the believing sinner may hence reason; If there was a reality in justice purifying of him as my Cautioner, and a reality and efficacy in his satisfaction; and if it was full and complete, so as justice was fully satisfied by it, when there was a reality of mercy, pardon, justification, and peace with God, and of healing to and for me, their being made forthcoming to me upon the condition of believing; and in this respect, though it be grace to pardon sin as to us, yet it is justice in God to give Christ the satisfaction for the travails of his soul, as well as he gave God satisfaction to his justice: And the equivalent of that which the elect should have paid, being paid to justice by Christ their Cautioner, the Lord cannot, nor will not shun nor shif the pardoning of a believing sinner according to the covenant.

The Uses are five, 1. Of instruction, whereby we may have a map of God's way of saving sinners; and of the way of sinners coming to get salvation through Jesus Christ.

2. To stir us up to admire the love of God, contriving such a design for the salvation of lost sinners; the love of God, that gave his Son; and the love of the Son, that engaged to come, and hath come and paid the debt.

3. It gives a notable warrant to the faith of a sinner to take hold of, and close with Christ, and to rest upon his satisfaction for justification and healing, because he hath God and the Mediator covenanting for this very end, the Mediator engaging to satisfy, and God engaging to receive the satisfaction, and to justify all these who shall accept of it, and rest upon it.
S E R M O N X X I V.

Ifaiah liii. 5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

If there were more deep convictions amongst us
of our natural deadness in sin, and of that fearful condition that naturally we lie under by our liableness to the wrath and curse of God, all men and women having by nature God's curse, as the sentence of the law, registrate against them; the reading of such a text, wherein a way of remedy is holden forth, would be more welcome to us; and we are persuaded that such a thorow conviction would not only make the word more lovely and delightful to us, but more plain and easy to be understood by us, and to be sooner taken up by us; and one preaching would thus be more profitable and effectual than many arc to you while in a secure condition: When people are not under the deep and due conviction of their sin and misery, they have no serious thoughts that the word of the gospel concerns them in particular, and that their souls stand in need of that which is spoken to them therein.

Ye may remember, we spoke somewhat from these words for clearing the way of making peace between God and sinners; and for holding forth the way that God in his infinite wisdom hath laid down for setting of poor sinners, that are lying under the curse, free: For this end, there was an eternal transfaction and covenant entred into by the Father and the Son, the Father demanding, and the Son accepting and satisfying, as Mediator and sinners Cautioner, what was due to justice for the sins of the elect, as was determined in the counsel of God; from which blessed bargain all our salvation flows as from the fountain, and runs down as a river to us.

That which now we are to speak a little to, is some profitable Use, which are the scope of all, and tend to lead you in to know the use of such doctrine, and not only to know it, but to engage you to make suitable practical improvement of it.

There are several sorts of Use that flow from this verse, whence the preceding doctrines have been drawn.

The first sort is for Information; which ye who are more ignorant, and have not so much light in you as to discover the way to heaven, would especially take heed to, though they be useful to all. And, 1. Ye would know and be informed in this, that all men and women, without exception, are lying under transgression and iniquities, and liable to be smitten and cursed of God, till these be taken away: But this having been spoke of in the forenoon, we need not inflict it on you now; but the truth is, neither law nor gospel hath gained this much ground on the great part of you, as to bring you really to know, that naturally ye are dead in sins and trespasses: and, till this be drunk in and digested, other truths cannot to any purpose profit you.

2. Ye would know and consider the necessity of a satisfaction to the justice of God, before sinners can be freed from sin, and from the curse and wrath of God, that they are under and liable to, by reason of their original corruption and actual transgressions. Do ye think that Jesus Christ did needfully enter into the covenant of redemption, and engage to satisfy, and actually and really did suffer and satisfy justice? If men might come so easily to heaven as...
Isaiah liii.

Verse 5.

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as many suppose, it had been needless. Would God (think ye) have wounded the Cautioner, his own
Son, if those who ly under sin and wrath might have by another way satisfied justice, and restored him to his honour? Nay, are this peace could be made, this behoved to be; and yet I much doubt if any do think that there is any such distance betwixt God and them, which a word of prayer, or
confession, or some penance cannot remove: This
is, alas! the woful ignorance of many that live under
the gospel; but ye would know that a satisfaction behooved to be, and such a satisfaction as was equivalent to
the wrong done, and suitable and satisfying to him
that was wronged by sin, and that among all the
creatures it could not be found. Yea, ye may read
from this the dreadful effects of sin, and what a
horrible thing it is to have your transgressions to
count for with God yourselves: If sin brought such
heavy things on the Cautioner, what will it bring
on the sinner, who hath continued all his days in
tops with God, to speak so, and would not make
peace with him, when he was earnestly invited to
it? Yea, we may from this know, what is that
most horrible, dreadful, and confounding sentence,
which is abiding all of you that stand it out, and do
not make your peace with God through this satis-
faction of our blessed Lord Jesus, when ye shall be
made eternally to bear the wrath that sin deferves,
which yet is intolerable.

3. Ye would hence know, and study to be clear
and distinct in your knowledge of this precious truth,
how a sinner, that by nature is under sin and wrath,
and hath ground every day to look for it, may be
freed from that curse and wrath: To prevent
which, the Lord hath made a covenant with the Son,
who is appointed Mediator for making peace be-
twixt God and sinners, by satisfying his justice for
them, and by paying the same debt that was due by
them; so that this wrath is prevented, and their
peace is made by vertue of this covenant of redemp-
tion; wherein these two clausules are agreed and
concluded upon betwixt these two infinitely respon-
so of parties, 1. That Christ shall become the sinner,
and be handled as a sinner; tho' there was no sin
in him. 2. That the elect sinner, that by nature
was a child of wrath even as well as others, shall be
freed from the wrath to come by vertue of his satis-
faction: These are two pillars that our salvation is
built upon, and that our peace and reconciliation
with God flow from: by his wounding and bruising,
we are pardoned, The chastisement of our peace was
on him, and by his stripes we are healed.

To clear this a little; This covenant would be
considered, 1. As it looks to the parties, and their
several actions. 2. As it looks to the execution
thereof, in all the steps of it.

For the first, There are three parties that con-
cur in their own place, 1. God is the party offend-
ed, and he is here bruising and wounding the Me-
diator: He is the Judge, and stands ready to execute
the sentence that stands in his law against sinners,
if he get not an equivalent satisfaction. 2. Jesus
Christ the Mediator is the party wounded and bru-
ised; the Mediator's part is to satisfy justice, to pay
the price, and perform the satisfaction resolved up-
on in the counsel of God, of suitable and sufficient
value for the redemption of the elect, according to
his engagement; and he is actually wounded and
bruised: God determined what shall satisfy, Christ
Jesus accepts of the determination, engages to sa-
tisfy, and does actually satisfy for elect sinners. A
3d party is, We poor sinners, He was wounded for
our transgressions, &c. it is the elect sinner, or the
sinner, who being made in due time sensible of sin,
and afraid of wrath, and who being kindly touched
with the apprehension of it, and cleared anent the
firmness and freeness of the covenant, and anent the
fulness of Christ's satisfaction, doth by faith flee unto
Jesus Christ, and submit to his satisfaction, and
betakes himself allenarrowly to that for righteousnes;
Christ lays down the price, and the believing sinner
pleads for intercess in it, and for the benefit of it, and
by faith gets title to an abolvitur from his debt and
guilt. If it then be asked, What is the thing where-
by a sinner is pardoned and justified, reconciled to
God, and delivered from wrath and healed? I an-
swer, It is by believing in Jesus Christ. If it be again
asked, What is the ground or reason, why the
believing sinner obtains that favour? I answer, Be-
cause our Lord Jesus hath sufficiently satisfied for,
and fully paid the debt of so many as are brought
to believe on him. If it be, 3dly, asked, How comes
it that Christ's satisfaction becomes a ransom, and
is accepted for such and such a believer? I answer,
It is by vertue of the eternal covenant of redemption,
or transact made betwixt the Father and the Son,
wherein it was agreed, that his suffering and satis-
fying of justice, should be accepted for believing fin-
ners, as if themselves had satisfied; according to that
of John vi. 39, 40. This is the Father's will that
sent me, that of all that he hath given me I shoul
lose nothing; and this is the will of him that sent
me, that whosoever feeth the Son, and believeth on
him, may have everlasting life: So our believing
is the first immediate step, whereby we come to
obtain pardon of sin, and peace with God: Christ's
righteousness,
righteousness, or satisfaction, is that wherein our believing founds itself; yet so as it hath a respect to the eternal covenant of redemption, whence both Christ's satisfaction and our believing do flow, and without which we could have no warrant to expect righteousness through a Mediator; for, unless we know that Christ hath satisfied justice for elect sinners that shall believe on him, we cannot rely on him for righteousness; and unless we have an eye to the covenant of redemption, we cannot expect that his satisfaction will be accepted for us: And therefore, if we will trace these steps back again, the first rise of our salvation is in the counsel of God; the execution of it is in Christ's satisfaction; and the application of his satisfaction, is by our fleeing to it, and accepting of it by faith: And therefore we would learn, in our looking and stepping up to heaven, to look to these three in this order; we would first begin at faith, and in believing we would consider Christ's satisfaction, and from that we would ascend to the rise of it, to wit, the covenant of redemption, and the terms of it: All which put together, give a very clear ground of expecting righteousness through Jesus Christ. I shall illustrate it by a scripture-familiarity, wherein I shall shew you how all the three concur, yet so as there is a difference in their concurrence. Ye know that under the law, there were cities of refuge appointed, which were types of Jesus Christ, in whom we find a shelter; in these cities of refuge, consider these three that concurred for saving the person that had committed manslaughter; 1. God's determination, appointing such a thing, and that the man-slayer, being within such a city, should be safe from the avenger of blood; and this gave the rise to the other two that follow. 2. The city itself, as a shelter or refuge to the man-slayer. 3. The persons fleeing or running to hide themselves in it: Now the safety of the person of the man-slayer did flow from all the three. (1.) The law, appointing such a city, was the ground. (2.) The city was the shelter. (3.) The person's actual running to the city, gave him a claim and title to the privilege of the city: For tho' the former two had been, if he had not fled to the city, he had not obtained the benefit of safety: even so, the believer that would be saved, is to consider these three. 1. God's determining such a way of salvation to elect sinners by a Mediator. 2. The Mediator privileged as the city of refuge for this end. And, 3. The sinner's fleeing to him, which is his believing on him, and his seeking and pleading for the benefit of Christ's satisfaction, according to the terms of the covenant. Now, suppose a person to flee to the city of refuge, he is preserved in

Verse 4, 5. it, justice cannot follow him further than the gates yet so as he hath the benefit by God's determination and appointment of the city for such an end, and yet so as he must flee into it, ere he can plead for the benefit of the city: So, suppose a sinner to be fled to Jesus Christ by faith, he may plead for exemption from wrath, by God's determining and appointing a Mediator for such an end; and the Mediator Jesus Christ hath this privilege conferred on him, that he that thus flees unto him shall be safe; yet it is also supposed, that such a sinner hath fled to him, else he could not expect safety through him, notwithstanding of God's determining the Mediator for safety: thus we would have these three put together; and yet (as we said) they differ: for God's determination is the efficient cause and fountain of all; Christ's satisfaction is the meritorious cause, and our believing is the ground on which we have right to plead for the benefit of his satisfaction: even as the man that fled to the city of refuge, his safety was not by any virtue in his running, but by God's determination, yet his running to the city was requisite as the mids, and except he run or fled to it, he could not plead for the benefit of the city; so our believing gives us ground to plead a right and title to Christ and his satisfaction, without which we could not have that right.

But, 2dly, Because one will take up this under one notion, and another under another: To clear it therefore a little further, we shall again consider in the covenant these three steps, 1. The determination of it, as it is enacted in the counsel of the God-head, which in fum is this, that such and such persons shall be satisfied for by the Mediator, and his satisfaction accepted for them. 2. The execution of this covenant, where we take in all our Lord's sufferings; all the strokes and wounds that justice purfued him with, as Cautioner for the elect; and God's accepting and justifying of him, and declaring his accepting of him, and being well satisfied with what he did and suffered, by his raising him from the dead. 3. The application of his purchase, by his accepted satisfaction; which confits in thee, (1.) That thee that were given to Christ on this condition, that his satisfaction should stand good for them, should be justified and faved, that is, that in due time application of his satisfaction should be made to the persons given him to be saved by him; which takes in Christ's making intercession, that renewing grace, faith, &c. may be given to such persons. (2.) That the work of the Spirit, who, as the Sanetifier, begets faith, and pursuades to embrace Jesus Christ, all be given them. Then (3.) Follows the belie veel's
Isaiah liii. 

verse's actual coming to Christ, being sweetly and powerfully drawn to rest on him and his satisfaction; whereupon follows the application of the sentence of justification and absolution that results from the former: So that whereas it was before, Curfed is he that continues not in all things written in the law; now it is, He that believeth on Jesus Christ, hath eternal life, and shall never come into condemnation: All these go and agree well together; the covenant as the ground, Christ's satisfaction as the meritorious cause, and the application of his satisfaction by faith, which entitles and gives the believer a right to it.

The reason why we have so much insisted on this, is, That we may teach you to join respect to the covenant of redemption, Christ's suffering, and your believing, together: It will not be faith that will justify, that is, without respect to the covenant; neither will the covenant and Christ's satisfaction justify, without faith; yet ye would so put them together, as the glory of salvation through grace may not ly on faith, but on God's everlasting love, and on Christ's satisfaction. And indeed it is not little practick for a soul sensible of sin, in the exercise of faith so to lay the weight of its salvation on Christ and the covenant, as it neglect not running to Christ by faith; and so to lay hold on Christ by faith, as it lay not the weight on faith, but on Christ and the covenant: As in the comparison before used, Suppose a man, that had killed another unawares, had been taken before he was to the city of refuge; God's determination was not the cause of that, but his not running, or his not coming at the city: So it may be that some are apprehended by the justice of God, that are less sinfull than others; yet the reason or cause is not in God's covenant, nor in Christ's want of worth, but in the person's not running, or not fleeing to Christ as to the city of refuge; and therefore they are not heard to plead for immnunity by virtue of that satisfaction before the bar of God.

A 2d sort of Ufe are for exhorting sinners to come to Christ: There is here then, 1. A clear ground to our faith, and a plain way opened to heaven, and a mighty encouragement to persuade sinners to lay hold on Christ, and to take this way for obtaining of life: This text opens as it were the gates of the city of refuge, and points out the way how to eschew the wrath which is to come: There is a way here laid down, in the wisdom, justice, goodness and grace of God, which is made offer of in the gospel; and since it is so, we beseech you that ye would not receive this grace in vain; but seeing there is a covenant well

Verse 5.

Serm. XXIV. 

ordered and sure, a Mediator and a ransom provided, and a way laid down how to come to Christ by faith, let all of you, who come under the conviction of sin and apprehension of wrath, step to, and clofe with him, and plead for pardon by virtue of his wounds, and for healing through his stripes, with respect to the covenant.

There are these four things here that will serve to give ground for this application, if we consider, 1. The great ground of faith that is here. 2. The great reason we have to make use of this ground. 3. The great encouragement we have so do. And, 4. The great necessity we have to make this application. A little to each of these: But we shall premise one word to all, and it is this, That considering you are all in trying terms with God, whether ye live at a distance from him, the use will by way of exhortation reach you; or whether ye be brought to greater nearness under the sense of sin, and have some seriousness in seeking after God, it will reach you for consolation. In a word, we would exhort all, and it may be convince some, and comfort others: But to the first thing we proposed, We declare and proclaim this as a true and faithful saying, that there is here an everlasting covenant, wherein the salvation of the elect is concluded through Christ's satisfaction to justice for them, and a way laid down for making peace betwixt God and all them that will thoroughly renounce their own righteousness, and lay hold on this satisfaction, even such a way as procures justification and healing to them. And for your confirmation, consider in general, if it be possible that this covenant of redemption, the sufferings of the Mediator, and the promises made to believing, can be for nought; did the Father pursue the Cautioner so hotly for nothing? or did the Cautioner pay such a ransom for nothing? No certcinly; if it had not been to communicate pardon and peace, with healing by his wounds and stripes to them who were liable to condemnation, and under the dominion of sin, neither of these would have been: And therefore, for grounds of your faith, more particularly see here, 1. A full satisfaction: God hath made way to sinners peace with himself, by satisfying himself fully in Christ the Mediator for the sins of elect believers; so that a sinner, that in the sense of sin behalves himself to him, needs not fear any back-accounts, because whatever might make for our peace, was fully laid on him, so that we may with holy and humble boldness say, that we are not come to the mount that might not be touched, nor to blackness, and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet; but we are come unto mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, a New Jerusalem.
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Isaiah lxi.  

Jerusalem, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling. Our invitation therefore to you, is not to bid you come and count for your own debt yourselves, but to come and accept of Christ's payment of it, and of his satisfaction, whereby justice is completely satisfied. 2. See here, as another ground of faith, the justice of God, not with respect to us, but to the bargain betwixt the Father and the Son, who are the principal Parties, and we (to speak so) but parties accidentally in this covenant, the covenant being primarily and mainly betwixt God and the Mediator; The justice of it appears in this, that it hath respect to a covenant which is fulfilled on all sides; and therefore the elect's believing and taking hold of the Mediator's satisfaction, cannot but be accepted, as if he had paid the debt himself. The Father (to speak so) had the carving of the bargain, and what satisfaction his justice was to receive, to his own mind; and as it was justice on the Father's side to pardon and be at peace with the sinner that by faith flees unto Jesus Christ. 3. See in this bargain, not only justice, but mercy; as it is just, so it is a graciously free bargain; which is wonderful, and may seem somewhat strange, if not paradoxal, yet it is nothing inconsistent with the way of grace: it is just that the Cautioner should pay the debt, and yet that debt is most freely and frankly pardoned as to us; it is justice in the height as to the Mediator, but free grace as to us in the height; we come to it freely and without price, tho' it cost him dear: And that it is one of the Mediator's undertakings that it should be free to his seed, John vi. 40. This is the will of him that sent me, that he that believeth on him, should have eternal life. 4. Consider the reality and sureness of the bargain: it is such as it cannot fail, having such pillars to lean on, the faithfulness of God engaged on just and equal terms, and the glory of God as the end; and having a most necessary and certain effect, to wit, healing to all to whom the sovereign Medicine is applied. This stability and sureness of the covenant flows from God's engaging to the Mediator, and the Mediator's engaging to God; from the Mediator's satisfying, and the Father's accepting of his satisfaction; which being confirmed by the blood of the Tearer, it becomes a Testament, which cannot be annulled, or altered, or changed. And if all this be so, let me put the question, Is there not good ground here to exhort the hearers of the gospel to believe in Christ, and on believing to look for life, through him, and a most solid ground laid down, whereupon to build the hopes of eternal life? And therefore seeing, this is the upshot of all, that life is to be gotten freely by faith in Jesus Christ, improve this way of salvation for making your peace, under no less certification than this, even as ye would owe reckoning with divine justice in your own persons for the least farthing of your debt. 5. If it be objected here by any, 1. We are at enmity with God, and cannot satisfy. I answer, This text tells you, that satisfaction is not sought from you, but from the Mediator, who hath already given it, and the Father hath accepted it for all such as shall by faith plead the benefit of it. 2. If ye shall say, We know not how to win at God, we are such as cannot step one foot forward, and so very sinful and miserable, that we know no such transgressors and wretches. I answer, Was it not for such that the Mediator transacted, even for such as we, transgressors, rebels, despisers of him, and such as judged him to be smitten and plagued of God? If he had been Caution only for righteous folk, there had been some reason for such an objection; but it is for sinners, for most hainous sinners: Nay, this way of reasoning and pleading fals on the matter, that Christ needed not have laid down his life. 3. If it be said, We are so sinful and backsliding, so filthy and polluted that we think we are not within the reach of healing, I answer, This reasoning would, if it held, turn in effect to this, that ye are not within the reach of God's grace, of Christ's satisfaction; which is not only injurious, but even blasphemous to the grace of God, and to the satisfaction of the Mediator: If your sin be ugly and horrible, he suffered horrible wrath; he was wounded, bruised, chastised, &c. 4. If it be said further, We can do nothing for ourselves, we cannot come to Christ, we know not what it is to believe; or if we win to do any thing, alas! all our goodness is as the morning-cloud and early dew, that soon passeth away. I answer, The covenant is not transacted betwixt God and you, but betwixt God and the Mediator; and the ground of your peace, as to the procuring cause, depends on the Mediator's performing his part of the covenant in your name: and further, as for your believing, it is a piece of the Father's engagement to the Mediator, and must certainly be made as effectual as the Father must keep his word to the Son, according to these promises of the covenant. I will put my law in their hearts, and write it in their minds; they shall all know me, and they shall be all taught of God; and, thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.
power, and the like: All these promises were in the
covenant betwixt the Father and the Son, and the
application of them is but their execution as to us;
and therefore, seeing such a City of refuge is cast
open to man-killers and transgressors, step humbly
and boldly forward, and run into it. There is yet
a fifth objection, which will possibly be sticking
with some, and it is this, We know not whether we
shall believe or not, for we know not if we be in
the covenant or not. I answer, Would ye have
thought, that he who had committed man-slaughter,
would have reafoned well, if he had reafoned thus,
I know not if that City of refuge was appointed or
built for me, and when the gates of it were cast
open, should fear to enter in to it on this account,
when it was told him that it was appointed for
such? Just so it is here. And suppose one should
say, I cannot believe, it is as if such a man should
say, I cannot, I now not run to the City; nay, ra
erther, tho' he had been feeble, yet he would have
creeped, clinfhed and crippl'd to it as he might: E
ever so here, in a word, a man should not dispute
whose name is in the covenant, but should step for-
ward to the Shelter and Refuge; as it is, Heb. vi.
18, 19, where the Apostle borroweth the same fi
militude, and says, God hath confirmed his promise
by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which
it was impossible for God to lie, we might have
strong conflation, who have fled for refuge to lay
hold on the hope set before us. Men in their natu
ral condition are compared to the man-killers, lying
under the stroke of the law, or under the hazard
of being pursu'd by the avenger of blood. Christ
is compared to the city of refuge; and the heir of
promise being pursu'd, what shall he do? Will his
election simply save him? No, but he must flee un
to Jesus Christ as to his City of refuge: And there
fore, by all means run and fleer to him, as having
this fear, left the avenger of blood pursueth and o
vertake you; and if ye cannot run so fast as you
would, yet run as ye may; and ye have this advan
tage, that the City of refuge is not far off, it is
near you, even at your door, as the Apostle speaks,
Rom. x. The word is near thee, in thy mouth,
and in thine heart. The cripple body amongst
you all has Christ at you door, that ye may enter
into him, as into a City of refuge, and that he
may come in and sup with you; so that tho' ye
cannot lift your feet so quickly in running to him,
if ye can but in good earnest roll yourselves over
upon him, ye shall be safe: Seeing then that this
way of salvation is so full, so free, so equal and
effectual, take heed lest ye prejudg
Serm. XXIV.

26b, To press this yet a little further, consider
what good reason ye have to run: Take but this
one word, Ye are sinners lying under the curse
and wrath of God; and have ye any other way of ob-
taining pardon, or of making your peace? And if
ye believe that ye are sinners and under the curse,
is there not need that ye should run to a shelter from
it? If we were preaching to angels that had never
sinned, there might be some reason for their flight-
ing or laying little weight upon such a word of ex-
hortation; but seeing ye are sinners and liable to
God's curse, why do ye flight a Saviour, having so
much need of him?

3dly, Consider yet further, that ye have encou-
ragement to run, and nothing to discourage you;
What prejudice is in believing? There is no preju
dice at all in this way, but many advantages; double-
less salvation will not fail them that believe: Yea,
we may add from the words of the text, for en-
couraging to this, that the man or woman that is
mensurable of sin, and afraid of wrath, hath the cove-
nant to look to, for begetting and throughing the
work of faith in them with power; for if it be
ture, that all the midstes are in the covenant, as well
as the end, and if we may lay weight on the cove-
nant for the effect, to wit, the pardon of sin, and
healing, then we may also lay hold on the covenant
for furthering us to that effect: I speak not this, as
if folk could of themselves act faith on the cove-
nant, before faith be given them; but I speak it to
encourage young beginners, that think they have
no faith at all, that they may act what they have,
and may look more and more to the covenant, to
be inlightened, quickned, and strengthened; and that
they may fly with the poor man in the gospel, Lord,
I believe, help my unbelief, and with the spouse,
Cant. i. Draw me, and we will run after thee.

4thly, And finally, for press of this, consider
the absolute necessity that ye are under of making
use of this way of salvation, of getting your peace
made by Christ's satisfaction, and your wounds
healed by his stripes; there is no mids, but either
ye must hazard on a reckoning with God on your
own score, or accept of his satisfaction: There
was never a covenant made by God with man, but
two; a covenant of works for perfectly righteous
folks, by which covenant no sinner was ever able to
come to life; and a covenant of grace, wherein
Christ is made sign for us, and as many as flee by
faith unto him, are made the righteousness of God
through him; and therefore either betake yourselves
to this way, or resolve to count with God your-
selves without a Mediator and Surety: Or, if ye
think
SERMON XXV.


Thee have in the former verses somewhat of our Lord's suffering, and of his suffering for sinners, that he was wounded and bruised, &c. In this verse the prophet proceeds to clear how this came to pass, that Christ Jesus was made to suffer for the elect, the seed that God had given him; which he doth by laying down the occasion and fountain-case whereunto it proceeded. 1. The occasion of it, in these words, *All we like sheep have gone astray;* all the elect, as well as others, have wandered: and *every one of us have to turned our own way;* we had denuded ourselves of all right and title to eternal life, and had made ourselves liable to God's curse and wrath thro' our sinning. 2. The fountain-case is, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all;* when we had all strayed, Jehovah took our Lord Jesus, as the sacrifices under the law were taken, and put him in our room, and laid on him the punishment due to us for our sins, and actually purged him for our debt.

So the words are an answer to that question, How comes it to pass that our Lord Jesus suffered thus for sinners? It is answered, The elect had made themselves liable to the wrath and curse of God through their straying; and to keep them from that wrath, God designed and provided his Son Jesus Christ to be the Redeemer, and according to the covenant of redemption laid on him the punishment due to them for their iniquities: in a word, their sin, and God's appointing him to be Cautioner, made him liable to satisfy for all their debt.

The first part of the words hold out our natural disease; the second part holds out God's gracious cure and remedy.

In the first part we have these three, 1. The natural state and condition of all men and women, even of the elect themselves (who are mainly to be look'd on here) *All we have gone astray.* 2. This is illustrative by a similitude, *We have gone astray like sheep.* 3. It is amplified, *Every one of us have turned to, his own way:* Several words being put together, to set out the desperate sinful condition, whereinto the elect, as well as others, had brought themselves.

1. Our natural state and condition is set down in this word *straying:* To *stray,* is to wander out of the way, to go wrong, to be bewildered; for God hath set a rule to men to walk by in the way to life, the rule and way of holiness; and whoever walk not in that way, do go astray, and wander out of the right way.

2. This is, as I said, illustrative by a similitude of sheep; the comparing of the elect to sheep here, is not at all to extenuate the sinfulness of their straying; tho' sometimes the innocence of that creature, in some other comparissons is infinuated: But it is to hold out the wittleness, spiritual silliness and brutishness of their straying; the scripture usually pointing out that beast to be disposed and given to wandering: And both nature and experience tells us, that in a wilderness, where there is greatest hazard, they are readiest to run on the hazard; such is their silly, and (to speak so) foolish inclination: Just so are the elect by nature.

3. It is amplified by this, *That every one hath turned to his own way: before,* it was collectively set down, *All we have gone astray:* but now, left any should esteem himself, it is distributively set down, *every one, even Ifaiah, Jeremiah, and others:* such, not one excepted. This *turning to our own way,* holds out two things 1. It is called our own way, to distinguish it from God's way, as it is, Psal. lxxxi. 13. He gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels; That is, in their own inventions, or according to their own will, so that all that is not God's will will be our own will, or our own way.
own will, humour and inclination. 2. While it is
said that every one turns to his own way, it is to
shew this, that beside the common way that all
sinners have to turn away from God, distinguished
from God's way, every sinner hath his own partic-
ular and peculiar way, whereby in his way, he is
distinguished from another sinner. There is but one
way to heaven, but many ways to hell, and every
one hath his different way; some have one predomi-
nant lust, some another, but they all meet here,
that every one turns from God's way, every one
takes a wrong way of his own.

Considering the scope, we shall shortly and paff-
ingly point at two general Observations, whereof
the 1st is this, That it contributes much for folks
conceiving and considering of Christ's sufferings a
right, to be well acquainted with their own sinful
nature and disposition. Men will never look rightly
on Christ's sufferings, nor suitably esteem of him,
nor make him, and the doctrine that holds him and
his sufferings forth, cordially welcome, except they
have some sense of their sinful nature and disposi-
tion: Hence it was that many of the Pharisees
and hypocrites of that time wherein the Lord exer-
cised his ministry among the Jews, never welcomed him,
nor prized his sufferings; whereas among the Pub-
licans and sinners many were brought to get good
of him.

Not to insin in the use of this, only in a word,
see here a main reason why Jesus Christ is so mean-
ly thought of, and the report of his sufferings is so
little welcomed and esteemed; even because so few
walk under the due sense of this, that like lost sheep
they have gone astray.

The 2d general Observation from the scope, put-
ting both parts of the verse together, is this, That
we should never look on Christ's sufferings, but with
respect to the covenant of redemption, and God's
transferring with him as our Cautioner; therefore
the last part comes in, The Lord hath laid on him
the iniquity of us all: For albeit we know that
Christ hath suffered much, yet if there be not an
eye to, and some acquaintance with the covenant,
the rite of his sufferings, and God's hand and end
in his sufferings, it will be to no purpose; therefore,
when Peter is to speak of his sufferings, Acts ii. 23,
he premises these words, Him, being delivered by
the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,
and then subjoins his being crucified. Looking on
Christ's sufferings with respect to the covenant, 1.
It lets us know that Christ's suffering comes not by
guise, but by the eternal counsel of God, and by
virtue of that transaction between the Father and
the Son; and this takes away the scandal off them,
which the prophet sets himself here to remove.
2. It gives faith access to make use of his sufferings,
when we look to him as purposely designed for this
end. 3. It holds out the love of God, Father, Son,
and Spirit, towards elect sinners, that howsoever
God looked angry like on the Mediator, as perfo-
nating them, and sifting their room; yet that
Jehovah had the devising and designing of these
sufferings, and that he sent his Son to suffer thus, it
holds out wonderful love.

3. And more particularly, from the first part of
the words, which is the main thing to be marked,
observe, That all men, even the elect themselves not
excepted, are naturally in a most sinful and despe-
rate state and condition: So that if ye would know
what they are by nature, this is a description of
their state. All we like sheep have gone astray, and
every one hath turned to his own way; And when
it is called our own way, there needs no other epi-
thet to set out the despicable of it: That which
I mean is this, that all men are naturally under
these two, 1. They are under guilt before God,
Eph. ii. 1, 2. Dead in sins and trespasses, children
of wrath and heirs of condemnation, liable to the
curse of God by virtue of the covenant which Adam
broke. 2. (which is mostly aimed at here) There is
in every one a sinful nature, a sinfulness, or sinning
sin, an inclination to sin, every one hath a flattering
humour; so that although the similitude of sheep
agree not to them in that sense, as sheep are inno-
cent creatures, yet it agrees to them in this sense,
that they are filly foolish creatures: and in this re-
spect it is said, Gen. vi. 8. That all the imagina-
tions of the thoughts of the heart in man are only
evil continually; and, Eph. ii. 1. they are said to
be dead in sins, not only in respect of their being
obnoxious to God's curse, but in respect of their
natural deadness, of their sinful nature, and want
of spiritual life; So, Rom. iii. 9, 10. and forwards;
the Apostle describes the sinfulness of man's nature
at large, not only in respect of its guilt, but of its
inclination to sin, and says, that their throat is an
open sepulchre: insinuating thereby, that men natu-
really are like a tomb, and that the corps within the
tomb is death and sin, and that all that comes from
them favours of that; Their feet are swift to shed
blood, with their tongues they use deceit &c.
every member and part of the body and every faculty
of the soul is bent to that which is evil. These three
may further confirm it, 1. If we look in general to
what the scripture sneaks of men by nature, Eph.
ii. 1, 2, 3. Rom. iii. and v. chapters; they being,
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Ifaiah liii. as it is, I sa. lvii. penult. as the raging sea, that
casts out dirt and mire continually: It is always
moving and working one way or another, and
more especially in a storm; so that though at one
tide ye would sweep the shore never so clean, it
will be as foul and dirty the next tide that cometh:
So are these hearts of ours (as Peter speaks, 2d
Epift. ii. and Jude vcr. 23.) foaming out their
own blame; and James faith, chap. iv. 5. The
spirit that dwells in us lusteth to envy; It hath as
great eagerness after, and as great delight in sin, as
a drunkard hath after and in drink. 2. Experience
also confirms it: Go through all men and women
that ever were in the world (our Lord Jesus being
excepted, as not descending of Adam by the ordi-
nary way of generation) and that will be found true
which the Apostle hath, Rom. iii. There is none
that doth good, no not one; and that which is spo-
nen, Gen. vi. All flesh hath corrupted their way.
And what is the spring of all the abominations that
are in the world, and the rise of these particular
evils that are in believers and saints mentioned in
scripture, as in David, Peter, and others; but this
fame corrupt nature, this body of death, as it is
called, Rom. vii. 14. All which strongly prove a
fire to be within, when there is such a smoke with-
out. 3. We may confirm it from well-grounded
reason, for it cannot be otherwise; if the root be
of such a nature, can the branches be otherwise? Who
can bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing?
No, not one. Job xiv. 4. When Adam fell, the
root was corrupted, and the branches cannot be
fresh; the fountain was defiled, and the stream
cannot be clean and clear: Hence, when Adam be-
got Seth, an elect in whom the Church was con-
tinued, it is said; that he begat a son after his own
likeness, Gen. v. he himself was created after God’s
image, but begat children after his own image.

Though this be a commonly received doctrine,
yet it is not without good reason, nor for no ufe
insisted on so much here and in other scriptures;
we shall therefore speak a little to thefe four ufe-
of it.

The 1st Ufe serves for information; and we may
make it a looking glafs, wherein we may fee clearly
our own most sinful state and condition: Would
ye know what ye are by nature? This text tells
you, that not only all men have strained, but that
each of us, or every one of us hath turned to his
own way. But knowing how ready we are to shift
the challenge, we would be persuaded that we are
by nature liable to God’s curse for Adam’s sin,
dead in sin, and inclined to all evil; sheep are no

Verse 6. reader to go the wrong way, and will no more
readily stray if they wanted a shepherd, than we
are inclined to do. There is a common word in
many of your mouths, that we are all sinners by
nature; but when it is searched into, we find that
there is much ignorance among you of what it means;
many count themselves to be sinners, only because
of their being guilty of the first sin, and fo put no
difference betwixt the first sin and original sin,
which is an effect that flows from, and follows upon
the first sin; the first sin was Adam’s deed, and is
legally ours, being imputed to us; as it is, Rom.
v. death reigned over all, even over them that had
not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgres-
sion, because Adam in his standing and falling flood
in our room, representing all mankind that was to
come of him; but original sin is inherent in us, and
cleaveth close to us, and is that which we are born
and bred up with: And therefore ye would distin-
guish these sins, that ye may know, that ye are not
only guilty of Adam’s first sinful deed, but that ye
have a present sinful and corrupt nature, though it
be not always alike exercising and acting itself.
Others again look only upon their nature as inclin-
ed to evil, and look not on it as that which makes
them liable to wrath by reason of the first sin; but
ye would put both together, and know, that though
your sinfulness doth not consist only in an inclina-
tion to evil, that yet your sinfulness lies mainly in
that, and that it will not be long a-going wrong:
And it is not only your actual straying and going
wrong that ye would take notice of, but also, and
mainly, of your sinful nature, that inclines, dif-
poses, and sets you on work to go wrong; it is
your filthy corrupt nature, the body of death, the
smell and favour whereof, to say fo, is the kything
of some actual sin. We may clear it in a similitude
or two: We are, by this original sin, as young
serpents before they can fly a going actually, or like
ravenous birds before they come out of the nest; yet
we call these serpents and ravenous birds, because
they are come of such a kind: In our swaddling-
cloths, we have the venomous and ravenous nature,
to wit, original sin, in us; and in our actual sinning,
we are like serpents when they come to fly actually,
or like ravenous birds when they come to
catch the prey; and our actual sin is a fruit of or-
iginal sin: Or take it in this fame similitude in the
text, there are many sheepe that never actually fray-
ed; yet they are called straying wilful creatures;
because they are inclined to stray, and ready to
stray: Or take it in this similitude, there are some
diseases that follow such a house and family, some
are inclined to a consummation, some to the stone, some to one diseafe, some to another; which is from some defect of the body; even so it is here, that, from a defect of our nature, infected by original sin, all actual sins flow.

The 2d Use is for conviction and reproof; and indeed we cannot well tell where we shall begin here. However, the first thing that it reproves, is our natural pride; though this be the finfulness of our very infancy, yet we are ready to look upon ourselves as something: It is a true saying, though much misapplied, that Job hath, Chap. xi. 12. Vain man would be wise, though man be born as a wild ass's colt; a colt hath a wild humour, and is the moft wilful of creatures: and this fame is it that is implied in that saying of James iv. 5. Do ye think the scripture faith in vain, The spirit that is in us lusteth to envy? which faith this much, that the moft part never trow that they have such a spirit in them, that is inclined to all evil, bent to hate God and every thing that is good. 2. It reproves the great security that is amongst the moft part. If this be a truth, that men and women are thus born under the curfe of God, and inclined to every thing that is evil, born enemies to God, and inclined to aggrege and heighten the quarrel, how comes it then to pafs that the great part feep as soundly and securely as if they were in no hazard? if ye were all posed, and put to it, how many of you can give a solid proof that ye are reconciled, that your peace is made, that ye are changed, and your nature renewed, and the quarrel betwixt God and you taken away? And yet if we look up and down, ye are generally as secure and quiet as if ye were born friends with God; there are but few taken with a conviction, and saying within themselves, Is yonder doctrine true of me? As if the scripture had spoken in vain, whatever it speaks of original sin. Ah! shall never this be amended? Will ye never lay your finfulness to heart? Shall ye still think nothing of that which gives the occaifional rife to the covenant of redemption, and to Christ's satisfaction? All the preaching that ye hear daily, if it be not now laid to heart, it shall be most terrible and dreadful to you one day; and the peace that ye now have, shall end in red war and great bitterness.

3. It reproves folks exceeding great unwatchfulnes, and their trusting to their own nature, and following their owne counsel: The wise man faith, Prov. xxviii. 26. He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool. Is it not proof-worthy for a man to be as brutish as the very beast that perisheth, as it is, Psal. xlix. and yet to be as little watchful, and as much

trustful, or to trust as much to a man's own guiding, as if nothing of a misleading humour and disposition were in him? We may more than allude to these words of our Saviour here, If the blind lead the blind, shall not both fall into the ditch? Many of you think that ye are instructed as serifes in the way to heaven, and will be ready to say, God forbid we should be ignorant of that, and what have we been doing all our days, if we be yet to learn that lefion? But we will tell you what you have been doing, ye have been like filly sheep straying all your days: And we would the rather speak to this, because it is fo necessary to be known and believed, and yet fo little known and credited; For, 1. Ye will never be rightly humbled, nor make ufe of Jesus Christ, nor walk watchfully and soberly; in a word, ye will never believe and repent, till ye know, be convinced of, and believe this to be your natural inclination, and the finfulness of your nature: And yet, 2. Though this be fo necessary, that the want of it mafs the fruit of the word in you, and preaching doth but buff on you, to fay fo; how many are there, that are as little fensible of it as the very ftones of the wall that are before us, or the boards that they lean upon, as to their own particular fate and condition? I would but ask you, Is it poiffible that ye could live fo securely, and fatisfied with your own cafe, if ye believed indeed that ye had fuch a finful nature, and that ye were liable to God's wrath and curfe? Or would ye give fuch way to your natural finful humours and inclinations, and fo contentedly flight Jesus Christ, and the offers of the gospel, as many of you do? And yet we fee amongst those with whom we converse, men and women not only as secure, as if they had no fuch natures, but even belching and foaming out their own shame: We would have you therefore to be convinced and know, that not only ye are finners in the general, but that every one of you is fuch in particular.

To make it the more clear, I shall give you two or three qualifications that are requisite to a suitable conviction of your finfulness, 1. It would be particular. 2. It would be fensible; ye would not in bare words take with it that ye are finners, but ye would fee and be convinced, that in this and this ye have finned, and ye would be kindly affected with it. 3. It would be diftinft, not a guessing, but a thing that from the seeing and feeling of it ye would be clear in. 4. It would have fuch an infiuence on the moving of your affections, and fuch an inward working on your hearts, as that ye may lothe your nature, and yourfelfe because of it: We
In this verse of the text, the speaker discusses the role of Christ in satisfying justice and forgiveness. He mentions the idea that Christ came to satisfy justice and to satisfy our sins. He also talks about the glory of God and the love of God towards humanity. The author suggests that the love of God is such that it leads to repentance and a change of heart. The passage emphasizes the importance of faith and its role in experiencing God's grace and mercy. The author also mentions the idea of faith leading to works, and the necessity of humility and submission to divine authority. Overall, the passage reveals a deep understanding of Christian theology and the importance of faith in the context of justice satisfaction and divine grace.
Isaiah liii. 6. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the
Lord Lath laid on him the iniquities of us all.

SERM. XXVI.

EVERY expression that the Prophet uteth, to set forth the grace of God in Jesus Christ to sinners by, is more wonderful than another, because indeed every thing that he expresseth is more wonderful than another: And there is so much grace and infinite love in the way of the gospel, that it is hard to know where there is most of it; whether in its rise, or in its execution; whether in the decree of God, or in Christ’s satisfaction; whether in the benefits that we enjoy, or in the way by which we are brought to enjoy them: Sure, all together make a wonder paffing great, a most wonderful wonder, even a world of wonders. It is a wonder, that so it is verse 5.) he should be wounded for our tranfgressions, bruised for our iniquities, that the chastisement of our peace should be on him, and that by his stripes we should be healed: and when here he comes to explain this, and to shew how it came to pafs that Jesus Christ suffered so much, he holds out another new wonder, All we like sheep have gone astray, &c. as if he had said, Would ye know how it comes to pafs that the Mediator behaved to suffer, and suffer so much? All we, the elect people of God, have gone astray like so many wandering sheep, as well as others, not one excepted; and there was not another way to recover and reclaim us but this, The Lord Jehovah laid on him the iniquity of us all: To recover us when we were lost, Jesus Christ was substitute in our room by the eternal decree of God, and the iniquities of all of us who are his elect people, as to their punishment, were laid upon him. This then is the scope, to shew the rise of Christ’s sufferings, and how it came to pafs that our Lord suffered, and suffered so much: The occasion of it, was the elect’s sin; and the fountain-cause, the Father’s laying of their sin on him by an eternal decree, and making him to answer for it according to that decree, with his undertaking, which was the covenant of redemption, whereof Christ’s suffering was the execution. Thus we have the fountain whence our Lord’s sufferings flowed; he is, in the covenant of redemption, substitute and judicially enacted the elect’s Cautioner, and takes on their debt; and being substitute in their room, justice pursues the claim, and sentence passes against him, for making him answerable and liable to the debt of their sins; which sets out, as it were, a Judge on the throne, Jehovah; and two parties at the bar, we and him; we the principal debtors, and him the Cautioner, Jesus Christ, in our room and place: the law, by which the judge proceeds, is the covenant of redemption; and we the principal debtors not being law-biding, he is made liable to the debt; and on this ground the sentence passes against him, for satisfying what we were owing; and hereupon followed his sufferings: So then, the rise of his sufferings is, that it was so transfacted by the wise, just and gracious God; and thus this verse comes well in, to bear it out against God? Or think ye that ye will be well enough for all that? And if ye dare not resolve to try under sin, I would ask, What way will ye win from it? think ye it easy to win from under it? Must not the justice of God be satisfied? Some of you think that ye can pray yourselves out of sin: But what need was there of Christ’s sufferings if a satisfaction might have been made to justice another way? And if none but Christ can satisfy, it turns to this, that by all means ye would make use of him, else ye will most certainly drown and die in your sins. And this is the thing that we would commend to you, that under the fentence of sin, and in the faith of God’s condescending love, ye would flee to Jesus Christ, and give him employment, for making your peace with God, and taking away your sin, and sanctifying of you: O but this be suitable to sinners! and if ye think yourselves sinners, prejudge not yourselves of the benefit of a Saviour.
In the few words then, we have, 

First, something spoken of iniquity, which three parties have some acts about, to wit, 1. The elect, Us all. 2. Him, to wit, The Mediator. 3. The Lord, to wit, Jehovah. Then, we have the express act of the Lord, to wit, his laying on him, the Mediator, the iniquity of us all. (1.) As for this word iniquity, by it is meant sometimes, 1. Sin formally taken; as it hath a disconformity to the law of God, and suppeth a spot and defect; and so it is commonly taken, when we pray for pardon of sin; and when David says, Psal. li. My sin is ever before me; and Psal. xxxviii. My iniquity is gone over my head: And so it is the transgression of the law of God. 2. It is sometimes taken for the effect that sin procureth, and so it is in effect the punishment of sin, as Lev. vii. the 18 and 20 verses being compared together; v. 18. it is said, He shall bear his iniquity, which, v. 20. is, He shall be cut off: and so it is clearly meant of the punishment of iniquity; For to bear his iniquity, and to be cut off, are the same thing there. And that word of Cain, Gen. iv. 14. My iniquity, or punishment, is greater than I can bear, hath a manifest respect to God's curse inflicted on him for his sin, and is, as if he had said, I will not get lived under the punishment that is inflicted upon me, for every one that finds me will cut my throat; and sometimes it is translated punishment, as in that of Gen. iv. 13. The Question then is, Which of these two is understood here in this text, whether iniquity or sin formally taken, or iniquity taken for the punishment thereof? These who are called Antinomians plead, that it is to be understood of sin formally taken: But though it be hard so much as to mention this, it being so blasphemous-like to affect, that our blessed Lord Jesus should be formally a sinner, and have the spots and desilement of sin on him, which we wonder that any Christian should dare to affect or presume to maintain; yet, because this scripture is allledged for it, we shall clear, that iniquity is not here to be taken for sin formally, but for sin in the punishment of it. And the first reason that we give, shall be drawn from the plain scope of the words; the Prophet having in the 5th verse laid, that he was wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; the scope of this verse is to shew how it came to pass that Christ suffered, and suffered so much; which he doth, by declaring that it could not be otherwise, because the punishment of all the sins of the elect was laid upon him; and that which was called wounding and bruising in the former verse, is here called on the matter a bearing of our iniquities (for if they were laid on him, he did certainly bear them) the sins of all the elect tried on him as to their punishment; and this shews how that Christ behaved not only to suffer all that he suffered: So in the 8th verse it is said, He was cut off out of the land of the living, and for the transgressions of my people was he stricken: That which is here called the bearing of iniquity, is there called, being cut off, and stricken for the transgressions of his people. And this may be the second reason of the exposition, as we have given it; because, when iniquities are spoken of, they are not called Christ's, as inherent in him, but they are called his people's iniquities, they being formally theirs, but his judicially and legally only: Even as the debt is formally the bankrump's, but legally the cautioner's. A third reason is drawn from comparing this text with other parallel places of scripture: that which is called bearing of iniquity here, is called, Gal. iii. 13. his being made a curse for us; so that his bearing of our iniquity, is his being made a curse for our iniquity, and his bearing the wrath of God due to us for our sin. I shall illustrate it by a comparison, whence the fourth reason will clearly result: Our iniquities become Christ's, as his righteousness becomes ours; for these two are parallel, 2 Cor. v. 21. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God, in, or through him; where 1. It is clear, that Jesus Christ is to the sinner in our room, as we are righteous in his room; and contrarily, we are righteous in his room, as he was the sinner in our room. 2. That righteousness is not so derived to us, that it is formally made ours, and to be inherently in us, but is ours only by imputation itself or the virtue of it being imputed to us; and it is upon this ground that, Rom. iv. imputed righteousness is often mentioned, that is, when God accounteth a man to be righteous, though he be yet a sinner in himself: Even so our sin is imputed to

Y 2

Christ,
Ifaiah xiii. 1. Seri. 2. 

Christ, and reckoned his, because he became our Surety. And though Antinomians have a vain notion to elude this, yet the scripture is very clear, as holding forth a legal procedure; the debt is accounted his, because of his obligation to be answerable for it, and in justice and law he is liable to it: and there is no other way that we can rationally imagine, how our blessed Lord can bear our iniquities; For, 1. It cannot stand with his absolute purity, to have any spot of sin, or to be formally the sinner. Neither, 2. Is it necessary that he should be the sinner, but only that he should pay the penalty due by us, it being the nature of contracts among men, that where the principal debtor succumbs, the cautioner comes in his room; so is it here. Yea, 3. If Jesus Christ were the sinner formally, it would incapacitate him to be our Cautioner, to pay the penalty, or to satisfy justice for the debt of our sins: We would not have spoken so much to this, were it not that this same place is prefixed in a most faultless manner by the abusers of the grace of God to maintain their error; so then, we take this in short to be the meaning of this part of the verse, that Jesus Christ did bear the punishment due to us for our sins.

2dly. The three Parties, that have some acts about iniquity, are, 1. Us all. 2. Him. 3. The Lord Jehovah. (1.) Us all, and here we meet with the Arminians, another party that abuseth and perverteth this place, as if it were to be extended to all men and women that ever sinned, or went astray: for, say they, It is the iniquity of all of them that are wrong, that is laid on Christ, and that is the iniquity of all men and women in the world: But (as we shew before) the scope of the words is not so much to shew the univerfality of all men, and women sinning, as to shew that all the elect as well as others went astray, and turned every one of them to their own way; and therefore it is restricted, All we; and the word All is no broader than the word We: now the We that is here meant, is the we who in the former words are healed by his stripes; and that sure is not all men and women that sin, but the elect only. And verse 11th it is they that by his knowledge, that is, by faith in him, are justified; it is the we, whole iniquities he bare, and no more: So that, in short, us all is not all men simply considered, but us all, that are elect; and thus it is necessarily to be restricted to the prophet's scope.

The meaning of both parts of the verse together then is, We all, even the elect as well as others, went astray, and turned every one of us to his own sinful way; and the Lord Jehovah made him to bear the punishment of all our sins; and it could not be but a mighty great punishment, and a most huge and horrible suffering, when the Lord made the iniquities of us all, his elect, to meet upon Christ.

There is not much debate about the other two Parties, the first whereof is Him, that is, the Mediator Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of the eternal Father, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express Image of his Person, who remaining God, became Man, to perform and bring about the work of our redemption according to his undertaking.

The other Party is the Lord Jehovah, the Judge and the Party offended; as we are the party offending, and Jesus Christ the Satisfier: And the Lord is here considered essentially, as Father, Son, and holy Ghost, having one common essence and justice, and who being all Three one God, are to be satisfied; He is Jehovah.

But how is this punishment of our iniquities laid on Jesus Christ? And here Socinians make as great a buffer and business; the devil intending (if he could effect it) to blow up the very foundation of the gospel, sends all his forces against such places as do most lively hold it forth: But the words are clear and most significant, as they are rendered according to the Hebrew on the margin, thus, The Lord hath made the iniquity of us all to meeten him. The iniquities of the elect are as so many brooks and rivulets, any one of which is hard and difficult for them to pass over: But O! when Christ comes to satisfy for them, they are brought and gathered into a great lake, or rather into a vast sea or ocean together; they all, collected and combined, met on him, and he did meet with them in a mighty shock; and sure, they could not but be great sufferings that he endured, when he had such a sea to pass through: Or, the sins of the elect were like so many companies or regiments of men, any one whereof they could never have overcome; but when Christ came to satisfy divine justice for them, as the companies and regiments of sins (fo to speak) rendezvoused, and brought in one formidable army together, met on Christ. The word is well rendered here, were laid on him, being the same word in the root that Saul used when he commanded Doeg to fall upon the Lord's priests, 1 Sam. xxii. 18. The word is. Lay upon them, or lay at them; as when one is angry with another, he will cry, Lay upon him; and this shews the exceeding greatness of Christ's sufferings, when all the sins of all the elect met together, as a huge and heavy holt did fall
fall and do terrible execution upon our blessed Lord Jesus. This then being the meaning of the words, the question is, Whether the Lord Jehovah did lay this punishment really upon Christ; or whether, as Socinians fondly imagine, he only interceded for them? But for answer, 1. What sort of meaning of the words would that be, I pray? the Lord made the iniquities of us all to intercede on him, when the text says plainly, that they were laid on him, and on the matter that he bare them, and expressly so, verse 11th, For he shall bear their iniquities. Yea, 2. Consider the scope, and it comes in as a reason why Christ suffered so much: and would that (can any think) be a good reason for so great and grievous sufferings undergone by Christ, that God made him to intercede for all the sins of the elect? but, if you look upon the words in their true meaning, they are a clear reason why he was wounded, and exceedingly bruised and chastened, and why he endured so many stripes, even because all the sins of all his elect met on him, because he was made to bear the punishment of them all; also the words following clear it, He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgressions of my people was he stricken; and Gal. iii. he was made a curse for us. He suffered, the just for the unjust; he actually and really suffered that which we should have suffered: If it be asked, What is this, to lay iniquity on Christ? Or how is it said that the iniquity of the elect was laid on him? Or in what respect? I answer, 1. In respect of God's eternal covenant; the punishment due for our sins is laid upon him by an eternal deliberate counsel or consultation of the Persons of the Godhead wherein (as we shew before) Christ enters Surety for us, accepts of, and engages to pay our debt. 2. In respect of God's actual pursuing Christ, having thus engaged himself, putting in his hand the cup, and making him drink; and the bill of our account, and making him accountable. 3. In respect of God's acceptation of that satisfaction which Christ performed and paid down for them.

This being the meaning of the words, we come to point at some things from them; and the very opening of them may give us some insight in the way of the Gospel, and of a notable ground of footing to our faith: If we could rightly apprehend God making this transference with the Mediator, we might not only have a ground to our faith, but a great encouragement to come to Christ, and to rest on him, who hath thus fitted himself in our room before the tribunal of divine justice; and it would waken and warm faith and love towards him.

Verse 6.

But observe here more particularly, 1. That all the elect people of God are lying under iniquity, even as others. This we spoke to the last day, and shall not repeat what was then said. It is with respect to iniquity in the elect that all the bunifes of redemption is transacted; and from hence, as the occasion, it hath its rise, even from God's being offended, and from the necessity of a Mediator: for this doth presuppose our debt, and a flanding sentence against us, till Christ interposed for the removing of it.

2. From its being said before, that every one turned his own way; and here, that the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all; observe, That every one of the elect, beside the common state of sin wherein all are, hath his own particular guilt, that is, in his own way: This is clearly holden out here, while it is said, that not only the sheep we have gone astray, but that every one hath turned to his own way; which, as it holds forth a way in them all different from God's way, so also in every one of them somewhat different from another's way; and this is called a walking in the counsel of our own heart, Psal. lxxxi. and a man's own fore, 2Chron. vi. 29. and a man's own iniquity, Psal. xviii. 23. because it is in a special manner his. To clear it a little, consider, that sin is peculiar to a believer, or may be called his own way, in these respects, (1.) In respect of his being more addicted to one sin than another, which is usually called a man's predominant. Two men may both be covetous and passionate; but the one of them may be called a covetous man, because he is especially given to that sin of covetousness; and the other may be called a passionate man, because he is especially given to passion. (2.) In respect of some peculiar aggravating circumstances. Though we will not dare particularly to determine as to persons, yet if we look thro' all men and women, it will be readily found, that there is some sin, which in respect of some or several aggravations, is in some a greater sin than it is in others; and hereby God hath given ground of humiliation to all: There is not a man (as we just now hinted) but readily he hath an evil which is at a greater height in him than in another; as for instance, one may be given more to the sin of drunkenness, another more to hypocrify, another more to uncleanness, &c. I do not speak so much here of the divers kinds of sin, as of the several aggravations of this or that sin that they are given to; such and such a man may have aggravations, that will heighten such a predominant evil in him, far beyond what it is in others; And it is from
from this ground that a believer, not in a complimenting way, but most really and sincerely, doth call and account himself the chief of sinners; because there are some aggravations that elevate his sin above the sin others, or above that same sin in others: As a weak believer may have some one good thing in him more commendable than it is in a stronger believer; so the stronger believer may have some one sin, that, in respect of its aggravations, may give him ground to look on himself as beyond others in sin.

**Use 1.** It serves much for our humiliation, in as far as this adds to our sinfulness: There are none of us, but, beside the common way of sinning incident to all, we have something that is peculiar to ourselves, we have our own way, wherewith we are chargeable above and beyond others. We will readily all grant that we are sinners, but who of us will take with our particular and peculiar guilt that doth more easily beget us? who amongst many are as doves of the valleys on the mountains, every one mourning for his own iniquity, for his own plague and sore, that by several circumstances may be heightened as to its sinfulness beyond the sin of others?

**Use 2.** The second use, which is the scope, serves to shew the exceeding greatness of Christ's sufferings; O! what a shock he was in, when he had not only all the common sins of the elect to satisfy for, but when all their particular sins, with their respective aggravations, rendezvous'd and tryst'd on him? It serves likewise to exalt the free grace of God, and the condescendancy of our blessed Lord Jesus, who took in altogether in his making satisfaction for them, when there were several forts of them, as if every one of the elect had been set to invent a new sin. What great and sore suffering was here, when he condescended to drink the cup, that had the wonderful effects of the sins of all the elect wrung into it? when not only in gros he takes on the sins of the elect, but this and that man's particular sins, which were all reckoned and summed on Christ's account, and for which he was made to satisfy; and wherein justice proceeded equally and equivalently. This notably confirmed the reality of Christ's satisfaction, by suffering what all the elect should have suffered eternally, or the equivalent of it; for if there had not been a proportionable satisfaction in his sufferings, wherefore serves such an enumeration of his sufferings?

**Use 3.** The third use serves to lead us in to know how much we are in Christ's debt, and what a great encouragement we have to believe, and withal, what notable ground of consolation believers have. I say, 1. It showeth how much we are in Christ's debt: When we take a view of all our sins, and consider that there was a particular view taken of them in the covenant of redemption, not only all our common sins, but even all the particular and peculiar sins of believers were reckoned unto Christ the Cautioner, and put on his account, and he engaged to satisfy for all, and pay the whole reckoning; doth it not lay a great obligation on us to him, who counted for the least farthing of our debt? We, like a pack of bankrupt dyours, did take on the debt, and the account was put in his hand, not only (as I just now said) of all our common sins, but of this and that particular sin, with all their several aggravations, and the sinful circumstances that did heighten them; and he satisfied for them all: And of this we would take special notice; for it may readily wrong us to look upon the covenant of redemption as a bargain in gros, there is a particular in it, to shew not only the sovereignty, but the exactness of justice, and also the riches of God's grace, and of the great condescendancy of Christ's love to elect sinners. 2. It is a great encouragement to believe; for even these sins that would fright and fear serious and exercised souls from coming forward to Christ, were all counted on Christ's score, and were all satisfied for by him. 3. It is a notable ground of consolation to believers, when they are disposed and ready to think that their particular sins are insufferable and unpardonable: they think that course might be taken with all their common evils; but as for this most sinful and shameful unthankfulness, this despising of his grace, this woful unbelief, &c. it flares them in the face, and they know not well how that will be got done away: but, believers in Christ, who are sorrowful and sadly perplexed on this account, is that your own way? It is tranfacted on Christ's score with the reft; every one of us turned to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all: Oh impregnable ground of strong consolation, which is as good news from a far country, a none-fuch cordial to a fainting soul!

3. Observe here, "That a believing elect, or "an elect believer, will not only be sensible of sin "in the general, but of his own particular and "peculiar sinful way;" or thus, "It is a good token, "when folk look not only to sins common, but on "their own peculiar sinful way;" or thus, "That "folk should consider their sinfulness, not only in "common, but in particular, with its several ag- "gravations." The scriptures which we cited be-
fore do confirm this, as Psal. xviii. 22. I kept myself from mine iniquity; and 2 Chron. vi. 29. where faith Solomon, when every one shall know his own fore and his own grief; or as itis, 1 Kings viii. 38. The plague of his own heart. This im-
plies these two things, 1. A distinct aggravating of
sin, when a man not only looks on himself as a fin-
er; but looks on his sin, by reason of several ag-
grivating circumstances, as being above and beyond
the sin of others, and abhorreth and lotheth himself
as the chief of sinners, as David doth, when he
faith, Psal. li. Against thee, thee only, have I
sinned: he is not there extenuating his sin, as if
it were done only against God; but aggravating his sin,
as the words following shew, and I have done this
evill in thy sight; as if he had said, Thy concern in
the matter doth most affect and afflict me: thou
lovest truth or sincerity in the inward parts; but I
have been (alsi!) all this time jugling and greatly
playing the hypocrite, which makes it to be a won-
derful great evil. And Psal. lxi. 3. Iniquities
prevail against me; and as Paul doth, who calls
himself the chief of sinners, 1 Tim. i. 15. 2dly
That believers before conversion yea and in respect
of their natural inclination even after their conver-
sion, are wofully inclined each of them to a sinful
way of their own, called, Eccl. xi. the way of a
man’s own heart: And of this believers would be
sensible, not only of their sinfulness in general and
of their particular acts of sin, but of their peculiar
sinful acts; and that for these ends or ues.

1. It serves deeply to humble, and to press forth
(to speak so) repentance; when we consider our
own way to be sinful beyond others, and that such
and such a man hath sinned, but his sin hath not
such aggravations as mine, this makes the soul to
blush, and to say, as it is Psal. xl. 12. “Innum-
“erable evils have compassed me about, mine iniqui-
ties have taken hold upon me,” so that I am not
“able to look up; they are more than the hairs of
“mine head, therefore my heart faileth me;” he
wonders at himself, how a man can be so given to
sin, and everyday to add one new sinful step to an-
other, and never to weary or give over; this makes
him to blush and be ashamed, as it is, Ezek. xvi.
63. The remembrance of common sins, and of thi
and that particular act of sin, will not so effect this;
but when a finner remembers, that such a sin had
been his own way, that humbles and stops his mouth
exceedingly.

2. This adds a peculiarness to the grace of God,
in the believer’s esteem, and maketh it so much the
more amiable and admirable to him, as it is with

Verse 6.
Paul, when he faith, 1 Tim. i. 13, &c. I was a
blaphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; never-
theless I obtained mercy, and the grace of God was
exceeding abundant towards me. This is a faithful
saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus
Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom
I am the chief, howbeit for this cause I obtained
mercy, that in me he might shew forth all long suffer-
ing, for a pattern to them that should hereafter
believe on him: I was, as if he had said, singular
in sinning, but grace was eminent and singular in
shewing mercy, and hath cast a copy thereof in me
that is singularly eminent; the peculiar sins of beli-
eviers sin, as it makes them know the aggravations
of it beyond others, so it makes them extant grace
the more.

3. It serves some way to discriminate a found
believer from a hypocrite; and a right sight of sin
from that which is not so: It is not so much to
know that we are sinners, for the light of a natural
conscience will tell men that, especially when their
lives are so bad; but it is more to know, and right-
ly to take up the peculiar sins that is in our way
of sinning, to take up the many windings and turnings
of the deceitful heart in following of such a sin that
it is addicted to; this makes a believer think, that
there is no body’s heart like his. We fee ordinarily,
that but very few, if any natural men, will take
kindly with the peculiar sins of their way of sinning;
and even when they will take with this, that they
are sinners in general; yet they shun to take with
it, that they are given to such a sinful way of their
own, and with the particular turnings, windings,
and threatenings of their own hearts to that way; but
few will grant that they are given to despising or
lighting of Christ, to hypocrisy, self-seeking, lying,
&c. I will not be pretermitary here, to say that
every body must know what is their own one pecu-
liar sinful way; for some see so many predominant
fins in themselves, that hardly can they pitch upon
one by another: Nor upon the other side, will I
positively say, that they are all gracious that see
one sin by another to carry sway in them. But this
i say, that this contributes much for the humbling
of the sinner, and for the exalting of free grace;
and that the believer will see many windings and
turnings in and to their own way, that others who
are not believers will not see, and will see one pre-
dominant after another; whereas a natural man,
that he complimentingly call himself the chief of sin-
ers, yet he doth not really think himself to be
such; but rather, if he be given to drunkenness,
to filthines, or the like, he will readily call up
David.
4. Considering our sinful way, as the occasion of this transgression, and of the laying of our iniquities upon Christ, as the result of it, we have this sweet Observation, “That the elect are considered in the covenant of redemption as foully and vilely sinful, and with all the aggravations of their sins and sinful ways; so that they cannot be fuller and more vile in time, than they were considered to be, when they were given to Christ to be satisfied for by him.” How were they then considered? The text tells us, even as straying sheep: But that is not all, they are considered as such, who have had their own peculiar way of straying from God, and have turned aside, and run on in their own sinful way: thus the Lord considered the elect in the covenant of redemption, thus Jesus Christ considered them in the undertaking for them, even with all the several aggravations of their sinfulness; so that they are not, nor cannot be worse in time, than they were considered to be before time: This is so ordered by the Lord, for these ends, 1. That justice might be distinctly, exactly, and fully satisfied; and that it might be known that it is so, he would needs be referred to his honour, to his declarative, or manifested honour and glory, which suffered by man’s fall, and by the many great and variously aggravated sins of the elect; and would have his justice, as I said, fully satisfied: And therefore, as there is a volume of a book, wherein all the elect are written, for whom Christ should satisfy; so there is a volume of what, and for what he should satisfy, that there may be a proportional satisfaction and price told down to justice. 2. That believers may have a more full view of the way of grace, and of Christ’s undertaking for them; when Jesus Christ undertook our debt, he had a full view of a sum he was to pay, he knew what he had to pay to the least farthing, and what his peoples sins would cost him; and yet he feared not to engage to satisfy, but did satisfy according to his engagement to the full. 4. It is also ordered so, for this end, even to confirm the believer’s faith, when he cometh to take hold of Christ, and of the covenant: And when this objection mutters within him, Dare such a sinful wretch as I take hold of Christ, who hath been thus and thus polluted with sin? Yes, faith the text, for these sins, so and so aggravated, were not unknown to the Father, nor to the Mediator, when thou wast bargained about: Nay, these sins, with their aggravations, were expressly considered in the covenant of redemption; and there is no sin already committed, or to be committed by thee in time, that was not considered before time: What was your pollute, believers, when God passed by, and cast the lap or shirt of his love over you? Were you not cast out in the open field, swallowing in your own blood, with your navels unclothed, having no eye to pity you? &c. as it is, Ezek. xvi. And wherefore I pray, is this set down? but to let you know that ye are no worse in time than ye were considered to be before ye had a being; so, to heighten the love and grace of God in Christ, and to draw you in to him, that since God and Christ the Mediator, in the transaction about your redemption, flood not on your sinfulness, ye may not stand on it, when seriously taken with, but may submit to his righteousness, and say, Be it so, Lord I am content to take what thou freely offerest. And the more sinful and lost ye be in yourselves, when suitably affected therewith, the more wonderful is the grace of God in the plot of your redemption, the more strong is your consolation, and the greater ground of believing have ye; your sins do not surprize God, nor the Mediator; the bargain was made before your sins were committed, and therefore the price must reach them, even when they are all summed up together: He was content to accept of them, so as to satisfy for them; and blessed be he for evermore, that accepted of the bargain, and paid the price according to his undertaking.

SERMON XXVII.

Isaiah liii. 6. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

In the former verse, the prophet hath affected the most wonderful truths, and very concerning to the people of God, and yet such truths as will not be easily got digested by natural reason. 1. That our Lord Jesus was put to fore and said sufferings, He was wounded and bruised, &c. 2. That these sad sufferings
fufferings were for us the elect: It was for our sins, and what was due to the elect; he was made to bear them. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. 3. The end of these fufferings, or the effect that followed on them to us, pardon of sin, peace with God, and healing; The chastisement of our peace was on him, and by his stripes we are healed.

And each of these being more wonderful than another, therefore the Prophet goes on to clear their rise, which is no less wonderful; how it came to pass that he suffered, and suffered so much, and that we have such benefit by his fufferings. It could not (would he say) be otherwise, but it behoved our Lord Jesus to suffer, and to suffer so much, and for us; neither was it unreasonable that it should be for our benefit. For, we had all like lost sheep gone astray, and every one of us had turned to his own way: And there was no way of relief for us, but by Christ's stepping into our room, and interposing for us, and engaging to pay our debt; and by virtue of that interposition and bargain, The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all: And therefore, 1. Would ye have the reason of Christ's so great fufferings? Here it is, the elect had many sins, and he interposing for them, their count was scored out, and they were reckoned on his score. 2. If the cause and reason be asked, How it came to pass that Christ suffered so much for us? Here it is, he undertook to satisfy for our iniquities, and God imputed them to him: Even as if a dyvour were purfued, and one should step in and be cau- tioner for him, and being enacted surety, should take on him and become liable for the debt; the exacting of it of him, is the laying it on him. But, 3. If it be asked, How it comes to pass that his fufferings become our healing, and bring peace to us? It is answered, It was so transacted and agreed upon; he was content to pay all our debt, and the Father accepted of his payment for ours: Our blef- sed Lord Jesus engaging and satisfying, the elect are set free, and justice, betaketh itself to him as the more responfual Party. This is the scope of the words, which though but few, yet exceeding full and signifigant, as holding out the fountain and fundamental grounds of the gospel; we shall look upon them in these three respects, (1.) As they imply a cov- enant and transfaction, whereby the elect's sins are transacted on Christ, and his righteousness is made application of to them; Christ undertaking to pay their debt, and Jehovah accepting thereof, and promising that his satisfaction, made for the behoof of the elect, shall be applied to them. (2.) In re- spect of the effects, which are two; which though they seem contrary, the one to the other, yet they are well confluent together, and subordinate the one of them to the other: The 1st is justice on Christ's side; He satisfies for the debt due by the elect. The 2d is of mercy and grace to the elect, which is also implied; but, comparing these words with the former, it is very clear: He is wounded and bruised, and they are healed; the chaffisment of their peace was on him; the imputing of their debt to him, makes that it is not imputed to them. (3.) In respect of the influence that the eternal co- venant hath on these effects. It lays down the way how these may be justly brought about, which is the scope of all, even to shew how Jesus Christ, being the innocent Son of God, and without sin, was made liable to the debt of the elect's sin; he became Cautioner for them, and is made liable on that account to satisfy for them. It clears also how his sufferings stood for theirs; which may seem to be unreasonable and unjust among men, that the sufferings of an innocent party should stand for the guilty: It was so articled in the covenant of re- demption, that the Son as Mediator interposing, and undertaking to pay the elect's debt, the Lord Jehovah the Creditor should not reckon it on their score, but on the Mediator's, and that he should count for it. The Prophet in this verse, almoft, is striking on the sweet and plianent ftring of this noble plot and contrivance of God concerning the redemption of elect sinners, called the covenant of redemp- tion; which these words, considered with respect to their scope, do in all the parts of it clearly hold out: And therefore, the clearing of it, being the clearing of a main ground of our faith in reference to Christ's sufferings, and to the way how they are made forthcoming to us, and withal to the benefits that come by them to us, we cannot speak too much nor too often of it, if we would speak of it suitably to the passing excellency of the matter.

The first Doctrine supposed here is, That there is an eternal covenant, and transfaction betwixt the Lord Jehovah and the Mediator, wherein the whole busines concerning the redemption and salvation of the elect is contrived. There is an eternal cove- nant palt betwixt God and the Mediator, wherein all that is executed, or will be, concerning the elect, till the day of judgment, was contrived; there is nothing relating to the elect's salvation, but it was in this transfaction exactly contrived and laid down, even as it is in time executed; and it is called a cove- nant in scripture, and we call it so, not strictly and properly, as if all things in covenants among men
were in it, but because materially and substantially it is so, and the resemblance will hold for the most part; the Lord having laid down in it the plot of man's salvation in a legal way, so as his grace and mercy may be glorified, and his justice satisfied, hath put it in this form, so as it may bear the name of a covenant: Wherein we have, 1. Mutual Parties, the Lord Jehovah, the Party offended, on the one side; and the Lord Mediator, Him, the Party engaging to satisfy, on the other side: Which shews the freeness of the redemption of the elect as to them, and the certainty of their salvation; and withal, the immutability of God's purpose, for the Parties are not mutable creatures, but on the one side Jehovah, and on the other side the Mediator, though considered as to be incarnate, and the Head of the elect. This whole business bred there, to wit, in the counsel of the Godhead, for promoting of that great end, the glorifying of the grace and justice of God in the elect's salvation. 2. Whereabout is it? It is about this matter, how to get the elect saved from the curse, to which on their foreseen fall and finning they were made liable; redemption necessarily presupposing man's fall, and the covenant of works, to which the certification and threatening was added, The soul that sins shall die; and the elect presupposed as fallen, as well as others, are liable to the curse, except a satisfaction for them do intervene; so that the elect are considered as having sin, and as being in themselves lost. And what is the Lord Jehovah and the Mediator doing? What are they about in this covenant? It is how to get the punishment due to the elect for their sins removed from them. And these persons, as all, in the text, are all the elect, wherein there is implied a particular consideration of them that are designed to life and salvation, and a particular consideration of all their sins, and of their several aggravations, that there may be a proportion between the price and the wrong that God hath gotten by their finning against him. 3. The occasion of this covenant, and the reason why it behoved to be, is holden forth in the first words, All we like sheep have gone astray, and turned every one of us unto his own way: The elect, as well as others, had made themselves through their finning liable to God's wrath and curse, and they were incapable of life and salvation till the curse was removed; and so there is a lift and obstruction in the way of the execution of the decree of election (which must stand for the glorification of God's grace and mercy, primarily intended in all this work) and till this lift be removed, the glorification of God's grace is letted and ob-

Ref: For the removal of which obstruction, there is a necessity of a Redeemer, for the elect are not able to pay their own debt themselves; now, that there may be a Redeemer, and that a price of redemption may be laid down, there is also a necessity of a covenant, otherwise the Redeemer cannot be, if a transactio do not precede, on which the Redeemer's interposing is founded. 4. What is the price, what is the stipulation, or that which the Mediator is engaged to, and that which provoked justice required? It is even satisfaction for all the wrongs that the sins of the elect did, or were to do, to the Majesty of God. Their sins deferred wounding and smiting; and the capitulation runs on this, that justice shall get that of the Mediator, that the elect may be spared. And comparing this verfe with the former, upon the one side our Lord Jesus gives his back to bear their burden, and engages to satisfy for their debt, and to undergo the punishment due to them; and upon the other side, Jehovah accepts of this offer and engagement, and lays over the burden of their debt on him: As the Mediator infantes and enacts himself in their room for payment of their debt, so he lays it on him, and accepts of it. 5. The end of this great transaction, to wit, of the undertaking on the Mediator's side, and of the acceptance on the Father's side, is, that the elect may have pardon and peace, and that by his stripes they may be healed; that justice may spare them, and purse him; and that the discharge of the debt, purchased by him, may be made forthcoming to them, as if they had paid the debt themselves, or had never been owing anything to justice.

Hence Deductions may be made, holding forth several points of truth; As, 1. Concerning the determinateness of the number of the elect. 2. Concerning the virtue and efficacy of the price which the Mediator hath paid, and the fulness of his satisfaction. 3. Concerning his imputed righteousness, which is, or may be called the laying of his righteousness on us, as our iniquity was laid on him: He is counted the sinner, by undertaking the elect's debt; and the elect, by receiving the offered righteousness in the gospel, are accounted righteous, by virtue of his satisfying for their debt. 4. Concerning the ground and matter of wonderful soul-satisfaction and ravenous that is here; that God should be thus minding the salvation of the elect, and thus contriving and ordering the work of their redemption; that their debt shall be paid, and yet nothing (to speak so) come out of their purse; and that by this excellent a mean as is the intervention of the Mediator; and that
Ifaiah lxxiii. 1. O! look not on the saluation of sinners, and the bringing of a sinner to heaven, as a little or a light busines and work: It is the greatest work and most wonderful that ever was told of; yea, it is in effect the end of all things which God hath made, and of his preserving and guiding the world in the order wherein it is governed; even that he may have a Church therein for the praise of the glory of his grace. We are exceeding far and finfully wrong in this, that we value not the work of redemption as becomes, and that we endeavour not to pray into, and take up the admirable and deep wisdom of God, that goes along and shines brightly in this whole contexture. Who could ever have found out this way, when the elect were lying under God's curse and wrath, that then the Son of God should undertake to satisfy for them, and that the Majesty of God should be so far from partiality and respect of persons, that he will pursue his own dear Son for the elect's debt, when he undertakes it? This is the rife of our salvation, and the channel wherein it runs! O rare and ravishing! O admirable and amiable! O beautiful and beneficial contrivance! Blessed, eternally blessed be the Contriver. 

Use 2. The second use serves to stir us up to study to know somewhat, and to know more of the way of salvation, under this notion of God's covenanting with the Mediator; not thereby to restrict God to man's law and forms, but for helping us to the better and more easy up-taking of these great things; and that we may see that the salvation of the elect is sure, forasmuch as it is laid down by way of bargain, transaction or covenant betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator, whom the Lord will no more fail in performing the promise made to him, than he hath failed in giving the satisfaction required. This would help both to clear and confirm the faith of believers, and strengthen the hope of all who are fled for refuge to take hold of him, in the certain expectation of these things engaged for in the covenant; seeing there is no least reason to think, that Jehovah will be forthcoming to the Mediator, than there is to think that he hath performed all that he engaged himself for. 

The 2d thing here is, the native effect or fruit of the covenant, and that which the Prophet aims at; even to show how it came to pass that Christ suffered so much, because it was so covenanted, statute and ordained, because he was by a prior contrivance and contract substitut with his own hearty consent in the room of the elect, who had many and great

Verse 6. 

fins to count for; from whence observe, That, in virtue of this eternal covenant that past betwixt God and the Mediator, the complete punishment that was due to all the elect for their sins in their greatest aggravations, was laid upon Jesus Christ. Jehovah laid upon him the iniquity of all: this is frequently touched on in this Chapter, as particularly in the words going before, He carried our sorrows, he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, &c. and it is sufficiently confirmed in the New Testament, as 2 Cor. v. He who knew no sin, was made sin for us; he had no sin in himself, but by virtue of this covenant, he was made the sacrifice for our sin, and made to bear the punishment thereof; and Gal. iii. 13. He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, he himself being made a curse for us. 

There are two words which we shall a little clear in this doctrine; and, secondly, Give some reasons of it; and then, thirdly, We shall speak to some uses from it.

1/2. For the two words or things in the doctrine to be cleared, they are these, First, What we mean by this, when we say, Iniquity is laid upon Christ? The second is, How is it laid upon Christ? As to the first, when we say, Iniquity is laid upon Christ, we mean these things shortly, 1. That our Lord Jesus is really made countable and liable to justice for these iniquities, as if they had been his own; by virtue of this covenant; in God's justice, he having engaged to pay the elect's debt, his engagement makes him liable to it. 2. We mean, that not only our Lord Jesus is made liable to our debt, but really he is made to satisfy for it: In short, we have done the wrong, but he makes the amends, as if he had done the wrong himself, The Just satisfies for the unjust; He, in whose mouth there was no guile, was made to satisfy for guilty sinners, as if he had been the guilty person himself: By the sins of the elect, God's declarative holiness suffered; creatures malapertly brake his command, and his justice was wronged; creatures topped with it, to lay so, and that even after the curse was pronounced, and after they had believed the devil more than God: But our Lord Jesus comes in and makes the amends, and the holiness of God is vindicate by his obedience, and his justice vindicate by his suffering. The elect have deferred wounding, but, says the Mediator, Let the wounds which they have deferred come on me, let them be mine; and thus he makes reparation of the wrong, and the amends, because, tho' the elect be spared, yet hereby the Lord is known to be as really and as much a hater of sin, and as
just in fulfilling his threatenings, as if the elect had been smitten in their own persons, because he punished sin in his own Son; yea, by this means he is seen so much the more to be holy, severe, pure and spotless: And, that the Son of God sweetly submits to his becoming Man, and to these terrible sufferings, for satisfying divine justice; Here, O here the spotlessness and severity of the justice of God, as also the greatness of the glory of free grace and love, shine forth conspicuously! 3. It implies this, That really there was a converting and turning of that wrath, and of these sufferings proportionably on Jesus Christ, which justice was to have inducted on the elect eternally, if he had not interposed for them; and that altogether in a full cup, offered to him, and put in his hand: That, which would have been in so many drops an eternal hell to elect sinners, is made to meet on him in one great sea; he gets it to drink up, dregs and all: In which respect, Gal. iii. 13. he is said to be made a curse for us. The Lord will not pass from one farthing of what was due to him, and will be satisfied with no less than proportionable satisfaction to that which was due to justice by the elect themselves, though the Surety was his own only Son; Therefore it behoved Christ to come under the curse, in which sense he is said to be made a curse for us; which supposeth that he endured the same curse and punishment due to the elect’s sins, in all the essentials of it: He behoved to die; and to have his soul separate from his body for a time, and for a seafon so want in a great measure the comfortable manifestations of God’s favour and presence, and to have wrath pursuing him; and to have horror feiting upon him; though our blessed Lord, being spotless and without sin, and having a good conscience, was not capable of these wayward accidental circumstances, of unbelief, sinful anxiety and desperation, that sinful finite creatures are liable to, when they come under wrath.

The second word or thing to be cleared in the doctrine, is, How are iniquities laid upon Christ Jesus? In three respects, 1. In respect of the eternal transaction betwixt Jehovah and him as Mediator, sustaining the persons of the elect: Even as one man hath another’s debt laid on him, when by a law-sentence he is made liable to it; so is Christ liable to the elect’s iniquity, when their account is blotted out, and the debt as it were written down in his account, to be satisfied for. 2. In respect of justice pursuing him for it: When he becometh Cautioner and full Debitor for the elect, he is put to pay their debt to the least farthing; the Lord mutters up against him his terrors, and commands his sword to awake, and to finite the Man that is his Fellow. But, 3d, and mainly, In respect of his actual undergoing the curse, and suffering that which the elect should have suffered; for it is not the work of a court to pass a sentence only, but also to see the execution of the sentence; not only are orders given to the sword to awake and finite, but the sword falls on and smites him actually: and this from the apprehension of the anger of God, as Man, and without the sensible and comforting manifestation of his Father’s love; and his seemingly forsaking him for a time, He prayed, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; yet it will not be, and he submits most sweetly to it: and not only is the cup put in his hand, but the dregs of wrath are, as it were, wrung out into it, and he must needs drink it up all; which manifestly kythes in his agony in the garden, when he is made to sweat blood; and in his complaint (if we may fo call it) My soul is exceeding sorrowful, and what shall I say? and in these strange words uttered by him on the cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? All which tells us plainly, that not only was he enacted Surety, and had the sentence paff on him, but that really he was satisfied, and had the sentence executed on him; that in his soul he was really pierced and wounded, and that with far deeper wounds than these were which the soldiery by the spear and nails made in his body, before the elect’s discharge of their debt could be procured and obtained. What it was more particularly that he suffered, the following words hold out: But it is clear, that he suffered really, and suffered much; that not only he undertook to pay, but that he was actually pursuèd, and made to lay down the least farthing of whatever was due to justice by the elect: And this is the cause why these words are brought in as the reason why he suffered so much, even because so many and so great sins, with all their aggravations, were laid upon him; and if his sufferings were not great, and undergone for this end, to satisfy for the elect’s debt, that they might be set free, the prophet’s scope would not be reached, neither would there be a suitable connexion betwixt the latter and the foregoing words.

As for the second, to wit, some Reasons of the doctrine; we shall shortly give you these three, why the elect’s sins were laid on Christ, and put on his account, and why he was made to undergo the compleat punishment of them, by virtue of the covenant of redemption. 1. Because it did much contribute to the glory of God; for he had designed
in his eternal council, that his grace should be glorified in the salvation of the elect, and that his justice should also be glorified in punishing of sin, either in themselves or in their Cautioner: And as free grace and mercy must be glorious in saving the elect, and justice in being satisfied for their sins; so it is to that end, that since the elect cannot pay their own debt, that their Cautioner pay it, and pay it fully; that the Lord, in exacting satisfaction from him in their name, may be known to be just. 2.

This way makes much for the confirmation of their faith; for what can justice demand, that it hath not gotten? it is fully satisfied. And then for their consolation: Seeing the Father put his own Son to suffer, and to so great suffering for them, what is it that they may confidently expect from such a fountain? 3. This serves to hold out the wonderfully great obligation of the elect to God, and to the Mediator; for the greater their sin was, the more he suffered; the greater their debt was, the more he paid; and they are the more in his common, and the greater debtors to him, and ought the more to love him, and their duty for his sake: As it is said of the woman, Luke vii. She loved much, for much was forgiven her; so this way of paying the elects debt, calls and strongly pleads, and also makes way for much warm and tender love in them to Jesus Christ.

In the third place, We come to the \textit{Uses} of the \textit{Doctrine}: To which I shall premise this word of desire to you, That ye would not look on these things as talfeless and unfavourly; for, had we not had these precious truths to open up to you, we should have had no meetings to this purpose, no ground to speak of life to you, nor any the least hope or expectation of life. And indeed it may be sadly regretted, that amongst a multitude of professing people, these substantial truths of the gospel are so werth and little relishing to the most part; which too evidently appears in the unconcerned, wearrying, and gazing posture of some, and in the slumbering and sleeping of others in our public assemblies: If our hearts were in a right frame, half a word, to say so, to this purpose, would be a waking and alarming to us; however this is a great privilege in itself: Heathens may and do know something of moral duties, but it is a privilege which we have, and they want, that the fundamental truths of the gospel are amongst us, and not amongst them.

The first \textit{Uses} serves to let us see the brightness of the glory of grace and truth, of mercy and justice, shinning clearly here; Can there be any greater mercy, and more pure mercy than this, that the Lord should be gracious to sinners, and to great sinners, \textit{that had turned every one of them to their own way}; in providing a Mediator, and such a Mediator; in providing such a help for them, and \textit{laying that help upon One that is mighty}; and that he should have done this of his own head (fo to speak with reverence) when the elect were in their sins, and when there was nothing to be the impulsive or meritorious cause of it; and that the Father should have laid this weight of punishment on Christ, the Son of his love, and pursu'd him at this rate of holy severity for sinners debt? O what grace and mercy shines here! And, 2. The spotless justice of God doth also here wonderfully manifest itself; O how exact is justice, whenit will not quit a farthing even to the second Person of the Godhead, when he became Man, and Man's Surety! But since he hath put himself in the room of sinners, the \textit{Lord maketh all their iniquities to meet on him}; this is matter of admiration to men and angels, to consider how justice and mercy run in one channel, and shine in one covenant, the one of them not incroaching upon the other.

\textit{Uses} 2. We may gather from this, some insight and clearness in the very great sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ: for these things are here put together, 1. That he suffered for all the elect, \textit{Us all}. 2. For all the sins of the elect, and for all the sins of the elect in their highest and most aggravating circumstances; the particular reckoning of them all, as it were, being call up, they are all put in one score. 3. All these meet together in a great sea and shock upon him at one time, as they came from several airs, like so many rivers; or they were like so many rivers; or they were like so many regiments, or rather armies of men, all meeting together, and marshalled to fall pell-mell (to say so) on him; one sin were enough to condemn, the many sins of one is more, but all the sins of all the elect is much more; they deserved to have lain in hell eternally, but he coming in their room, all their sins met as the violent press of waters on him. What then behoved his sufferings to be, when he was so put to it for all the sins of all the elect, and that at once?

\textit{Uses} 3. We may gather hence a just account of the truth of Christ's satisfaction, and a ground of refutation of the Socinian error, a blasphemy which is most abominable to be once mentioned, as if our Lord had suffered all this, only to give us an example, and as if there had not been a proportionable satisfaction in his sufferings to our debt, nor an intention to satisfy justice thereby. Every verse, almost
almost, not to say every word, in this chapter refutes this; if he had not satisfied for our sins, why is he said to be here on the matter put in our room? And if his sufferings had not been very great, what needed the prophet to shew the reason of his great sufferings, in all the sins of the elect their meeting on him? There was sure a particular respect had to this, even to shew, that the meeting of all these sins of all the elect together upon Christ, did cause and procure great and extreme sufferings to him; he suffered the more that they had so many sins, seeing their many sins are given for the cause of his so much suffering.

Use 4. Here is great ground of consolation to believing sinners, Out of this eater comes meat, and out of this strong comes sweet; the more sharp and bitter these sufferings were to Christ, the report of them is in some respect the more favoury and sweet to the believer, whose effectual calling discovers his election. And indeed I cannot tell how many grounds of consolation believers have from this doctrine; but, 1. If they have sinned, there is here a Saviour provided for them. 2. This Saviour hath undertaken their debt. 3. He hath undertaken it with the Father’s allowance. 4. As he hath undertaken it, so the Father hath laid on him all their iniquity. 5. All the elect come in here together in one roll, and there is but one covenant, and one Mediator for them all: the sin of the poor body, of the weakest and meanest, is tranfacted on him, as well as the sin of Abraham that great friend of God, and Father of the faithful; and the salvation of the one is as sure as the salvation of the other: All believers, from the strongest to the weakest, have bot one right or charter to heaven, but one holding of the inheritance. 6. The Lord hath laid on him all the iniquities of all the elect, with a particular respect to all their aggravations, and to all the several ways that they have turned to sin; their original sin, and their actual tranfgreßions, with their particular predominant, as to their punishment: And there is reason for it, because the elect could not satisfy for the death sin; and it is necessary for the glorifying of grace, that the glory of the work of their salvation be not halfed, but solely and singly ascrib’d and given to God; and therefore the satisfaction comes all on the Mediator’s account, and none of it on theirs. 7. All this is really done and performed by the Mediator, without any suit or request of the elect, or of the believer, or at least as the procuring cause thereof: He buys and purchaseth what is needful for them, and pays for their discharge; and they have no more to do, but to call for an extrait, and to take a sealed remission by his blood; the application whereof, the Uses that follow will give occasion to speak to.

Use 5. Since it is so, then none would think little of sin; which checks the great presumption that is amongst men and women, who think little and light of sin, and that it is an easy matter to come by the pardon of it: They think there is no more to do, but barely and bauchly to confess they have sinned, and to say, God is merciful; and hence they conclude, that God will not reckon with them: But, did he reckon with the Mediator, and that so holy, rigidly, and severely, too; and will he, think ye, spare you? If he dealt so with the green tree, what shall become of the dry? Be not deceived, God will not be mocked.

And therefore, 6th, As the close of all, See here the absolute necessity of sharing in Christ’s satisfaction, and of having an interest therein by this covenant derived unto you, else know that ye must count for your own sins; and if so, wo eternally to you: Therefore either betake yourselves to the Mediator, that by his eye-salve ye may see, that by his gold ye may be enriched, and by his garments ye may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness do not appear; and that ye may, by being justified by his knowledge, be free from the wrath to come; or otherwise ye must and shall lie under it for ever.

Thus ye have the fulness of God’s covenant on the one side, and the weightiness and terribleness of God’s wrath on the other side, laid before you: If ye knew what a fearful thing his wrath were, ye would be glad at your hearts to hear of a Saviour, and every one would run and make haste to be found in him, and to share of his satisfaction, and to be sure of a discharge by virtue of his payment of the debt; and they would give all diligence to make sure their calling and election, for that end. The Lord himself powerfully persuade you to do so.
The news of a suffering Mediator seem to be a sad subject, yet it hath been, is, and will be, the great subject of the gospel, and of the gladdest tidings that ever sinners heard. This being the great thing that they ought in a special manner to know, even Jesus Christ and him crucified; the prophet here takes a special delight to insin on it, and in one verse after another hath some new thing of his sufferings.

Having in the former verse spoken to the occasion, ground and rise of his sufferings, to wit, the elect straying like sheep, their wandering and turning every one to his own way, and the Lord’s laying on him the iniquity of them all; the elect that were given to Christ, being naturally at an enmity with God, and having run on in the course of their sinful nature to the provoking of God; and there being no way for them to escape the wrath which by their sins they had deferred, till the Lord found out this mids, to wit, the second Person his interposing as their Mediator and Surety, and engaging to pay their debt; on which followed the imputation of all their iniquities to him, according to the translocation made about them; which translocation being laid down as we have heard, the prophet proceeds to how Christ’s executing and performing of the translocation. And, because it might be thought that it was so great a matter as could have much, sad and fore suffering following up it, to take on all our iniquities; he answers, that notwithstanding of all that, yet he took them on, and that very willingly and cheerfully: Or, because it might be thought that the former words look as if God had laid the punishment of our iniquity on him, and that he had not taken it on himself, the prophet tells us that it is nothing fo, but that there was a mutual covenant between God and the Mediator, and that the Mediator was as well content to bear the iniquity of the elect, as the Father was content to lay it on him; and that tho’ he was exacted upon, oppressed, afflicted, and suffered sad strokes, yet he rewed not the bargain, but went on resolutely in paying the ransom of the elect, as singly as ever a sheep went to the slaughter, or as it is dumb before the shearer, so he opened not his mouth to speak against it.

There are three things affected here, that serve to make up the scope, supposing the translocation to have gone before, 1. The Father’s exacting the elect’s debt of the Mediator. 2. The Mediator’s yielding and satisfying. 3. The manner how he did it, willingly, readily and cheerfully. We shall first open the words a little, and then speak to some doctrines from them, reserving the uses to the close of all.

1st, Where it is said, he was oppressed, the words signify to exact; and we find it three ways applied in scripture, 1. To the exacting of tribute, 2 Kings xxiii. 33. where it is said, That Pharaoh-Nechoh put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold; it is the word that is here. 2. Sometimes it is applied to the exacting of debts; as when a man is put to the horn, and caption and imprisonment follows upon it: So Deut. xv. 2. When the Lord tells his people, The creditor shall not exact of his neighbour, nor of his brother, in the year of release. 3. It is applied to the exacting of labour, as Isa. lvi. 3. Ye exact all your labour; and Exod. i. 11. the word Task masters comes from the same root; this being the ordinary signification of the word, it is turned here oppressing figuratively, because such exacters and taskmasters, in their rigorous usage of these whom they exact upon, are often oppressive: And there being no noun prefixed to these words in the original, they may stand as well thus, It was exacted of him; That which he was engaged to pay, he was fully exacted upon for it, to the least farthing: Or take the words as they stand here, he was oppressed, that is, (as we use to speak) stressed or afflicted, for our debt; he was not only engaged but according to his engagement he was put hard to it to satisfy. 2dly, It it said, He was afflicted, which is sometimes rendered to answer: And these two agree very well together, he was exacted upon, and he answered the debt; as when a bill of exchange for such a sum is drawn upon a man and he answers it: And this exposition runs well and smoothly with the words following, Yet he opened not his mouth, he used no defence to elude or shift the debt; he said not that it was not his, but he answered it indeed, and in a word said nothing to the contrary. Or, taking the words as they here stand, translated, He was afflicted, they signify the effect that follows on his being exacted upon; Though it brake him not, yet it brought him very low, even to an afflicted condition. The 3d thing is, That though he was brought thus low, and though it was

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not for his own, but for othcr folks debts (which usually troubles men most). Yet he opened not his mouth; to shew his wonderful condescendancy, and the great love from which it flows, he paid the elects debt with as good will, and as pleasantly, as if it had been his own proper and personal debt; tho' he was the Son of God, and God equal with the Father, and might have brought legions of angels to destroy his enemies, yet, as the lamb brought to the slaughter, and as the sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. And it may be, that there is not only here relation or respect had to the sheep, as it is an innocent, harmless, simple, tractable creature, and not untoward and refractory, as a bull or ox ufeth to be; but also respect had to it, as it was made use of in the sacrifices: And so the meaning is, He yielded his life willingly, when none could take it from him, for performing the indenture, to pay so, and for satisfying the transission past betwixt Jehovah and him.

So, having shown you how it comes to pass, that Christ suffered, and suffered so much, and was brought so low under suffering; and having told that he was engaged to pay the elects debt, and that the Father had laid their iniquities on him; left any might think that the Father would have spared his own Son, No, faith the prophet, He was oppressed, and not only so, but afflicted and humbled: And left it should have been thought that the Lord Jehovah had better will to the bargain than the Mediator had; it is added, that he did satisfy the debt as willingly as the Father laid it on him, as these similitudes made use of plainly hold forth.

Take these Observations from the words, 1. That our Lord Jesus, having entered himself Surety for sinners, was really put at, and justice exacted "the debt of him, which he had undertaken and engaged to pay." Read the whole story of the gospel, and it will make out this: It is said by himself, Luke xxii. It behoved the Son of man to suffer these things, and then to enter into his glory: he must needs go to Jerusalem and suffer: And when the cup is in his hand, and his holy human nature, having a sinless fearing at it, makes him pray, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, yet seeing here was a necessity, that either he should drink it, or that the elect should perish: in the very next words, he sweetly subjoins, Not my will, but thy will be done: and so hotly and hardly he was pursuied by justice, that he must needs come to the cursed death of the cross, and actually die; and, as if death had gotten a piece of dominion over the Lord of life, he is laid in the grave: So, Zech.

xiii. the Lord faith, Awake, 0 sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my Fellow, smite the Shepherd; where we see, that when the good Shepherd and great Bishop of souls, hath undertaken for the elects debt, justice gives a commission as it were to its own holy revenge, to pursue the Man that is God's Fellow for that debt. That which we design to confirm in the doctrine, is not only, that our Lord Jesus suffered, but that his suffering was by justice its exacting of him the debt of the elects sin, according to the engagement that he came under to the Father: For the scope is to shew, not only that he suffered so great things, as oppressed and brought him very low; but also that he was put at by justice, in these sad sufferings, to pay the debt that he had taken on. For confirming and clearing of this a little, ye may consider, 1. The titles which he gets in scripture, he is called the Cautioner, or Surety of the better testament, or covenant, Heb. vii. 22. and by that title he is shewed to be instated in our room, and answerable for our debt: And he is called the lamb, that takes away the debt of fin, by the sacrifice of itself; he stepped in into our place, and kept off the stroke of the sword of justice that would have lighted on us, had he not interposed. 2. Consider the titles which his sufferings and death gets, Heb. ix. 12. He is said to purchase (to wit, by it) eternal redemption for us. And Rom. iii. 24. we are said to be justified through the redemption that is in Jesus: We were slaves to the devil, subject to the curie, decreed and adjudged to suffer for the wrongs that we had done to justice: And his sufferings is called redemption, because as the man that redeems the captive, gives a ransom for him; so he interposed and paid a ransom for us: It is also called a propitiation, 1 John ii. 2. He is the propitiation for our sins, to wit, pleasing to God, and accepted of him in the room of all the elect; and this word propitiation, as it supposed God's being displeased with the elect before Christ's satisfaction, so it plainly holds forth his being well pleased with them on the account of his satisfaction. 3. Consider these scriptures that speak not only of Christ's sufferings, but of their end and scope, even the drawing of him down (to speak so) into the elects room, as verfe 5th, of this chapter, He was wounded for our transgressions, &c. He got the stroke, and we got the cure, 2 Cor. v. 21. He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God through him: We are sinners, and Christ is to purchase righteousness for us; and the way he doth it, is by stepping into our room, and becoming
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Isaiah liii.

Verse 7.

being our Cautioner, and he engages as Surety; the law wins at him on that ground: so, Gal. iii. 13. He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us: we were under the curse, and liable to be pursued by it; and our Lord Jesus becomes a curse, to deliver us from it. Considering then the end of God's covenant, which is to glorify his justice and grace, that sinners may know it is an evil thing to sin and depart from God, and that grace is a very costly thing, whereunto he hath made access through the vail, which is his flesh; and considering Christ's undertaking, without which they could not be set free, it could not be otherwise. This is a truth that hath in it much of the marrow of the gospel, and tends much to humble us, and is also very much for our comfort: What was justice seeking of Christ when he suffered and was in an agony? If thou art a believer or an elect sinner, it was even exacting thy debt of him; and would it not affect an ingenuous debtor to see his cautioner dragged, haled, and hurried to prison for his debt? Even so, if we could look on Christ's sufferings as so many summons and pursuavts arresting him for our debt, it could not but affect us with much sorrow for our sins, that brought him to this, and with much love to him, who was content to be so dealt with for them; and no doubt this is one of the reasons why he will have his death remembered till he come again, even that we may see our obligation to him, and be suitably affected with it.

2dly, Observe, "That the debt of the elects sins was severely and with holy rigour exacted of Christ to the very full worth or value." This proceeding was, as to Christ, by was of justice; whether we look to the purchase that he made, to wit, the elect souls, he laid down as good in their room; or whether we look to a transaction or bargain going before, whatever was in the stipulation, he paid and satisfied to the full, nothing was remitted or given him down; or whether we look to the curse due to the elect, that was inflicted on him, and he himself was made a curse for us, looking on the curse simply as penal, and what was bitter in it, which swears his condescendency in his sufferings so much the more.

3dly, Observe, "That our Lord Jesus was brought exceeding low, while the debt of the elect was exacted of him:" He was put to exceeding fore affliction, much strained and fretted by the justice of God exacting of him the debt due by elect sinners. We spoke to some words before, which bare out this, as, he was wounded, bruised, chastised, &c. and now we see the effect here, when justice puts him to it; after he hath taken on the debt, he is tried, stripped as it were to the skin, pinched and distressed, ere he got it paid: if we consider our Lord Jesus as God, he is neither less nor more pinched, being, so considered, utterly incapable of any such thing; but if we look on him as Mediator, God-Man, God much withdrawing from him the influence of his comforting presence, while he hath the cup of wrath in his hand, so he is brought exceeding low, and deeply afflicted. And these four considerations (under which we may see him paying our debt) may clear it, 1. That he laid aside the glory which before the world was, he had with the Father, for a time; which therefore, that it may be restored to him again, he prays, John xvii. 5. it having been, as to the manifestation thereof in his person, eclipsed, interrupted, and darkned for a season: hence the apostle says, Philip. ii. that he emptied himself, and became of no reputation, as if his glory had not been discernible for a time; he that is Judge of quick and dead, is himself judged; he that created heaven and earth, hath not whereon to lay his head; tho' all the kings of the earth hold their treasures of him, yet he was so poor, that he lived upon the alms of others; for women ministrd unto him. 2. Not only hath he a being that is mean and low, but he is exceedingly afflicted; he suffered hunger; he is pursued, as if he had been a thief or a robber; a band of men comes and apprehends him in the night, as if he had been a malefactor or evil doer; and drag him away to the civil judge; his back is smitten, his face is spitted on, his head ratted and pricked with thorns; sentence is passed upon him, he is condemned and scourged; and when he doth not bear his own cross, (his body, being a true human body, is so faint and enfeebled) it is accounted a favour that he gets one Simon to help him to bear it, or to bear it after him; which is not marked, to shew that they did him a kindness or courtey beyond others, but to hold out the low and weak condition he was brought into, that he was not able to bear it himself. And not only so, but he must come to death, and to the shameful and cursed death of the cross; he dies very quickly, further to point out his lowness, which was such, that death overcame him sooner than the others, because he had other things to wrestle with. 3. In his name he suffered, he was reproached, nodded at with the head, reviled, mocked, sent about as a spectacle from Pilate to Herod, back again from Herod to Pilate; he had a scarlet robe put on him in derisi.
tion; the high priests also derided him; the Jews wagg the head at him, and count him not at all worthy to live, and therefore prefer a robber and murderer to him. 4. Consider his inward sufferings: O these were far more piercing! Justice laid claim to his soul, *The sorrow of hell compassed him; his soul is heavy unto the death; he sweats blood,* and cries, *Is it possible that that wrathful cup might pass from him?* and on the cross with a pitiful voice, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* which, by the way is not an expression of any quarrelling complaint or discouragement, but of sinless nature, when he is arraigned and made to stand before the tribunal of God, affected with the horror of divine wrath, and cannot easily endure, that there should be a cloud betwixt God and him: But these soul-sufferings of his, will fall in to be spoken to afterwards; only we see here, that he was afflicted, and in sufferings was greatly humbled and brought very low: And, indeed, considering that all the elect’s sins were laid upon him, and that justice was exacting all their debt of him, he could not be otherwise, but behoved to be exceedingly afflicted and fore distressed.

*4thly, Observe,* “That for as much as our Lord suffered, yet he did most willingly and cheerfully undergo it all; he thwarted not with it; he repented not, he grudged not, he flinched not, nor drew back:” Or, which is to the same purpose, “Our Lord Jesus, in his lowest humiliation and affliction, and all along his deepest suffering, shewed exceeding great willingness, desirousness and heartforness:” That word was always true of him, *I delight to do thy will, O my God;* and the prophet holds out this as a great wonder, that tho’ he was oppressed and afflicted, *yet he opened not his mouth.* We shall, for clearing of this, propose these considerations. 1. In his undertaking of the bargain, his willingness appears; when burnt-offerings and sacrifices would not do it, and when there was no obligation on him to do what he did, then comes in his free offer and consent, and that with delight, *Psal. xl.* “Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do will, O my God;” where we see that there was no exerting or forcing of a consent from the Mediator against his will, but a delight for offering of it: and that word of his, *Prov. viii.* is very remarkable to this purpose, “Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delight was with the fons of men;” the contemplation and sight of his incarnation and suffering for the elect was (to speak so) refreshing to him, and made him leap as it were for joy, ere the world was made, and before they had a being. 2. Consider the great things that he undertook, not only to be Man, but a poor mean Man. It had been much for him to have humbled himself to be Monarch of the whole world, as his vain and profane pretended Vicar the Pope of Rome claims to be; yet he not only will not be so, but emptied himself, and became a worm, in a manner, and no man, an out-cast of the people; O such a proof of his love! And when he took the cup, that bitter cup, and said, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, left it should seem a thwarting with the work of redemption, and with his Father’s will therein; he says, Let it come, Father, *Not my will, but thine be done.* 3. Consider the manner of his suffering, and we will see a further proof of his willingness; how little pains takes he to escape them? yea, when Peter labours to dissuade him, Matt. xvi, from suffering, he disdains and rejects the suggestion with a severe check, “Get thee behind me, Satan thou art an offence unto me, thou favourest not the things that be of God, but of men;” and when his disciples said unto him (resolving to go up again to Judea) John xi. 8. *Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and wilt thou go thither again?* he will needs go up notwithstanding; and when they were going up to Jerusalem, Mark x. 32. *He went before all the rest,* to wit at a swift pace; and Luke xii. 50. he says, “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?” Never did men long so much for their marriage-day, and for the day of their triumph, as our Lord Jesus did to get the elect’s debt paid, and their discharge extricated and drawn out. 4. Consider his einefs and willingness to be taken; he goes forth, John xviii. to meet the band of soldiers, that came with the traitor to apprehend him, and asks them again and again, *Whom seek ye?* and says as often, *I am he:* He will not suffer his disciples to draw a sword in his defence, Matt. xxvi. but when Peter drew his sword, he bade him put it up again, for he could have commanded more than twelve legions of angels: but it behoved him now to suffer, he came for another end than to oppose his sufferings; and hence he says, John x. “No man takes my life from me, but I lay it down of myself, and have power to take it up again,” it was neither Judas nor Pilate, that took his life against his will, but he willingly laid it down; for either the elect behoved to die, or he himself; and since it is so, as if he said, then behold here is my life, take it, and I will lay it down, that they, poor things, may
Ser. XXVIII.

Isaiah lii. Verse 7.

This, and Mark xv. He held his peace; so that it is said, that Pilate marvelled, Mark xv. He knew that he could but not have much to say for himself, as all men in such a case use to have, but he answered nothing; or as it is in the text, yet he opened not his mouth: The reason was, because he would not divert the course of justice, nor mar the Lord's design in the work of the elect's redemption through his death and sufferings: He came not into the world, to accuse Pilate or the Jews, and to justify himself, tho' now and then, for the conviction of enemies, and for his own necessary clearing, he did let a word fall; but, being engaged for the elect, he will needs perform all that justice called for. And in this willingness he hath a respect to two things, 1. To the Father's satisfaction; for his willing suffering is that which makes it a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing to him. 2. To the elect's consolation, that they may know they had a willing Saviour, that had no necessity laid on him to satisfy, but satisfied willingly. And from these two arises a third, Even the glory of the Mediator's satisfaction; for herein his love to the elect shines brightly, I lay down my life for my sheep: This is the heart warming commendation of his sufferings, that with delight and pleasure he underwent them, as if he had been purchasing a kingdom to himself.

Now, to come to the use of all these doctrines: when they with the things contained in them are laid together, we profess we cannot tell you what excellent uses they yield. Would to God we were all in such a frame as the Eunuch was in, when he read this scripture (as the divine historian gives us an account, Acts viii. verse 32. and forward) who, when Philip had begun to preach to him on this excellent subject, was so taken, that before the sermon or discourse was at an end, being holly impatient at any longer delay, he says to Philip, Here is water, what hinderst me to be baptized? I lay again, Would to God we were all in such a frame, and that this were the fruit of such a doctrine as this to many of you, nay to all of you!

Use 1. Wonder, believers, at the exactness and infiniteness of the grace of God, and at the heart-rending and soul-ravishing love of the Mediator! In grace in God, that spared the debtor, and exacted payment from the Cautioner, the Son of his love! Act love in the Mediator, that paid so much, and so willingly and cheerfully. If any subject of thoughts be pertinent for us, while we are about to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's supper, certainly this was pertinent concerning a crucified Christ, inflating himself in our room, to pay our debt, and doing this of his own accord, without the solicitation or instigating of any creature, and doing it, withal, so frankly and cheerfully. Was ever the like of this love heard tell of, for One, and more especially for such a One, to suffer so much, and so cheerfully, unrequired? We would have you confirmed in the faith of this great and sweet truth, that he had never better will, nay, never so good will to eat his dinner, than he had to suffer, and satisfy justice for you, tho' at a dear rate; he says, John ix. It was his meat to do the Father's will that sent him, and to finish his work. Have ye suitable thoughts of his love, when ye read the gospel? Have ye in the word seen him standing before Pilate in your room, not answeraing when he is accused, and Pilate marvelling at his silence? and did Pilate marvel, knowing, and being convinced of his innocency? and have ye never marvelled, or maraved but very little? Sure, your little marvelling at his silence, is the more sadly marvellous, that the cause of his silence, when he was charged with your iniquities, with such and such a piece of your iniquities, with such a piece of your miscarriage, with such a vain and roving heart, with such a wanton look, with such a profane or idle word of yours, with the horrid sin of your having so abused, slighted and neglected him, &c. That the cause, I say, of his silence at such a terrible accusation and charge, and not vindicating of himself, or saying, These faults, miscarriages, and transgressions, are not mine, as he might have done, was pure love to you; O is not this strange, and yet most true! wonder then more at it.

Use 2. Here is strong consolation to believers, and wonderful wisdom in the rise and convey of it, in uniting justice and love; out of which the consolation springs: Justice exacting upon, and differing the Son of God, and he satisfying justice so fully, that, tho' all the elect had satisfied eternally in hell, it had not been made to shine so splendidly and gloriously: justice also on the Mediator's side, in yielding and giving satisfaction, tho' it should oppress and break soul and body: And yet love, both on the Father's and Mediator's side; on the Father's side, love, in finding out this way of satisfaction to his own justice, when there was no cure,
but by the wounding of his own Son; and yet he
was content rather to wound him, than that the e-
left should suffer, and be wounded eternally: Love
on the Mediator's side, who willingly yields, and
undergoes their debt, and will not hide his face from
thame and spitting. What may not the be-
liever expect from God, when he spared not his
own Son for him? and what may he expect from
Christ, who spared not himself for his sake? and
who is that good Shepherd, that laid down his life
for the sheep, and held his tongue, and quarrelled
not with those that sinned him; will he quarrel
with a poor sinner coming to him, and pleading for
the benefit of satisfaction? no certainly; but as
the word is, Zeph. iii. 17. He will rest in his love,
or as the word signifies, He will be silent or dumb
in his love; he will not upbraid thee, nor call up
thy former miscarriages; he will not say reproach-
fully to thee, Where was thou so long playing the
prodigal? He is better content with thy recovery,
than ever he was discontent or ill pleased with all
the wrong thou didst unto him.

Ufe 3. This word of doctrine lays down the
ground whereupon a sinner, sensible of sin, may
build his expectation of peace with God: The tran-
saction, concluded and agreed upon, is the ground
of his coming; and the exacting of the price, ac-
cording to the tranaction, is the ground of his
expectation of the benefits of Christ's purchase:
And there is justice for it, as the Apolitical intitmates,
Rom. viii. 34, 35. Who shall lay any thing to the
charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth,
who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died,
yes rather that is risen again, &c. And upon this
follows the believing soul's triumph. O but there is
much need to be thoroughly acquainted with the
mutual relations that are betwixt Christ and the
believing sinner, with the ground of their approach-
ing to him, and with the good they are to expect
through him!

Ufe 4. This word is made use of 1 Pet. ii. 21,
to give us a notable and none such pattern of pa-
tience; Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an
example, that we should follow his steps. He did
bear all wrongs patiently, and packed them up
quietly (to say so) and opened not his mouth: He
could have told Pilate and Caiaphas what they were,
but spoke not a word but one to the high priest,
notwithstanding all his provoking carriage, and a
very meek one too. If I have spoken evil, bear
witness of the evil; and if well, why smitest thou
me? Amongst other copies then that Christ hath
callen, take this for one, make him a copy and
pattern of patience: It is to be regretted, that folks
are so unlike to Christ in this respect; they think
it a dishonourable thing to pack up a wrong, and they
will scorn and tuff at it: But, what if Jesus Christ
had been of that temper and disposition? (if it be
fit to make such a supposition) ye had been without
a Redeemer, and had perished for ever. When he
calls you to be sufferers of him, and to suffer
patiently, as he did, tho' most unjustly, as to
men; for you to think or say that you scorn it, and
that ye are not so mean-spirited, what is it else, but
to think, and to say on the matter, that the blessed
Jesus, in his patient and silent carriage under all
the injuries that he suffered very unjustly from men,
shewed himself to be of a low and base spirit, and
that ye disdain to follow his way? O intolerable,
saucy, and proudly blasphemous reflection! The
many contetts, the many high resentments of wrongs,
the great grudging, fretting and fooming at them
that there are in Christians, say plainly, that there
is little of the meek and patient Spirit of Christ in,
and amongst us; and that many of us know not
what spirit we are of.

SERMON XXIX.

Isaiah lxi. 8, He was taken from prison, and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation?
For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

W
E need not tell you of whom the Prophet is
speaking here; every verfe, and every word
almost, do make it manifest, that he speaks of Christ
the Saviour; and indeed it can be applied to none
other. It is the same verfe, Acts viii. 24, from which
Philip proceeds to preach Christ to the Eunuch.
The Prophet hath been largely holding forth
Christ's sufferings in the former verfe, and we con-
ceive he takes a turn to speak of Christ's exaltation
and out-gate from these sufferings: It is true (as
if he had said) He was brought to prison and judg-
ment; he was indeed straitned and pinched, and
laid very low: But prison and judgment did not
keep him; He was taken, or, as the word is, He
was lifted up, from both. And, for as despickable
as he was in man's eyes, yet he was not so in him-
selv; for who shall declare his generation? There
is a wonderfulnes in him who suffered, that cannot
be
Ifaiah liii., be reached, but must be left with admiration; and a wonderful glory wherunto he was after his humiliation exalted: And there is a reason of this given, for preventing of offence: If any should say, How then could he suffer, and be brought so low in suffering, if he was so glorious a Person? He answers, It is true, that he was cut off out of the land of the living, but for no offence in himself, but for the transgression of God’s elect, was he stricken, or the word is, the stroke was upon him. Yea, this (we conceive) is given as a reason of his exaltation; because in the lowest steps of his humiliation, he condescended to fulfill his engagement with the Father, in satisfying justice for the sins of the elect, according to that of John x. 17. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again: Because, according to his engagement, he suffered for the sins of his elect people, therefore he could not but have a comfortable and glorious out-gate.

There are these three things in the words. 1. Somewhat asserted concerning Christ Jesus, He was taken from prison and from judgment. 2. Something hinted at, which cannot be expressed, Who shall declare his generation? 3. There is a reason given in reference to both, For he was cut off, &c. which we shall expound when we come to it.

For the first, He was taken from prison and from judgment: We conceive these words look both to his humiliation, and to his out-gate from it; the one being clearly supposed, that he was in prison or straits, and brought to judgment; and the other being expressed, that he was brought from prison and from judgment. 1. Prison, here, may be taken generally for any strait, pinch or preffure that one may be brought into; which we conceive both the words, and the Prophet’s scope will clear; Christ never having been properly in prison, at least for any considerable time, but straitened and pinched: And he was taken from that, being in his humiliation, and in his sufferings in the room of the elect, pursued by the law and justice of God. 2. Judgment is taken passively, for judgments past on him: and it looks not only to the procedure of Pilate, of the chief priest, and of the Scribes and Pharisees, but to a judicial process, which the justice of God led against him; in which respect, he answered (as the words after will clear) for the sins of God’s people. The word, He was taken, sometimes signifies to deliver, as a captive is delivered, when he is taken from him that took him captive; as it is, Isa. xlix. 24. Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? To which

Verse 8.

The Lord answers, It, or he shall be taken.

So then, the scope and meaning of the words is, that the Prophet subjoins a narration of Christ’s exaltation upon the back of his humiliation, as it is usual in the scripture to put these together, and in this order, as namely, Phil. ii. 8, 9. He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the the death of the cross: Wherefore God bath highly exalted him, and given him a name, &c. He was exceedingly straitened and pinched for the elect’s sins; but death had no dominion over him, he had a glorious out-gate; he was taken out, and let free from the prison, or straits wherein he was held, and from these judgments that past upon him. The reason of the explication is drawn from the plain meaning of the words, which must run thus, He was taken from judgment, the very fame which is in the following expression, He was cut off out of the land of the living: That being the ordinary signification of the preposition from, the meaning must be this, that he was taken out of the condition wherein he was; it agrees also with the scope of the very next words, Who shall declare his generation? wherein he propounds an admirable aggravation of this delivery.

The 2d thing hath a connexion with the former, and therefore take a word or two for clearing of it. What to understand by generation, here, is somewhat difficult to determine, the word in the original having several meanings; yet generally it looks to one or two, as it is applied to Christ, (1.) Either to the time past, and so is used by many, to express and hold forth Christ’s Godhead: and so the meaning is, Though he was brought very low, yet he was, and is the eternal Son of God. Or, (2.) (as commonly it is taken) It looks to the time to come; and so the meaning is, Who shall declare his duration, or continuance? Generation is often taken thus in scripture for the continuance of an age, and of one age following another successively; as Joshua xxii. This altar shall, be a witness to the generations to come; so then, the meaning is, he was once low, but God exalted him, and brought him thorrw; and who shall declare this duration, or continuance of his exaltation? As it is, Phil. ii. 8, 9. He humbled himself, &c. therefore God hath highly exalted him; as his humiliation was so low, so his exaltation was ineffable, it cannot be declared, nor adequately conceived, the continuance of it being for ever. There is no inconsistency betwixt these two expostitions; his duration or continuance after his sufferings, necessarily presupposing his Godhead; brought in here, partly to shew the wonderfulness
derfulness of his suffering, it being God that suffered, for the Man that suffered was God; partly to shew Christ's glory, who, notwithstanding of his suffering, was brought thoroiv, and gloriously exalted: and these reasons make it evident, 1. Whatever these words, *Who shall declare his generation?* do signify, certainly it is something that can be spoken of no other, but of Christ, and that agrees to him fo, as it agrees to no other. Now, if we look simply to the *eternity* of his duration or continuance, that agrees to all the elect, and well agrees to all men at the resurrection: Therefore the prophet must look here to his continuance and duration as he is God. 2. Because, *Who shall declare his generation?* is brought in here, to shew the ineffableness of it, and so to make his sufferings the more wonderful; it was he who suffered, whose continuance cannot be declared. 3. It is such a continuance, as is brought in to shew a reason why death could not have dominion over him, nor keep him; according to that, Rom. i. 4. *He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness,* by *his resurrection from the dead:* And the reason subjoined to this will some way clear it; for *he was cut off out of the land of the living,* for the *transgression of my people was he stricken:* Thereby influencing, that because of the great work which he had to do, there belonged to be some singulars in the Person that had the work in hand, who, notwithstanding of the greatnes of and difficulties of it, came thoroiv, and was hereby exalted. However it be, the Prophet's scope being to set out Christ's humiliation and exaltation, his humiliation before, and his exaltation after, which is, as we said, ordinary in scripture; we conceive the meaning we have given is safe, and agreeing to the Prophet's scope.

We may observe three things from the first part of the words, *First,* "That our Lord Jesus Christ in his performing the work of redemption, was exceedingly straitened or pinched, or held in, as the word is elsewhere rendered, bound up and immed in, as men are who are in prison:" And, by these straiatnings, we mean not only such as he was brought into by men, (whence we spoke before) but especially those that were more inward; and these being amongst the last steps of his humiliation, more immediately preceding his exaltation, and spoken of as most wonderful, we conceive they look to those pressures that were upon his spirit: And we shall instance several places of scripture, that serve to hold it out; the first is that of John xii. 27, 28. *Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour.* Here our blest Lord is troubled in spirit, and so pinched and hedged in as in a prison, that he is holily nonplussed what to say. The 2d scripture is Matt. xxv. 38. *My soul is exceeding forrowful even unto death,* which is like the expressions used by the Apostle, 2 Cor. i. 8. *We were pressed above measure, above strength, in so much as we despaired of life,* and we *had the sentence of death in ourselves,* there was no out-gate obvious to human sense and uptaking: So is it here; wherein we are not only to consider his soul- vexation, but that his soul- vexation was very great, extremely pinching, vexing, and in a manner imprisoning to him. The 3d scripture is Luke xxii. 24. *He being in an agony, prayed more earnestly,* and *his sweat was as if it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground,* there was such a striving, wrestling and conflicting, not with man without him, but with inward presures on his spirit, that he is like one in a barracks, or cock-pit, or engaged in a duel with a mighty combatant, sore put to it, very far beyond ought that we can conceive of; so that *he sweate great drops of blood,* and says, *Father, if thou be willing,* *remove this cup from me;* nevertheless not my will, but thine be done: it is in Mathew, *if it be possible,* and thereafter, *if it be not possible;* which says, there was no winning out of the grips of the law and justice, till that they were fully satisfied; and those dreadful words uttered by him on the cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* hold out, that from the sinless human nature of Christ, the comfortable and joyful influence of the Godhead for a time was in a great measure suspended, (tho' the sustaining power thereof was exercised mightily on him) so that he looks on himself some way as forsaken, and left in the hand of the curse.

To clear this a little, we would consider these pressures that were upon our Lord's spirit, 1. In respect of their cause. 2. In respect of their effects.

1st, In respect of their cause. There is upon the one side his undertaking for the elect as their Surety, and God's justice pursuing and holding him in on the other side: So that he cannot decline being sifted at the bar of justice, because, as it is verse 6th, the sins of all the elect met upon him; and he having, as it is verse 7th, the bitter cup in his hand, which by his engagement he was obliged to drink, he stands there by the decree of God and by the covenant of redemption, trying him to satisfy; and being pursued by wrath and justice, the words come out, *Father, if it be possible,* let this cup depart from me; yet not my will, but thine be done; his engage-
engagement hemming him in, and wrath pursuing him, he stands betwixt these two as a prisoner: and upon these two, the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, and he was exalted upon, and answered for them; follows well the third, that he was put in prison; for in these verses, the steps of our Lord's humiliation are followed out in a legal way, as before the bar of God's tribunal.

2dly, This being our Lord's posture, we shall consider the effects of this prefluence of spirit, which we may draw to these four heads. 1. He was under the sense of great soul-pain, sorrow and trouble; for the cup of the wrath of God being bitter, which he was to drink, it could not but deeply sting his holy human nature, which was the procuring cause of his agony, and that which made his soul sorrowful, and brought out the bloody sweat. 2. Beseit his grief and pain, there was a holy horror; And, considering the Party that he had to do with, it was impossible it could be otherwise; impossible for a finite, tho' a sinless Creature, to look on an angry God, and on wrath poured forth into the cup, which it must needs drink, and not have a horror at it; it were not becoming the sinless human nature of our blessed Lord, not to be affected with a holy and sinless horror at that most bitter cup, which brought out that sad cry, Father, let this cup depart from me; which did not proceed from any dislike he had to fulfil his engagement, or from any reposing in unfruitful repentment that he had fo engaged himself, but from an apprehended sinless disproportionableness (to speak so) in his finite sinless human Nature, to encounter with the wrath of his Father; to which tho' he most willingly yielded, yet in itself it was dreadful. 3. There was a pinching and straining of holy fear, as if there had been in him a sinless dispute or debate. What will become of this? Can a Man win through this? (though he was God as well as Man) how will this be gotten born? This looks as if death would get the victory; thus it is faid, Heb. v. 7. In the days of his flesh he offered up strong cries and supplications, with tears, and was heard in that which he feared: He put up strong cries to be delivered, not from dying, but from the power of death; and was heard in that which he feared, to show a holy care to prevent death, could that have been, and a sinless fear of it, left it should swallow him up. 4. There was a pinching and straining, from love to the Father, and to the doing of his will: and from love to the elect, and to their salvation, which pushed him forward to perform and fulfil his engagement; accordingly, Luke xii. 50. he says, I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am to suffer in its ac-

Verse 3. completed? and hence it was that these words were uttered by him, Father, not my will, but thine be done; and therefore though he had power to command twelve legions of angels for his relief, yet, to speak fo, love fo binds his hands, that he will not use his power for his own liberation. But to guard this doctrine from mistakes, take a fourfold advertisement concerning this inward foul-pinchling, which will help to clear somewhat of his soul-suffering that followeth. And, (1.) Think not that there was any sinful or unsuitable confusion or perturbation of mind in our Lord, such as useth to be in us, there being no dreg of corruption in his mind to jumble or discompose his holy human Nature. (2.) Beware of thinking that there was any fretting or anxiety in him, or any discontentedness with the bargain: His expessions shew forth the contrary; for (faith he) I could command twelve legions of angels, yet he would not do it. (3.) Think not that there was any jealousy in him of the Father's love: though there was a supposition of the comfortable and joyful sense of it, yet there was not the least looking of the Father of it, as is clear by his doubling of these words, My God, my God, when in his faddest pinch he cried out as being forfaken. (4.) Ye would not look on this, as holding out any distrust as to the event: I have (faith he) power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again; and I will rise again the third day. He knew that the covenant of redemption betwixt the Father and him fford firm and sure; but it is the confirmation of God's now coming as his Party to exact the elect's debt of him, and his standing at the bar to anfwer for it, which puts him in this agony; and tho' concerning Chrift as a Man personally united to the Godhead (whereby he was kept from finking) he had no distrust to be carried thoro; yet considering him as a Man suffering, and that (to speak with reverence in such a divine subjeft) there was an eclipse of that sensible joy that proceeded from the two natures together, it is not possible to conceive of Chrift in this posture, but wrath and anger behaved to be some way dreadful or terrible to him.

The Ufer are 16. To evidence the truth of what our Lord suffered, and how severely he was pinched and straitned; it was not the Scribes and Pharisees pursuing him, nor the foldiers buffeting and mocking him, and carrying him to the high priest's hall, and from Pilate to Herod, and back again, that so much troubled him; but there was a higher hand that he had to look to, and a Judge and court, to which he was now answering, that was very far above theirs.

And:
And therefore, as a **2d. Use of the doctrine**, Think it not such a light thing (as many do) to satisfy justice, or to give God a ransom for souls; ye see how it pinched the Cautioner, and put him as in a prison. Un speakably deceased are they, who think that two or three formal words will make their peace with God, and that they will slip into heaven: Be not carried away with this delusion: but consider seriously what will become of you, if ye be put to answer for your own debt, when he handled the Cautioner, his own Son, so roughly; ye that will sleep on, and scorn to let any word pick at you, or prick you, the justice of God shall prick you, and put you to straits, out of which ye will not be able to extricate yourselves; and he shall appear like everlasting burning, when the great day of his wrath comes, and when it shall be said by you, *Who can stand before it, or abide it?* It were good that ye, who are most atheistical, and who with a fort of triumph and gallantry will needs destroy yourselves, would lay this to heart, and remember that the day comes, when ye will be brought to this bar; and gravely consider, what an hell this will be, to have the desperateness of the out-gate sealed up in your consciences, and these evidences of God's hatred and thence aggravations that our Lord's holy nature could not admit of, in your bottom: When wrath meets with corruption, and corruption with wrath, and when these mingle, how dreadful will your cafe be!

3dly, Let believers see here what ye are obliged to Christ; consider what he hath paid, and what the satisfaction of justice for you cost him. Folks are ready to think, that it was an easy thing to satisfy justice, and to drink of the brook by the way; but if sinners were sensible of challenges for sin, and if they had the arrows of the Almighty, drinking up their spirits, they would think otherwise of Christ's drinking out the cup of wrath for them, not leaving so much as one drop of it: It is but the shorings or threatnings, with some drops of it, that any of you meet with in your soul exercises: O! believing sinners, are ye not then eternally obliged to Christ, who drank out this wrathful cup for you?

4thly, There is notable conflation here to poor souls, that would fain make ufe of Christ. As, 1. That Christ hath stepped thorow this deep ford, or rather sea before them; and if the cup come in their hand, it is empty: Freedom from the wrath of God is a great conflation; and yet it is the conflation of them that are fled unto him for refuge. 2. It is comfortable to them, in their comparatively petty straits and difficulties, when they wot not what to do, when the law feizeth, and justice pursueth, and when the conscience challengeth; to consider that Christ was a Prifoner before them: Though he had no challenge for his own debt, yet he was challenged for ours, that he might be a compassionate high Priest, being made like to us, but without sin. Justice pursueth him, the law arrested him, wrath seized on him; so that, when we are set upon by these, he will be tender of us, for he knoweth our frame, and that we cannot bear much: And therefore, on this ground, a believing sinner may go with boldness to the throne of grace, because Christ the Cautioner, who hath paid his debt, is there. It is a shame for believing sinners, to walk so heartlessly, even under these things that are terrible, as if Christ had not gone thorow them before them, and for them. 3. There is conflation here, when they are under any pinching cross and difficulty; as there is also ground for patient and pleafant bearing of it, because it was another fort of prison that Christ was put in for them. Ye may, I grant, lament over the long want of sensible presence, it being kindly to the believer to misit, and to long for it; but ye should not be heartless under the want of it, nor complain, as the Lord's people do lament: *Is there any sorrow like unto my sorrow?* but submissively and contentedly bear it without fretting, seeing our Lord bare so much for you.

5thly, There is here a notable encouragement to believe, and a notable ground for the believer to expect freedom from sin, and from the pinching straits that it devorvth, because Christ paid dear for it: Wherefore was all this pinching, but to pay believers debt? But when we come to speak of his out-gate, it will clear this more.

Secondly, While it is said, That he was brought from judgment, which supposes and implies, that he was once at, or under judgement, even the judgment of God, who is his great party all along; *He laid on him the iniquity of us all;* and verfe 10. *It pleased the Lord to bruise him;* He was the Creditor that caufed take and arrest him: *Obferve,* That in all the soul vexation, in all the pinching paffure of spirit that our Lord sustained, he was standing judicially before the bar of God, and was judicially proceeded against as the elect's cautioner and surety. There was no access to bring Christ to judgment, had he not engaged to be surety, and had not God laid on him our iniquities; for it was for no debt that he was owing himself, but for what by his engagement as the elect's surety he came under, and was made liable to.
That which I mean by his being brought to judgment, is not only that he suffered, and was occasionally condemned by a court of men, or by a human judiciary, which was rather like a tumultuary meeting, or a company of men in an uproar, than indeed a court; but whatever was before men, there was a legal and judicial procedure before God: For clearing whereof ye would confider, 1. The account whereon he suffered, and was brought before God's court of judgment, to speak so: It was not for any thing that the Scribes or Pharisees or Pilate had to lay to his charge; it was envy in them, the former at least, that stirred them in what they did: But the next words tell us what it was, for the transgression of my people was he stricken; the the priests and people had no mind of this, but this was indeed the ground of his judicial challenge and arraignment before God: The elect were in their sins, and he by the covenant of redemption stood liable for their debt, because he had undertaken for them as their cautioner and surety. 2. Confider who was his great party in his sufferings: It was not Pilate nor the Jews, he cared not so much for them; but it is God, and therefore he cries, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and therefore he makes his address to God, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: He cared not for answering them, but looks to a higher hand, and upon himself as standing before another tribunal; therefore it is said, verse 10. yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he looked not to Pilate, but to the Lord pursuing him. 3. Confider our Lord's submission to his being brought to judgment, not only nor chiefly before men, but before God; therefore says he, John xii. 48. Father, save me from this hour, but for this cause came I to this hour; Come then, Father, and let us count: He looks not only to the present dispensation but also to the ground whence it came, and to the end that God had in it: for this cause came I to this hour, even to have my soul troubled, and to be put to answer for the debt of my elect people according to my engagement: Lo, I come (faith he in that often cited xlv. Psalm) in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will. Consider, 4. The effects of his bringing to judgment: A sentence passeth, 1 Tim. iii. ulti. Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, not before Pilate, but in God's court, having satisfied for the elects debt according to his undertaking, he gets an absolvitor, which reaches not only to himself, but to all them whose perfons he fulfilled, as is clear, 2 Cor. v. ulti. He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him: And the elects obtaining eternal redemption and absolution by his death, with the accruing of his satisfaction to their justification, clears that he stood there judicially at the bar of God, in their name, to answer for them. And there are three steps of this his judicial answer, (1.) He gets the libel of the elects debt put in his hand; Though there was no guile in his mouth, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he laid on him the iniquity of us all; and for the iniquity of my people was he stricken. These are the persons that he undertook for, and for their debt he answers: The verity of the fact is clear, for they are under guilt; the law's claim is clear, for it is broken, and upon this the libel is put in his hand; hence it is said, He died for us, he was made sin for us, and he died for our sins. (2.) As the libel is put in his hand, so a sentence passeth accordingly; he is found liable to the elects debt, and must answer for it, as the former word is, It was exacted on him, and 2 Cor. v. ulti. He was made sin for us, and Gal. iii. 13. He was made a curse for us, that is, by the sentence of justice he is decreed to bear the curse. (3.) The sentence is executed as it was past; the cup is put in his hand, and not only is he decreed and doomed to the curse, but actually he is made a curse, and all this as judicially fulfilling the persons of the elect, and as their Cautioner and Surety.

Here we have some sweet and profitable Uses. 1. See here and take up the way of redemption contrived, so as it runs on mercy and justice, mercy to the elect, and justice to the Cautioner, their debt being fully exacted of him.

2. It learns us how to establish our faith, and also gives us a ground of believing. To make it distinct; justice behoved to be satisfied, without which no mercy could be shewed to the sinner; and God hath laid down the way by the Cautioner's interposing: Even as it is among men, the cautioner's being imprisoned, and satisfying, is the debtor's liberation; and as God hath condiscended to deal with us by way of covenant, so he condiscended in the covenant of redemption to proceed legally and judicially with Christ, that we might have the clearer way to make application of it.

3. Are there any here that look for redemption thorow Christ, and hope that their sins were in the libel given to him? O how warming would this be to your hearts! and how should it make them to melt in love and godly sorrow, to behold Christ standing at justice bar, and that for you! O what
SERMON XXX.

Isaiah liii. 8. He was taken from prison, and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

Every step of Christ's way to sinners, and every word whereby it is expressed, is wonderful; and therefore it is no marvel that the prophet doth by way of admiration call in this word, And who shall declare his generation? We shew you, that we conceive these words to be the expression of the prophet's turning of himself from Christ's humiliation to his exaltation: he hath inflicted long in setting out his wonderful abasement, exanimation, and humiliation, which these words import, he was brought from prison and from judgment; which look not only to his external imprisonment, to his coming to judgment before men, but also, and mainly and principally, to the pinches and straights he was brought into, and his arraignment before God's tribunal, and so the cause of his suffering, to wit, for the transgression of his people, as the words following hold out; which was not the cause of his cenfure before

an aspect would his sufferings have on us, if we were clear about our interest in him, and could hear him, in our name saying, Father, here am I; if thou take me, let these go; thy will be done, for this cause came I here, to answer for my peoples debt, to take with the challenges given in against them, and to undergo thy sentence for them: Then says justice, Thou must pay their debt; Content, says he, here am I; and so he gives his back to the smiter, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame and spitting. If we were clear that our share was there, and that our iniquities came in among the rest to make up the libel, and if we could aight discern him so pinched and straitned in satisfying for us, would we not think ourselves eternally obliged to him, to hate sin, and to glorify him in our bodies and spirits which are his? as it is, 1 Cor. vi. ult. If indeed ye be Christ's (as ye are all ready to profess yourselves to be) he pays dear for you; and if so, will not this ly upon you as a juft debt to him, to glorify him in your bodies, and in your spirits? for both in body and spirit he paid for you.

It is a notable ground of consolation to believers against dependency and fear to appear before the throne of God; because our Lord Jesus Christ hath been before us, and in our name, and hath answered for us to the ful, and hath satisfied all that justice could crave of us. What wakens terror at death, and makes the thoughts of Christ's appearing to be dreadful, but our looking on our appearing at the bar of God? but it is a comfort against it, that Christ our Cautioner was brought to prison and to judgment, and was also brought from both; yea, which is more, and without which the consolation is but halfed, he was brought to both for us, and he was also brought from both as our surety for all them that betake themselves by faith to him: he was carried to prison and to judgment as caut-
before men, but the procuring cause of what he met with from, and before God.

But tho' he was brought to prison and to judgement, to death and to the grave, yet they did not, they could not detain him. *He was taken, or, as the word signifies, he was lifted up from prison and from judgment, being the same word that followeth, He was cut off out of the land of the living;* which supposes a turn and change from his humiliation to his exaltation: And these words, *Who shall declare his generation? set out the unceivable and unexpressible glory that Christ is exalted unto;* so Acts viii. 33, 35. where these words are cited, it is said *In his humiliation his judgment was taken away;* that is, in his lowest step of his humiliation, his judgment, or that to which he was adjudged, was taken from him, and he was declared free. However, since in these words our Lord's humiliation is implied, and his exaltation expressed as following on it, we think it safest to understand it so. The words put together hold out the high degree of Christ's glorious exaltation, so as his generation cannot be declared; *He was taken from prison and from judgment,* and gloriously exalted in another manner, and to another degree of glory, than either angels or believers are, or are capable to be: For he that is exalted is God, whose generation cannot be declared; *Death having no more dominion over him,* and *he having the keys of hell and of death.* In a word, we take this, *Who shall declare his generation?* most immediately to relate to Christ's exaltation as Mediator, and to the glory wherewith he was invested, and to the dominion that he hath over all creatures: yet, considering that the prophet's scope is to set out this as wonderful, and considering that the first step of his exaltation is his resurrection, whereby (as the apostle speaks, Rom. i. 4.) *he was declared to be the Son of God with power,* his resurrection being singular in this respect, that he arose by his own power, and considering that, Acts vii. 35. Philip began to preach to the Eunuch Jesus Christ as the object of faith; we think it reasonable to conceive, that he preached Christ to be God, from this text, so that the Eunuch might have a solid foundation for his faith. And the subserving the scope, which is to set out the wonderfulness of Christ's love to elect sinners, who being God, yet condescended to come this low for saving of them; We may take in his Godhead mediately, from which as the former steps of his humiliation received worth and efficacy, so he was thereby sustained and born up under all these sufferings, whereby his people are saved.

**Isaiah lxxx.** Verse 5.

From the first and second expressions put together, we shall draw three doctrines relating to three main articles of faith.

The 1st whereof is this, *That our Lord had an outgare from, and victory over, the lowest and most pinching pieces of his humiliation and suffering.* So that, tho' he was at prison and judgment, yet he was lift up from both, and had a glorious outgate: This takes in three things, which the same grounds will confirm, 1. That in his lowest estate and steps of humiliation, he was sustained, and carried thorow, so that all the assaults which he was put to endure and encounter with from all his enemies, wicked men and devils, did not over come him. 2. That as he in himself was born thorow and sustained; so, in respect of God's bar at which he was arraigned, he was absolv'd and set free; he so came thorow by paying of the debt, that he had an abfolvitor, as it is, 1 Tim. iii. ult. *Great is the mystery of godliness.* God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit. Our blessed Lord Jesus, being sustained by the power of his Godhead, was carried thorow in his sufferings, paid the elect's debt, and receives the sentence of abolution; even as a person (to speak with reverence in such a subject) having paid the debt for which he was imprison'd, is absolv'd and set free. 3. It takes in our Lord's actual delivery, he not only received the sentence of abolution, but was actually set free: so that as he was pleased to put himself in prison and in straits for us; so he was brought from every step of his humiliation, from prison and from judgment, from death and from the grave; *he nailed the hand writing which was against us to his cross,* as the Apostle faith, Col. ii. 14, 15. *And having spoiled principalties and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it,* and as it is, 1 Cor. xv. at the close, he took the thing from death, disarmed it, and trod upon it: And there was necessity for this, even such necessity, that it was impossible it could be otherwise, as we have it, Acts ii. 24. *It was not possible that he could be holden of death.* This will be clear, if we consider these things.

1. The Person that suffered: He was not an ordinary, nay, nor a meer Man, but God-Man, as is clear, Acts ii. 27. cited out of Psal. xvi. where it is said, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,* neither *wilt thou suffer thy holy One to see corruption.*

2. The end of Christ's sufferings, which was to satisfy for the debt of his people: Here having been no reckoning on his own score or account, he being still in God's favour, and his holy One in
whom his soul delighted all along his sufferings; his sufferings being for the sins of his elect, and he being to make application of his satisfaction, and of the purchase made thereby, to the elect, for whom he suffered and purchased these things, by his intercession; there was a necessity that he should come thither; otherwise he should not have been a perfect and a complete Saviour, able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him, as the Apostle speaks, Heb. vii. 25. *Such an high Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.*

3. *It is clear also, if we consider the nature of the covenant, and of the promises made to him therein, upon his engaging and undertaking for the elect; as particularly verse 10th of this chapter, He shall see his seed, and prolong his days, his duration shall be for ever;* The Pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; and I will divide him a portion with the great, and be he shall divide the spoil with the strong; *Our Lord's exaltation and victory over death being on the Lord's side conditioned to him the Mediator, as well as he engaged to suffer; hence it is said, Psal. cx. He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head."

The Uses are two, The 1st whereof serves for clearing and confirming our faith in a fundamental article of Christianity, without which it were needless for us to preach, and needless for you to hear or believe; and that is, That our Lord Jesus suffered, and also got the victory over sufferings; that he was raised from the dead, and declared to be the Son of God with power; intimating, that justice had gotten full satisfaction: in evidence and testimony whereof, he was declared free, which is a main thing that believers have to believe; even that we have an exalted Christ, a raised-up Saviour, who could not be detained by all the elect's guilt in prison. 2. It serves to be matter of strong consolation; it puts life in all Christ's offices and qualifications, and in all the promises made to believers; to wit, that our Lord Jesus is a living Christ, over whom death had no dominion, and he overcame it, now to die no more; So that, as it is, Heb. vii. 25. *He is able to face to the uttermost those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them:* There is nothing that a soul needs or can desire, but it is to be had in him. And if we would look to particular instances, much consolation will arise from this ground; For, (1.) Hath a believing sinner to do with challenges at the bar of justice, is it not unspeakable consolation that their debt is paid? hence it is said Rom. viii. 33. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Is it God that justifies; who shall condemn? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again.* It is that which gives proof of compleat payment of the elect's debt, and defiance to any challenges and accusations to come against the believer to his prejudice; because Christ hath not only died, but is also risen; justice being well pleased with his satisfaction, he is let out of the prison. (2.) If the believer hath to do with corruption, with the devil and with many enemies, is it not strong consolation that our Lord is risen and up, *that the Prince of this world is judged,* that Satan is troden under foot, and that he shall and must reign till all his enemies be made his footstool: (3.) Our Lord's resurrection hath a twofold further consolation with it to believers, 1. It serves to be a ground for the exercising of faith on him, that as he is risen, so (Rom. vi.) *may we expect that being spiritually dead with him to sin, we shall be with him raised up to newness of life.* 2. It is a pledge of believers exaltation and compleat victory over death and the grave, and over all enemies; for Christ being raised as the common Head of all believers who are his members, they by virtue of his resurrection, and by that same efficacy, shall be raised; and it is impossible they can lie under corruption. This is our great consolation who are believers, and live under the gospel, that we have not these things as a prophecy of things to come, but as a plain history of things in part done, and by and bye to be compleatly done. (4.) It hath also in it consolation in respect of temporal difficulties: What are they all? They are not sure such as Christ's were; and the day is coming, when believers shall have an out-gate from them all: And therefore, since our Lord is up, let not believers be afraid of any challenges whatsoever.

2dly, Observe, *"That our Lord Jesus, being raised up from his state of humiliation, is inviolate, and put in a most excellent and glorious condition; even such as the prophet cannot express."* *Who can declare his generation? faith he; Who can declare how glorious he is now? Take two or three scriptures to confirm this. 1st, That Eph. i. 20, 21. *"He hath set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principali- ties and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the Church."* Our Lord's throne
Isaiah liii.

Verse 8.

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This now he is clearly known in respect of his kingly office to be God in our nature, clothed with our flesh, and to be Immanuel, God with us; and that this Immanuel hath all power in heaven and earth committed to him; he hath the keys of hell and of death, and is King of kings, and Lord of lords, is exalted far above principalities and powers, and is given to be Head over all things to the Church: in which respect that is most properly to be understood, when it is said, that he is *set on the right hand of God*; so that now Jesus Christ, God and man in one Person, is in highest glory, and in absolute dominion, nearest unto God, far above that which angels or saints are capable of: As kings use to set their greatest courtiers and minions, whom they would honour most, on their right hand, and as Solomon set his mother on his right hand; so is our Lord set on the right hand of God in highest glory. It is true, that, as God, he hath an absolutely sovereign and independent kingdom; yet, as Mediator, God-Man, he hath a dispensatory kingdom next unto the Father in glory. 

This exaltation consists in Christ's being furnished with qualifications suitable to that glorious condition wherein he is invested: And tho' these qualifications of the Man-Christ be not simply infinite, yet they are far above what we can conceive; and the qualifications of the Person God-man are infinite, in which respect he is omnipotent, all-seeing, and infinitely wise, to provide every thing that may be for the good of his Church and people, and to prevent what may tend to their hurt; omnipresent, &c.

The Uses are three, 1st, This would waken and rouze our spirits to high, holy, and reverent esteem of Christ; he is God above all gods, King above all kings; he hath gotten a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, not superstitiously when he is named, but holy and reverently to think of him, and to worship and serve him. We conceive, among many faults and evils in believers, this is a root-evil, even low thoughts of glorious Christ; so that, because he hath become low to lift us up, we are ready to think the less of him: But O that we could behold the glorious condition he is exalted unto, and could look upon him as, erelong, coming in the clouds with power and great glory, in the glory his Father, and all the holy angels with him! It will furnish reverend thoughts of him, tho' not to hurt faith and con-
Lord Jesus Christ; what loss they are, who lose him; and what a great aggravation their sin hath, who sin against him: Ye that strive, refuse and oppose him, do ye know whom ye refuse, and whose dominion ye spurn against, and how hard it will be for you to kick against the pricks? do ye know your loss who lose him, and how it will heighten your guilt who despise him? the more glorious Christ be, the greater will the sin of the unbeliever be; therefore beware what ye are doing: Ye have a mighty great and strong Party to deal with; and when the great day of his wrath comes, and when he shall appear in his glory, how will you be able to abide the least touch of it? it will heighten your sin, and heighten your misery, that he whom the Father exalted was undervalued by you, that ye scorned to take a direction from him, or to submit to a counsel drawn forth in his name, and said, at least by your practice, “Let us break his bands asunder, and cast away his cords from us, but he hath set his King on his holy hill of Zion, for all that; and he that fits in heaven will laugh, “the Lord will have you in derision.” Think on it seriously, and know, that he is no mean person whom ye slight and despise; and tho’ this may now seem less than other sins, yet it will one day by heavy on your score and conscience, above many, yea, above all other sins.

The 3d Use serves to be a motive and encouragement to them that hear this gospel to receive Christ, and for the confutation of believers who have received him. 1. It serves to encourage you all to receive him; he is no mean person that woos you, but King of kings, and Lord of lords; and if ye think it a happiness to be for ever with him, then let it move you to close with him; if ye do so, ye shall be made glorious as he is glorious; a due proportion betwixt the Head and the members being kept, ye shall sit on the same throne with him, and behold his glory; as he prayseth, John xvii. I will that these whom thou hast given me may be with me to behold my glory. This is certainly a great bargain; if Christ be glorious, he calleth you to share with him in the same glory. 2. It serves for the confutation of believers, who have received him: Ye have an excellent Mediator, a most glorious Head and Husband, and a most excellent Dowry, and ye shall know it to your superabundant satisfaction and joy in that day, when (as it is Psal. xlv.) ye shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle work, and shall enter into the king’s palace, and share of his glory, and see him face to face, and sit with him on his throne, even as he hath overcome, and is set down with his Father on his throne. Labour to be stayed in the faith and hope of this good, glorious, and desirable day that is coming, when we shall not only see, but partake of, and be fully and for ever possessed in that, which eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered in the heart of man to conceive of.

3dly, From the words, as we expounded them, observe, “That our Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered, and was in suffering brought very low, is “God.” We find ordinarily in scripture, especially thro’ the new Testament, these three going together, 1. Christ’s humiliation; 2. His exaltation on the back of that; And, 3. His Godhead. His humiliation is not readily spoken of without his exaltation, nor his exaltation without his Godhead; because it is impossible to separate Christ’s exaltation from his Godhead, his exaltation being the evidence of his Godhead; and the prophet’s scope here being to set out Christ’s exaltation, and Philip preaching of it to the Eunuch from this text, it is doubtful the contemplation of Christ’s Godhead that occasioneth this admiring exclamation, Where shall I find another generation? which we apply, not so much to the ineffable-ness of his generation as to its being an evidence that he is God. There are three or four ways whereby the scripture confirms this: Let me desire you, by the way, not to look on this as of little moment, or but a common doctrine; and since there are many so ignorant, that we would be ashamed to tell what we hear from some of you concerning the Godhead of Jesus Christ, ye would take better heed to it, being a main pillar of Christian religion, without which our preaching and your faith are in vain; for he is not believed on at all, if ye rest not on him as God. But to prosecute what we proposed, to wit, these several ways whereby the scripture confirms this truth; and to this purpose, consider, 1. The express titles and names that are given to him in scripture, and some scripture sayings of him, which hold it out; three whereof we shall instance: The first is that of Isaiah ix. 6, 7, where, when Christ is prophesied of, it is said, “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Child is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders,” And what is he? “He 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.” Here we have these three, his humiliation, exaltation, and Godhead; his humiliation, “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given;” his exaltation,
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"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice:" And his Godhead is interjeeted and put in betwixt these two, in the names and titles given to him, "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father;" not as personally taken, but (as the word signifies) The Father of Eternity, from whom all things have their being; and for the same reason, Chap. vii. 14, he is called Immanuel, God with us.

A 2d place is that of Phil. ii. 6. "Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery (he did God no wrong) to be equal with God. He made himself of no reputation, and took on him the form of a servant, &c. wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, &c." A 3d place is that of Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed Heir of all things, by whom also he made the world," and what is He by whom he spake to us? "Who being the brightness of his 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, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." There is here much of Christ's excellency holden forth; he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his Person: The beam of the sun is not liker to the sun's light, the impression of the seal on the wax is not liker to the seal, than the Son is to the Father, (nay, the liveliest resemblances fall infinitely short of a full and exact resemblance) the Father and he being the same God, and he being compared with the Father, not simply as God essentially taken, but as the second Person of the Trinity compared with him who is the first Person; O deep and adorable mystery!

A 2d way to clear and confirm it, is to consider his works, oft-times joined with his name; the works of creation, providence, redemption, and guiding of his Church; so we have it, John i. 1. In the beginning was the Word, the substantial Word of the Father, the Son of his love, called the Word, either as expressing the Father's image, as a man's word expresseth his mind: or because, as a prophet of the Church, he hath revealed the Father's will. It is said, that this Word was not only with God, but was God: and then follows in several verses together his works, the works of crea-

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tion, all things were made by him, &c. the works of providence are attributed to him, John v. 17. My Father worketh hitherto, and I work: and the work of redemption, and his glorious going thro' with it, declare him to be the Son of God; for none but God could redeem his Church.

3dly, For clearing and confirming of this truth, we may take the express confession of the saints in scripture, whereon there is much weight laid; and I shall name but five or six of their confessions, which to this purpose are expressly and fully recorded: The 1st is that of Matt. xvi. 16. "Whom do men say that I am? Peter answered, Thou art the Son of the living God:" and Christ saith, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, flesh and blood hath not revealed that unto thee, but my Father, which is in heaven;" to let us know that it is not a little thing to believe Christ's Godhead, as many take it to be; and then he calls himself the Rock on which his Church is built, Christ's Godhead is the foundation of Christiannity. A 2d is John i. 49. in Nathanael's words; Christ tells him, Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee; and he having gotten this proof of Christ's omniscience, presently breaks out, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel; and that is the first thing his faith evidenced itself in. A 3d place is, John vi. 67, 68, 69, where, when Christ is saying to the twelve, Will ye also leave me? Simon answered, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure, that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God; there is much in these words, we believe and are sure, that it is so. A 4th place is, John xi. 27. and it is Martha her confession, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." The 5th place is that of John xx. 28. where, when Christ bids Thomas reach hither his hand and put it in his side, his glory shineth so full in his face, that he cries out, "My Lord, and my God:" and his faith is summed up and compounded in that. The last place that we shall name, is that of Acts viii. 37. and it is the Eunuch's confession, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," which is the sum of his faith.

The 4th and last way of confirmation of this great truth, is drawn from the worship which is due unto him: He is the Object of Faith, John xiv. 1. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me;" He is the Object of prayer, Acts vii. 59. "They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, saying, Lord Jesus, receive
Ye would consider, for convincing you that it is thus with many of you, 1. The little fear that is in men and women of the Majesty of Christ as God; they durst not walk with so little fear of him, if they believed indeed that he were God: What made the Jews, with the Scribes and Pharisees, to spit upon him and despise him? but because they wanted the faith of his Godhead: And have not ye the same nature in you? Ye live in a place where the faith of Christ’s Godhead is professed, and is not questioned; but your practice says to beholders, that ye believe it not, because ye fear him not. 2. That your souls do so little welcome the offer of the gospel; that tells, that ye believe him not to be God. 3. That ye do not place your happiness in believing on him, and in the way of holiness; ye say in effect, Wherefore serves Christ? ye care not for him: Hence it is, that so many live contentedly without him, and are not solicitous about the enjoying of him. 4. Even in believers there is much unbelief of this truth; which is sadly evidenced by this, that they do not so blest themselves in him, and that they do not so reckon themselves to have come well to, and to be made up in him, as David doth, Psal. xvi. where he faith, and holly glorifieth, The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, &c. And by the frequent discouragement that is incident to believers, as if Christ had not the guiding of them, and of what concerns them, or could not guide all well for their good. If he were believed to be God, it would qualifie temptations, banish discouragements, comfort under croffes, sweeten every condition, induce to holiness, refrain from sin: And in a word, it cannot be told what is in the bosom of this one truth, when solidly believed; for what can possibly be wanting to the believer in him that is God? He hath the fulness of the Godhead to supply whatever they want, and sustains the relation of a Husband to the believer, to make it forthcoming; and he is furnished with suitable qualifications to make the application thereof: what then could be wanting, if this were thorowly believed, that he is God? Let me say it to you, the faith of this would provoke to more holiness, and to study more the power than the profession of religion, and would help you to live a more comfortable life in every condition.

**SERMON XXXI.**

**Unialh lxxii. 8.** He was taken from prison, and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

These words are a proof of that which we discoursed in the lecture concerning Christ’s wonderful love to his people, than which, no man hath greater, that a man should lay down his life for
for his friend; But he hath commanded his love to us, in that while we were yet enemies he died for us: This is the great commendation of Christ's love; and what will he refuse to his people, who in his love hath this length to them?

In the former part of this verse, we shew, that there was a hint given of Christ's exaltation, of the exaltation and glory of the Mediator following on the back of his lowest suffering; an ineffable and inexpressible glory, which the prophet rather paffeth with a sort of nonpluming silence, than insinueth in the declaration of it, Who shall declare his generation?

We come now to the last part of the words, For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was he stricken. They are added as a reason of the former, and the one part of them is a reason of the other: He said before, Who shall declare his generation? who can sufficiently declare and unfold, how gloriously the Mediator is exalted? And he gives this for the reason of it, For he was cut off out of the land of the living; the force of which is, that he humbles himself, therefore God hath exalted him, as the Apostle reasons, Philip. ii. 9. So that this is not added, as being posterior to his exaltation, but as a reason shewing the connection of his exaltation with his humiliation; and left it should be a flumbling to any, that this glorious Person suffered death, he gives the reason of that also, which strengthens the reason of his exaltation, For the transgression of my people was he stricken, or (as the word is) the stroke was on him; he suffered, not for any wrong that was in himself, but for the sins of his own elect people. The first particularly looks to Christ's death, which was a prophecy in Isaiah's time, but is now an historical narration to us, having the gospel as a commentary on it. To be cut off out of the land of the living, is to have an end put to the natural life, which is ordinarily done by death; but cutting off, here, signifies to be taken away, not in an ordinary, but in an extraordinary way, to be removed by a violent death, by the stroke of justice.

We may shortly take these two observes here, for the confirmation of two articles of our faith; looking on it, 1. As a prophecy, we may obferve, That our Lord Jesus behoved to suffer and die, it was prophesied of him, That he should be cut off out of the land of the living; and Dan. ix. 26, it is plainly and clearly afferted, that the Messiah shall be cut off; which being compared with the history of the gospel, we have it as a truth fulfilled; for

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our Lord Jesus was cut off, and as he himself says, Luke xxiv. It behoved him, to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory. And supposing the effect to be sinners, and the curse to be added to the covenant of works, The day thou e'ats thou shalt surely die; supposing also the Mediator to have engaged, and undertaken to satisfy justice, and undertake to pursue the elect to be sinners, and the curse to be added to the covenant of works, there was a necessity that he should die, as it is, Gal. iii. 13. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; which curse was evident in his death, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

2d Observe, That our Lord Jesus behoved to die a violent death, and not an ordinary natural one; which this expression, and that other, Daniel ix. clearly holds forth. And, considering his sinless nature that was not liable to death, and that he had not these principles of his dying in him, disproving him to die, that we sinful miserable mortals have in us; and considering withal, that the Lord Jehovah was (to speak so) pursuing him as sinners Cautioner at the bar of justice; it was meet, yea necessary, that our blessed Lord should not die an ordinary death, as men die ordinarily, through weakness or sickness on their beds, but a violent death.

Ufe. It serves to be a confirmation of this truth, that the Messiah behoved thus to die; therefore we say in the Belief, He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried: Which shews, 1. The reality of his satisfaction, and the compleat payment that he made to justice, when he lays down that price which the sinner ought to have laid down. 2. It shews the reality of our Lord's sufferings, and that they were not imaginary, but that as he was a real and true Man, so his sufferings were most real; his soul was separate from his body, tho' the union betwixt both his body and soul and the Godhead continued still. 3. It holds forth a proof and confirmation of our faith in this, that our Lord Jesus is the Messiah that was prophesied of, and promised, in whom all the sufferings in his soul and body that were spoken of, to go before his death, were accomplished, and in whom this was also accomplished, that he was cut off out of the land of the living; so that, if we look rightly on the scripture, our Lord's sufferings will be so far from being matter of stumbling, that they will rather be a clear, convincing, and evident proof that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah, and that in him, all that was spoken concerning the Messiah is fulfilled and came to pass.
4. It is matter of great consolation to believers, that our Lord Jesus, who is now exalted, died, and so death is spoiled, and there needs not be any great fear for them to yoke with it. This land of the living is not their rest, within a little they must be gone hence: Our Lord was cut off from it, and that by a shameful death, for the behoof and sake of others, and not for himself; and therefore his death cannot but be made forthcoming for them for whom he underwent it, and their petty sufferings need not much to vex them: These plainest truths, that are most ordinary, have in them most of spiritual sap, juice, and life to strengthen faith, and to furnish consolation to believers; and if they were rightly understood, and fed upon by faith, O how lively might they be! And were there no more but these two words in the text, O how much consolation do they yield in life and in death! Our Lord is gone before believers, and they may be greatly heartened to follow him.

The last part of, or the last thing in the words, seems to have some more obscurity in it; and therefore we shall insist the more in opening up of the same.

For the transgressions of my people was he smitten: These words do not look to the reason why Pilate and the priests condemned him, for they had no thoughts of the sins of God’s people; tho’ Calaphas stumbled, as to himself, by guess on a prophecy of his dying for them: But they give a reason why he was cut off out of the land of the living, and look to the court and tribunal of God’s justice, before which he was standing, by which he was to be sentenced to death for the transgressions of God’s people, and also abolished: He was thus smitten in respect of God’s purpose and design.

For clearing of the words, it may be required, 1. What is meant here by my people? 2. What it is to be smitten or smitten for them?

For the 1st, My people, it is a discriminating or differenting of some from others: And therefore, by my people here, is not meant, 1. All the world, or all that ever lived and had a being; we find not any where in scripture that these are called my people, or God’s people: but whenever my people is spoken of, it is used to rid marches betwixt his people and other people that are not his, as John x. 26, 27. Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep: my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, which suppheth that some are his, and others not so his; and so my people cannot be all the world. Neither, 2. Can it be meant of the whole visible Church, who, in respect of the external administration of the covenant, are sometimes called his people, as all Israel are: There is a narrower march, or boundary drawn, John x. 26. where the Lord, speaking of them that were only externally in covenant with him, says, Ye are not my sheep, to shew that his reckoning there must not go upon external profession: And, ver. 16. some that were not for the time professing themselves to be his people, are reckoned; Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring in. Nor, 3. Can it be limited to them that were actually converted and believers; for he says (as I just now hinted) that he hath other sheep that are not brought in; and he is said to gather together into one the children of God that were scattered abroad, John xi. 52. So then, by my people, must be understood these who in God’s eternal purpose are separate by the decree of election to be his own, even these whom he hath chosen to glorify himself in and by them through his grace, and to glorify them with himself; even these spoken of, John xvii. 6. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; they are the people who were transacted for in the covenant of redemption, and that were given by the Father to the Son, to be redeemed by him; it was for their sins, even for the sins of the elect, that our Lord Jesus was smitten.

As for the 2d, What is it to be smitten for their transgressions? The meaning is, The meritorious caule of their stroke was on Christ, which intimates to us, that his sufferings and death were procured by the sins of the elect of God; his stroke, or the stroke that was upon him (as the word is) was the amends that justice got for their sins: in a word, the stroke that the elect’s sins procured and merited, took him out of (or away from) the land of the living, brought him to prison and to judgment, and made his soul an offering for sin. Neither can this be otherways understood; for it is not said that for their good, or for their behoof only, or to be an example and pattern of patience only to them, he was smitten, as some grossly erroneous and profane men expound the words; but for their transgressions was he smitten, that is, it was their guilt, which he having undertaken and engaged to satisfy for, made him liable to this stroke.

In this part of the words, thus opened up, we have two notable points concerning the covenant of redemption, 1. The party for whom it is contrived and intended, and that is the elect or God’s people; it is not all the world, nor all the visible Church members that God transacted for in the bargain with the Mediator, but my people, the elect of God; they
they were so considered in the transaction and in the execution. 2. The great price that was bought or required, that was offered, and that was agreed upon for the redemption of the elect, to wit, the death of the Mediator, even his dying the cursed death of the cross: This is the sum, for the transgressions of God's people, the stroke was upon him; God's design being to glorify his grace in the salvation of so many, sin having intervened to bring them under the curse. There is upon the one side the Lord's giving of them to the Mediator to be redeemed by him, and upon the other side the Mediator's accepting of them on the terms proposed; he is content to satisfy for them, to take the stroke on himself deserved by them, that they may go free. Each of these may be considered several ways, for furnishing of sweet doctrines.

1. From the first of those, Observe, 'That there are some differenced from others in respect of God's purpose, some chosen of God for his people, being all the rest of the world.' For some are here God's people ere they be born, and ere Christ die for them, John xvii. 16. Thine they were, and thou gavest them to me: They are supposed to be God's people in some peculiar respect, ere they be given to Christ to be redeemed by him. In a word, the Lord hath an elect people, or a people chosen to salvation in his eternal purpose and decree, an elect people, or a people chosen out of the world, which in this respect are not his people, or are not elected. There are four qualifications or properties in this doctrine, which will serve to clear it; (1.) When we say, there is such a decree of election, we say that it is a discriminating or differencing decree, wherein or whereby there is a taking of some, and not all; a taking of one, and leaving another; a taking of Isaac, and a leaving of Ishmael, a taking of Jacob, and a leaving of Esau, as it is Rom. ix. And this discriminating or differencing, hath these four steps, 1. There is a differencing in God's purpose, in respect of the end, while all men are alike before him, some are designed to eternal life, others not; therefore, Matt. xxv. 34. it is said, 'Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;' and in this respect the book of life is said to be opened, Rev. xx. 12. 2. This differencing is in respect of God's offering and giving of them to the Mediator in the covenant of redemption, wherein some, not all, are given to Christ, John xviii. 2. 'That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hadst given him out of the world;' where it is clear, that so many are given to him, in

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There is a differencing in respect of Christ's undertaking and executing his offices for them, he accepts of them, John xvii. 9. For their sakes I sanctify my self, I have separated my self to the office of Mediator, and offer my self for them, 'That they also may be sanctified; and I pray for them, I pray not for the world,' it is of them that he maketh that sweet account, John vi. 39. 'This is the Father's will that sent me, that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day;' and of whom he faith, John x. 28, 29. 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.' He answer's and is accountable for them, and for them only; he will count for no other, as being redeemed by him, and to be made partakers of his glory.

4. This differencing is in respect of the promises made upon God's part to the Mediator in favours of the elect, and of the benefits that flow to them from the covenant: He hath not promised to justify all, nor to make all believe, but some only: He, as it were, faith to the Mediator, Thefe I give thee to be redeemed by thee, and on the laying down of thy life, and satisfying for them, I promise to make them believe, and that through faith in thee they shall be justified; therefore faith Christ, John vi. 44. 'Murmur not among yourselves; no man can come unto me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him.' And who are they that shall believe on him? See ver. 37. 'All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me, and him that cometh I will in no wise cast him out,' but will make him dearly welcome; and ver. 45. 'Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me; and John xvii. 2. That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.' Thus you see what was meant, when we call this a differencing decree. (2.) We say, that it is a definite decree, both in respect of the number numbered, that is, about so many, and no more, and not all; and in respect of the number, that numbers such a man and such a woman in particular, in such a place, and not such another person; they are all particularly designed, and are therefore said to be written in the Lamb's book of life: It is not all who are foreseen to believe who are elected, as if election did follow believing, as the cause of the decree; but it is such a number whom the Lord engageth to the Mediator to draw, to teach and make them believers. (3.) We say it is a decree that is free, as to all merit in them.
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verse 8.

whom it reacheth; and it is free in these three respects. 1. In respect of any thing in the person or persons elected, who are supposed to be lying as the rest of the world; therefore it is said of Jacob and Esau, Rom. ix. 11. The children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, &c. That is, God respected not the doing good or evil, in his election of the one, and palling by the other. 2. In respect of Christ's satisfaction and redemption, which presupposeth this decree to be, and is the nids by which it is accomplished; so that we are redeemed, because we are elected. The elect were God's people, when Christ did undertake and engage for them; and in this respect election is a fountain of grace, and Christ's death is not the cause of election, tho' it be the cause of all the benefits that follow upon it. 3. It is free, in respect of God's absolute sovereignty, who acts herein according to the purpose of his own will, having no reason without himself, as it is clear, Matth. xi. Even so Father, because it seemed good in thy sight; And Eph. i. 11. Being predestinate according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will: As the potter hath power over the clay, and makes of the same lump one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour as he pleaseth; so the Lord acts most sovereignly in the decree of election. (4.) We say, that this decree is absolute and peremptory; which is not so to be understood, as if it admitted of no midles in the execution of it. But this is the meaning, that the performing and bringing about thereof depends on nothing without God, neither can it be possibly frustrated; these sheep can never be plucked out of his hand, neither can they ever perish, but must needs all and every one of them actually enjoy that which is decreed for them by his decree; else they could not be called God's people, if they might not be his. Thus ye see what is the meaning of these words, my people, that is, his elect people, in or by the decree of election.

I shall shortly give you some few grounds from scripture, to clear and confirm this truth; the 1st whereof is taken from the names that the people of God get, from the expressions that are used in making mention of them in scripture, which will inform all that have been said; as namely, They are called my sheep, John x. his sheep that he knows, as it were, by head-mark, by name and surname, which cannot but be his. They are called the election of grace, Rom. xi. 5. At this present time there is a remnant, according to the election of grace; and v. 7. The election hath obtained, and the rest were blinded. It is impossible but the elect must obtain, there being an inseparable connexion betwixt the decree and the end thereof: They are said to be written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, before there was any mention of themselves, or consideration of ought in themselves: they are said to be loved and beloved, and ordained to eternal life, Acts xiii. 48. As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed; where believing is made a fruit and effect of this decree of election, it is so far from being a cause thereof: They are called blessed of the Father, Matt. xxv. and thefe whom he blesteth, cannot but be blessed: They are called such as are given to Christ, holding forth a peculiar differencing of them from others: They are called the people whom he foreknew and predestinated, Rom. viii. 29. Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate, &c. and Rom. xi. 2. God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew: Every one was not so foreknown; for Christ will say to many at the great day, Depart from me, I never knew you. Titles and names of this kind are frequent in the scripture, whereby God differenceth some from others; which hath its rise from God's purpose and decree of election. A 2d ground is taken from the opposition which the scripture maketh betwixt the elect and others who are not elected, which shews clearly that election cannot be understood of all, as if there were a general and conditional election: Hence it is said, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated; the election of the one is laid foreagainst the rejecting of the other; so John x. the Lord says of some, that they are his sheep, and of others, They are not my sheep; and Rom. ix. the apostle speaks of some vessels of mercy which are before prepared for glory, and of some vessels of wrath fitted for destruction; and 2 Tim. ii. 21. some are said to be vessels of honour, some of dishonour; some are ordained to eternal life, Acts xiii. and some are ordained of old to that destruction, as Jude speakseth; some are written in the Lamb's book of life, and some not, Rev. xx. And wherefore is all this spoken? but to let us know that God hath freely and sovereignly in his decree put a difference betwixt some and others, which as it began (to speak so) in God's eternal purpose, so it will continue in the event. Which is a third ground of confirmation; and it will be clear, if we compare God's purpose and decree with the event and effect; for as a thing is in the event and effect, so God intended and purposed in his decree it should be: thus the Lord's final sentence at the day of judgment, is
but the result of his eternal purpose; the book of life, containing the names of all the elect, was written (to speak so) before the elect existed. And as it is said, Acts xv. known unto God are all his works from the beginning, so in a special manner and peculiar way this great work of redemption was, and they that were to be redeemed, particularly known and written down in the book of God's decree of election; hence it is said, Rom. xi. 7. Israel hath r. obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained: and John vi. 37. All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me; and John x. 28. I give my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish. There is, Rom. viii. 30. a concatenation and linking together of things from God's purpose and decree of election, even to eternal glory, which is the result of election: And it being very clear that some are admitted and owned by Christ in the great day, and others not; this is also clear, that there was a differing decree between these, so admitted and owned, before the world was, and others not so owned and admitted; especially considering that this differing at the great day of judgment is drawn from the decree of election, Mat. xxvi. Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world was laid; as if the Lord had said, There was a purpose and design of bringing you to heaven before the world was. A 4th ground is taken from the nature of God's covenant of redemption, which holds clearly forth the truth of this doctrine concerning election in all the steps of it: As, 1. In God's making the offer and gift of fome to the Mediator; it is only fome that he gives, and not all. 2. In Christ's acceptance of the offer and gift: He prays for fome, he sanctifies himself for fome, and for fome he counts, and not for all. 3. There is not a promise in all the covenant of redemption, whether it be of grace or of glory, but it is intended for the elect only, and not for all; " I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never " perish, John x. Thy people shall be willing in the " day of thy power, Psal. cx. 3." Christ's undertaking is for them only, John x. " Other sheep I " have which are not of this fold, them also I must " bring in;" there is a necessity in the bringing in of them and of no others, because he undertook for them and for no others. We the rather take notice of, and insist so much on this, because it will much serve to clear the following doctrine concerning the redemption of the elect; for if there be a differing of them from others by the decree of election, then there must be a differing of them from o-thers, in Christ's laying down of his life for them, and not for any others: election is the key of all; there is such a people, and they are the object of the covenant of redemption, whose good is sought after and agreed upon therein, and not for any other.

Use 1. It serves for the confirmation of a weighty truth, and we would have you not to think little of any piece of truth. We shall not here follow the subtle cavilings of adversaries against this truth, only we would have you confirmed in the faith of it; for, 1. If ye be not clear and established in the faith of this truth, ye will be in great hazard, not only to make muddy, but to obstruct and fop the whole current and tract of grace, so that grace shall be a common thing, heaven and happiness shall go by guesfs, redemption shall be universal, &c. but let this truth be once well established, that God hath a peculiar people for whom the Mediator tranfacted, and these errors fall to the ground and evanfh; for it is the love of election from which all the rest of the benefits that come to the elect flow, and this love is peculiar, therefore there cannot be a common application of it; it is the peculiarity of grace that commends it to the souls of believers, and makes it wonderful to them: That God should have taken notice of them, that were by nature separate from God as well as others; that their case being common, his love should be peculiar, is indeed just and great matter of wonder: hence comes in that song, Rev. v. 9. Thou hast redeemed us to God, by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; not all of every nation, people, tongue and kindred are redeemed, but some out of every one of these. Let this then be taken for a solid truth, that the Lord in his eternal purpose hath made a difference and separation of some from others, which is the great ground of the title that God hath to these some.

2. Clearness in this truth, serves to keep the hearts of God's people in aw of him, to lift him up very high in their esteem, as Sovereign over the creature: and if any should quarrel with God and say, Why did God do? that of the apostle comes well in for an answer, Who art thou, O man, that replieth against God? it is his sovereign pleasure, who is supreme Potter, and hath power over the clay, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour. When the soul doth thus take up God as having all mankind before him as a lump of clay, and choosmg out of it, and writing upon one man and not another, it must needs, in a transport of admiration, say, O what a great and sovereign God: must.
I
never
been
there.
That
happens
when
thousands
of
men
are
rejected,
and
their
names
are
dropped
from
God's
rolls.

But
there
is
a
select
group
of
people,
who
are
chosen
and
accepted
by
God.

This
is
true
for
all
who
believe
in
Christ,
and
are
saved.

In
the
passage
from
Isaiah
33, verse
8,
we
learn
that
God's
people
are
called
by
souls
that
are
gifted
and
privileged.

They
are
not
chosen
because
of
their
merits,
but
because
God
has
called
them.

Sermon
XXXI.

John
x.
4.
His
sheep
follow
him,
and
know
his
voice;
they
accept
of
and
make
welcome
Christ's
call
in
the
gospel,
and
they
that
accept
of
it
are
elected:
for
that
there
is
no
need
of
any
new
revelation
about
the
matter,
neither
needs
their
any
torturing
anxiety
to
know,
how
to
come
by
thy
name
in
the
roll
of
the
elec:
try
it
by
this,
If
thou
hast
given
obedience
to
the
call
of
the
gospel;
if
thou
hast,
in
the
undle
of
thy
need
of
a
Saviour,
 fled
unto
Jesus
Christ,
and
on
his
own
terms
closed
with
him,
by
this
thy
tenure
or
holding
is
sure,
and
by
this
thou
hast
an
evidence
that
thou
art
an
elect;
for
his
sheep
come
unto
him,
and
hast
his
voice:
as
many
of
you
as
soundly
believe
on
him,
and
haveetaken
yourselves
to
him
for
life
and
salvation,
have
the
real
and
written
in
you,
that
your
names
were
in
God's
roll
and
book
before
the
world
was:
but
if
this
be
not,
debate,
dispute
and
question
as
ye
will
about
it,
whatever
may
be
afterwards,
ye
have
no
evidence
for
the
time
of
your
election.
Where
there
is
real
holiness,
or
a
real
order
and
endeavour
to
be
holy
and
more
holy,
it
is
an
evidence
of
election,
and
of
a
person's
being
inrolled
in
the
volume
of
the
book
of
God's
decree;
because
holiness
is
a
fruit
of
election,
as
is
clear,
Eph.
1.
4.
According
as
he
hath
chosen
us
before
the
foundation
of
the
world,
that
we
should
be
holy;
never
a
person
is
really
holy,
but
such
as
God
designed
should
be
holy:
To
this
purpose,
the
apostle
having,
2
Tim.
ii.
21.
spoke
of
election,
The
foundation
of
the
Lord
stands
sure,
having
this
seal,
the
Lord
knows
who
are
his,
and
let
every
one
that
names
the
name
of
Christ
depart
from
iniquity;
but
in
a
great
house
are
not
only
vessels
of
gold,
&c.
he
subjoins,
If
a
man
depart
from
these,
he
shall
be
a
vessel
unto
honour,
sanctified,
&c.
Not
that
election
dependeth
on
man's
holiness,
but
by
his
holiness
he
shall
be
manifested
to
be,
and
accounted
an
elevated
situation,
and
may
warrantably
conclude
himsel
be
such;
so
that
true
holiness
brings
folk
to
be
acquainted
with
the
great
secret
of
election,
and
gives
them
borders
for
the
application
of
it.
There
is
nothing
that
men
readily
desire
more
to
know
than
this,
whether
they
be
elected
or
not;
here
is
a
sure
way
to
come
by
the
knowledge
of
it,
even
to
study
to
believe,
and
to
be
holy,
and
then
we
may
be
confident
that
our
names
were
written
in
the
Lamb's
book
of
life;
but
if
we
fly
in
Christ
and
holiness,
whatever
may
be
in
God's
purpose
about
us,
we
have
for
present
no
ground
to
conclude
our
election
upon,
God
himself
fix
us
in
such
things,
that
have
such
mighty
consequences
depending
on
them.
SERMON XXXII.

Isaith liii. 8. He was taken from prison, and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

The prophet hath been long in describing Christ's sufferings, and hath shown what height they came to, even to prison and to judgment, and to death itself. He was cut off out of the land of the living: Now he calls in a word to shew wherefore all this was, or what was the procuring cause that brought all this suffering and sorrow on Christ, which also was the end that he had before him in it, in these words, For the transgression of my people was he stricken. We shew that by my people here, was not meant all men and women in the world, nay, not all men who are externally called in the visible Church, but his elect only, those whom he hath chosen to be his people, and separated from others by an eternal decree of election; we shew also that these words for the transgression of my people was he stricken, do not contain only a reason of Christ's extreme sufferings, even of his being brought to prison and to judgment before men, but also, and mainly, of his being brought to before God, and of his being cut off: For the sins of God's people are not laid to his charge before men, but before God they are; and so it does imply an influence that the sins of the elect had upon Christ's sufferings, and a respect that his sufferings had to their sins; the elect's sins procured these sufferings to him and his sufferings were undergone by him, for the satisfying of justice for their sins and for the removing of them.

I shall not insist further in the exposition of the words having opened them up the last day, but shall hint at a few doctrines from them; and because they are general and more doctrinal I shall be the shorter in speaking to them: Tho' it may be ye think not so much of them, yet they are not a little for your edification; and if ye were suitably sensible of sin, and of your hazard, there is no doctrine concerning the covenant of redemption, but it would be useful and refreshing to you.

There are several things implied here, concerning the efficacy of the price of Christ's death, and concerning the extent of it, as it is laid down as a price for the sins of the elect, which I shall first passingly touch upon, and then come to these doctrines that are more directly held forth in the words.

1st. Then, it is implied, that there is a people of God separated from others, and chosen by him, on whom he intended and proposed, before the world was, to glorify his grace: The very designation that they get here clears this; it is my people, not only of the Jews, nor my people only of the Gentiles, but my people both of Jews and Gentiles; as Christ says, John x. Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold, them I must bring in.

2dly. It is implied, that this decree of election is antecedent to, and goes before the covenant of redemption in order of nature: It flows not from Christ's death as the effect of it, but is prior to it; for if Christ's death be the mean, or price (as indeed it is) whereby the sins of God's elect people are satisfied for, then the decree of election must precede it. Only we would beware to ascribe to God any priority or posteriority in his decrees in order of time for he is infinite in wisdom and foresight, and able to look on all things with one blink of beholding, and to decree things infinite in number at once, which we cannot conceive of, nor comprehend: But this we say, That, considering the order of things, the decree of election is not a fruit or effect of Christ's death, but prior to it, and Christ's death follows as a mean to make it effectual; he is appointed to save the elect from their sins, and from that which their sins deferred, For the transgression of my people was stricken: They were God's people by election before Christ's engagement to suffer and satisfy for them, much more before his actual suffering; and so their election cannot be a fruit and effect of his suffering.

3dly. It serves to vindicate this truth from an error and mistake of the Arminians, who, as they overthrow the design of grace in the salvation of sinners, in other steps thereof; so do they in this, in making Christ's death to preceed election, and election to follow it; but, as we hinted before, the decree of election is sovereign, being an act of grace absolutely free: The Lord in it having designed some for manifesting the glory of his grace upon them as the end, he hath taken in Christ's death and other middlesthe for the promoting of it.

4thly. It is implied here, that even the elect or God's people are considered as sinful in the covenant of redemption, For the transgression of my people was he stricken; they were considered as sinful as well as others, when they were bargained for. We need not dispute, whether they were considered as sinful in the decree of election, it not being necessary in this place, nor profitable for you; but sure in Christ's undertaking for them they are considered.
Sermon XXXII.

Ye may possibly think it to be but a common doctrine, but alas! ye walk not under the due and deep conviction and sense of it; hence it comes to pass, that so few think themselves in Christ’s common, and that so few make their address to him. Ask the most part, how they think they will win to heaven? They will readily name many things and ways, considered as sinful: For God sent not Christ, neither came he into the world, to purchase life and salvation to righteous folks; but he was sent and came to lay down his life a ransom for many to wit sinners; and therefore it is given as the reason of his name, Matt. i. 21. Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

USE 1. It serves to humble the elect greatly, who, whenever they come to get grace, they get it moat freely; for they were not better by nature than others whom God past by, as is clear, Eph. ii. 1. We were dead in trespasses and sins, and were by nature children of wrath, even as others; Peter and Paul were by nature children of wrath as well as Judas; and David was a child of wrath by nature as well as Saul, when this transfaction concerning the work of redemption was agreed upon, and concluded betwixt these most resplendent Parties.

2. It serves also much for the encouragement of a believer, who is sensible of sin, and afraid of wrath, and in that posture betakes himself to Christ for refuge: tho’ his misbeliefs should make him say, with Peter, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord; yet this consideration may hearten him to draw near, that Christ was stricken for sinners, for the transgressions of his elect people: Yea, if there had not been sin, and if the covenant of works had holden foot, there needed not have been a Saviour; and therefore sinners have here a solid ground to lay hold upon, for life and salvation.

And therefore, as a 3d Use of it, It is an unsafe assertion, beside the curiosity of it, that Antinomian maintain, which is, That tho’ man had never fallen, yet Christ would have become man; for we see here that Christ’s becoming man, and his being stricken, flowed from his being Saviour for elect sinners; and his being Saviour flowed from the covenant of redemption concerning elect sinners: To be wise without, or beside and above what is written in the Scripture, is vanity, pride and folly.

4thly, It is implied here, that sin, wherever it is, deserveth strokes, even the sins of the elect; yea we may add this to it, that not only do the sins of the elect deserve strokes in themselves, being breaches of God’s law, but that there is an actual curse standing against them, till it be removed; and God’s threatening, The day thou eatt thou shalt surely die, infers a necessity of strokes. This we say is clearly implied here, because the Mediator, entering himself Surety for the elects debt, behoved to be sitten; and when he was so sitten, sure sin must deserve much. We speak not of an absolute necessity, but God having revealed to man his duty, and added a threatening, that in the day he should eat he should die, there is a necessity in respect of God’s truth, faithfulness, and unchangeableness, who had spoken the word, that strokes should follow sin; for sin cannot be removed, till the threatening be satisfied.

USE. This may point out to us, that sin is no little nor light thing, neither is the obtaining of pardon an easy business, whatever men generally think of them: There are many sad strokes that follow sin, which will hotly pursue sinners who are not in Christ; O do not then think lightly of sin, which is the fountain of such mischief and wo to the sinner: If ye knew how exceedingly bitter wrath and the curse is that follows sin, ye would as soon put your head in the fire, as ye would meddle with it; if ye believed that word to be true, which is in Exod. xxxiv. He will by no means clear the guilty, and if ye believed God’s faithfulness that is engaged to make good his threatenings, challenges for sin would be more strong and slinging.

5thly, It is implied here, that tho’ the elects sins deserve wrath, and that there must be a satisfaction ere they can be removed, that yet the elect cannot satisfy for themselves: For the transgressions of my people was he stricken; Christ behoved to be stricken, ere their sin could be removed. If the elect could have done their own bunines, they needed not to have been so much in Christ’s common and debt, nor to have given him thanks for this undertaking: But this is brought in to hold forth the condescendancy of his love, that when no other thing could do it, he interposed as Saviour; the abominables of sin was so great, that the Majesty of God, his infinite holiness and his spotless justice being wronged, and the finite creature not being able to make amends for the wrong done, did require this: For all mankind, yea, all the holy Angels, could not satisfy for the wrong done by one man to the infinite God; therefore he says, I am the Saviour, and there is none else: He gives defiance to all favours beside himself, None can redeem his brother’s soul from death, nor give a price sufficient for it, the redemption of it ceaseth for ever among the creatures.

USE. Study then to be suitably sensible of this: Ye may possibly think it to be but a common doctrine, but alas! ye walk not under the due and deep conviction and sense of it; hence it comes to pass, that so few think themselves in Christ’s common, and that so few make their address to him. Ask the most part, how they think they will win to heaven? They will readily name many things and ways,
SERM. XXXII.

*Ifaiah* liii.

ere they light on Christ and faith in him; if they have done a fault, they say they will make amends, or they will pray for pardon, and they think that will do the turn: Such have this language in effect, that either there is no need of satisfaction for sin, or that they can satisfy for themselves.

6thly, It is implied here, that tho' the elect have sinned, and cannot satisfy for themselves, yet it is necessary that a satisfaction be provided for them: I do not say simply, that whoever hath sinned must have a satisfaction made for them; for the Lord hath left legions of angels, and many thousands of reprobate men and women, without hope of a Saviour, or of a satisfaction: But, considering God's purpose to bring many sons to glory, and his decree of election which must needs stand, and that the elect's names are written in the book of life; it is impossible that they can ly still under the curse, but must be satisfied for, and redeemed from it: For the transgression of my people was stricken: My people have sinned, and must be redeemed. On supposition of the decree of election, our Lord undertook that great work; the elect cannot perish, sin cannot draw them utterly away from God: Not only shall no externals, such as devils or men, persecution, tribulation, &c. be able to come betwixt them and life, but not sin itself that is within them; his decree, being peremptory, must stand, as he says, John x. I have other sheep, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring in: God's purpose cannot be frustrated nor altered, therefore of necessity their sins must be satisfied for.

7thly, It is implied here, that for this end, to wit, that the elect might be saved from sin, and that God's decree of election might stand sure, Christ Jesus became Surety, and did undertake to satisfy for their sins; otherways he could not have been liable to be stricken for them, if he had not become Surety for them. That he was for the transgression of God's people stricken, says plainly that he was engaged for them, as it is, Heb. vii. 22. He was made Surety of a better testament; and Psal xl. 7. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: These things being spoken after the manner of and borrowed from the bargainings or transactions that use to be amongst men, we may conceive the businesst thus, (hinted before) There is the Father's refusing of some what, Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; and his proposing of another thing, and that is, that the Mediator would engage for the elect: And upon the other side, there is the Mediator's offer to under-

Verse 8.

take, and his actual undertaking and accepting of the Father's proposal; when sacrifices and offerings, when thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of oil will not do it, Lo, I come, faith he: And then, for a conclusion of the bargain and transaction, there is the Father's accepting of his undertaking, he is content to take his sufferings as the price for the elect's debt; hence, John xvii. he faith, Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, that is, thine they were by election, and thou gavest them me to be redeemed by me, and Heb. x. 10. it is said, that it is by this will that we are sanctified, that is, by the will of the Father, that the Son should be Surety.

*U5e.* Look upon the work of redemption as a great, gracious, and glorious work; about the designing and contriving whereof, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were occupied (to speak so with reverence) before the world was: He might have made worlds of angels, and of finless men and women at a word, and yet he hath graciously condescended to this way for redeeming of the poor elect. We are, alas! sinfully disposed to think little of the salvation and redemption of a soul; but it is a great matter in God's account, the deepest of whose consultation (to say so) is taken up about it, and in the contrivance whereof the manifold wisdom of God conspicuously shineth forth; and as in other things therein, so in this, that there was an ancient undertaking and engaging by Jesus Christ in the room of the elect as their Surety.

8thly, While it is said, For the transgression of my people was he cut off and stricken, it implies, that Christ, in his undertaking for the elect, did oblige himself to undergo all these sufferings, that were due to them, and even the sufferings of a cursed death, which was the curse threatened against man for sin, The day thou eait, thou shalt surely die: And tho' Christ becoming Surety and Cautioner, the Party is altered, yet the price is still continued to be the same, as is clear, Gal. iii. 11. He was made a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come on us Gentiles: whereby the justice of God is vindicate, and he hath access to shew mercy to the elect, without any the least imputation to it. Nay, this way is more for the vindicating of God's justice, and for the making of his faithfulnes to shine, that Christ became Man, and died for the elect, than if the curse had lighted and lain on all the elect themselves, and it is a greater aw-band on sinners against sin; I say again, that thereby the pure and spotless justice of God is more vindicated, and his faithfulnes more demonstrated,
when he will needs so severely, and with so much holy rigour, exact of the Cautioner the elect’s debt to the last farthing, than if they had suffered themselves eternally, it shews forth also both the manifold wisdom and riches of the free grace of God: There being a decree of election, for having of many, and for bringing them to glory; and they being under sin, there is another decree and threatening that goes forth for cursing the sinner: And these two seeming to be altogether irreconcilable, the question comes in on the one hand, How is it possible that a sinner under the curse can be saved? And upon the other hand, How is it possible that an elect of God can be damned? The wisdom of God lootheth the knot: spotless justice is satisfied, by taking hold of, and falling on the Cautioner: Wonderful grace and love vent themselves in pardoning the sinner, and accepting of a ransom for him; and manifold wisdom manifests itself in knitting these two together, so as none of them can want its effect; but all turns to the manifestation of the glory of grace in the up-shot: It cannot be that the elect shall be damned, yet here stands the threatening of a just God, and his curse ready to be executed: but here is the reconciliation; the curse is execute on the Mediator, whereby God shews himself to be a hater of sin, and an avenger of the wrong done to his justice; and the elect sinner is pardoned, whereby God manifests the freedom of his grace, and his wonderful condescending love.

But now we come to a 6th doctrine, which is more directly held forth in these words, and it hath two branches, “That our Lord Jesus his death “ and sufferings is a proportionable price and satisfaction laid down for the sins of the elect, and “ for them only.” This is in the express words of the prophet. If the question be asked, Wherefore suffered Christ all this? He anwers, He suffered it as a price for transgression: If it be asked again, For whom, or for whose transgressions did he suffer? He anwers, Not for all men and women in the world, but for the transgression of my people was he stricken, or the stroke was on him for their transgressions. The first branch of the doctrine is to this purpose, That Christ’s suffering is intended to satisfy for the transgressions of God’s elected people, and with respect to satisfying for their sins did he suffer: And if we take these to be truths that we marked before, as implied in the words, this will natively and necessarily follow; if he engaged to be Cautioner and Surety for the elect’s debt, then his laying down his life must be on the same account, and for the same end: Now, when we speak of Christ’s laying down a price to satisfy for the transgressions of the elect, we mean not only this, that his sufferings and death have a value in themselves to satisfy for their sins, but that they are so intended by him in undergoing of them, and that they are so accepted of God, according to his purpose, and according to the transaction that past betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator: They are not only (as Socinians say) to be a confirmation of the doctrine which he preached, and to be a rule and example to us of patient suffering, and of giving obedience to the death, as he did; but it is also, and mainly, to satisfy the justice of God for our debt: So then this wicked tenet of the Socinians is exceeding derogatory to the sufferings of Christ, and to the matchless love that shined in them, yea, and even to the whole design of redemption: for if Christ’s sufferings be not a satisfaction to justice, we are left without all just plea and apology for ourselves at God’s bar; and if we have none, then that curse looks the wakened sinner full in the face, The day thou eatest thou shalt surely die. And however men in their security may please themselves with such dreams, and think that a satisfaction to justice is not needful, yet if the conscience be once awakened, it will not be quieted without one; and if men’s faith give not credit to God’s threatenings, they can have but little, or rather no comfort at all in his promises: There is therefore a necessity of a satisfaction; and if Christ’s sufferings be not the satisfaction, there is not another, and so the whole work of redemption is overturned. So then, tho’ Christ in his sufferings hath left us a copy how we should suffer, yet that is not the only nor the principal end of them; but it is contrived in the covenant of redemption, and intended by the Mediator, and wilful accepted by Jehovah, that they should be the meritorious cause of pardon to the elect, and the price of their redemption.

This may be further cleared and confirmed, 1. From the phrase that is ordinarily made use of in scripture, He suffered for the sins of his people; and in the text, For the transgression of my people was he stricken: Their sins had a peculiar influence in bringing the stroke on him: And what influence, I pray, could they have, but as they procured the stroke to him? And if his strokes were procured by our sins, then the defect of them was laid on him, and his sufferings behaved to be the curse that we elect sinners should have suffered. So, when he is called their Cautioner, it tells that he undertook their debt; and his laying down of his life is the performance and fulfilling of his undertaking,
taking, suretieship, and cautionry: And considering that their debt was exacted of him, and that he was arraigned before God's tribunal as their Surety in their room, and that this could be for nothing else but to answer for them as being their Cautioner; his sufferings behaved to be intended as a satisfaction for their sins: For the elects sins were not the cause why Pilate, the people of the Jews, and the Scribes and Pharisees purfued him to death, but for our sins he was fitted before God's tribunal, and being our Cautioner he was called to reckon for them, and they were put upon his account or score. 2. It is clear also from the names that his sufferings get in the scripture, where they are called the price of our redemption, a buying of us, a propitiation for our sins that pacified God, Rom. iii. 25. and i John ii. 2. A Sacrifice often, and Ransom, Matt. xx. 28. The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many, that is, for all his elect people, to relieve them from the bondage they were under; which plainly shews the respect that his sufferings had to our sins, that they were a propitiation for them to God. 3. It is clear, if we consider that Chrift's death, as to its object, is for the transgressions of all God's people; of all the elect that lived before he suffered, whether they died in their infancy or at age; and for all that lived or shall live and die after his suffering, to the end of the world. Now, what benefit could redound to them that died ere Chrift came in the flesh by his sufferings, if it were as Socinians say? for his death could not be a pure pattern of patience and obedience to them: But the efficacy of his death was from the beginning of the world: He was full in that sense the Lamb slain, before his incarnation, as well as since: And if it be not meritorious in procuring salvation to elect infants, what influence or advantage can it have as to them; either they are not taken to heaven at all, or they are taken to heaven, and yet not in the least obliged to Chrift for their being brought thither; or if they be obliged to him, it is certainly by virtue of the merit of his sufferings, for expiating the sins of his people. 4. It is clear from this, that in this fame chapter, and throughout the gospel, all the benefits that come to God's people, as namely, justification and pardon of sin, they are attributed to this as the cause of them, as verfe 11. By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many: And if all the spiritual benefits that come to us were procured by his death, there must necessarily be vertue in it that procured them, and it must be a price and satisfaction in reference to the procuring and purchasing thereof, that he laid down

Verse 8. 5. It is clear from the end that God had before him in the work of redemption, and in Chrift's sufferings; which was, to glorify his justice as well as his mercy, and that neither of them might be clouded, or reflected upon: Now, by Chrift's death, God's justice is glorified, and he is seen to be just in executing his threatening against sin, even in the Person of his own dearly beloved Son, when he became Surety for sinners; but if his sufferings had not a satisfaction in them to divine justice, tho' there might be some shew of shewing mercy, yet none at all of a satisfaction to justice: But faith the Apostle. Rom. iii. 25, 26. God hath set him forth to be a propitiation thro' faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, and that he might be just, and the justifier of them which believe in Jesus; By this, God hath made it manifel, that he is a just God, that none may preponerously presume upon mercy, nor dare to bowrd with fin when it is purfued in the Surety with such severity.

For use and application. 1. Do not think these truths to be of little concernment to you, as alas! they, and such like truths of the gospel, are often thought of by many; and therefore they are tasteles to them, and it is a wearines to people to hear them spoken of: And yet, notwithstanding, this fame truth that we are now upon, is a great ground of our faith; for if we believe not this that Chrift was a propitiation for sin, we can have no ground of lippening to him, or believing on him: But, knowing and being confirmed in the faith of this truth, we have (cordially closing with him) ground from it to expect God's favour, and to be freed from the curfe; becaufe Chrift as our Surety, undertook, and accordingly satisfied for us; which is the thing that makes his death to be sweet: That Chrift in his death should demit himself to leave us an example, is much; yet, if we had no more by it, it would be but cold comfort, except we had it as a satisfaction to divine justice to rest upon. Tho' this may be looked upon as doctrinal only, yet it comes nearer to our practice than we are aware of; and tho' we have no Socinians in opinion and profession to deal with, yet we have two sorts that are Socinians in heart among us. 1st. These that securely sin on still, and yet hope to get mercy, and who will confefs that they are sinners, but that, for making an amends, they will pray and mend their life; and they will speak of a number of things, but it may be, not one word of Chrift, or of his purchase, or of their natural inclination to presume, and to flight Chrift, as if they had nothing yet to look to but a covenant of works without a Saviour,
or as it God had removed or would remove the comfort of without a satisfaction, so that Christ's satisfaction is not known nor rested on by the multitude of hypocrites that live in the visible Church; and this is easily proven from this, that there are but very few who make use of him, or stand in awe of him, and that Christ is the only Surety, folk would either quit their hopes of heaven, or be more in Christ's common; and that so many maintain the hope of heaven without a due consideration of a satisfaction to justice by Christ, and without employing of him, it declares plainly, that they are drunken with this error. A 2d sort are these, who being wakened in conscience; and sensible of sin, yet are as heartless, hesitating, and hopeless to get peace thro' him, as if he had not satisfied: What else does the doubting and despondency of such say, but that there is not a compleat satisfaction in Christ's death, and that therefore they dare not trust to it? Otherwise they would wonder that God hath provided such a remedy, and yet adventure to rest upon it, seeing God is as well pleased with it, as if they had not provoked him at all, or had satisfied his justice themselves.

2dly, It serves to let us see what we are in God's

**SERMON XXXIII.**

Isaiah liii. 8. *He was taken from prison, and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was he stricken.*

There is nothing that concerns us more, than to be well acquainted with the doctrine of Christ Jesus, and his sufferings; the prophet hath therefore been much in shewing what Christ suffered in the former words, and hath largely described his humiliation to judgment and death, *For (faith he) he was cut off out of the land of the living.* In the words read he answers two important questions concerning his sufferings, 1st, To what end were all these sufferings? He answers, That they were for transgressions, even to be a satisfaction to justice for them. The 2d question is, *For whose sins were the sufferings of Christ to be a satisfaction?* It is answered expressly in the words, *For the transgression of my people was he stricken,* or the stroke was upon him; it was for the sins of the elect, and of the elect only: For this is the prophet's scope, who, having spoken of Christ's sufferings and death, holds forth the meritorious and procuring cause and end thereof; and this is the result, design and sum of all, even to be a satisfaction for God's elect people: For (as we shew) by God's people are not meant all men in the world, nor the Jews only, for Christ hath many sheep beside them; but it is God's peculiar people, in opposition to the multitude who are not his people.

The doctrine, or rather the branch of the doctrine we left at, was this, (and it is exclusive) "That Christ's death is only intended to be a price for the sins of God's elect people, and was laid down with respect to them: His death and sufferings are to be looked upon, and considered only as a price and satisfaction for their sins, and for the sins of none other." Or thus, "Jesus Christ in his sufferings, and in the laying down of his life, had a respect to the elect, and intended the removing of the sins and transgressions of God's elect people only, and of none other." We know nothing that we can make of these words, nor of the prophet's scope in them, but this; who, as he hath been describing Christ's sufferings in all other respects, so doth he in this, to wit, in respect of the persons common and debt, and how much we are obliged to the Mediator, when there was a necessity, that either he should suffer, or that we should perish; and that tho' his sufferings drew so deep, as to bring him to prison and to judgment, and to put him to a holy sinless anxiety and perplexity, that yet he yielded to it, and underwent all for our sakes: This is our great ground of confidence, and the strong stay of the mind of a wakened believer; and should make us wonder at the Father's love that gave the Son, and at the Son's love that was so condescending; and should make our souls warm towards him, who, when we deferved nothing but to be hurried away to the pit, was content to enter himself as our Surety, and to pay our debt: It should also be a motive to chafe fouls into him, knowing that where sin is, there a satisfaction must be; and that there is therefore a necessity to flee to him, and to be in him, because there is no other way to get justice satisfied; the thorough conviction whereof is that which thro' grace not only chaseth the soul to, but engageth it to close with Christ, and to rest upon him, and to give him the credit of its through-bearing, when it is ready otherwise to sink. Now the Lord himself teach you to make this use of this doctrine.
persons for whom he suffered, and of the meritorious cause and end of his sufferings; for says the text, For the transgression of my people, that is, of God’s elect people, was he stricken.

This branch of the doctrine is of great weight and concernment in the whole strain of grace; for if this marchstone be lifted, and removed, grace becomes common, and as some call it, universal, and so to be in effect no grace at all; for grace hath a peculiar channel of its own, wherein it runs toward a certain select number, and not towards all; I do not mean of grace taken in a large sense, for so all men, as they are partakers of any mercy, or of common favours, may be said to have grace extended to them; But I mean God’s special grace, favour and good-will, which is extended only to the elect, for whose sins Christ suffered: The right bounding of which doctrine shews forth both God’s sovereignty, in the dispensing of grace, and the freeness thereof in communicating and manifesting of it to whom he will; and which, thus considered, is especially engaging to the hearts of them on whom he pleaseth to manifest it.

Ere I come to confirm this branch of the doctrine, take a word or two of advertisement in the entry. 1st, That Christ’s death may be considered two ways. (1.) In respect of itself, and as abstracting from the covenant of redemption, wherein in it is contrived as to all the circumstances of it; in which sense, as his death and sufferings are of infinite value and worth, so they are (as divines use to speak) of value to redeem the whole world, if God in his design and decree had so ordered, and thought meet to extend it. (2.) We are to consider his sufferings and death, as a price agreed upon in the covenant and bargain of redemption; wherein these two or three things concur. 1. God’s proposal. 2. Christ’s acceptance, and design in laying down his life. 3. The Father’s acquiefcing therein, and declaring himself well pleased therewith. We speak not here of Christ’s death in the first respect, that is as abstracting from the covenant; for, in that respect, he might have laid down his life for few or more, for some, or for all, if it had been so intended: But we speak of it in the second respect, as it is a price agreed upon in God’s purpose, and Christ’s design, and in God’s acceptance; and thus we say, that his death is only intended as a satisfaction and recompence for the sins of the elect, and was laid down for them only.

2dly, We may consider Christ’s sufferings and death in the fruits of it, either as they respect common favours, and mercies, common gifts, and means of grace, which are not peculiar and saving, but common to believers with others, being bestowed upon professors in the visible church; or as they are peculiar and saving, such as faith, justification, adoption, &c. Now when we say, that Christ’s sufferings and death are a price for the sins of his people, we exclude not the reprobate simply from temporal and common favours and mercies that come by his death; they may have, and actually have, common gifts and works of the Spirit, the means of grace, which are someway effects and fruits of the same covenant; But we say, that the reprobate partake not of saving mercy, and that Christ’s death is a satisfaction only for the elect, and that none others get pardon of sin, faith, repentance, &c. by it, but they only; it was intended for none others. And this we clear and confirm from, and by, these following grounds and arguments, which we will shortly hint at.

The 1st argument is drawn from this same assertion of the prophet thus, If Christ’s death be only a satisfaction for the sins of God’s people, then it is not a satisfaction for the sins of all; but it is a satisfaction only for the sins of God’s people, therefore not for all; for his people are not all men, or all men are not his people, but his people are peculiar people, separate from others, in God’s purpose and decree, as we cleared before from John xvii. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and the text says expressly, For the transgression of my people was he stricken: He respected the sins of God’s people, in accepting of the bargain, and in laying down his life, and for their sins only God accepted him; yea, the very mentioning of them thus here, excludes all others; and we must expone them exclusively as taking in none others, and must look upon the things spoken of them, as agreeing to no other; even as it is said, Heb. iv. There remains therefore a rest to the people of God, which is certainly exclusive of all others: And hence, when our Lord speaks of them, John xviii. he oppofeth them to, and contradictinguitheth them from all others; I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me out of the world; to let us know, that the things prayed for to the one, are denied to the other, according to the strain of the covenant.

A 2d ground is drawn from the strain and frame of the covenant of redemption, where we find two things clear, (1.) That as to the end and convey of it, the elect are the only persons for whose good and behoof it is intended; and if it be the elect for whom he entered in that covenant, then the advan-
tage, good and benefit of the elect, must be eyed in this main article of the covenant which relates to Christ's death and sufferings: For, 1. In the covenant of redemption, the good of the elect is proposed and designed by the Father; as is clear, John vi. 39, 40. "This is the Father's will that sent me, that of all of which he hath given me, I should lose nothing; and this is the Father's will that sent me, that every one which feeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life." Which will be the more clear, if we consider the time when this is spoken; it is at such a time, when many will not come to him, and believe on him, as ver. 36, 37. "Ye also have seen me, and believe not: All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me, and him that cometh, 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 then follows "This is the will of him that sent me, &c. and ver. 43, 44. "Murmur not (faith he) among yourselves; no man can come to me, except the Father that sent me, draw him." This ye heard of from John xvii. 2. at greater length. 2. Look on the Son's side of the covenant, and it will also be clear; for his undertaking must be according to the Father's proposing: If the Father did not propose all, but some only to be redeemed, then his undertaking must be for those some, and not for all, conform to the Father's propofal, Psal. xi. Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God: Now, the Father's will is, that he should undertake for these given him; and it is not his will, that he should undertake for others, therefore he did not undertake for them. 3. Christ's sufferings and death are the executions of the Father's will, and therefore must be the execution of his undertaking, according to his engagement for the elect, and given ones; therefore these two are put together, John xvii. 9. and 19. "I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, and for their sakes I sanctify myself," that is, for their sakes whom thou had given me, and not for the world; he sanctifies himself for them, for whom he prays, for them that are given him, and no more.

(2.) This is clear in the covenant, that Christ's death is intended therein, as all other mercies covenanted are; that is to say, to whom faith, effectual calling, justification, &c. are covenanted, for these is Christ's death covenanted, and for none others; for the covenant being mutual, the reprobation on the Father's part must be of equal extent with the Son's stipulation: But all these are only peculiarly applicable to the elect, as benefits flowing from, and following upon Christ's death, which therefore must be peculiarly intended for them, as being undergone for them; hence, when Christ speaks of faith, and effectual calling, John vi. he says, All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me, and none other will, or can come; so justification, pardon of sin, &c. are brought to the elect, and to none others: and when the smallest of blessings are covenanted, and articulated for none other, but for the elect, shall Jesus Christ himself, that gift of God, or his death, which is the chief thing articulated in the covenant, be covenanted for, or applied to any others but to them?

A 3d ground is drawn from Christ's executing of his offices; for this piece or part of Christ's executing of his offices, must correspond, and be of equal extent with all the other parts, and pieces of his offices, such as his effectual teaching, interceding, subduing to himself, &c. which are no broader than the elect, for he executes no part of any of his offices for the behoof and benefit of any but of the elect; he favouring enlightens no others; he subdues none others to the faith of the gospel; he intercedes for none other; his intercession is not for the world; therefore his death must be for none others, all these being commensurable and of equal extent; his intercession being grounded on his sufferings: Therefore, John xvii. he lays by the world expressly, as these for whom he will not pray, and looks back to the covenant, as the ground of his undertaking for the elect, given him out of the world, and not for others; and if he will not pray nor intercede for others, what reason can be given for his dying for others? when he will not do the less, which is to pray for them, it were absurd to think or say, that he will do the greater, which is to lay down his life for them.

A 4th ground is this, Christ's death is one of the peculiar evidences of his dearest love, beyond which there is none greater, and a main proof and fruit thereof, and therefore is not common to all, but is intended for them only, whom he peculiarly loves, and designes to bring through to glory; which is clear, Eph. v. 26. Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved his Church, and gave himself for it, &c. Rom. v. 5. God commends his love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; John xv. 13. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends; there is a world of reprobates whom Christ never loved with peculiar love, and sure for these he did
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not die: Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated, faith the Lord, Rom. ix. 13, which the apostle holdeth forth, as a sort of copy of God's dealing in reprobation and election in reference to all mankind; and where the Lord himself hath fet bounds betwixt them whom he loves and hates, it is too great liberality, or rather too great presumption for any, under whatever specious pretences, to extend this his peculiar love to those whom he disclaims.

A 5th ground is taken from the effect, thus; All for whom Christ died are justified, and freed from the guilt of their sins in due time: but Christ Jesus hath not purchased and actually procured freedom to all men from their sins, all men are not justified; therefore he laid not down his life for all: For, 1. It cannot be said, that he laid down his life for purchasing and buying of such wares, and yet that he got not that which he bought; and seeing the event tells plainly, that all are not justified and brought to heaven, it cannot be that he laid down his life a ransom for all, but it must be for the elect only, that he died. 2. To say, that God exacts double payment of one and the self fame debt, that he exacts from men over again that which Christ paid already for them, reflects on the justice and wisdom of God: And to say, that person that goes to hell shall be no less in his common than others that go to heaven, is no less absurd; for the apostle says, Rom. v. 10. If while 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: where he plainly ininuates, that if a person be bought by Christ's death, it cannot be that he can perish; for if the price be paid by his death, and so the greater thing be done, much more will the leffer, we shall be saved by his life. Now this reasoning could have no force, if Christ died for any that shall perish; yea, ver. 11. of this chapter, it is said, By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities; where it is clear, that as many (and no more) whose iniquities Christ hath taken on and born, shall be justified; for the one is given as a reason of the other: and there should be no consequents to his justifying of them, from his bearing of their iniquities, if he could by his death bear their iniquities, whom he never justified.

A 6th ground is taken from the end of the covenant, which is to put a difference betwixt special grace peculiar to some, and severe justice to others, and particularly and specially in Christ's death, which makes out what we affirm: For if, when Christ died, many were actually damned, it cannot be said that he died for these, nor that it was with them, as with believers before his death; for it cannot be said, that the intention of his death in the covenant, could be beyond what it was at his death, the one being the execution of the other: and sure it could not be intended at his death for the damned; for it would seem a very absurd thing to say, that when Christ was to go and lay down his life, that he was going to suffer for many, that were suffering for their own sins in hell, as many reprobate sinners were before he came in the flesh; can any imagine a possibility of such a thing? Our Lord was not to be so indifferent in the administration of grace, as to cast it thus away; and can any reasonably think, that at one and the same time, the same punishment shall be exacted from Christ, and from the persons themselves, for whom he suffered? Is it possible that this could be intended in the covenant of redemption? Or is there free access to justice to pursue Christ as cauioner, when the principal debtor is actually seized upon? indeed, when the principal is set free, as the elect were, before his death, there is access to pursue the cauioner for their debt: but no such thing can be alleged for others that were already damned; but their being taken hold of by justice, is a proof that he answered not for them, nor paid their debt.

7thly, We may argue thus, If Christ died for all, then either for all indifferently, and so all were alike obliged to Christ; or for some more absolutely that must be satisfied for, and for others conditionally, on supposition that they should believe: but this last is absurd; for, (1.) The scripture makes not two considerations of Christ's death. (2.) It were absurd to say, that now it cannot be told, whether Christ died for such an one or not. (3.) Either that condition is bought to them or not: If it be bought, then it must be fulfilled; if it be not bought, then, 1. That person cannot be said to be bought, because all needful for his redemption is not bought and paid for. 2. Either that convenience can be fulfilled by themselves or not: If it may be by themselves, then is free will established, and none are absolutely redeemed: If it cannot be fulfilled by themselves, and yet bought by him for them, they are determined for another end, to wit, not to get it; and what wisdom can there be in such a redemption as this?

The 1st verse serves for clearing and confirming of a gospel-truth of the covenant of redemption, and for the refutation of a contrary error. As we have somewhat of many errors practically in our hearts, so have we this among the rest, that Christ died
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Serm. XXXIII.

When a mercy is judged to be common, who will praise it, as he would do, if it were special and peculiar? That which is a great ground of thankfulness for election, effectual calling, justification, 
&c. is because these mercies are peculiar; even so, that which makes the redeemed thankful for redemption, is because they are redeemed and bought when others are left: Hence is that song of the redeemed company, Rev. v. 9. Thou art worthy to open the book; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation. It heightens not their praise, that all of every kindred, and tongue, and nation were redeemed; but this doth it, that when the Lord had the whole world before him, he was graciously pleased to purchase, and redeem them out of it, that, as it is, John xi. 52. He should gather together in one the children of God, that were scattered abroad: They therefore, I say, bless him, and wonder when they consider, that they are pitched on, who are by nature the same with these that are past by. It were a strange thing to affirm, that they who are in hell have as great ground of praise, and of saying, We thank thee, for thou hast redeemed us by thy blood, as these that are in heaven have. 4. This making of grace so wide and large in its extent, as to take in all, doth leave the people of God altogether comfortless. But it may be here said, How is it that it is more comfort to believers, that grace is peculiar in saving, and that but few are redeemed, in comparison of others that are not redeemed, than if we should extend it unto, and account it to be for all? Or how is this more comfortless to them, that grace is made univeral? Answer, (1.) Because, if it were univeral, many, whom Christ died for, are now in hell; and what consolation can there be from that? A man may be redeemed, and yet perish, and go to hell, for all that? but it is strong consolation, when this comes in, If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. If he died for us when we were enemies, will he not much more save us, being friends? (2.) Suppose a person to be in black nature, what comfort could he have by looking on redemption as universal? he could not expect heaven by it; for many expect heaven on that ground, who will never get it: But it is a sort of consolation, even to them that are without, to consider that redemption is peculiar to some; for tho' all get not heaven, yet they that believe get it, and so upon their closing with Christ, the consolation presently flows out unto them; where
as, if they should lay it for a ground that Christ's death were universal, they could never have solid ground of consolation by fleeing to him. 5. This error doth quite overturn and enervate the whole covenant of redemption and peculiar love. (1.) It enervates and obfuscates the wisdom that shines in it, if Christ may buy and purchase many by his death, who shall yet notwithstanding perish. (2.) It enervates and obfuscates the love and grace that shine in it; for it makes Christ to cast away the love and grace of it to reprobates, and so cast pearls to swine. (3.) It obfuscates the freedom of it, which appears in its taking of one, and refusing another, as it is, Rom. ix. 11, 12. The children not being yet born, and having done neither good nor 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, and Esau have I hated. (4.) It obscures the justice of it, if he should buy all, and yet get but some: For it being the design of God to inculc on Christ the curse that was due to sinners, and to spare them; if this should be the result of it, that many, for whom he died, and took on him the curse, should perish, he should get but some of these whom he bought, and justice should twice exact satisfaction for one and the same debt; once of the Surety, and again of the principal debtor that perilled. Whereas, when Christ becomes surety, they are set free for whom he was surety; and it is justice that it should be so. We do the rather infilt in the consideration of this error, because this is a time wherein it is one of the devil's great designs, which he drives, to trouble the clear springs of the gospel, and to revive this error amongst the reft; and there is something of it in these poor fool bodies, who speak so much of a light within, as if all were alike, and had something, which, if they werc well, they may get life by: This error always leaves men to be masters and carvers of of God's decree, and of Christ's purpose and design in the work of redemption, and suspends the benefit of his death, mainly, if not only, on the consent of mans free-will.

A 2d branch of this error, which this doctrine refutes, is that which is vented by some, who are not professed enemies, but in other things are deferue well of the church of Christ, which therefore should be our grief to mention; and it is this, That tho' Christ hath not simply purchased redemption from sin to all men, that yet he hath taken away from all the sins of that first covenant of works, as if there were (as they say) no sin for which men are now condemned, but the sin of infidelity, or unbelief. But this is dangerous; for, 1. If this be true, that Christ's death is only a price for the sins of the elect, then there are no sins of others reckoned on this score. 2. It halveth Christ's purchase, and hardly will we find Christ's death divided, which were to say, that he hath bought a man in part or half from wrath, and not wholly: Such a dividing of Christ, and halving of his death, seems not consistent with the strain of the gospel; for as there is one sacrifice, so there is one account on which it is offered. 3. It seems to infer a good and safe condition to all them that die without finning against the gospel, and so to infants born out of the church, that never sinned against the covenant of grace: and it pleads much for them, that never heard the gospel, yet possibly for all, if they be not obliged to believe the gospel, as it is hard to say they are, who never heard of it. 4. There are many in hell this day, who know and feel this to be an untruth, being condemned for sins against the covenant of works; therefore he undertook not their debt, nor paid for them: And, when the books should be cast open, there will be many other sins found to reckoned for, than sins against the gospel. Are not whoresmongers, adulterers, murderers, thieves, &c. to reckon for these sins? It is very sad that such things should take place with men otherwise useful, but as in other things, so in this hurtful; which we should not speak of, were it not that they are spread abroad in books wherewith many may be leavened.

A 3d branch of the error, which this doctrine refutes, is, That Christ died conditionally for all hearers of the gospel, to whom he is conditionally offered; and this is also vented by the same authors, who say, That tho' he hath not bought all men absolutely, nor died to procure life absolutely to them, yet that he did so conditionally, and upon supposition that they should afterwards believe on him: But there can be no conditional satisfaction intended here; for, 1. If respect be had only to the sins of the elect in Christ's undertaking, then none is had to the sins of all. 2. If the Father's acceptation of the price be absolute, then there is no conditional buying. 3. If it be conditional, then he suspended the effect of his death, the satisfaction for his soul-travel, on man's will: And if this condition could not be fulfilled by man, then it is an unwise bargain, and nothing of it may fall to be fulfilled; and then believing is no fruit of grace. Again, he hath either bought faith to them, as he hath done to the elect, or not: if he hath, then they reject it, and so grace is not efficacious: if not, he hath bought the end without
without the middle leading to it. Or thus, If it be conditional, it is either on a condition that they can fulfill, or on a condition that they cannot fulfill; if it be on a condition that they can fulfill, then it hangs grace on men's free-will, and suspends the decree of election on their receiving of Christ; if it be a condition that is in their power to fulfill, then either Christ hath bought that condition to them, or not: To say that he hath not bought the condition of faith, it will infer a strange assertion, that he hath bought life, and not the condition, the end, and not the mids; and if it be said that he hath bought it, it cannot be said that he hath done it so absolutely, because they never get it; or, if absolutely, then to the elect only, in whom it must be, and in due time fulfilled: And so in effect it resolves in this, that Christ's purchase is to be bounded and confined (to say so) to the elect only.

There are some difficulties and objections that will readily here be removed, which we will not enter upon, only for preventing of mistakes: It stands in the way of some to hinder their believing, as they suppose, that Christ hath died for some, and not for all; and they know not if they be of that small number. If we were to speak to such, we would say, 1. God hath not elected all, and so who knows if he hath elected them? And he will not save all, and who knows if he will save them? And so the doubt will flick still, if folks will thus break in upon God's secret will and purpose, which belongs not to them. 2. Christ's death for you is not the formal ground nor warrant of your faith, nor yet of the offer of the gospel, but the Lord's will warranting you to believe, and calling for it from you, and his commanding you to rest upon Christ for the attaining of righteousness, as he is offered to us in the gospel: We are invited by his command and promise, and we are not first called to believe that Christ died for us, but we are called first to believe in him that is offered to us in the gospel, that is our duty; and folks are not condemned, because Christ died not for them, but because, when he offered the benefit of his death and sufferings to them, they flighted and rejected it: We are to look first to what Christ calleth to, and not to meddle with the other, to wit, whom Christ minded in his death, till we have done the first. The word bids all believe, that they may be saved; and such as neglect this command, shall be partakers of his death; and from this ye should reason, and not from his intention in dying: If ye come not to him, ye cannot have ground to think that he died for you; but if you go to him by faith, ye may expect that he will pray for you, and own you for believers. Christ calls in that word, John xvii. They have believed thy word; as well as that other, Thine they were, and thou gavest them me: And if we put these two together, the one will be found as sure a ground of consolation as the other; but it were but a poor comfort to say, that Christ died for all, and yet that they may all, or most, or many of them, perish for all that.

The 2d Use lerves to stir them up to thankful-ness for whom Christ hath satisfied, and who are fled for refuge to him: If there be any here to whom Christ hath manifested such love, that they can say he hath loved me, and given himself for me; O how are ye obliged to wonder and bless him! greater love than this cannot be; and it should warm your hearts with love to him the more, when ye reflect on God's design upon you in particular in the covenant of redemption.

Ufe 3d, If Christ intended his death and sufferings only for behalf of the elect; Then, as because few come to heaven, all should be the more diligent; so, because Christ died not for all, every one should aim, in God's own way, to have it made sure to himself that Christ died for him, and should be the more watchful and diligent to make his calling and election sure; because, as it is not all that are elected, so it is not all that are purchased by Christ's death. Redemption is sure in itself, and free grace appears conspicuously in it; yea wisdom and sovereignty do also appear in this, that it is not of all: therefore study ye to make it sure, by fleeking to Christ by faith, and by the study of holiness and mortification, in his strength, and through the power of his death, which will be a proof of your interest in it: This were much more suitable, than to be quarrelling with God's decrees, as some are brought in, Rom. ix. 19. Why doth he find fault? Who hath reiled his will? To whom the apostle answer, Who art thou that repliest against God? It becomes you not to dispute with God, but to seek with more solicitude, and with holy and humble carefulness to make the matter sure to yourselves: We may well raise storms by our disputes, but shall come to no peace by them: this can only be come at, by fleeking to the hope set before us.
Very passage of our Lord's way in prosecuting the work of redemption hath somewhat wonderful in it: We heard of several of them, especially in his humiliation, how very low the blessed Cautioner condescended to come for relief of the captivity; how he was put to wrestle and fight, and what great strengths or strong holds he was put as it were to take in: There is one strong hold (to speak so) not spoken of as yet, which must also be mentioned, and the fortifications of it pulled down by the Mediator, and that is the grave. The prophet tells us, that as he declined not death, so neither did he decline the grave; but as he was cut off out of the land of the living, as a wicked man in the account of men, so in the account of men he was taken down from the cross with the thieves, and buried in the grave as one of them.

I shall not trouble you with diversity of interpretations, but shall only hint at two things, for your better understanding of the words, in which the difficulty lieth: the first is this, Whether doth this relate to his humiliation only, or to his exaltation, or to both? for it cannot be reasonably thought, but his being buried with the wicked, is a piece of his humiliation; to make it only an evidence of his humiliation, seems not to stand with the next part of the words, because he had done no violence, &c. which is a causal reason of that which goeth before: But we answer, That there may be here a respect unto both; the first words respect his humiliation, comparing them with the truth of the history, as it is set down, Matt. chap. xxvii. where it is clear that he was delinquent in the account of men, and by their appointment, to be buried with wicked men; for they thought no more of him than if he had been a wicked man. The next words, And with the rich in his death, look to his exaltation, and the meaning of them is, That however he was in the account of men buried with thieves, and laid in the grave as a malefactor or wicked man; yet in God's account, and by his appointment and overruling providence, it was otherwise; for he put a difference between him and others, and gave him a honourable burial with the rich: tho' he was designed by men to be buried with thieves, yet, as we have it, Mat. xxvii. 57. Joseph of Arimathaea went to Pilate, and begged his body, and wrapped it in clean linen and laid it in a new tomb; which in God's providence was so ordered, both to shew a difference betwixt him and those thieves, and also to declare that he was innocent, as the reason subjoined tells, Because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth; and to make way for the clearing of his resurrection, he being buried in such a remarkable place, where never man had been buried before.

So then the sum of the words is this, He was humbled in coming to the grave, and in men's account and destination was buried as a wicked man; yet by God's decree and providence it was so ordered, that tho' he was poor all his days, he had a honourable burial, such as rich men use to have, because he had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his mouth: God will not have it going as men designed, but will have him honourably buried and laid in the grave, that thereby there might be the greater evidence of his innocency, and a more full clearing and confirmation of the truth of his resurrection.

What is rendred death here in our translation, is deaths in the plural number in the Hebrew; to shew the greatness and terribleness of the death which he underwent, and the fore spiritual as well as bodily exercise that he was put unto, at, and in his death; so that it was a complication of many deaths in one, and at once, which he suffered. 2. Where it is said in our translation, that He made his grave; in the original it is, He gave his grave with the wicked: So that by the pronoun He, may be meant, either of the Father his giving, or it may be understood of the Mediator himself his giving; and so the meaning is, That it came not to pass by guess on God's side, but was by him well ordered; and upon the Mediator's side it sets out his willingnes to go to the grave, and his having an overruling hand, as God, in his own death and burial; as he saith, John x. 18. No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself: His death and burial were determined and well ordered, as to all the circumstances of both, by a divine decree, and by an overruling hand of providence; and this agrees well with the reason subjoined, because he willingly condescended to die; God put a difference betwixt him and others, as is clear in that of John x. 17. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life for my sheep. The verse hath two parts, (1.) Something foretold concerning the Messiah, and that is, That he shall make or give his grave...
grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death. (2.) There is a reason subjoined, especially to the last part, taken from his innocency, and from the difference that was in his life betwixt him and all men in the world, that therefore God put a difference betwixt him and them in his death and burial.

First then, This point of doctrine is implied here, "That coming to the grave is a thing common and certain to all men." I mean, that death, or a state of death, and to be in the grave, in an ordinary way, is common to all men; and whoever wants the privilege of burial, their condition in that respect is rather worse than better. It is suppose here, that wicked men come to the grave, therefore our Lord is said to make his grave with them; and it is also supposed, that rich men come to the grave, therefore it is said, and with the rich in his death: That which Solomon hath, Eccl. viii. 8. of death, may well be applied to the grave; There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain it, neither hath he power in the day of death; and there is no discharge in that war, neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it: The most powerful wicked man cannot prevail over it, nor is he able to repit and withstand it; these who conquer most of the world, are contrained at length to be content with some few feet of ground, and their bodies turned into dust. Job, in the 3d chapter of his book, speaks of it as common to all, to rich and poor, to high and low, to the king and to the beggar, all are there in one category: If any were freed from it, it would readily be rich men; but, as it is, Psal. cxix. 6, 7, their riches will not be a ransom for them: They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; so precious is the soul, that the redemption of it ceases for ever: Amongst all mortals, there is none that can buy himself from coming to the church-yard, or from coming to the grave; but were he never so rich and honourable, he must be laid in a hole, as well as the poor man; the bravest and best-gilded tomb is but a grave: That sentence past by God must stand and will stand, Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return; the translation of Enoch and Elias, who did not see death, doth not alter the common rule, tho' it shews the sovereignty and power of God, what he can do.

Use 1. O think more on death and on the grave! These sure would be much more profitable subjects of thoughts than many things which our thoughts run ordinarily on: It is appointed for men once to die, and thereafter cometh the judgment. As we walk over and tread on the graves of others now, so some will be walking over and treading on ours ere long; and within a few years our bodies will be turned into dust, and our dust will not be known from the dust of others that lived before us: It were good to have the faith of this more rooted, and that we did meditate more frequently and seriously on it.

Use 2. It reproves the pride of men and women, and their lustling after earthly vanities: When death and the grave come, where will all their brave houses, and clothes, and well dreft beds be? and what will become of your silver and gold? These things will not go to the grave with you: As ye brought nothing into the world, so it is certain that ye shall carry nothing out of it; the consideration whereof would be a restraint and aw-band to mens exorbitant desires. The time is coming, when six or seven foot in length, and two or three foot in breadth, of ground, will serve the richest and most honourable; and within a few years the lord pro- vost's dust will not be known from the dust of the poor body that got share of the common contribution; the dust of both will be alike: Drefts and panter the body as ye will, that beauty will not abide with you; wherefore then serves all this pride, vanity and bravity, seeing a very little while's time will lay it all in the dust, and when all your projects will take an end? as Job faith, Chap. xvii. My purposes are broken; and what did break them off? The grave (faith he) is waiting for me; I have said to corruption, to the rottenness of the earth, Thou art my mother; and to the worms, Ye are my brothers and sisters: They and I must ly together. These that now cannot get their beds made fine and soft enough, the worms and they will lay together ere long in the grave; the cheft or cof-fin will not be so close but they will win in, nay, they will breed in their own bodies: Do we not see this daily? Were it not then good, that, when ye are going to the burials and graves of others, ye were thinking on your own lying down in the grave? and what will be your thoughts, in that day, of all things in this world? if dead corpes could speak out of the graves, they would preach sharp warnings to them that are alive, and would say to such as are carrying them thither, Beware of putting off thoughts of death, and of the grave. Tho' this be a common point of truth, yet few walk suitably to it; but we are generally in our practice, as if it were not a truth, no more minding death and the grave, than...
2dly, Observe, "That the Messiah behoved to "come to the grave and be buried." It was so de- signed, foretold, and fore-prophesied of; He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death. Hence the Apostle, Acts ii. 30. citing Psal. xvi. 8, gathers, that as there was a necessity of his being in the grave, so there was a necessity of his resurrection out of it, because he should not see corrup- tion in it; His soul was not left in hell, or in the grave, neither did his flesh see corruption: And in all the evangelists it is clear, that after death he was remarkably laid in the grave, and very parti- cular and special notice is taken of it. Take here shortly some few reasons of this necessity according to the Lord's appointment, and no further: The 1st whereof is this, That the unaintedefns and purity of divine justice may appear; and that there- fore the compleatness and perfection of his satisfac- tion, as Mediator, to the justice of God, may be confirmed: If he had not been buried, it might have been questioned, whether that which folk suffer after death be a reality or not; but his three days lying in the grave, is a greater evidence of the unaintednes and purity of justice, and of its impor- tunity, than the imprisoning of many creatures for many thousands of years would have been: This shews him to be a just God, when Sinners Cautioner is not only pursued to death, but to the grave; and therefore this is always accounted the lowest part or step of his sufferings. And in the Creed, his descending into hell, is spoken of, which in our excellent Catechism is expounded to be his continuing under the power of death for a time. 2. It is much for the manifestation of the great love of God, and of the rich condescending grace of the Mediator, who is not only content to die, but to be laid in the grave, and to suffer death to have a kind of domination over him for a time; so that, as death had power to separate his soul from his body, so it prorogates that power during his being in the grave: His enemies, as it were, cry, Take him up now; and they seal the stone, and set a watch to keep him in the grave. 3. It is for the con-
most fearful thing, Heb. x. 31. 3. It shews the believer's obligation to God, that so fully provided a satisfaction for him, and hath furnished him with such a ground of consolation; before what is done for the satisfying of justice, (which is the great consolation) there is here ground of consolation against all croffes, pain, fickness, death and the grave; there is not a step in the way to heaven, but our Lord hath gone it before us: We have not only a Mediator that died, but that was buried; and O but this is much, when believers come to think on their going to the grave! Will it devour them, or feed upon them for ever? No, he hath muzzled it, to fay fo; they reft in their graves as in a bed, their bodies being united to him, and their dust must be counted for: It is true, the bodies of the reprobate must be raised up, yet upon another account, and not by virtue of their union with Christ, and of Christ's victory over death in their stead, as believers are. In a word they have many advantages that have Christ, and they have a miserable life a comfortless death, and a hard lying in the grave, that want him: Therefore, as the short cut to have a happy life, and a comfortable death and burial, and the grave sanctified to you, seek to have your interest in Christ made sure; then all things are yours, and particularly death and the grave, which will be as a box to keep the particles of your dust, till it restore them faithfully to Christ, to whom it must give an account. But as for you that flight and milken Christ, ye have a dreadful lot of it, no interest in Christ living, no union with him in the grave, nor at the resurrection; and if ye did but seriously consider that ye will die, ye would also consider that it is good dying and being in the grave with Christ, and that it is a woful thing to be, and to be in it, without him.

3dly, Observe, "That all the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the least particular circum-
stance of them, were ordered of God, and be-
fore hand determined and concluded upon;" none of them came by griefs upon him: That he should suffer and die, and what sort of death he should die, and that he should be laid in the grave, all was before concluded and determined. When we read thro' the gospel, it were good to take a look of the Old Testament prophecies of the covenant of re-
demption, and of the antient determinations con-
cerning him, as Peter doth, Acts ii. 27. Him, be-
ing delivered by the determinate counsel of God, ye 
have with wicked hands crucified: God's fore-
knowledge and determination fixed the bounds, and laid down the rule (to speak so) to these wicked hands in the crucifying of him, without all tinc-
ture or touch of culpable accession to their sin: And, in looking over his sufferings, we would call to mind, that this and this was the Lord's purpose, and that in these sufferings, and in every part and piece of them, the Mediator is telling down the price that he undertook to pay; all which demon-
strates the verity of our Lord's being the true Messiah.

4thly, From comparing the two parts of the first part of the verse together, He made his grave with the wicked, as to the estimation of men, and with the rich in his death, in respect of God's ordering it, Observe, "That often God hath one design, and men another; and that God will have his design to stand, and infructually to take effect:" When none would design shame to his people, he will have them honoured.

The 1st Use serves to comfort God's people, when they are in their lowest condition, and when their enemies are in highest power; our Lord is driving on his design, and making his and their en-
emies to fulfil it: Pilate and the chief Priests, with the Scribes and Pharifes, are putting Christ to death; the multitude are crying, Crucify him, and preferring a robler to him: But, in all this, they were fulfilling what God had before determined to be done; which we say is matter of great consolation, both as to our own particular case, and as to God's general guiding of the world, and especially of his Church therein: There is nothing, wherein the malice of men seems to be most prevalent, but our Lord is still gaining his point upon, and by them; they are all the while executing God's determinati-
on, tho' to their own ruin.

2. See here an exact corepondency betwixt all the circumstances of our Lord's sufferings, and God's determination, and a concurrence of all of them for the promoting of it, in the history of the gospel; A bone of him is not broken. When the bones of the two thieves crucified with him are broken, a spear is run at him, and his side is pierced, when they are not pierced; and all this, because it was prophesied of him, that A bone of him shall not be broken, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced; and when it comes to his burial, Pilate wots not what he is doing, when yet he is fulfilling the Lord's design, in giving his body to a rich man Joseph of Arimathea, when he asked it from him to be buried by him, whereby the pro-
phesy in the text is fulfilled; the wickedness of some, the contingent actions of others, and the igno-
nace of many, concur all together, to make
And therefore, 3. Let us lay our faith here, that our Lord is still working in all these confusions: And when matters are turned up-side-down to human appearance, our blessed Lord is not non-plussed and at a stand when we are; he knows well what he is doing, and will make all things most certainly, infallibly, and infallibly to work for his own glory, and for the good of his people.

From its being said, that, he gave his grace with the wicked, as holding forth Christ's willingness to be buried, (as he faith of his death, John x. 17. No man taketh away my life from me, but I lay it down, and take it up again) Observe, “That in the whole performance of the work of redemption, even in the lowest and most shameful steps of it, our Lord was a most willing Condescender.” He gave his grace with the wicked: He was a most free and willing Undertaker: When, as it were, the question was put, Who will satisfy for elect sinners? He comes in and says, (as we have it, Psal. xlv.) Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; I am here, Father, as if he had said, I offer myself, and accept of the terms heartily, and delightfully; I rejoiced, faith he Prov. viii. 28. in the habitable parts of the earth, before the foundation of the world was laid, my delight was with the sons of men: So it may be made evident, that in all the parts of his sufferings, and in every step thereof he did most exactly, and also most willingly, perform whatever was carved out to him; he preached and wrought miracles, and did all with delight, as himself says, John iv. 32. It is my meat and my drink to do my Father's will, and to finish his work; it refreshed him, when his body was hungry and faint, to be carrying on the work of redemption, in speaking to a poor straying sinner. If we yet look a little forward, we will find, that he so longed for the faddest part of this exercise, that he is pained till it be accomplished, Luke xii. 50. I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished? His heart longed so much to be at it, that he would approve nor admit of nothing that might stand in the way of it; therefore he rejected Peter's advice with holy detestation, with a Get thee behind me Satan; he knew well what was in Judas's mind, and yet would not divert him, but bid him do what he was about quickly; he went to the garden, where he was known to resort, and gave his enemies opportunity to take him, and would not suffer his disciples to draw a sword to oppose them; when he was before Pilate, he would not open his mouth; when he was buffeted, he gave his back to the fitter, and his cheeks to him that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame and spitting, because he knew what was aimed at in all this, and accordingly faith, Matt. xx. 20. The Son of man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many. When his holy human nature carreared at the cup, and when he was thereby put to pray, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, he sweeterly subjoins, But for this cause came I unto this hour: And the nearer it came to his death, he vented his desire after it the more; With desire have I desired, faith he, or with special desire have I desired, to eat this passover with you before I suffer; even when he was to eat the last passover, and to take his last good-night, and to be in readiness for what was coming. What could have been the mean or motive to bring it about, if he had not been willing? It was this willingness that Jehovah was pleased with, and that made his sacrifice to find sweetly to his Father, who loveth a cheerful giver: And it had never been satisfactory, if it had not been willing, but extorted; and therefore faith he, John xi. No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down; and I delight to do thy will, Psal. xi.

Ufe 17, See here a great evidence of the love of God, and of the Mediator; behold what manner of love this is, that when it was not required, he should offer, and freely give himself to death, and to the grave, for his is the love of a Friend, and beyond it, that he should have so loved his Church, as to give himself for her to death, and to the grave; well may he say, as he doth, John xv. 15. Greater love hath no man than this, &c.

2dly, It sheweth what great ground of consolation and encouragement a sinner hath, that would fain be at Christ, to believe on him, and to expect life and salvation through him. Our Lord was most willing to lay down his life, and to come to the grave for that end; and is it possible that he will refuse a sinner, that comes unto him, and that would fain share in the benefit of his sufferings, which was his great end in suffering? This one thing, to wit, the willingness that he had to suffer, and the delight that he had in suffering, to purchase redemption to sinners, may be a strong cordial to strengthen the heart of a swooning sinner, and a great motive and encouragement to come forward to him. Thou wilt, it may be, say, I wot not if Christ loves me: O consider these sweet words, Rom. v. 10. If he died for us while we were...
were yet enemies, how much more shall we be saved by his life? I shall close this discourse with these two words, the first whereof is, for encouragement: If there be any body here that would gain have Christ's love, and partake of his death; take courage, seeing our Lord, out of the great desire he had to promote the salvation of sinners, gave himself to death, and to the grave, will he not willingly make application of his purchase to them when they seek it? That he was willing to undergo all this, is a far greater matter than to welcome a sinner coming home to him; and if he did all that he did for this very end, will he stand it when it comes to the application? the second word is, That this is, and will be the ground of conviction to all who think little of our Lord Jesus, and of his love, and who will not part with a base lust for him, and who will not make choice of him, but will refuse, reject, undervalue and despise him, with all that he hath done and suffered; it will exceedingly aggravate your condemnation, that when he was so willing to die for the good of sinners, ye were not willing to live for his satisfaction. Think on it, O! think seriously on it: These things are the truths of God, and the main truths of the gospel, that ly very near the engaging of hearts to Christ; and if such truths do you no good, none others readily will. God give us the faith of them.

SERMON XXXV.

Isaiah liti. 9. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.  

His is a most wonderful subject that we have to think and speak of, which concerns the sufferings that our blessed Lord was pleased to undergo for sinners: And this makes it to be the more wonderful, when we consider what he was made, and what his carriage was; he was numbered with the transgressors, and gave his grave with the wicked; and yet he hath this testimony, that there was no violence in his hands, nor any deceit in his mouth. He was a sinless mediator, not only before men, but before God.

These words, considered in themselves, hold out a little sum and short compend of a holy walk, most perfectly and exactly fulfilled in the conversation of Jesus Christ: He had done no violence, or there was no violence in his hands, that is, there was no sinful deed contrary to the law of God in all his practice and walk; And there was no deceit, or guile, i. his mouth, that is, no sinful or deceitful expression: in sum, neither in deed nor in word was there sin in him; he did wrong to none by his deeds, and he deceived no body by his words. This guile or deceit, as it looks to the first table of the law, imports that there was no falsehood nor corrupt doctrine in his ministry; he did not beguile nor seduce the fools of any, in leading them wrong: And as it looks to the second table of the law more immediately, it imports, that he was sincere and upright, that there was no deceit, no violence or dissembling in his carriage: so that, whether we look to him as God's public servant in the ministry, or to him in his private walk, he was completely innocent, and without all sin, as the word is, 1 Pet. iii. 22. Who did sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: However men accounted of him, he was an innocent and sinless Saviour.

If we look on them as they depend on the former words, they are a reason of that difference which in his death and burial God did put betwixt him and others. Tho' he was by wicked men put to death as a wicked person, yet God in his providence so ordered the matter, that he was honourably buried with the rich; Why so? This is the reason of it, because, tho' they esteemed him a false Prophet, and a deceiver, a wine-bibber, &c. yet he had done no wrong to any, neither by word nor by deed; and therefore God would have that respect put on him after his death in his burial, and so a remarkable difference to be made betwixt him and others.

Observe hence, 1. "That our Lord Jesus, the "High Priest of our profession, that laid down his "life for sinners, is completely and perfectly holy." He hath that testimony from the prophet here, that He did no violence, neither was there any deceit in his mouth; He hath this testimony from the apostles, from Peter, 1 Pet.ii. 22. He did sin, neither was any guile found in his mouth; from John, 1 John iii. 5. He was manifested to take away sin, and in him is no sin; and from Paul, Heb. vii. 27. He was holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners. In this respect, there is a difference betwixt him and all men in the world; and it was necessary for believers conformation, that it should be so, It became us, faith the apostle, to have such an High Priest. If we consider the excellency of his person, he could not be otherwise, being God and man in one person, and having the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily. 2. It was necessary, if we consider the
end of his offices: He, being to offer up an acceptable sacrifice to God, behaved to be holy and harmless; otherwise neither the priest nor the sacrifice could have been acceptable. 3. It was necessary, if we consider the dignity of his office: It behaved him to differ from the former priests under the law; and if he had not been without sin, he should not have suffered from them. 4. It was necessary for the persons for whom he undertook these offices: Such a high priest became them, and another could not have done their turn. All these we will find to be put together, Heb. vii. 26, 27. where the apostle having said, v. 25. That he is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God through him, subjoins, For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens, who needeth not daily, as these high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. The most holy of all the priests had sins for which they behoved to offer sacrifices, so had the holiest of the people: But Christ was holy and blameless, and had no sin; and it behoved him to be so: As I said just now, his sacrifice could never have been accepted for others, if he had had need to offer up sacrifices for himself.

The Uses are these; not to speak how it vindicates our Lord Jesus Christ from all these aspersions cast upon him by wicked men, who called him a glutton, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, a deceiver, &c. He was holy and harmless; and ere long he will gloriously appear to be holy, when those who pierced him shall see him, and be confounded: I say, the uses are these, in reference to the church and people of God: It serves, 1. To shew the condescendancy of love, and the contrivance of infinite wisdom for the behoof of sinners; such a high priest became us. Love condescended, and wisdom contrived, that he should become man, and suffer, the just for the unjust; wisdom set on work by grace, provided for sinners such an high priest as they stood in need of; and indeed sinners have no want here, for they have an high priest becoming them; and this is an evidence of it, that he is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, &c. 2. It serves to be a great ground of encouragement to sinners, to step to, and make use of Christ’s sacrifice. Our Lord had no sin, and needed not to offer a sacrifice for himself; and if he offered sacrifice for atonement, wherefore did he so? It was either for himself, and that could not be, for he was holy; or for nothing, or for no end, and to say so were blasphemy; or it must be for a real satisfaction for their sins, or such as should make use of him: And thus faith hath a sure ground to lay hold on, namely, that his satisfaction was real; and that it was for this end, to be made forthcoming for the behoof of such as should believe on him. And therefore, look upon Christ’s suffering, and upon his innocency who suffered, and ye will find that ye have a suitable high priest, and atonement made for you: O but that is a sweet word, 2 Cor. v. ult. He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

3. It is ground of great consolation to them that betake themselves to Christ: Why? our Lord’s sacrifice cannot but be accepted, for there was in him no guile, nothing that might make his sacrifice unavourable. And as it commends the way of grace to a sinner, so it is ground of encouragement to a sinner to look to be accepted through him: For if the temptation should say, Thou art a sinner, and such a great sinner; that is nothing to the purpose; for God hath accepted of Christ and of his sacrifice; and if thou make use of his sacrifice, it cannot but be accepted for thee: Here then is the consolation, that we have such an high Priest as became us, who needed not to offer for himself, but only for the sins of the people, and of his own people.

4. It serves notably for our imitation: He was holy, and in his holy walking hath left us a copy to write after, and to walk by: And therefore, in your speaking of Christ’s holiness, or in your reading of it, consider that he is thereby calling a copy to you, and bidding you purify yourselves, as he is pure; to be holy, as he who hath called you is holy; learn of him to be meek and lowly in heart, to be humble and heavenly minded: and in whatever respect his life and walk is proposed to us as a pattern, let yourselves in his own strength to imitate it, and be ye followers of him as dear children; whenever ye read of his obedience to death, of his holiness in all manner of conversation, and of his fulfilling of all righteousness, let it provoke you singly and fearfully to design and endeavour conformity to him therein in your practice.
Isaiah iii. Verse 9.

Serm. XXXV.

"from others at their death; it is ever otherwise " with them than it is with others when death " comes, however it hath been with them in their " life." He made his grave with the wicked, and "with the rich in his death, because he had done no "violence, &c. This hath been confirmed in the ex- "perience of all that ever lived: The rich glutton, "Luke xvi. hath the better life as to externals, and " Lazarus had a poor afflicted life; but when death " comes, the rich glutton goes to hell, and Lazarus " goes to the bosom of Abraham. This is laid down as a "certain truth, Eccl. viii. 12, 13. Tho' a sinner "doth evil an hundred times, and his days be pro- "longed, yet surely I know that it shall be well with him that "fears God, but it shall not be well with the wicked. "There shall be a change at death; and it cannot be "otherwise, whether we look, 1. To the holy nature of "God, who hath a complicity in holiness, as it is "said, Psl. xi. ult. "The righteous Lord loveth "righteousness, his countenance doth behold the up- "right. Or whether, 2. We look to the word of "God, which, Isa. iii. 10, 11. bids say to the righ- "teous, 'It shall be well with them, for they shall "eat of the fruit of their doings': for, Blessed are "the dead which die in the Lord, they rest from their- "labours, and their works do follow them: but, Wo "unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the "reward of his hands shall be given him.' The same "connexion that was betwixt Chrift's life, tho' a "suffering life, and his death, shall be betwixt the "life of all his members, and their death; If we "suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. "The uses are, 1. To let us see what is the true "way to eternal well-being, when this short life shall "be at an end; and it is the way of holiness: And "so it serves to answer a great question, Who shall "be happy at their death? Even they that are holy "in their life; whose hands have done no violence, "and whose mouth hath had no guile, to wit, with the "full benediction of their will, and without all gracious re- "luctation; for absolute freedom from these in this "life was proper only to our Lord Jesus since Adam's "fall: Such may expect the Lord's countenance, "when death separates their soul and body. There- "fore take this as a mark for trial, observe and see "what is your carriage, and judge accordingly; and "seeing the Lord hath joined holiness and happiness "together inseparably, presume not to separate them. "2. Is it so, that holiness hath a good and com- "fortable close of a man's life, (which is the sub- "stance of the doctrine,) it would commend to us the "study of holiness, as the most precious, advantagi- "ous, honourable, fiker and safe course that a "man can follow; Say, to the righteous, It shall be "well with him; it is not, Say to the honourable "man, nor say to the rich man, nor to the wife man, "&c. God hath not chosen many of these, as is clear, "1 Cor. i. 26. but, Say to the righteous or holy man, "It shall be well with him: And is there any thing "that should have so much influence on men, and "take them so much up, as how to be well in the "close? Folk may have a fighting life of it here, and "may suffer much, and be under reproach for a time, "as Chrift was; but if thou be holy, ere thy body "be laid in the grave, it shall be well with thy soul. "And as for all who have chosen the way of holiness, "we are allowed to say this to you, that it shall be "well with you at death, and after death, at judg- "ment, and even for evermore: To them (faith the "apostle, Rom. ii. 9,) 'who by a patient continuance "in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and im- "mortality, eternal life.' O how many great and "good things are abiding all the honest hearted stu- "dents of holiness! Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, "nor heart conceived, what they are. "3. It is ground of expostulation with them that "neglect and slight holiness; As it will be well with "the righteous or holy, so they shall have a miserable "and desperate lot of it, who either despise or neglect "holiness, "Wo to the wicked (faith Isaiah iii. 11. "it shall be ill with him.' Some of you may think "that ye are rich and honourable, are well clothed, "fit in fine houses, and have rich covered tables, "when poor bodies are kept at the door, and are de- "finitive of these things; and are ready to blefs your- "selves as being well, tho' ye care not for, nor feek "after holiness: But wo unto you, for ye mutt die, "and go unto the bottomless pit, and there ye will "not get so much as a drop of water to cool your "tongues in these tormenting flames; neither your "riches, nor honours, nor pleasures, will hold off "the heat and fury of the vengeance of God, nor in "the least ease you in your extreme pain; but, as it "is, Rom. ii. 9. "Indignation and wrath, tribulation "and anguish (four fore words) will be upon every "foul of man that doth evil." O do ye not believe "this? It is the truth of God, and a very plain truth, "and we are persuaded none of you will dare down- "right to deny it. Holiness will have a sweet and "comfortable close, and the neglect of it will have "fearful effects following on it. What is the reason "then that holiness is so little thought of, and fol- "lowed, do ye believe that ye will die? and think "ye ever to come to judgment, or to hear that word, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the king- "dom prepared for you; for I was hungry, and ye "fed
"fed me; naked, and ye clothed me, &c." O what will become of many of you, when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, to render vengeance to all them who know not God, and obey not the gospel; and will say to you, Depart, ye cursed, into ever-lasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for when I was hungry ye fed me not, &c. This is, I grant, a general truth; yet if it be not received, we know not what truth will be received; and if it were received, the practice of holines is would be more studied; there would be less sin, and more prayer, reading, meditation, more seeking after knowledge, and more watchfulness and tenderness of folks conversation: Always in this the Lord shows the connexion that is betwixt holiness and happiness, and here ye have the copy and pattern of an exemplary walk.

3. From this, that the holiness and blamelesness of Christ, here spoken of, is marked in him as peculiar to him, for it fits him to be a high-priest, and proves that only he could be the priest that suited and became us, and that no other could do our turn, as the apostle reasons, Heb. vii. 26, 27, 28. For the law maketh men priests that have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore: From this, I say, Observe, "That all men, even the most "holy, except Christ (who was both God and Man) "are sinful, and not one of them sinless, while liv- "ing here on earth." And the reason is, because if any were sinless, then this that is said here would not be peculiar to our Lord Jesus Christ, that He did no violence, neither was there deceit in his mouth: This being a singular character of our high priest, that none of his types could claim to, it exclusively agrees to him, so as it agreeth to none other. The scripture is full to this purpose, in affirming, that not only all men are sinners, as considered in their natural condition, but that even believers are sinful in part; for the same apostle John, that faith, 1 Epift. i. 3. "Truly our fellowship is "with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," faith also verse 8. "If we say we have no sin, we "deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," and verse 10. "If we say that we have not sinned, we "make him a liar, and his word is not in us;" and 1 Kings viii. 46. and Eccl. vii. 20. "There is no "man that doth good, and sinneth not," plainly insinuating, that all have need of an intercessor; we shall not insert in this: only from these words compared with the scope, making it peculiar to Christ to be without sin, and implying, that none other are so; we would consider the necessity of its being so. 1. For differencing and separating of Jesus Christ from all others, by putting this dignity on him, of being holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; this is his prerogative, and badge of honour, above others. 2. It is necessary for this end, to demonstrate the need that is there of offering himself a sacrifice for sinners; and that it was not for himself; but for sinners that he offered up himself: and that there is a continual necessity of making use of that sacrifice; for if there were no a continuance of sin in part, while believers are out of heaven, there would be no need of Christ's office; if we were holy and harmless ourselves, we needed not such an high priest.

Use 1. To establish us in the faith of this truth, That amongst all men there is none that were true men except Christ, that is, without sin; sin is still abiding in them, while in this world: Of none of them all it can be said, that they have done no violence, neither is there any deceit in their mouth; none of them could ever say since Adam fell, The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing of me; yet this is a special qualification of Christ Jesus, for his Priest-hood, that he was without sin, and believed to be so. I am not pleading, that sinners should take a liberty to sin, because there is no perfection to win at in this life, God forbid; we unto them that make such an use of this truth: nor do I speak of it, to allow any to dispense with, or to give way to themselves to sin; for we shew before, that Christ is here proposed, as our pattern, and we are hidden purify ourselves, as he is pure: But this we say, that none living here on the earth are without sin; the most perfect men that are on this side eternity, carry about with them a body of death, called five or six times sin, Rom. vii. that hath actual luftings, and a power, as a law of sin, to lead captive; and that makes the man guilty before God.

Use 2. For reproof of two sorts of enemies to this truth. (1.) These inveterate enemies of the Sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, to wit, the Papists, that black train that follows Antichrist, who pleads for a perfection according to the law, as attainable in this life, laying down two grounds to prove this perfection. 1. That the inward luftings, or first risings and motions at least of the body of death are no sin. And, 2. Their exponing of the law, so as it may suit to their own apprehension, and opinion, yet so, as they say, that every believer or godly person wins not to this perfection to keep the law wholly, but only some of their grandees. This the Lord hath mercifully banished out of the
reformed Churches, as inconsistent with the experience of the saints, who find a law in their members warring against the law of their mind, and leading them captive to the law of sin that is in their members; inconsistent with the scriptures, which clear, that none have attained, nor do attain perfection in this life, but the contrary, the _in-many things we offend all_; and inconsistent with grace, that leave sinners still in Christ's common and debt, as standing in need of his imputed righteousness: This perfection they place in inherent holiness, and habitual grace; but we infilt not on it. (2.) Another sort of enemies, reproved here, are the old Papists, who are owned by those who are called Antinomians, several of which miserable persons are now going up and down amongst us, who say that the people of God have no sin in them: Wherein they are worse than Papists; for Papists make it peculiar to some only, but they make it common to all believers; and Papists make their perfection to consist in inherent holiness, but they make the nature of sin to be changed, and say, that sin is no more so in a believer, even tho' it be contrary to the law of God. We grant indeed, that the people of God are free of sin in these respects. 1. In this respect, that no sin can condemn them, they are not under the law, but under grace; in that respect, Rom. viii. 1. it is said, that _there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ_. 2. In this respect, that they cannot fall into that sin, _which is unto death_, as is clear, 1 John v. 17, 18. And, 3. In this respect, that they cannot so sin, as to ly, or be under the reign and dominion of sin, as is evident, Rom. vi. 14. the believer _delights in the law of God according to the inner man_, Rom. vii. 22. and is not in sin, neither doth commit sin, as the unbeliever doth, for the seed of God abideth in him, and is kept from being involved in that which his corrupt nature inclines the believer to. So then, what the scripture speaks, of believers being free of sin, is to be understood in one of these respects: But to say, (1.) That a believer cannot sin at all, that experience and practice of the saints is a proof of the contrary: Or, 2. To say, that sin in a believer, is no sin, because of his faith in Christ, is as contrary to scripture; for the law of God is the same to the believer and unbeliever, and sin is the same to both; adultery is adultery, and murder is murder in David, as well as in any other man. Sure, when Christ bade his disciples pray for forgiveness of sin daily, he taught them no such doctrine, as to account their sins to be no sins; for if so, they should neither repent of sin, nor seek the pardon of it, as some are not ashamed to say they should not. That which we aim at, is, to clear it to be Christ's prerogative only to be free of sin, none other in this life can claim it; and to teach believers to carry about with them daily, all along their mortal life, that which is for their good, even the sense of sin. I know it is now an up-cite of some pretended perfectionists, to the people of God, that they think and say, that they have sin, and are not perfect; and we are by these men called Antichristian Priests and Jesuits, because we preach that doctrine: But let it be soberly considered, whether it doth better agree with Papists and Jesuits to say, that believers are without sin, or to say that they have sin? They who say that believers, or the saints, have no sin, do agree in this with the Papists, who maintain a perfection of holiness, or a conformity to the law in some in this life, and who deny the lustings of the body of death to be sin; without which opinion, tho' most groiks, they would not, nor could with the least shadow of reason, maintain their doctrine of justification by works: And yet were now among us will needs call us Popish, because we say that we have sin, and that none of God's people are without sin in this life; this seems to be very strange: But that which have been the thought of some sharp-sighted and fagacious men, since the beginning of our confusions, to wit, that Popery is a working, as an under-hand design; is by this, and other things, made to be more and more apparent: Is there any thing more like Popery working in a mystery, yea more Popish than to say, that the motions of corruption in believers are no sins, that a man or woman may attain to perfection in holiness here, and yet to carry on this with that subtlety, as confidentially to aver, that it is Popery to say the contrary? Nay, if the scriptures they make use of in their papers or pamphlets be well considered, we will find, that not only a perfection in holiness and good works is pleaded for, but a possibility of fulfilling the law and covenant of works, as namely, 1 Pet. i. 15. v. John iii. 3. and v. 5. and Matt. v. ult. Will ye (say they) call yourselves saints, that are not purified even as he is pure? And will ye call yourselves believers, that have not overcome the world, &c? as if all that is commanded duty might be, or were perfectly reached in this life, and as if no distinction betwixt begun, yea, considerably advanced holiness, and intire perfection were to be admitted. That for which I mark this, is, to shew that the design of Popery seems to be on foot; the devil in some considerable persons venting these things, when the great patrons and authors of them
SERMON XXXVI.

Isaiah liii. 9. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Verse 10. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief: When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

We were speaking somewhat, the last day, of our Lord Jesus his innocency; which is here compounded, and summed up in these two, 1. That there was no violence in his hands. 2. That there was no deceit in his mouth: However he was accounted of among men, and by them numbered among transgressors, yet he was not so in very deed, and before God.

The prophet proceed, and answers an objection, How came he then to suffer, if he was so innocent; especially his sufferings being ordered by God, who is said to give his grave with the wicked? He answers the objection, and removes the offence, by giving three grounds for this, verse 10. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief: This is the first reason, and it is taken from the fountain whence his sufferings proceeded, God's good pleasure graciously ordered it so; it was the good pleasure of Jehovah, that so it should be. The second reason is taken from the nature, or end of his sufferings, in these words, When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin: Thou' he suffered for men as a sinner, yet before God it was an offering for sin, to satisfy for, and to remove the sins of his elect people. The word may be either, When thou, or when he shall make his soul an offering for sin: But both come to one thing, which is this, That his sufferings were not such as befel other men, nor such as befel innocent men; but they were ordered on a higher design, and for an higher end, even to be a satisfaction for sinners, and to make way for their freedom. A 3d reason is this, As his sufferings flowed from God's good pleasure, and were a satisfaction for the sins of his elect people; so it hath notable and noble effects. And there are three mentioned here, 1. He shall
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Isaiah lili. 

If his seed, he shall have a numerous offspring, many that shall hold eternal life of him. Men by their suffering of death are incapacitated to increafe their offspring, but this is a quickening suffering and death that hath a numerous offspring.

He shall prolong his days, which seems to be another paradox; for men days are shortened by their sufferings, and death; but tho' he be dead and buried, yet he shall rise again, and ascend, and fit down at the right hand of the Father, and live for ever, to make intercession for his people. A 3d effect, which is the up-shot of all, The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand: God hath designed him for a work, which is the great work of redemption, even the bringing of many sons to glory; this is the will of him that sent him, that he should give eternal life to as many as should believe on him: And this is called God's good pleasure, which shall thrive and prosper in his hand: He shall pull many captives from the devil, and set many prisoners free; he shall by his sufferings overcome the devil, death and the grave, and all enemies, and shall gather the sons of God together, from the four corners of the earth; and that work shall not misguide, nor be frustrated, but thrive in his hand. So then, in this text, we have much of the gospel compounded in few words.

We shall speak a little to one observation more from the close of the 9th verfe, where Christ Jesus his sinfulness and innocency is holden out, in these two, There was no violence in his hands, no sinful practice in him, And there was no deceit in his mouth: Which looks not only to his sinless carriage before men, and so says, that he was no liar nor dissembler in his dealing and converse with them; but also to his doctrine, and so says, that there was no doctrinal deceit in him; which is, when men lie of God to men, which is a gross sort of lying, and a deceiving of souls, in making them to take that for truth which is not truth; and in derogating from the truth, and making them to take that for error which is truth, as the Apostle speaks of such, that they speak lies in hypocrisy. These words, There was no deceit in his mouth, look to both; especially to the left, that is, the doctrinal deceit of corrupt teaching (whereof he was free altogether) I say, it looks especially to that, because he was calluminated, traduced, and called a deceiver of the people: That is (as if the prophet had said) most untrue of him, there is no deceitful word in all his doctrine; tho' it was imputed to him, yet he was most free of it. Thence observe, That exact holiness and blamelessness, takes in holiness in a

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"man's conversation, in respect of practice; and soundness in judgment, in respect of doctrine." For if our Lord be a pattern of holiness, that which was in him as our pattern, is called for from us, even to be pure as he is pure; No violence was in his hands, he was no healer, nor robber, nor oppressor, (to speak fo with reverence) and there was no deceit in his mouth, the word and worship of God was not wronged by him: And he is holden forth as an example to us in both.

That which we would say further on this, shall be in a word of Ufe: where we may clear both the branches of the doctrine, to meet with two exceeding prejudicial tenets among men.

1. There are some, who, if they be not erroneous in their opinions, and sectaries, they think they are well enough, and influt over the infirmities of poor folk, that fall into these errors; and they will (like these spoken of) whore, drink, steal, and lie, &c. and yet lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? no evil shall come unto us. Such half and divide godliness; they will not be Papists, Puritans, nor Sectaries; but there is much unholi-

ness in their practice, much self-seeking, pride, hypocrisy, formality, deceiving, out-fening, fall-hood; and they cover all with this, that they are found as to their profession; though only hearing, and not doing, professing, and not practifing: But they would consider, that Christ faith not, Blessed are they that hear only, but, Blessed are they that do the will of God. O beware of this great deceit; it is a piece of Christ's innocency and holiness, that no violence was in his hands, there was no sinful thing in his practice, no sinful word came from his mouth; ye shall never be accounted followers of Christ, tho' ye give your bodies to be burnt for the truth (as it is to be feared few of you would do) if your conversation be not suitable; God shall never accept of your testimony: Therefore divide not these things, which God hath put together; let holiness be in your practice, otherways Papists and Quakers, yea, the groffest and most abominable heretics and ye will be utterly disclaimed.

The other branch of the Ufe is, That suppose there were never so much apprehended tendernefs in folks walk, tho' they were much in duty, and tho' they would quit all they had to the poor; yet if deceit be in their mouth, if they corrupt the truth, and teach others fo to do, there is a want of the half of holiness, yea, in some respect of the best and chief half of it; and the reason is, 1. Because the image of God confits as much in the truth, as in the practice; nay, if practice be not conform to
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truth, it is no true holiness: and where error is drunken in, there is in so far an utter unsuitableness to the holiness of Christ, as well as where profligacy appears in the conversation; For there was no deceit in his mouth. 2. Because this word of God prescribes the doctrine of faith to be believed, as well as duties to be performed; and the right grounding of faith is a main, if not the main thing wherein the image of God consists, to wit, in knowledge: and error is as inconsistent with knowledge, as ignorance is, yea, more, in so far as it leaves a contrary impression of untruth on the soul, which is worse than simple ignorance. 3. Because when a person mistaketh, by turning aside from the truth to error, he also mistaketh in his practice, at least, in so far; the right conceiving of truth, being both the ground of our faith, and the rule of our practice: As for instance, let once the conceit and fancy come in, of folks being above ordinances, no confidence is thenceforth made of sanctifying the Sabbath or Lord's day, nor of any other duty of worship; but men become almost, if not altogether Atheists. Yea, 4. The incoming of error beget a sort of presumptuous confidence; therefore Christ says, He that breaks one of these commandments, and teacheth men to do so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of God; he not only breaks the command himself, but he seeketh to engage others to do so likewise: so that an error from the truth, is a sin against the first table, and so among the greatest evils; and the teaching and propagating of error, is a sin against the second table, because it hazardeth the soul of our neighbour; whereas violence in the hands hurts only his person or estate. And, 5. If we look to the rise of error, or whence it comes, we will find it to be a fruit of the flesh, Gal. v. 19. and that which flows from our corruption; and is therefore ranked in with witchcraft, adultery, fornication, idolatry, hatred, variance, &c. 6. If we look to the scripture-account of it, and of the propagators of it, we will find that 2 Cor. xi. 13. they are called false apostles, deceitful workers, ministers of Satan, not common sinners, transforming themselves into the ministers of Christ; and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light; for their work is to gather in souls to the devil, to hale them as in a net to him, to be disciples to him. Or, 7. if we look to the effects that follow upon error, and upon the propagation of it, we will find them to be dreadful: For, as it is, 2 Pet. ii. 1. They draw upon themselves swift destruction; chap. iii. 16. They wrest, or pervert the scriptures, to their own destruction. In all these respects, error in judgment is as evil (if not worse) then profaneness in practice. And if we look thorow the Churches of Christ, we will find that there hath been more palpable harrow and destruction of souls since Antichrist arose, by his gross errors, and damnable delusions, than hath readily been by sin in practice; which men do not own and avouch, as they do these delusions: Think therefore seriously on this; whoever would be pure as Christ is pure, would study soundness in judgment, as well as tenderness in practice; and yet how many are readily mistaken in this, who, if they meet with some that can speak a few good words, and make pretences to a holy walk, tho' the second command be baffled and disgraced by them, and the name of God torn, and tho' the fourth command be made of none effect or price by them, it is thought but little of, all is covered with this, that they are good folks, and of a tender walk? But O! can they be good, who where-in the name and image of God are most tenderly concerned? and will God account that to be holiness agreeable to his law, that flights, depreciates, and vilifies the best part of his law? Let me therefore befeech you to take in, and to classt error with other sins, and to look upon unboundness in the truths of God, as a fruit of the flesh; and withal to look upon found knowledge in the mind, and the form of found words in the mouth, as being a duty, that is called for from you, as well as other duties. We the rather take occasion to speak to this, because the devil is seeking to turn men mcer Atheists, Gallio's as to the truths of God, to care for none of these things; and as to weart out the eftem of truth, so to make people to look upon error as if there were no hurt by it (it is sad that there is not more scarring at, and keeping distance from the company of such) if they can but give a parcel of good words, and make shews of respect to piety in this lukewarm time. There is need to guard against this temper, or rather distemper, and to look well that we shall not, nor divide the pattern and copy which God in his word hath cast to us, and set before us: We would study purity and tendereness in our walk, and growth in sound knowledge; and would walk: humbly, under the impression of our hazard: It is sad when folks are ill girded, and yet fiercely discern it. It seems to be a winnowing time, and some are already taken off their feet, who thought not, some months or years since, to have carried in reference to the truth, as they have done; it hath been God's mercy to this place, that he hath hedged us about hitherto, at
which the devil hath raged not a little. Be humbled, and have an eye to him that can keep his people, and can establish them in the truth, and make them unblamable in holiness till the coming of the Lord.

We come now to the 10th verse; and from the first part of it, Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief; these 3 things arise clearly, first, That tho' our Lord Jesus was mott innocent in his own Person, yet he was put to exceeding fore trials and sharp sufferings. For (1.) He was bruised, to wit, like corn betwixt the upper and neither millstones, or like grapes in the wine-press; which respects so much his outward sufferings, tho' great (for a bone of him was not broken) as his inward soul-sufferings, and the inward presurces of wrath that were on his human soul. (2.) He was put to grief, was sore straitned and pinched; and these expressions import so much, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; my soul is sore troubled, and what shall I say? and, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? The particulars of this grief was spoken to before; and we shew in what respect he was so humbled, and that he was most finfulness, and without any the least carnal mud or passion, under these expressions, in which the sense of grief vented itself most in him: Only, if it be here asked, What is the reason, why the prophet doth so much insist, in pointing out Christ's sufferings, and the extremity of them, that scarce almost is there one verse, but he hath in it some one or other new aggravation of them? We conceive the reason of it is, 1. Because there is nothing wherein the greatness of the love of God, and the kindnefs of the Mediator's condescension, doth appear more than in this; for, the more he suffered, the more the love of God shined, and his condescension kythed the more; this being the great infance, and demonstrative proof of the love of God, God jo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, as it is, John iii. 16. O manifold and vastly comprehensive So! What is unfold in it, eternity will but suffice fully to unfold. And this being the great infance of the Mediator's condescency, and of his commending his love to sinners, That while we were yet enemies, he died for us, as it is, Rom. v. the Lord loves to have this the subje of our thoughts, that we may be led thereby into the soul-ravishing, and satisfying contemplation of the love whence it came. Because there is not any one thing that lies nearer, or that is readily of greater concern to believers, than to be well acquainted with Christ's sufferings, wherein the Lord would have his people spiritually perquiere: and it is of their concernment in a twofold respect, 1. As it is the ground of their peace, therefore he is called our peace, and a propitiation, for by being acquainted with Christ's sufferings, believers have a solid ground for their faith, whereby they discover access to peace with God, to pardon of sin, and justification, the Mediator having undergone these sufferings for this end. 2. As it is the ground of their consolation, considering that they have a suffering Mediator, that hath paid the price that was due by them; even such an one that knows what it was to be bruised with wrath, and is therefore very tender of, and compassionate towards souls, that are under challenges, and apprehensions of wrath: These are sweet words, which we have to this purpose. 1 John ii. 1. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins, who was content to suffer and satisfy for them. O consider then what ye are doing, when ye read of his sufferings! for the very marrow of the gospel, and the life of the consolation of the people of God lies here. 2dly. From these words, Yet it pleased, the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief; Observe, "That the Lord Jehovah had the main and principal hand in all the sufferings of this innocent Mediator." It was not the Jews nor the Scribes and Pharisees, nor Pilate; but it pleased the Lord, to bruise him, and to put him to grief; as is clear, Acts iv. 27, 28. Herod and Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles and people of Israel, were gathered together, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. In all that they did, they were but doing that which was carved out before, in the eternal counsel of God; and therefore Peter says, Acts ii. 23. Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. The Lord's hand was supreme in the business; and we may gather the supreme and sovereign influence of the Lord's hand, in these three respects in Christ's sufferings, 1. In respect of his appointing them; it was concluded in the counsel of God, what he should suffer, what should be the price that Jehovah should have, and the sacrifice that he would accept of from his hand. 2. In respect of the ordering and over-ruling of his sufferings, when it came to the execution of his antient decree; he, who governs all the counsels, thoughts, and actions of men, did in a special manner govern and over-rule the sufferings of the Mediator: tho' wicked men were following their own
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And yet be free of their sin for which they shall count to him: And as it was no excuse to Judas nor to Pilate, that they did what before was decreed of God; so it shall be no excuse to any man in a sinful course, that God hath a hand in every thing that comes to pass, who yet is just and holy in all. It may also flay our hearts, when the devil and his instruments, as it were, are running mad; that they can do no more than what God permits, nay, some way commisfionath them to do. The devil could not so much as touch a tail of one of Job's sheep, without leave askd and given: "O the depth both of the knowledge, and of the wisdom of God! how unsearchable are his ways, and his judgments past finding out!" 

Verse 9, 10.

"That the Lord is well-willed to, and hath delight in prosecuting the work of redemption, tho' even to the bruising of the second Person of the Godhead, considered as he became Man and Mediator." Not that he delighted in the sufferings, as such, of his innocent Son, for he afflicts not willingly the children of men: but considering the end, and the effects that were to follow, to wit, the seed that he should beget to eternal life, and the captives which he was to redeem, in that respect, it was not only not against his will, but it pleased him well, or, as the word is in the New Testament, it was his good pleasure; alluding, as it is like, to this of the prophet: Hence, when Christ speaks of the work of redemption, he calleth it the Father's will, and work; the Father's will, when he says, I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me; the Father's work, while he says, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do: And here it is called his pleasure, for there was nothing without himself to move him to it; when he might have suffered all fallen mankind to ly still in their forlorn condition, it pleased him to give his son, of his own good will, to redeem severall of them.

Use. If we put these doctrines together, they afford us wonderful matter of consolation, 1. That we have an able Saviour, that hath given a sufficient ransom for us, a price that cannot be over-valued. 2. A willing Mediator, that gave himself; no man took his life from him, but he laid it down of himself, and took it up again. 3. A willing Jehovah.

SERMON XXXVII.

Isaiah liii. 10.—When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

CHRIST and his sufferings have been a most delightful subject to be spoken and heard of, before ever he suffered; and they should be to us now no less, but much more so, even very glad tidings to hear, that ever the Son of God was made an offering for sin.

This verse, as we hinted the last day, doth set forth Christ's sufferings, and in these three, that the design of God in bruising the innocent Lamb of God might be the better taken up. (1.) They are holden forth in the rife where they bred, or in the fountain whence they flowed, the good pleasure of God; It pleased the Lord to bruise him, to put him to grief. Which the prophet marks, 1. To shew that all the good, that comes by Christ to sinners, is bred in the Lord's own bosom: It was concluded and contrived there, and that with delight, there being no constraint or necessity on the Lord to give his Son, or to provide him to be a Cautioner for dyavour sinners, but it was his own good pleasure to do so. 2. To shew the concurrence of all the Persons of the Trinity in promoting the work of redemption of sinners; which was executed by the Son the Mediator, to shew, that the love of the Son in giving his life, is no greater than the love of the Father in contriving and accepting of it for a ransom; there being naturally in the hearts of the hearers of the gospel this prejudice, that the Father is more rigid, and less loving than the Son: But considering, that it was the Father, Son and Spirit, that contrived Christ's sufferings; that the Son's sufferings were the product and consequent of his contrivance? it removeth this corrupt imagination and prejudice, and sheweth that there is no place for it. It doth also contribute notably to our engagement to God, to be thoroughly persuaded of the Lord's good pleasure in the sufferings of the Mediator, as well as in the willingnes of the Mediator to suffer; he having performed the will of the Father, in the lowest steps of his humiliation. (2.) They are express, and holden forth in their nature and end, they were to be an offering for sin;
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The sin; and this follows well on the former verse, because it might be said, How could he, that had no violence in his hands, nor guile in his mouth, be brought so low? He hath anwered in part, by saying, It pleased the Father to bruise him, and to put him to grief: But because that does not so fully obviate, and answer the objection; he answers further, that there was a notably good end for it: Tho' he had no sin in himself, nor are we to look on his sufferings, as for any sin in him, yet we are to look upon them as a satisfaction to justice for the sins of others; even as the bullocks, lambs and rams, and the scape-goat, were not slain for their own sins, for they were not capable of sin, yet they were somehow typical offerings and satisfactions for sin, in the room of others for whom they were offered; so our Lord Jesus is the proper Offering and Sacrifice for the Sins of his elect people; and his sufferings are so to be looked on by us: And this is the scope. But to clear the words a little more fully, there are different readings of them, as they are set down here in the text, and on the margin. Here it is, When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, on the margin it is, When his soul shall make an offering for sin: The reason of the diversity is, because the same word in the original, which signifies the second Person masculine, thou, meaning the Father, signifies the third Person feminine, his soul shall make itself: But on the matter, whether we apply it to the Father, or to Christ, both comes to one thing; it seems to do as well to apply it to Christ: The former words having set out God's concurrence, and good pleasure to the work; these set out the Mediator's willingness, as in the last verse, it is said that he poured out his soul to death: and properly Christ is the Priest that offered up himself: yet, we say, there is no difference on the matter, nor as to the scope, the will of the Father, and of the Mediator, in the work of redemption, being both one: tho' (as we said) we incline to look on them, as relating to Christ. 2. Offering for sin, in the original, signifies sin; so that the words are, when thou shalt make his soul sin, the word being ordinarily used in the Old Testament, and thence borrowed in the New Testament to signify a sin-offering; as Exod. xxix. 14. and Levit. iv. v. and xvi. chapters, where the sin-offering is appointed; it is the same word that's here, intimating that the sin-offering was designed to bear their sin, They shall lay their hands on the sin, or sin-offering, because the sacrificed beast was typically to have the peoples sins imputed to it; tho' properly no man's sin is imputed to any, but to Christ. This is also clear, if we compare Psal. xl. 6. with Heb. x. 5. 6. That which in the psalm is rendered sin-offering, in the original is sin; but the Apostle, Heb. x. hath it sacrifice for sin; and it is the same word which he hath, 2 Cor. v. ult. He was made sin for us, that is, an offering for sin. By which we may see the unwarrantableness of some men accounting Christ to be formally a sinner, because he is called sin, and because our sin is said to be laid on him, which, in scripture-phrase, is as much as his being a sacrifice for sin in the room of sinners.

(3.) His soul may be taken either simply, for he shall be an offering for sin, the soul being often taken for the whole person; or it may be taken more to relate to his sufferings, called the travel of his soul, verse 11. however it is the Person, the Man-Chrift, soul and body, that is the Sacrifice, and more especially his soul, as the wrath of God was on it; and when he suffered, his soul did undergo that wrath, as well as his back was given to the smiter, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair.

(4.) There are two words further, which we would hint at in the exposition, for clearing of Christ's being called an offering for sin. 1st, We would put a difference between the offerings and sacrifices which were for sin under the law, and this offering, which is applied to Christ: The apostle says, Heb. x. That it was impossible, that the blood of bullocks and of goats could take away sin; They were not properly sin-offerings, but as they were types of that offering which was to come. And so, when Christ is called an offering, he is differenced from all the offerings that were offered before him by the Priests on earth, in this, that his offering or sacrifice takes away sin, by virtue of itself, according to the covenant; but these offerings of thote Priests that were under the law (as is clear, Heb. ix. 13.) took not away sin by themselves, but only in so far as Christ who was typified by them was made use of. And from this we may see it clear. 1. That it was by the blood of Christ, that the fathers under the law had their sins pardoned; and that the pardon of sin was to them an effect of this offering, as well as unto us. 2. That all these sacrifices and offerings under the law were types of this one offering, and not the anniversary sacrifice only, which was offered once a year by the High Priest; which we the rather hint at, because both these are by Socinus, that enemy of Christ's satisfaction, controverted; he aiming thereby to draw souls from leaning to this offering. 2dly, What we speak of Christ's sacrifice, relates to that which
he performed on earth. Tho' he be yet a Priest, and lives for ever to make intercession for us; yet this offering respects that which he offered while he was here in the world, and especially that which he offered on the cross, as it is said, Eph. v. 2. He hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling-favour; and Heb. x. 12. This Man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God; and by his sacrifice once offered up before, he went into the most holy, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified: Which is also a truth controverted by that same enemy Socinus; the clearing of it serves, not only to open up the meaning of this place, but to let us fee the efficacy of Christ's sufferings, and the nature of them, that in them especially, his offering, as it brings pardon of sin, and peace with God, does conflict. So then the meaning of the place is in short, That tho' our Lord Jesus had no sin, yet he pleads God, in his counsel, to appoint him to suffer, and that his sufferings should be an offering for the sins of others.

More particularly, if it be asked, What is meant by this, an offering for sin? we shall clear it from the type; and, 1. It is here supposed, that there is sin on the person, and that wrath due for sin is to be removed. 2. It is supposed, that there is an inutility in the person to remove the sin, and yet a necessity to have it removed, or else he must suffer. 3. There is supposed the interveening, or coming of something in the place of that person that is guilty of sin, and liable to wrath. 4. There is supposed the acceptance of that which interveneth, by God, the Party offended; and so it proceeded a covenant, whereby the Lord hath condoned to accept of that offering. Take it in the sin-offering goat, the scape-goat, Levit. xvi. a lively type of Christ; when he is brought into the congregation. (1.) The Priest must put his hand upon him, and confess the sins and transgressions of the people over him; which signified their acknowledgment of their sins, and a liability to sufferings because of them. (2.) It supposed their proposing of that goat, as a sacrifice to bear their sins, and to take them on him; therefore it was said, The Priefts shall put the iniquities of the people upon him. (3.) The one of these goats was to be sent away into the wilderness, and the other was to be killed; and generally all the sin-offerings were to be killed: So that no remission of sins was without blood, and they came in the room of the sinners, bearing as it were their sin, and their punishment.

And, (4.) It is to be an atonement, to wit, a typical atonement: By this means, the people were to have access to ecclesiastical privileges; but they could not purify the conscience, except Christ were made use of, who was the true atonement then, as he is now, still for sin; and by virtue of his sacrifice, according to the covenant, they, were to deal, for the pardon of the sins born by him.

We come now to observe some things from the words; and, 1. It is supposed here, that even the elect, and consequently all others, are by their sin liable to God's judgment, and obnoxious to his wrath; there were no need of a sin-offering, if this were not. The name that Christ gets here, supposes that there was sin, and that there was wrath for sin lying at the door of all men, since man fell, and brake God's command: All men are before God like Isaac, lying before his Father, ready to be killed, his Father having his hand stretched out with the knife, ready to take away his life; and our Lord Jesus is as the ram that was caught in the thicket of thorns, whereby elect sinners are freed, and himself made the sacrifice that was provided in their room and place. Thus, in the name that our Lord Jesus gets, we have holden out to us, the posture that all of us are in by nature, if Christ interveened not to take the stroke off us on himself, laying himself open to the stroke of justice for sin: To clear it, consider these three things, which will hold out, what this state and posture of ours is; 1. The natural sinfulness, and guilt that men are lying under, which makes them naked, and to be as that wretched infant, (spoken of Ezek. xvi.) lying in their blood, call forth into the open field, to the loathing of their perfons: This makes God and them to be at feud, and lays them open to the stroke of justice. 2. Consider the interveening of the law of God, that threatens the curse on sin wherever it is, and pronounces this sentence, that the wages of sin is death, and says to the sinner, as it is said to Cain, If thou sin, death lies at thy door; and in this sense, sinners are not only like malefactors taken and apprehended, but like to such when sentenced to death; therefore, John iii. 18. He that believes not, is condemned already. 3. Consider, that men in their natural state, who have broken the covenant of works, have justice someway pursuing them, to the executing of the sentence, which God in his law hath pronounced against them; and they are the shefdeers of blood before they betook themselves to the city of refuge, having the avenger of blood following hard at their heels: In which sense, John iii. 36.
Isaiab iii. Verse 10.

is a way laid down how to get your debt satisfied for; which if ye neglect, what will ye do when your day is gone? Are there not many dying daily? And is there not a day of reckoning coming, when the stroke that is hanging and hovering over your head will light? and seeing it is so, why do ye ly full, and fight Jesus Christ? If it were believed what dreadful wrath is abiding many (whereof your secure sensibleness, and senseless security is a part) and what a terror it will waken in your conscience one day, ye would certainly think it good news to have the sufferings of Christ spoken of and the benefit of them offered to you now.

The third use is, to stir up sinners to thankfulness, especially such of you as are blest with effectual counsel, to make the right use of this sacrifice. O consider how much ye are obliged to God, and to Christ the Mediator! The preaching of the gospel is now thought little of, and is taftlees to many; but did ye know what is your state and posture by nature, how near ye are to hell, and how near the curse and wrath are upon you, even ready to grasp at you, to tear and devour you, the Mediator's interposing to satisfy for you, would make him more lovely to you; and ye that have gotten interest in him secured, would think yourselves much, unspokenly much, in his common, to say so, and in the debt of his grace. This was the posture that grace found you in, even liable to the stroke of God's drawn sword of justice: and our Lord Jesus on the one side stepped in, and said, Hold, Lord; let that be on me, and let them go free: and upon the other side, there was God's good pleasure, condescending to accept of his offer, and laying, Awake, O sword! and smite the shepherd, and scatter the sheep. What obligation should this lay upon you, to love and be thankful to God, and to the Mediator, who interposed to keep the stroke off you; I say, upon you who are sinners, and apprehensive of wrath? This is Christ's offer; and if ye be tied to him for refuge, he hath changed rooms with you. Ye are much (as I said) in his debt; he hath freed you of your debt, and purchased an abolution for you; and there is no condemnation to you, as it is, Rom. viii. 1. whereas before ye were in a manner condemned already. But the truth is, our Lord Jesus is undervalued, not only by them that apprehend not their hazard, and so make not use of him; but also in a great measure by them that do apprehend it, in so far as they give way to unbelief, and dare scarcely trust to his sacrifice.

The 2d and next thing implied here, is, “That tho' men be naturally under sin, and obnoxious,
Hebrews iii. 7. | Serm. XXXVII.

to the wrath and curse of God, by reason of sin;

yet there is nothing that can take away that sin,

and free them from wrath, but Christ Jesus his

offering up himself a sacrifice for sin.” Therefore

he is so made the offering for sin here, as it is ex-
clusive of all other things; no other thing could do
it; as it is, Heb. x. 14. He by one offering hath
perpetuated for ever these who are sanctified. The
blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin;
Neither is (as it is, Acts iv. 12.) there any other
name under heaven given to sinners, whereby they
can be saved, but by the name of Jesus. I shall not
speak here of the nature of Christ’s offering and sa-
crifice; but sure, tho’ all men be under sin and
wrath by nature, there is no other way to remove it,
except by this sacrifice. Thouands of rams, (as it
is, Micah vi. 7.) and ten thousand rivers of oil, the
first born of the body, will not take away the sin of
the soul; Christ’s offering up of himself, in God’s
account, is only the sin-offering, for the removing
of sin, and wrath from sinners. Is it needful to
prove this? We wish it were not; but the truth is,
it is hardly believed by men and women. Consider
therefore shortly these three things, and ye will
find it true, 1. The certification and peremptoriness
of the curse that follows sin, as we may see, Gal.
iii. 10. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all
things written in the book of the law to do them.
Whatever may be said of God’s absolute sovereignty,
whereof we will not now speak, God hath so order-
ed his covenant, and revealed his will in his word,
that the soul that sin shall die, if a sacrifice be not
put in its room. 2. Consider the ineffectualness of
all other things to satisfy justice. Tho’ we would
multiply offerings, what cares God for thefe? All
the beasts on the mountains are his, – he delights not
in the blood of bulls and goats, as it is, Psal. 1.
Thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of oil,
are rejected; whether we look to penances, (where-
of some foolishly talk) what can these do to God?
or whether we look to mens external performance
of holy duties, or to their inward convictions, chal-
lenges and mournings for sin, there is no suitable
value in these things, to interpose betwixt them and
God’s wrath; suppose that man after the fall could
perform duties without sin: Therefore the apostle,
Heb. x. says, that it was impossible that the blood
of bullocks and of goats could take away sin; there
is no suftainables nor proportionables betwixt the
blood of a beast, and the soul of a sinner; far
less betwixt it and the majesty of God that is wrong-
ed by sin: Wherefore, when the sufferings of a sin-
er are lengthened to twenty thousand millions of
years in hell, the justice of God is never satisfied,
nor never will be to the full; what then can other
things do? 3. There is no other thing that hath a
promise made or annexed to it, nor is there any oth-
er mean laid down, for the removal of sin and
wrath, but Christ offering himself up a sin-offering,
I know some are ready to think, that tho’ there be
no worth in the thing, or duty, yet God of his free
grace will accept of it; but is there a promise of
God’s accepting any other thing for a satis-
faction for sin, or for the removal of wrath, but
Christ’s sacrifice alone? and will or can folks ex-
pect that for which they have no promise? The
inscription is plain and preeminent in this, as namely,
Acts iv. 12. There is no other name under heaven,
whereby a sinner can be saved, but by the name of
Jesus: He is the Door, the Way, the Truth, and
the Life, John xiv. The promises are sea and amen
in him, 2 Cor. i. there is greater necessity to be
through in this, though a common truth, than folks
think of: And for ufe, it aims at these two. (1.)
Upon the one side, to carry down all before, that
pretends to satisfy God, or to make a sinner accep-
table to him. Prayer is no sin-offering; repentance,
convictions, a blameless life &c. are no sin-offerings;
these things are empty, and insignificant, as to the
justification of a sinner, or the obtaining of his par-
don. (2.) Upon the other side, it points out the ab-
solute necessity of making ufe of Christ’s sacrifice,
and of the betaking of ourselves to it, for the sa-
tisfying of God’s justice: If there be a necessity of
the pardon of sin, and of the removing of wrath,
there is then sure a necessity of closing with Christ,
and his sacrifice.

The frit of these ufe speaks to two sorts of per-
sons, with whom the word of God hath no weight,
and who, in effect think to satisfy God with nothing.
1. A profligate, graceless, secure company, who,
because God keeps silence, are disposed to think that
he is like themselves, and that he will never pursue
a quarrel against them; much like to that man spoken
of, Deut. xxix. 18, 19. Who says in his heart, He
shall have peace, though he walk in the imaginati-
on of his own heart, adding drunkenness to thirst.
We have a generation of this sort among us, who
fufh at all threatenings, (alas for them! O that God
would be graciously pleased to make a change on
them; or, if that may not be, that he would rid
us of them!) who will needs live sensually, and as
they lift; who will needs speak and do as they
please, and will not be controuled; and yet, at
the firt hand, will boldly and confidently affer
their hope of heaven, as if they never had been sin-
ners.
S E R M O N XXXVIII.


When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

The use is, to commend, and to demonstrate to us all, the necessity of the use-making of this one offering of Christ. If he be the one offering to take away sin, and if no other will be accepted, then there is a necessity, that he in his offering of himself be made use of: If all be under sin, and if, by the law, sin and death be knit inseparably together (as it is said, The wages of sin is death) and if freedom from sin and wrath, and peace with God, be necessary; then there is a necessity, that sinners be serious in this matter, to get a title to, and interest in this one Offering and Sacrifice of Christ.

In the prosecuting of the use, we shall speak a little to these four things. 1. To some grounds, or reasons, to shew the necessity of sinners using the sacrifice of Christ's Sacrifice or Offering. 2. To this, what it is to make use of this Offering. 3. We shall give a word of advertisement, as to some mistakes that are about it. 4. We shall give some different...
For the first, that is, the reasons to evince the necessity of it; the first of them is that which we hinted at just now, If men were not lying under sin, and obnoxious to wrath, and if there were any other sin-offering, or any other way or means to escape the curse and wrath of God due for sin, there were no such necessity: But seeing that all men are under sin, and under the curse of God and his wrath, because of it, and seeing there is no other thing that can take away sin; then there is an absolute necessity, seriously to make use of it, and to have an interest in this sin-offering. 2. Consider, that the great part of men in the world, and even of them that hear this gospel, do not indeed make use of this offering, tho’ they be some way under the conviction that they are sinners, and that this is the only sin-offering to take away sin: And we suppose, if ye were all put to it, ye could not deny, but ye are sinners, and that nothing can take away sin, but Christ’s offering up of himself as a Sacrifice to satisfy justice. Tho’ some be that grossly ignorant, that they will speak of some other thing, yet generally these that own and maintain the truth of the gospel, are under a conviction that no other thing can take away sin; and yet, even amongst these, there are many that never make use of Christ, and of his Sacrifice, to take away their sins, to remove wrath, and make their peace with God: There were many Jews, who by the daily sacrifices, which typed forth this one offering of Christ, were taught, that there was no other way to come by pardon, and peace with God, but their ufe-making of it; and yet the most part of them, in going about these sacrifices, were flighters of this one Sacrifice; therefore the apostles says of them, Rom. x. 13. “That, “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, they went “about to establish their own righteousness, and “did not submit themselves unto the righteousness “of God.” It is as certain, that many that hear this gospel, and profess Christ to be the only sin-offering, will be disowned of him on this account; therefore many are brought in, saying, Luke xiii. “Did we not hear thee preach in our streets? have “we not eaten and drunken in thy presence?” to whom he shall say, “Depart from me, I never “knew you, ye workers of iniquity;” because (as “if he had said) whatever ye professed, ye never made peace with God, through and by me. And what is the reason, I pray, that so many perish under the gospel, who in word acknowledge this one offering, and that it is it only which takes away sin, but because that, notwithstanding of that conviction and acknowledgment, they are never brought actually to make use of Christ, and of this his Sacrifice and Offering; and if ye think and acknowledge, that there are many that go to hell, that have the knowledge and conviction of this truth, ye also must grant, that it is because they make not conscience to make use of it. 3. Consider, that those there be many of the hearers of the gospel, who do not rest on Christ, yet it is very hard to convince any of them, that they are ready to flight Christ’s Sacrifice: I am sure that both the former will be granted, (1.) That nothing but Christ’s Sacrifice can satisfy justice; (2.) That many do not rest on it, that so perilled: But if we come to the (3.) scarcely shall we find one that will grant (except it be a tender body) that they make not use of him: They will easily be convinced, that adultery is a sin, and that they are guilty of it, if they be so indeed; that drunkenness and Sabbath-breaking are sins; yea, possibly (which is more) that vagu- ing of the mind in duties of worship is a sin, and that they are guilty of it: But it is not so easy to convince them, that they are guilty of the sin of not making use of Christ, and of his Sacrifice; nay, they are so put up with a good opinion of them- selves, that they will laugh at such a challenge; and hence it is, that so few make use of Christ’s Sacrifice, and of his righteousness, because so few are convinced, that they believe not on him; therefore, when the Spirit comes, John xvi. it is said, that he shall convince the world of sin; not because they did whore, drink, swear, &c. tho’ convictions for these sins will not be wanting; but because they believed not in Christ: And hence it is, Luke xiii. 25. that these will not take Christ’s first an- swer, I know you not: What (as if they said) knows thou not us? we have eaten and drunken in thy pre- fence, we have professed faith in thee, and we hope to get heaven by thy righteousness; and yet he shall anfwcr them again peremptorily, Depart from me, I know you not: Not that there will be much to do, or any great difficulty to convince folk in that day or any room left to debate the busines; but he would tell us by this, that many die in this delusion: And if it be a thing that folks are so hardly con- vinced of, had they not need to be seriously solici- tous, that they be not deceived and disappointed? 4. Consider how sad the disappointment will be to sinners one day, when they shall be brought to acknowledge, that they knew that there was no o- ther name given whereby sinners could be saved, but the
the name of Jesus; and yet that they flighted and rejected him. Ye that never seriously minded counting and reckoning with God, do ye think on this, and that the paffing of the fentence, will be upon this ground, to wit, Whether ye have fled to Jesus Christ and make ufe of his Sacrifice or not? Will it not be a fad disappointment, to meet with a doleful Depart from me, on this ground, because tho' there was fome conviction that this was the only Sacrifice and Sin-offering that takes away fin, that yet it was not made ufe of, nor made the ground of your peace with God?

But to the 2d, What is it then to make ufe of this Offering? I know no better way than to explain it from the typical sacrifices, that were under the law; and we may take it up in these three,

1. It implies a thorough conviction of folks liablenefs to the justice of God for fin, and an utter inability in ourselves, and utter emptinefs and impotency in all other means, to fatisfy for fin: Thus they that brought the Sacrifice to the Priet, laid their hand on the head of the beast, by which they acknowledged, that death was due unto them. So then, to have the lively fenfe of the due defect of fin, that is, to have the fenfe of fin, becarfe of death carried about in our bowm, to have the thorough conviction of the emptinefs of all other means of relief, is requisite to the right ufe-making of Christ's Offering. 2. It implies, that there be a look had to the infitution and ordinance of God, appointing this Sacrifice to be the mean of the redemption of finners: Therefore, in thofe Sacrifices that were offered for fin, there was a refpeét had to God's covenant; wherein were not only promifes relating to external cleaning, and to admission to Church privileges, but promifes also relating to inward cleaning, and the pardon of fin, which was the great end of thofe Sacrifices; and the looking to the infitution of this Sacrifice, is the ground that leads us in to take up the end of Christ's Sacrifices, and is a warrant for our faith, in the ufe-making thereof; being the only Sacrifice that expiates fin, and holds off wrath: And if these two things be not carried along in the ufe-making of this Sacrifice, to wit, the conviction of fin, and the liablenefs to wrath; and God's infitution and appointment of this Sacrifice, to take away fin, and to avert wrath; our ufe-making of it is but will-worship. 3. It implies this, that when the finner is walking under the fenfe of his fin, and the emptinefs and ineffectualnefs of all other things, to remove fin and wrath (as David hath it, Pfal. li. 16. Thou defireft not Sacrifice, thou delightsft not in burnt offerings) there muft be a looking to the worth of Christ, and of his Sacrifice, that is appointed to take away fin, and hold off wrath; and the soul's actual applying of his Offering to itself; as we may fee in the iv. vi. and xvi. chapters of Leviticus, where there are fev- eral Sacrifices appointed to be offered for feveral fins, and particularly that of the Scape-goat, on the head whereof, the Priet for the people was to lay his hands: In which was implied not only their acknowledgment of fin, and of their deferving death; and of God's appointment of that to be a typical offering for the typical taking away of fin; but these two things further were implied, 1. That they did take the burden of their fins, which neither they themselves, nor any other could bear, and laid it on Christ; when justice did put at them for their debt (to speak fo) they drew a bill on Christ, as their Cautioner, to anfwer it; and as they did put the debt in his hand, to be paid by him; fo they liptened and trusted the weight of their souls to him, and to another: So that, when God was purifying them for their debt, faying, as it were, I will have payment of you, or else you muft die; they brought the Sacrifice to the Priet, to pleafe God typically, with an eye to Christ typified thereby: Even fo, for finners to make ufe of Christ's Sacrifices, is, in the thorough conviction of fin, and of deferved wrath, to flee unto Jesus Christ, and to put him in their room; being content and defirous, that he be their Cautioner, and undertake for them, and fatisfy for their debt: Yea, putting him actually to it, to pay their debt; fo that they have no other anfwer to any challenge for finbut this, The Cautioner that I have betaken myfelf to, and put in my room, will pay this debt, and anfwer for it: The 2d act of faith is this, When they have betaken themselves to him, and to his Sacrifice, they acquiefce in, and reft upon it alone, for obtaining of the fenfence of abfolution: which was also implied in the people their laying their hands, by the Priet, on the head of the Sacrifice: For as it implied their acknowledging that they could not pleafe nor fatisfy God of themselves, nor by any other way or mean; fo it implied, that according to God's covenant, they expected his abfolving of them, becaufe of that Sacrifice; and that, tho' they were defperate by themselves to fatisfy, yet they had faith in God's covenant, that the Sacrifice they offered, would typically fatisfy him: Even fo, the believer draws the conclusion from Christ's Sacrifice, according to the terms of the covenant, that he hath abfolution; and refts on and acquiefces in it: And this is called Trusting or Confiding in Christ;
when not only he casteth himself on him, but hath confidence, that the bill which he hath drawn on him will be answered by him; which is founded on the covenant, in which it is said, Of all that come unto me, I will put none away; as it is, John vi. 37. Him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out; and Zechar. xiii. There is a fountain opened in the house of David, for sin, and for uncleannesses, on which ground believers expect the benefit of washing, on their performing the condition of the covenant: And when David, Psal. li. 7, prays, Purge me, it holds out the act of faith, drawing the bill on Christ: And when he says, I shall be clean and white as snow; it holds out his confident resting on, and acquiescing in Christ, for cleansing. And this is the reason, why some express faith, by cleaving to Christ; others, by confident resting on him, or by assurance: And there may be a truth in both; because the one looks on faith according to the first act of cleaving to him; and the other takes up faith according to the other act of assured resting on him, or confiding in him, and on, or in his sacrifice offered up once for all. In a word, to make use of this once offering for sin, is so to make use of him, as to put him in our room, and ourselves some way in his room: Not to dare to count and reckon with justice; nay, not to dare, as it were, to count with Christ; but leaving Christ in the flour (to speak so) and running away from reckoning with justice, to hide ourselves under him, who can count to the utmost farthing: Even as when God commanded Abraham to offer up his son Isaac, and when he was lifting up his hand to slay him, there came a voice from heaven, Abraham hold thy hand, and a ram is provided, and Isaac is loosed, and taken down from off the altar, and the ram is put in his stead and place; so there is here a changing of rooms with Christ, according to that sweetest word, 2 Cor. v. ult. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we who had no righteousness, might be made the righteousnes of God in him.

3. If it be so very difficult, and yet so absolutely necessary, to make use of Christ, and especially in his offering up of himself for the sins of his people; there is ground here for warning, and advertisement, to walk tenderly in this matter, that this sacrifice be not slighted, that this one offering be not neglected, as we would not have sin lying at our door. And here we shall point at three sorts of persons, who may be counted frighters and neglecters of this offering. The 1st sort are these, who think to make their peace with God, without minding the necessity of the interwining of any thing betwixt him and them; and these go on several grounds, or are of several sorts. 1. Some are utterly careless how their peace be made, or whether it be made or not: They hope for it, and think to come at it, but cannot give an account, whether they will come at it or not; and they are careless to know the way. 2. Others go upon their presumption: They think God loves them, because they love themselves; and tho' they know they have sin, yet they think God will not be so ill, as to reckon with them; they think they are sure that God loves them, but they cannot give a ground for it. 3. Others think, God is merciful, and therefore they conclude that they will be pardoned: They cannot conceive God to be like man in his mercy, but to be far beyond him, (as indeed he is infinitely in some respect) and therefore, because when man is merciful, he sometimes seeks no satisfaction; so neither will God, think they; nor considering, that tho' God be merciful, that yet he will not shew mercy to the prejudice of his justice, but will needs have it satisfied: Such think, on the matter at least, that they would have gotten mercy, tho' Christ had never died. It is true, If God had not been merciful, never a finner had gotten mercy; yet that is not the ground of his shewing mercy, otherwise all the world might expect mercy: For he is, and ever was, gracious and merciful in himself; and therefore there must be some other ground and way for obtaining of pardon; else it cannot be expected, because of the alone simple and abstract consideration of his mercy: And yet many will needs expect it on this ground, without respect to the Mediator's purchase. A 2d sort, are they that take the legal way, for making their peace with God: Not as if they thought to appear before God without sin, and holy, as the covenant of works requireth; but if they sin, they will make amends: And it is either something negative that they have not done, or something positive that they have done, or some internal qualifications, that they rest upon. 1. Something negative, they have not been so ill as other folks; and if they go to hell, they think few will go to heaven: They have done wrong to none; and if they were about to die, they think, and, it may be, say, that they will leave a good name behind them, on the account of their harmless walk; like that Pharisee, they can say, Lord, I thank thee, I am not like other men, nor like this Publican: They are no drunkards, no oppressors, they neither curse nor swear; and when they see any profane persons, they are put up with a good
a good opinion of themselves, because they are not
as profane as they. Or, 2. They will come a
further length, and positively do many duties, upon
which they rest; and whereof they are ready to
boast, with the fame Pharisee, who vaunted, I go
twice a week, I give tithes of all I possess: If any
duty be performed, or any good be done by them,
their fingers are ready (to lay fo) to flock to it: But,
3. and especially, If there be any inward work, as
if there be any liberty, or motion of the affections
in prayer; if there be, at hearing the word, some
convictions sharper at one time than at another; if
there be any fort of repentance, reeling, and fad-
ness for sin, &c. thefe, they think, will do their
turn: It is moft certain, and might be cleared,
both from the word of God, and from experience,
that many hundreds of profefitors dafh, and perifh
on this ftumbling-block; Isaiah xlviil. 1, 2. where
the Lord is speaking of a people, that made men-
tion of his name, and fware by him, but not in
truth, nor in righteousmess; of whom he fays, that
they call and count themselves of the holy city, and
fly themselves upon the God of Israel; and the
ground of it is, their reeling on external duties, of
failing and prayer, and the like: Expectation of
happiness grounded on some fcklefs performances,
cuts the throats of many and civil and difcreet men,
thafs not grossly profane. A 2d fort do not al-
together flight and negleep Chrift himself, but they
flight and negleep his offering; as if they would in
a manner make ufe of himfelf, but not of his sacri-
fice; as Matt. xix. and Mark x. there is a man
spoken of, that comes to Chrift, would foim be at
heaven, and asks, Good Master, what fhall I do
that I may inherit eternal life? and yet he was
going on the grounds of his own righteousmess:
This is exceeding subtle and deceitful; and there-
fore ye would take the better notice of it, and
how it is fallen into. A man may come to Chrift,
as God, fay pardon of fin (and some think the
most ignorantly and erroneously, that Chrift the
Son is more compaffionate and ready to pardon than
the Father) and may fek pardon from him; but
not for his fake, or on his account: For there is a
difference between making Chrift the Object of
our worship, and making ufe of him as Mediator. There
are many that have prayed to Chrift as God, and
ought pardon of fin from him; who never prayed
to obtain pardon, by vertue of his offering. Folk
may also defire help from Chrift, to enable them to
do duties, that they may thereby work out the
work of their own salvation, and be helped this
way to make their peace with God, who do not

ground the making of their peace with God on his
offering alone: These things are exceeding frequent
in peoples practice, who will pray to Chrift for
fuch and fuch things, and yet not found their ex-
pectation of them upon this offering, or his right-
oufness: If we would make ufe of Chrift's offering
fingly and rightly, we would eschew these, and all
other wrong ways.

4. It may be asked then, What are the evidences
that may give a perfon fome clearenees, that he is
making ufe of Chrift's righteousmess aright, and
that it is not his own righteousmess, nor the making
ufe of Chrift's only as he is God, that fultanis him?
I anfwer, that this is indeed a myftery; and will
require searching, and watching to observe our own
condition. And more things concur than one or
two, to make a full discovery of it: In speaking to
this, as we defire to strengthen the pre furnption of
none, fo we fhall labour to fhun the weakening of
the faith of any foun believer. There are then
three fix or seven differencing evidences, or charac-
ters of a perfon, that is rightly making ufe of
Chrift's offering, which differencce him from others:
And, 1. One that truly makes ufe of Chrift's offering,
hath not only been brought to fee his need of
it, but his natural propention and readiness to mis-
ken it, and refi upon other things beside it, for
the making of his peace; whereas another man, who
does not rightly make ufe of it, tho' he may fe
his fin, and fo his need of it; yet he fees not, nei-
ther will take with the tendency, propenfeness, and
inclination of his heart, to refi upon fome other
thing beside it: See this differencce in Paul, before
and after converfion, Phil. iii. Before he was con-
verted, he studied, as he thought, all the right-
oufness of the law; and no doubt offered facrifices,
which implied the acknowledgment of fin; and he
thought that all was well with him: Therefore he
fays, Touching the righteousmess of the law, he
was blamelefs; and verfe 6. These things that were
gain to me, orfe these things that I placed my right-
oufness in, I though the more facrifices that I of-
fere, I had the more to buy my peace by; he fees,
that in his ftudying of holines, he was seeking to
make a fock in himfelf: But after his converfion,
he casts all these, as to leaming to them, or making
them any ground of his peace with God, or of his
justification before him; he betakes himfelf only to
Chrift's rightoufness, and counts them to be but
lofs. I would think it a good evidence for folks,
not only to fee the loosenees of their hearts in duty,
and that to be a fin; but to fee, when ought went
well with them, the inclination of their hearts ready

H h 2
to account that to be gain, and to reft upon it: There is such an humour and natural inclination in all; and it is a good token when it is discovered, and becomes a burden, and the ground of a challenge; not only that they have finned, in this, and that, and the other duty, but that they have gone a whoring after their feckles performances, to the prejudice of their esteem of Chrift, and of his righteousness: Before the law came (faith Paul) Rom. vii. I was alive, I thought I had a flock to do my own turn; but when the commandment came, sin received, and I died. There are many that will be convinced of fin in their performances, that will not be convinced of this finful inclination to put these in Chrift’s room. A fecond difference or evidence is this: One that aims to make ufe of Chrift’s offering and righteousness, not only their fins will be an exerfice to them, how to win over them to Chrift, but it will be their exerfice also, how to win over their graces and duties to him; it will be an exerfice to them, not only to have fuch a fin in their duty taken away, but how to win over the duty itfelf, that they fumble not on it, to the prejudice of theirtrufting to Chrift: whereas another man, when his duties go well with him, it is easy to him to win over them, as he thinks, becaufe he fatisfafts with them. Paul, Phil. iii. fees not only while he was in nature, that he counted something gain before Chrift, but after conversion, he finds an inclination to it; and therefore, in opposition to this inclination, he doth with a doublefled, cry down all things, and count them but dung and lofs for the excellency of the knowledge of Chrift; taking in his gracious actions, as well as others: For the words in the text and context tell us, that he is speaking of duties performed by him, even after conversion; and that he found a neceffity to cut away the good as well as the bad, in the point of justification: As a man, that is in a ftorm at sea, hath a greater reftendencies to cast over-board, filks, fattins, velvets, and other fuch fine things, than that which is more bafe, and of lefs worth; fo he found it more difficult, and was put to some hardier exerfice, to be quit of his duties, that they fhould not flck to him, than to be rid of his fins. Is there any fuch exerfice as this amongft folks, to be put to wrestling with their duties, not as being angry at them as fuch, but how to get them as it were cast over-board; to be jealous of any good in them, or done by them, that it pre-judge not their esteem of Chrift; to be bufy in well-doing all the day, and in the evening to count all their doing but lofs; and to renounce it utterly, as to any pulling-up by it, or as to the making of their peace with God thereby? A third evidence is this, One that is fingle in making ufe of Chrift’s facrifice, will be exercifed and dilquifed, when his duty is done, till there be, for acceptance, a faying and refting on Chrift’s righteousness. There are two forts that utterly fail, and fall short here, 1. Some that are content with fin, and make lies their refuge. 2. Others that are fatisfied with duty, if it go well with them, and promife themselves acceptance on that alone account, neglecting Chrift. But the believer hath (as I juft now faid) one exerfice of faith, how to be quit of fin; and another new exerfice of it, how to be freed from refting on duty, and how to be fingly engaged unto, and to reft upon Chrift: his mind is not quiet in all his duties, till he come hither, even to be found in Chrift, not having his own righteousness, but his. It is a good token, when folks are not only exercifed to have fin mortified, and duties going with them, but alfo to have their peace with God grounded on Chrift, and not on duty; hence it is, that a Chriftian will fometimes be taken up a whole day in duty, and yet have bit little, or no peace, becaufe he would be over, and through all duties, to refting on Chrift, which he wins not at to his fatisfaction. 4thly, One that is fingle in ufe-making of Chrift, and of his offering, hath a fear of mitaking this offering of Chrift, and that fome other thing be put in his room, and he miifent or neglecd. There will be not only a fear, left he fin, and come short in the fuitable performance of fuch a duty, and left he fall under wrath; but alfo fear and jealoufly, left, in his unbelief and felfifhnefs, he be going wrong in the ufe-making of Chrift, and of his facrifice; as is implied in the word, Heb. iv. 1, where the apoftle, having fpoken of many of the Israelites their unbelief in the former chapter, fays, in the beginning of this, Let us therefore fear, left a promise being left of entering into his reft, any of us should come short of it, to wit, through unbelief: Be holily jealous (as if he had faid) left, as it is chap. iii. 12, 13, there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. In a word, he will be fufccepting the exerfice of his faith, as much as any thing; a natural man will fometimes, it may be, fufpect his duties, but hardly will he be brought to fufpect his faith, otherwife he could not have the peace that he hath, fuch as it is: This may alfo be confirmed from that poor man’s prayer to Chrift, Mark ix. Lord, I believe, help my unbelief. He dare not well truft his own faith. 5thly, They that are fingle in their ufe-making of Chrift’s offering; not only fee-themselves finners
finners, but they carry along with them the discovery of the naughtiness of every thing that is best in them; when they see that, to which others trust so much, so very unsuitable, and that they are far short of what they should be at, they dare not own, nor look on it to boast of it, but it is a burden to them, to see so much sin in it: It is nothing to see sin in some outward actions, and in that which is directly contrary to God's law; but it is much to see sin in our bent things, as in our faith in God, in our love to him, and in our ends in holy duties. A legal man will confess it may be readily, that he sins in every thing; but he covers all with this, that he hath a good heart to God, or a good end: The believer on the contrary sees all his good so naughtily, that it is tasteless to him; he never gets any thing to rest on, or that can bear his weight to confide in, till he comes to Christ's sacrifice. 6thly, Such as are aiming rightly to make use of Christ's offering and sacrifice, esteem and think exceeding much of it; therefore they adventure heaven and their eternal salvation on it: it is that which cheers and delights them most, that Christ hath stepped in, and engaged to do that for them, which neither themselves, nor any other person, or thing could do; The life (faith the apostle, Gal. ii.) that I now live in the flesh, is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me; And 1 Tim. i. 15. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came to the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief. And John heartily, Rev. i. 7. To him that loved us, and washed us in his own blood, &c. But they that endeavour not, neither aim rightly to make use of Christ's sacrifice, think little or nothing of it; they are not made glad, nor are their hearts lifted up with spiritual joy because of it: The good and glad news of a Saviour, are not the chief ground of their consolation, as they are to the believer. This evidence is somewhat general, yet sure as well as the former. O but it is matter of much wonder to the believer, when he thinks how that, when the stroke of justice was ready to come on him, Christ should have interposed between him and the fatal deadly blow! But others esteem not of it, and therefore cannot make use of it. 7thly, They that are rightly making use of Christ's sacrifice, find it to be a difficult thing, and that which will cost them wrestling, to get it made use of aright; they breathe after it, and yet win not to that which they would be at in it: O! as David cries, Psal. li. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be white as snow: they know not well what way to make use of it to their satisfaction, they would make so much use of it, or how to vent and exercise their faith on it; and when it comes to actual believing, and to the acting of their faith, they find it to be like a smooth and slippery stone, that they cannot easily hold their feet on. So Paul says, Phil. iii. I count all things but dung, that I may win Christ, and that I may be found in him; he cared not what he cast overboard, that he might win to that land, even to Christ and his righteousness; like see-men in great hazard, who cast all over board, to win to the shore; it is even so with the believer, he sees that there is such hazard to go wrong, and that it is so difficult to be right, even to make the heart to submit to the way of faith, and to abide by it singly; that he is content to suffer the loss of all things, if he may be right there: But on the contrary, a man that relies on his own righteousness, be a difficulty what will to him, faith is no difficulty to him; he may have fear to come short of heaven sometimes, but he thinks that he is always exercising his faith. In a word, the believer ordinarily believes best, when he hath the deepest, and most kindly impression of his sin: As for the legal man, he can believe well, as he thinks, when he hath no challenge for sin; but when he is challenged for sin, his faith fails him. Now, from all that hath been said, ye may see the necessity of making use of this sacrifice; and how wary, and cautiously it should be done, that ye may steer a right course between gross profligacy and presumption, either of which will ruin and destroy the soul: The Lord Jesus himself be your Steersman, and Pilot, that ye by his skillful conduct may steer the port, and hold off these rocks, on which thousands of souls have split, and make shipwreck.
ISAIAH lii. 10. — When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

SIN was easily brought into the world; a little business brought in sin, and the curse and wrath of God with it; and, without any great difficulty, men can continue in sin, and by under God’s wrath and curse: But the taking away of sin, and the satisfying of the justice of God for it is no easy matter, that (if we may so speak) did put heaven and earth both to it; there was such a contrivance of this way, and such a mean chosen, and made use of, that sin might be removed, and the curse taken away, as the like was never heard of.

The intimation and manifestation of this way, is in the first part of this verse, Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; in God’s council, and by his pleasure, it was contrived, and the way found out; and the mean is set down in these words, When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin; the Mediator, even he who was the spotless Lamb of God, in whose mouth was found no guile, was bruised, and put to sad suffering, to get this effectuate; that the curse might be removed from sinners, he was made the sin-offering.

We shew, that Jesus Christ is the only sin-offering, by which sin is taken away, and that it is implied here; so that it is denied to all other things, or means, to have any efficacy, virtue or merit in them, as to the removing of sin, and the curse brought on by it. This is, I say, so peculiarly applied to Christ’s offering, that it is denied to every thing else; which shews, 1. How much sinners are obliged to Christ, who, when no other thing could do it, interposed himself. 2. The necessity of making use of this one offering, without which never soul can be perfected or saved. He is the alone foundation of sinners peace, and of all the consolation that they can have in the promises of God.

Now, to proceed, and to hint at some few things more from the words, wherein the end, and nature of Christ’s sufferings are set forth. He in his sufferings, and offering up of himself, did step into the room of the sinful elect, that by justice exading of him the debt that was due by them, they might escape, and be set free; hence observe, 1st, “That when there was no other thing, nor mean, that could sufficiently satisfy divine justice, or be a sacrifice for sin; our Lord stepped to, and undertook, and became the sacrifice to take away sin;” according to that often cited Psalm, Psal. xl. 7, 8. Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, in burnt-offering thou hast no pleasure: He is not speaking of what God required in the law, as typical; for he required sacrifices and offerings in that respect, but not to be a propitiation for the sins of the elect world, because they could not do it: And then follows, Lo, I come, or I am here; wine ear hast thou bored; it is, Heb. x. A body hast thou given unto me; which sets out his being put in a capacity to be a sacrifice; I delight to do thy will, O my God. Here there are the four things implied. 1. A liableness in the elect to the justice of God for sin; and as to all other means and ways of relief, but by this one sacrifice, a derperateness and impossibility: And considering the sentence, which God had pronounced, The day that thou eaths, thou shalt surely die; and, Curseth is every one that continues not in all things written in the law, to do them; no sacrifice can be accepted but this only; thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil have no access; he did not in that respect require these, neither would he capitate on these terms. 2. That, when no other sacrifice could do the turn, Christ Jesus came in, and was content to interpose, and to be the sacrifice for sin; Lo, faith he, I come, I am here ready to satisfy for my elect people: For this is an old design, and he had undertaken from eternity to carry it on. 3. There is implied here a great willingness, a delight from and heart from condensing in the Mediator, to be the sacrifice; he steps in affectionately in the room of the elect, as the sacrifice for them, to receive the stroke of justice, that they may escape and go free: I delight to do thy will, O my God; This is God’s will, as to the work of redemption, as it is, John vi. 38. I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and John xvii. 4. I have finished the work thou gavest me to do. That will and this work is all
SERM. XXXIX.


**Interposed to come in sinners room; to satisfy for their sins; so his death and sufferings are really the performing of that undertaking; and his death and sufferings are so to be looked on, and confidered by us an offering for sin.** Or thus, "Chrift’s death is the fin offering that satisfie the “justice of God, in the room of elect sinners." This is the sum or compend of all that is spoken of his sufferings. If then it be asked, what meant they all? Here it is, he was made a sin-offering. We shall clear it a little in these three or four parts, or branches. 1. Chrift is properly a sin-offering, or a sacrifice for fin; he is properly the propitiatory sacrifice for fin, that satisfies the justice of God for the sins of the elect. 2. This sacrifice was especially offered by him, in his death and sufferings; it is his suffering and humiliation that is most properly this sacrifice, for it is that which is related here. 3. That by Chrift’s offering up of himself, he was not only outwardly pinched, but his soul was deeply affected, and troubled: In satisfying the fin-revenging justice of God, both his soul and body were strained, and streffed. 4. By his sufferings, there is a sufficient satisfaction given to justice for the sins of his people, a propitiation, or propitiatory sacrifice, that makes God propitious to elect sinners: As in satisfying the justice of God for sin, all other things are denied to have a hand; so there is a sufficient efficacy, and worth in his sacrifice to do the turn, and by God it is accepted as such; and so there is a fair way made to them, for whom he offers this sacrifice, to escape fin, and the wrath and curfe of God, and to be set free.

As for the first of these, to wit, That our Lord Jesus, in his dying and suffering, was properly the propitiatory sacrifice, or is properly a propitiatory Sacrifice for the taking away of fin: To clear it a little we would consider, First, That sacrifices are fummary ways taken in scripture. (1.) Sometimes they are taken improperly for duties; as alms, prayers, &c. Pial. 11. *The sacrifice of a broken heart thou wilt not desife:* So also, Heb. xiii. 15, 16. (2.) They are taken more properly for such sacrifices as were offered under the law; as of bullocks, lambs, rams and goats; yet none of these was the true propitiatory sacrifice, as is clear, Heb. x. 4. *It was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away fin:* But Chrift’s sacrifice is properly the propitiatory sacrifice, it being by this sacrifice that believers under the old testament became partakers of redemption, and obtained remiffion of fins, as well as believers do now under the new. If it be then asked, What is necessary to a sacrifice:

2) By, From its being said, *When thou shalt make, or when his foul shall make itself, or he himself shall make himself an offering for sin; Observe,* *That as Chrift undertook, and by undertaking*
facrifice properly so taken? I answer, These four things, (all which we find to be in Christ's sacrifice,) 1. That there be some thing, or matter, set apart to be offered to God in the room of some other thing, as it was in the typical sacrifices. 2. That there be some appointed to offer the facrifice, that there be some set apart for that very thing. 3. That there be a killing or destroying of the thing that is offered in a facrifice; which especially in the sin-offering was necessary, to wit, that it should be killed, or destroyed; as we see in Exod. xxix. and Leviticus frequently; This had a signification, and the Lord would thereby point out man's great guilt, and the necessity of a Mediator, in order to the obtaining of pardon; for there could be no remission or pardon of sin without blood, as it is Heb. ix. 22. therefore the sinner behoved either to die himself, or to have another to die for him, and in his room. 4. The facrifice behoved to be offered according to the manner prescribed by God, as to all rites and ceremonies enjoined. Now we may see all these in Christ's facrifice; for, 1st, He himself is the Sacrifice, Heb. vii. 26. 26. Heb. ix. 26. Heb. x. 10. and frequently else where in that epistle; and 1 Pet. ii. 24. Who his ownself bare our sins in his ownbody on the tree: And when he had offered up himself as a facrifice, be sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; he is the alone facrifice, that comes properly in the room of elect sinners. 2. As there behoved to be one to offer the facrifice, so Christ Jesus is the Priest, that offered up the facrifice of himself: He is not only the Sacrifice, but the Priest: And in this he differed from other Priests, Heb. vii. 26. Such an high Priest became us, Who is holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; and then follows, Who needs not daily, as these High-Priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people; for this he did once, when he offered up himself. There are three things ordinarily attributed to Christ, as to his Sacrifice, to wit, That he was the Sacrifice, the Altar, and the Priest; 1. He was the Sacrifice, in respect of his human nature: Which we are not so to look upon, abstracting and dividing it from his divine nature; for tho' he suffered in the flesh; yet it was the same Person, that was God, that suffered. He was the Altar, by which his facrifice received a special excellency on his sufferings, and made them to be of such worth and value; therefore, Heb. ix. 14. it is said, That he through the eternal Spirit offered up himself without spot unto God; it was the suffering of the Person that was God, that made the facrifice to be accepted. 2. He was the Priest, and that according to both his natures, each nature concurring, and that jointly, as in one Person, to the making of the facrifice offered up to God acceptable. 3dly, We have in him a real destruction; but do not mistake the word: It is not so to be understood, as if he were annihilated, or had been utterly destroyed, and undone; but the meaning is this, that he was killed or put to death, and his Soul separate from his Body: in which respect, he ceased to be, what he was before, for a time; having been really slain, dead and buried. And, 4thly, All this was according to God's prescription and appointment in the covenant of redemption; This commandment (faith he, John x. 18.) have I received of my Father, to wit, that I should lay down my Life for my sheep; and most emphatically, he says, John xiv. 13. As my Father gave me commandment, even so (mark, even so, most exactly in conformity to the commandment) do I: It was all, to every circumstance, ordered according to the good pleasure of God, who was pleased thus to bruise him, and to put him to grief.

The 1st Use of it serves to teach us how to conceive and consider of Christ's death and sufferings rightly, to wit, even as a facrifice designd by God, to come in the room of elect sinners: And how to look upon his death; not as the ordinary death of ordinary or meer men, who by necessity of nature die; but to look on it, as being appointed of God to be a facrifice, properly so taken, for the sins of his people.

2. This serves to clear some truths, concerning our Lord Jesus his facrifice: For we must consider it, as satisfying to justice, and meritoriously procuring the ecapeing from wrath, and salvation of them for whom he interpolated. It is from the grofs ignorance, or from the wicked denial of this ground, that the damnable deniers of Christ's satisfaction, do also deny the propriety of his facrifice on earth, and bound it to heaven; whereas it is bounded to his death; tho' by virtue of this one offering, he continues to intercede for us in heaven.

3. It teaches sinners what is the native Use which they should make of this facrifice: They should look upon it, as the only facrifice to prevent eternal death and the curse of God; and so it demonstrates to us, that either Jesus Christ must be received by faith, and his facrifice reflected on, or we must resolve to
to meet with wrath, and the curse of God ourselves in our own persons.

4. It serves to clear us anent the way and tract of grace; to wit, how it came to pass, that our Lord, who was innocent, and without sin, was so bruised, and put to grief: He came to be a propitiation for the sins of his people, and filled himself in our room, as our Cautioner, as a sin-offering for us. It would doubtless quash many questions, and doubts, that arise in the hearts of believers, if it were well understood: They may say, We should have been in such and such a sad condition, this and that terrible thing would have come on us, if he had not interpos’d; never enough can these words be spoken, and thought of, that we have, 2 Cor. v. 21. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

5. It serves for notable consolation to believers, who have betaken themselves to Christ, and have many challenges for sin to buckle with, that his death was to be properly a sacrifice for sin, and was so accepted of God in their room: So that ye see the right up-taking of Christ’s death, is a matter of no little moment; Christ crucified being the very fulness of the gospel, it helps much to keep alive the impression of our sinfulness, and of the goodness of God and gives us directions how to escape wrath, by putting him in our room. There is nothing wherein folks more readily miscarry, in making of their peace with God, than in not making the right use of Christ, and of his sacrifice and death: Some praying for pardon of sin from him, and not for him or for his sake, when they know not what they are saying, as we hinted at before: Some praying for strength from him for duty, that they may do for themselves; not considering that we are justified by his interposing in our room, and by faith’s closing with him, under that consideration, as filling himself at the bar of justice; and the Lord accepting of him in the room of elect sinners: This being well considered, gives to faith much clearness how to take him up, when the soul honestly aims to partake of the benefit of his sufferings.

Secondly, For clearing this a little further, we would know, that there are (as divines observe) four or five ways, how the death of Christ is to be considered; or how Christ, in procuring by his death redemption, peace, and pardon to sinners is holden forth in scripture. 1. He purchases redemption, and pardon of sin meritoriously, or he merits it by his death; this respects the value of Christ’s sufferings and satisfaction: So that, if we consider Christ in himself, and the elect in themselves; his death and these sufferings are more, than if all the elect had suffured eternally in hell. 2. His death is considered as satisfaction; and this looks to the wrong that men by sin have done to God: That the finite and feeble creature durst be so malapert as to break God’s command, it required a satisfaction equivalent to the wrong done; tho’ the word satisfaction be not in scripture, yet the thing is; Christ Jesus, for the restoring of God to his honour that was, as to the manifestation of it, wronged by man’s sin, comes in to perform the will of God, and to satisfy for the wrong done him by man, that it may be made known that God is holy and just, who will needs avenge sin on his own Son, the holy and innocent Cautioner, when he interpos’d in the room of the sinner: Which vindicates the spotless justice and sovereignty of God as much as, if not more than if he had exacted the satisfaction off the sinners themselves; as it is, Rom. iii. 16. To declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. 3. Christ’s death is considered as a redemption of man from sin, the law, and the curse, because liable to a debt which he cannot of himself pay; and his death was in this respect a paying of the debt that man was owing, and loosing of the captive and imprisoned sinner: Even as when a piece of land is mortgaged, and a person comes in, and pays that for which it was mortgaged: So Jesus Christ comes in, and (as it were) asks, What are these men owing? and what is due to them? Is it answered, They are sinners; death and the curse are due to them: Well, faith he, I will take their debt on myself, I will pay their ransom, by undergoing all that was due to them; He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, (faith the Apostle, Gal. iii. 13.) being made a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come on us Gentiles. And so Christ’s death, in this respect, is to be looked on as a laying down of the same price that justice would have exacted of men: His death is the paying of our ransom, and satisfying of the account that was over our head. 4. His death is considered, as it furthered the work of the redemption of elect sinners, by a powerful annulling of the obligation that was against us, and by a powerful overcoming of all enemies that kept us captive: He grappled and yoked with the devil, and that wherein he seemed to be strongest, and overcome him; he tore the obligation that stood over sinners heads, as it is, Col. iii. 14, 15. Blotting out the handwriting.
writing of ordinances that was against us, and that was contrary to us, he took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it: In this respect, tho' his death be one of the lowest items of his humiliation; yet considering him as, in it, prevailing over the devil, and other enemies, he is to be looked on as powerfully working, and efficaciously perfecting our salvation: In the former respect, he pays God the debt that was due by sinners; in the latter respect, considering the devil, and spiritual enemies, as so many jailors, keeping sinners prisoners; he by his death, wrings, as it were, the keys out of his hands, and lets the prisoners free.

5. Christ's death is considered (as it is in the text) as an offering and sacrifice for sin: In this respect, it looks to God as displeased with man; and our Lord Jesus interposes to pacify him, and to make him well pleased, and that by the means of his death, God's peace, favour and friendship may be recovered to poor sinful men. All these considerations of the death of Christ, are but one and the same upon the matter; yet, thus diversified, they serve to shew, how unexpressibly much sinners are obliged Christ; what great advantages they have by him; and what a desperate condition they are in, who are without him, having nothing to satisfy justice, nor to pay their debt with.

2dly, We said, that this sacrifice was especially offered by him in his death; therefore he is said to offer this sacrifice on the cross: He himself, as Peter hath it, 1 Pet. ii. 24, bare our sins in his body on the tree. Heb. ix. at the close, and Heb. x. 14. it is said, That he once offered up himself to bear the sins of many, and by his once offering he hath perfected for ever those who are sanctified. So that his offering is to be applied to that which he suffered on earth, before he ascended, and it is in this respect, that he is a propitiatory sacrifice; tho', as I said, the virtue thereof is still communicated by him, now when he is in heaven.

3dly. This serves to remove two errors, about Christ's sacrifice. The 1st is that which bounds and limits Christ's offering and priesthood to his going to heaven, thereby to enervate the efficacy of his sufferings and death; quite contrary to this scripture, wherein the prophet, explicating his sufferings on earth, calleth them an offering for sin. The 2d is that blasphemous conceit and fancy of the Papists, who account their abominable Mass a propitiatory sacrifice for taking away the sins of the quick and of the dead; which, as it is most horrid blasphemy, so it is most expressly against this text; for, if Christ's sacrifice, for the taking away of sin be peculiarly applied to his humiliation and death, which brought with it such a change, as made him not to be for a time, what he was before; then certainly there can be nothing of that now, which can bear that name; there being no other thing, to which the properties of a real sacrifice can agree; but this only. 3. I said, that Christ's offering up of himself, a sacrifice, was in his soul as well as in his body; and that he was therein obnoxious to the wrath of God. That is, as he stood Cautioner for the elect, and had the cup of wrath put in his hand, he suffered not only in his body, but also and mainly in his soul, which the Jews could not reach; and he is here holden out as a sin-offering in his soul: Yea, considering that it was the wrath of God, and his curse due to the elect, that he had to deal with, his soul was more capable to be affected with it than his body; hence he says, when no hand of man touched him, John xii. 27. Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? and Matt. xxvi. 38. and Luke xxii. 44. Now is my soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; and being in an agony, he prayed, &c. That which looked like strong armies muttered, and drawn up against him, was not the soldiers that came to take him, nor the bodily death which was quickly to follow, but it was the Father's coming with his awakened sword, to exact of him the debt due by the elect, and to be avenged on him for their wrongs, and his being to step in into their room, and to be smitten with that awakened and furished sword, and to offer himself the sacrifice, as he had long before engaged: Here, O here, was the heat and strength of the battle!


Ufe. This shews, 1. What a dear price Christ paid for sinners. 2. The severity of the justice of God, in exacting the elect's debt off the Cautioner. 3. How much we are obliged to the Cautioner, who so willingly undertook the debt, and was so ready to pay it, though it cost him not only external and bodily sufferings, but soul-sufferings, and put him to encounter with God's curse and wrath. We are persuaded, could we conceive, and speak aright of these sufferings, that there is a great mystery here: And really it is a wonder that we are not more affected with it, even to confider, that such miserable creatures should be purgied by justice, that can do nothing to avert the stroke of it; and that such a great and glorious Person, as the Son of God, should interpose himself; and that the Father should spare the poor sinful enemies, and make way
way, for them to escape, by the diverting of his justice from pursuing them, and by making it take hold of the Son of his bosom, exacting the debt severely from him. O what a wonder is this! that the Lord should pass by the enemy, and satisfy himself of his own Son! yea, that God should take on himself the place of a Mid-man, and satisfy himself! That God should be in Christ reconciling the world to himself! This, this is the wonder: Here in infinite wisdom, pure and spotless justice, holiness and faithfulness, grace and mercy, to the admiration of men and angels, appear and shine forth most radiantly. It can hardly be known, in which of these the glory of God shines most, in this great and glorious work of redemption: But of them all, we may say to you else, and believing sinners, What could our Lord Jesus do more for your salvation? I say what could he do more, than to offer up himself a propitiatory sacrifice for your sins? In the gospel he calleth upon you to make use of it, that, by virtue of his sacrifice, your peace may be made with God; as it is, 1 John ii.

**Isaiah liii. Verse 10.**

When thou shalt make thy soul an offering for sin, he shall see thy seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

**SERMON XL.**

WHERE there is any light and knowledge of a Godhead, amongst men, there is this impression on them, that it is a dreadful thing to have a controversy lying over betwixt God and them unremoved: And upon this ground it is, that as naturally the conscience doth challenge for the provoking of God, so men, according to the light they have, are set on to seek after this and that, and the other mean and way, to get God appeased, and the conscience quieted; and it is like that this hath descended to men from Noah, that the most part of them have thought on the mean of sacrifices, by them to make their peace with God: So the Lord taught the family of Adam, after the fall, and Noah renewed it, after his coming out of the ark: and it is probable (as I said) somewhat of this hath abidden with, and stuck to men, even when they degenerated and apostatized from God, and offered sacrifice to devils, tho' not intentionally, but unto God in their account. And indeed it is no marvel that flesh and blood be here at a stand, and made to say, Wherewithal shall we come before God? But we have this advantage by the gospel, that, in it, the Lord hath shewed to us, what it is that satisfieth justice, and takes away fin, and the curse; and that it is even this in the text, Thou shalt make thy soul an offering for sin: There is no other thing that a sinner can bring with him, that can be accepted, or that can make him to be accepted of God.

We have hinted at some things from the words already, and shew, that Christ's sacrifice is called an offering for sin, as excluding all others, and as expressing the nature and ends of it: We shall now speak to one thing more, which is the 4th, implied in this expression; and it is this, That the atonement and satisfaction to God can be made by no other sacrifice, or offering; yet there is an atonement and satisfaction, that may be made by Christ's offering. Hence he is called an offering for sin; not only because it excludes all others, but also, because he is accepted for that very end, as a propitiation for the sins of them, for whom he suffered, and offered himself in a sacrifice.

**I. 2.**
As this is denied to all other things, (as we just now said,) so it is applied and appropriated to him, and his offering; as Heb. x. 10. By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all. Verse 12. This Man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God. And verse 14. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. This is the great thing that the Apostle aims at in that dispute, not only to caft the Levitical offerings, as to the removing of sin and the curse, and making of sinners peace with God; but to commend this one offering, as able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through it: And, according to this, we have that great question answered to poor sinners, Wherewithal shall we come before the Lord, and how ourselves before the most high God? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is meet, and what the Lord requireth of thee. That there is nothing but this one sacrifice of Christ, that will do the turn; and this will do it most fully, and most fully, as to the procuring of pardon of sin, and the making of their peace with God: So that, by the right making use of this sacrifice, a sinner may most really expect remission of sins, and peace with God, and his friendship, as if sin had never been; for otherwise Christ could not be called the sin-offering, or an offering for sin, if he were not accepted in the room of the sinner that comes to him.

To clear it a little, there are four things, in and about this sacrifice, to make out this; and to prove that a sinner, that makes use of this sacrifice, may expect the pardon of sin, and peace with God. The 1st is the excellency of his offering; he offered himself, as it is, Heb. vii. 27. and Heb. x. 10, 12, 14. The offering up of himself, and of his blessed body on the tree, was another sort of sacrifice than all these bulls, rams, and goats, offered under the law, that were but types of him. The 2d is the excellency of the Person that offered up this offering, which is in effect the excellency of the Priest. As the sacrifice was excellent beyond all other sacrifices, so also is the Priest above all other priests, Heb. vii. 26. Such an High-Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; a Priest, who is the Son, and is set over the house, as the Heir: And tho' the human nature was the sacrifice, yet (as was said before) not as abstracted from the divine nature, the Person being but one, and so the Priest offering commends the sacrifice offered, and makes that it cannot but be accepted. The 3d is, his willing condescending to be the sin-offering, to interpolate himself, and to become this sacrifice, out of respect to the honour of God, that his justice might be vindicated and satisfied, and that thereby access might be made, for shewing mercy to the heirs of salvation: Which exceedingly commends this sacrifice; according to that of John x. 17. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again; No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself, and take it again. It commends his sacrifice, that he was not constrained to it, but did it most willingly, and with delight: It is true, if we look to him, as the eternal Son of God, and the second Person of the blessed Trinity, he could not but be loved of the Father, as well before his incarnation, as after; but that he says, Therefore doth my Father love me, it is to be understood, on account of his voluntary condescension as Mediator to do his Father's will; and out of respect to his honour engaging, and, according to his engagement, satisfying his justice for the elect: And this cannot but commend his offering, that such a glorious Person, who was holy, harmless, and undefiled, should, out of tendernefs to the honour of God, and that the wrong done to it by sinners might be repaired, and out of love to the elect, should condescend to flrop fo low, as to make himself a sin-offering: This regard for the honour of God, and willing condescendency to suffer for the repairing of it, is abundantly valuable, and (tho' it be a great word) above the disrepect that sinners evidenced to the honour of God, by their sinning. The 4th is the covenant, which is the ground of this offering, and that whereby it is regulated, and the terms of it: It was not an undertaking, as a piece of will-worship, but according to the deliberate counsel, and foreknowledge of God: wherein it was determined, that the Son of God should become Cautioner, and be made liable for the debt of the elect, and be an offering for their sins, by which freedom from sin and wrath should accrefce to elect sinners: And all this being concluded in the covenant of redemption his offering could not but be accepted for us, the Lord having condescended on the articles of that covenant for this very end.

This Doctrine is of mighty great and notable concernment to sinners; and, were there any such waking and rousing amongst us, that souls were put to say, and cry, What shall we do to be saved? The opening up of this truth, to wit, that Christ is a sin-offering for sinners, and that by his offering the atonement is made, would be much more acceptable
Serm. XL.

Isaiah liii.

And therefore let this be the 1st Use, That tho’ there be nothing imaginable, that can be brought before God, which will be acceptable to him, as a satisfaction to his justice; yet here there is a ransom found, by the offering whereof to God, a soul that is lying under challenges for sin, and apprehensions of wrath, may expect absolution; this is, in effect, that which Elihu says, Job xxxiii. If there be an interpreter, one of a thousand, to shew unto man his righteousness, then he is gracious unto him, and faith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a Ransom: Here is the Ransom, our Lord Jesus Christ stepping in among sinners room, and offering himself up a sacrifice to satisfy the justice of God; so that a sinner, in making use of that, may come to be in good terms with God. And are not these glad tidings of great joy, that an offering is provided, a ransom paid, and a way found out, how sinners, liable to the curse, may expect freedom? It is no small matter, that God hath given this subject to us to speak of, and to you to hear of; that the torturing anxiety of a soul driven almost to despair, may have this for an aniver, even the blood of Jesus, that blood of sprinkling, which purges the conscience from dead works; which as it satisfies justice, so it quiets the conscience of the sinner, that flees unto it, and makes right use of it. It would become sinners well, to think more of these glad tidings, and to study to have them always fresh. There are many parts of the world, wherein men are sacrificing beasts, some lambs, some rams, some other beasts, and some (it may be) the first-born of their bodies for the sin of their souls; (and, which is lamentable, sacrificing thee things to the devil, on the matter at least, and not to God) and yet all that does not their turn; and not having heard of this offering, they cannot make use of it, neither can their conscience ever be quiet: But our Lord Jesus hath sent these blessed news to us, and hath shewed us what is the fin-offering, the atonement, and propitiatory sacrifice; we need not fend our children through the fire, nor bring any other offering to God, to appease his wrath; he hath given to us his Son, and hath accepted him for a fin-offering, and hath told us, that this shall be as sufficient and satisfying, as if we had made the satisfaction ourselves: Here, O here, is the wonder, even a wonder of wonders!

Use 2. See here the way how we come to life by Christ; it is imported in this doctrine to be by Christ’s being made an offering for us: It is not our praying to him as God, nor by our holy living, nor by his working holiness in us; (tho’ these ought, and will be in some measure, where he is made use of aright) but by his offering up himself a sacrifice for us, and by God’s imputing it to us: And, considering that Christ Jesus is the offering in our room, and that thereby God is pacified, and sin and wrath removed, there can no other way be conceived, how we are made partakers of it, but by imputation. This will be the more clear, if we consider that the same way that our sins became Christ’s, the same way his righteousness became ours; or the same way that justice laid claim to him for our debt, the same way lay we claim to his righteousness. Now, it is blamemous to think, that our sin became his any other way, but that legally he entering himself as our cautioner, our sin was reckoned on his score; even so his righteousness becomes ours, by being imputed to us: So the apostle says, 2 Cor. v. ult. He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, and have his righteousness derived to us. It were good that we would learn how to win to this rightoverflow, even by presenting him to justice, as cautioner for our debt; and by taking hold of his righteousness, to ground our plea upon, when we come to reckon with God for our sins. And we think that there is here a clear ground, for refuting of that way of justification by any thing inherent in ourselves: For, if it be by his offering that we are justified, then it is by nothing in ourselves. Now, this name, that Christ’s sufferings gets, bears out, that it is that which satisfies God, and absoles us, as the alone meritorious and procuring cause; and therefore there is no other thing, that we can derive our justification from, but his righteousness only.

Use 3. Seeing by Christ’s offering there is a ransom and atonement to be had, and seeing it is offered in the gospel, we pray you, in the name of the Lord, to take hold of, and improve this offering; let every body, that hears tell that Christ is the Sin offering, endeavour to get him to be their fin offering: There are none that know, and find, that they have sinned, but they would think of an amends; and here it is, and there is ground to exhort you to make use of it, and to encourage you to it, because this is the very end of his suffering, and he is fully furnished completely to accomplish it. If there were no access to life by this offering, he would not be called a Sin offering, in opposition to all other offerings; there is ground therefore to declare this to you, that by Christ Jesus, life and reconciliation is attainable, and that it is actually attained.
attained by accepting of this offering: Such as accept of it, and rest upon it, shall find acceptance with God, and freedom from sin and wrath, by virtue thereof. It is a common question, What shall we do? we do all we can, or may: But if we were studying a long time to tell you, this is it, even to make use of Christ's offering; this, and this only will do your turn completely, and no other thing will do it.

The 4th Use is of strong consolation to all who betake themselves to Christ: He is the sin-offering, that procures the taking away of sin and wrath, and that procures friendship with God; and there is no imputation of sin, nor condemnation to them that are in him, Rom. viii. 1. and hence is that triumph, ver. 34. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that will condemn? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, &c. If justice were coming to execute the sentence, what can it say to the believer? Jesus Christ hath swallowed up the wrath and him; and, as to God's acceptance, he alone is counted the Sin-offering; and as these, who under the law offered the typical sacrifices, had access to the ordinances, and were sanctified, as to the purifying of the flesh; so much more is this offering able to purify the conscience, and to purge it from dead works, and to give a fair access to the promises of life, and to the favour of God, to all them who make use of it, as if they had never sinned. I know, much of the weight of this consolation will lie on this, Whether Christ's offering be made use of? And some will say, How shall we make use of Christ's offering? And others will ask, How shall we know, if we have made right use of it? And would to God, that souls were beaten off their pride and security, and brought under the conviction of a necessity of ufe-making of Christ; he would discover both to them. But before we answer the question, there are two things we would presuppose. 1. We presuppose, that the soul is desirous to be at God, and to have peace with him, to which end Christ is the mids; and there will be no respect had to the mids, except there be a respect had to the end, as it is, Heb. xi. 6. He that comes to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that ask him diligently; where there is implied in the coming, a desire to be at God, and an expectation of some benefit to be had from him; or, as the word is, Heb. vii. 27. He is able to face to the uttermost all that come unto God by him; Which implies the sinner's being sensible of his lost condition, his desire to be at God; and then Christ's offering comes in, as the mids, to bring about, and to come by that end. But these being presupposed, the great thing, wherein the answer of the question lies, How to make use of Christ's offering for the attaining of that end, of pardon of sin, and peace with God, seems to be holden out in that word, Heb. vii. 25. He is able to face to the uttermost, then that come unto God by him; and therein we may consider sinners desire to be at God, and the ufe-making of Christ, in reference to that end, in these three, (1.) To have the breach made up with God, in respect of their state. (2.) For quieting the conscience, in respect of particular challenges. (3.) For the making up of their defects in grace, as well as for the removing of sin. And as ufe-making of Christ in these three, points out the way of a sinner's coming to Christ, so a sinner's going on in this way, evidenceth his right ufe-making of him: Which will serve to answer both the questions, to wit, how to make use of Christ's offering? and how to know that we are making use of it aright?

For the first, to wit, Going to God by Christ; 1. It is opposed to fleeing in to God, at the first hand. 2. It is opposed to the ufe-making of any other thing, in our coming to God, for making up the breach. 3. It implies the sinner's betaking of himself to Christ, as the Mid-man, by whom he expects to come to friendship with God. There are some scriptural similitudes, whereof if we could rightly conceive, and apply them to this purpose, they might serve much to clear it. There is a distance, which, like a gulf, is fixed betwixt God and man; a soul then comes to God by Christ, as one goes over a gulf by a bridge; hinted at by the apostle, Heb. x. 19, 20. Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated to us through the vail, which is his flesh. We take the force of the similitude to ly in this, That as one that hath a vail betwixt him and another, whom he desires to approach to, must go through that vail ere he win to that other; so here, Christ's flesh being the vail, he by his death hath rent it, that sinner
 Isa. XL.  

Verse 10. Even as if a number of men were pursued for debt before a judge, and one should come in, and say, I have paid so much; and another should say, Give me down a part, and I will pay the rest; and a third should say, Give me a day and time, and I will satisfy; and a fourth poor body should come in, and say, I have indeed nothing myself to pay my debt with, but I betake myself to the reiponfal Cautious, who hath paid all for such as betake themselves to him. This is faith's answering and arguing; it will never shift the debt, nor yet admit of the final sentence of condemnation, tho' readily acknowledged to be deserved; but it interposes Christ's satisfaction, as that which will be acceptable, tho' the fiinner can do nothing of himself. In a word, this way of pleading is, upon the one side, an utter denying of the man's self, and of all that is, or can be in him, for attaining of righteoufness; and, upon the other side, a creditizing of himself to Christ, for the attaining of that which he hath not in himself: It is not only faith (if it were possible to separate these two) to deny our own righteoufness; but, by the exercise of it, there must be a stepping over on Christ, and on his righteoufness, unto God.

The ad thing, wherein the excercif of faith in the ufe-making of Christ's sacrifice conffits, is, in reference to particular challenges: For, even when a foul hath fled to Christ, and made ufe of his sacrifice for pardon of fin, and for peace with God, it will not be free from challenges, and from new accounts; and therefore the excercif of faith is to be continued in the ufe-making of this offering, in reference to these particulars, as well as in reference to the making of our peace with God at firft; in which respect, faith is called a shield, Eph. vi. 16. When new guilt is contradicted, and drawn on, and then tentation fays to the believer, Is this the goodnefs of your purposes, and resolutions, which have been like flax before the fire? No sooner wall thou effayed, and affaulted, but thou didft greatly fuccumb, and wall much foiled, and prevailed over: The foul runs to the fame targe, buckler, or shield; and tho' every one of these challenges be like a fiery dart that would fet the confcience on a flame, yet by faith the dart is kept off, or the venom of it fluckt fo out, that it burns not; and it makes the foul to fay, Thou I cannot satisfy for the debt, yet there is in Christ's righteoufness, where-to I betake myself, which can do it: And if we look to that, which entertains tormenting excercifcs, that fpeak evil of the grace of God (for humbling excercifcs are called for, and are profitable) we will find
find it to be this, to wit, When souls come to dispute, and debate with challenges, and do not interpose the targe or shield of faith, taking hold of Christ's righteousness, betwixt them and these challenges; for sometimes a soul will betake itself to Christ's righteousness for peace at first, and will look upon itself, as bound to keep, and maintain its own peace; and will, on the matter, think that it is but a sort of bailing, or prophaning of Christ's righteousness, (to say so) to be making daily use of it, for answering of new challenges; and such will be ready to say, Should not a believer be holy? and we say, that he should, and that it were to abuse the spiritual armour, to take one piece of it, and not another, yea, nor all the rest: But this we say likewise, that when one makes use of the sword of the Spirit, he may warrantably make use of the shield of faith also; failing in this, that is, when Christ's righteousness is not made use of, in reference to particular challenges, mightily indisposing many furious poor souls for use-making of the rest of the weapons of their spiritual warfare: And therefore, as ye would exercise faith in general, for reconciling you to God, as to your fate; so ye would exercise faith on Christ's offering, for doing away of particular quarrels, and for silencing of particular challenges, which is to be daily walking at the fountain. In short, as to the other question, this may be a mark of a perfon, that is making right use of Christ's offering for his peace, if he be daily making use of Christ's offering for his peace, if he be daily making use of his offering for quenching and silencing of particular challenges.

The 3d thing, wherein this exercise of faith in the use-making of Christ's sacrifice consists, is, in reference to the defects of our grace: We have indeed much need of Christ, and he hath much forthcoming in him, for the helping of grace, for the amending of weak faith, and love, and other graces, as well as for obtaining pardon of sin, and of peace with God, and for answering of challenges; and yet, oftentimes, these, who are making use of Christ in the former two respects, are in hazard, and ready to think, that they should believe more, love more, and exercise other graces more, of themselves: But we are to make use of him, for helping defects of grace, as well as for these other things. By this, I mean, not only the use-making of Christ meritoriously; and so that we should look on faith, love, repentance, and every other grace, as purchased by him, as well as peace with God; and that we should make use of Christ's offering,
SERMONXL.

Isaiah liii. 10.—He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

It may be thought, and that very justly, that there must be some great and glorious design driven in the contrivance of the work of redemption, that was executed by such a means, as the suffering of the Son of God; and that there must be some noble and notable thing following on it, that moved the Father to send his Son, and the Son to come for this work. This part of the text answers, and tells us what is the design, He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, &c. He shall communicate life to many that were dead, and shall beget a generation, that shall have life derived from him, as a seed have from their parents: And so this is a third answer, for removing of that stumbling objection, proposed in the beginning of the verse, to wit, How it came to pass, that the innocent Son of God, who had done no violence, and who had no guile in his mouth, was put to such sufferings? We shew that there were three grounds laid down, in answer to this, 1st, It pleased the Lord to bruise him, it was the Father's good pleasure. The 2d is from the nature of his sufferings, which were to be a sin-offering, or an offering for sin, not for his own, but for the sins of the elect. The 3d is, That his sufferings should have notable fruits and effects following them, set down in three expressions, which are partly prophecies, telling what should be the effects of the sufferings of the Mediator; partly promises made to the Mediator, telling what should be his reward and hire (to speak so) for his sufferings. (1.) He shall see his seed, that is, many shall get good of his sufferings; (2.) He shall prolong his days, that is, he shall out-live these his troubles and sufferings, and shall have a glorious out-gate and reign; (3.) The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand, that is, the work that was given him to do, and to finish, shall thrive well, and no part of it shall fail, or miscarry. In the first promise made to him, or in the first effect that should follow on his sufferings, in these words, He shall see his seed; we have these three, 1. A relation implied betwixt Christ and believers; they are his seed, such as in the next verse are said to be justified by him: It is in short, many shall get pardon
of sin, and justification, by his death. In this respect, it is said, Psal. xliv. penult verse, Iflead of thy fathers, shall be thy children, whom thou mayst make princes in all the earth. 2. A prophecy, and foretelling of the event, that should follow Christ’s sufferings; and so it holds out this, That our Lord Jesus should not only have a feed, but a numerous feed, that should be made sure to him: And it seems to be in allusion to that which is spoken of Abraham, and of others in the old Testament, of whom it is said, they should have feed, that is, that many should descendent of them: But there is more here; for, whereas others, while they are living, or in their lifetime, beget a feed, which begetting is interrupted by death; the death of our Lord Jesus begets his feed, or his feed are begotten by his death. 3. Considering the words as a promise, they hold out this, That tho’ our Lord Jesus suffer, and die; yet he shall not only have a feed, but he shall see his feed, he shall out-live his sufferings and death, and shall be delighted in seeing of them, who shall get the good of his sufferings: As it is said of Job, that he saw his children, or feed, of the third and fourth generation, that is, he lived long, and saw many that came of him; even so, tho’ our Lord came to death, and to the grave, yet he should not only have a numerous feed, and many children, but he should live and see them; and that not only for three, or four, or ten generations, but for very many generations: And his dying should neither mar his begetting, nor the seeing of them. And this seeing of his feed, is opposed to such parents as are dead; and who, tho’ their children and posterity be in want, yet they know it not. From the First of these, Observe, "That believers are our Lord Jesus his feed, they are come of him:” Whatever their meaness and lownes be in the world; and tho’ they could not claim kindred to any of externally noble rank, or quality, yet they are his feed. To this purpose the apostle beepsakes the believing Corinthians, 1 Cor. i. 27, 28. Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many mighty, not many wise-men after the flesh, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of this world, to confound the wise, &c. that no flesh should glory in his presence; Tho’ ye be not of any high rank or quality in the world, yet of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made to us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: In this respect, Christ is called the everlasting Father, Isa. ix. 6. For he is the Father of all believers, that ever had, or shall have life; who are, Psal. xliv. penult verse, called his children.

To clear this a little, ye shall take it in the four or five respects, or considerates, in which believers are said to be Christ’s feed, or to be descended of him. 1st, In this respect, that, as believers, they have their being of him: As children descend from off their parents as to their natural being; So believers, as they have spiritual being, descend from him, and hold their being of him; without whom they had never been believers. And in this respect they are his blood, 1. Because he meritoriously purchased life to them; which is the thing here mainly understood, as following immediately upon the back of his sufferings. 2. Because they have life from him, efficiently, as he works it in them, and by the gospel begets them; therefore he is said, 1 Tim. i. 10, to have brought life and immortality to light by the gospel, which was not known in many parts of the world till Christ brought it forth; in this respect, believers are Christ’s feed: We are not believers born of our parents, nor have the faith which we have, of the ordinations, nor of minifters, as efficient causes there-of; but it is from our Lord Jesus, who is believers Father. Thus believers have an affinity and near relation to Christ, even to be his children: And any that would lay claim to faith or spiritual life, would see well, that it be this way kindly, and (as we use to say) leil come, from Jesus Christ, and that they be in his debt and common for it. 2dly, They are his feed, in respect of the likenefs that is betwixt him and them, or in respect of the qualifications that are in them; as they are said, 2 Pet. i. 4, By the exceeding great and precious promises, to be made partakers of the divine nature: They have of the fame Spirit, for the kind, that he, as Mediator, hath in him; and it is in this respect, that, Can. vii. 1, the believer is called the Prince’s daughter, which especially looks to the spiritual, generous, and noble qualifications, that are derived from Christ, to the believer: Hence believers are said to have the Spirit of sons, when all others, tho’ they be the greatest in the world, have but the spirit of servants; and their generosity is nothing to that of believers, who are made partakers of the divine nature: We have not, says the apostle, received the Spirit of fear, but of faith and love, and of a found mind. Ah! there are many that claim kindred and relation to Christ, that are very unlike him. 3dly, They are called Christ’s feed, in respect of the care that he hath of them: Never mother was more tender of the fucking child, than he is of his believing children; therefore, faith the Lord, Isa. xlix. 15. A mother may forget.
Serm. XLII.

Isaiah iii.

her fucking child, but I will not forget thee: Hence is that phrase, even as to vile profilers of the Church, who refuse to listen to the call of the gospel, which is much more eminently verified in believers, Matth. xiii. How often would I have gathered thee, as a hen doth her chickens under her wings! So tender and respective is he to his children, as the mother is tender of the fucking child, or the hen is of her newly-hatched, and young chickens; for they are, in some respect, come out of his own bowels; his blood was shed to purchase them; so it is said, Isa. xl. 11. He gathers the lambs with his arm, he carries them in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young. And, O what mafly consolation have such words as these in them! And what confidence may believing sinners have to come to this Mediator, that is a Mother, a Father, a Brother, and a Parent; that hath begotten us out of his own bowels, and in some respect (as we are believers) hath as a mother conceived us in his own womb! 4thly, They are called his feed, in respect of the portion which they get from him. The apostle says, that parents provide for their children; it is indeed eminently so here, believers come under his care, oversight, and tutor; and as a man provides for his household, his children and servants meat in due season (and the apostle says, He is worse than an infidel, that provides not for them of his own house) even so our Lord Jesus, as he gives believers their spiritual life, so he entertains that life, provides for them, and trains them up, and on, till he enter them into the possession of eternal life; they are made by him Princes, Psal. xlv. 16. entitled to a kingdom; yea, all his children are kings, and fit with him on his throne, Rev. ii. last verse, and are made partakers of his glory; and (to speak so) they fare as he fares, they dwell as he dwells, and behold his glory: O, is not this much, that the poor dyavour, that hath not a penny left him, nor to leave to another, should be thus dignified, as to have a claim to Christ's kingdom, to be an heir, and a joint heir with him, who is the Heir of all things! For so we come to be retoured (to speak so) and to be served heirs to all things; as it is, Rev. xxi. 7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things: And it goes on this ground, Heb. i. 2. that the Mediator is appointed Heir of all things; with whom being joint heirs, we are heirs too, and made to inherit all things. 5thly, They are called his feed, because of the manner of their coming to the possession of that, which through him they have a claim to; for they have a claim to nothing, but Verse 10.

by being heirs to, and with him; and by believing in him, they are heirs of the promise, in some respect, as Isaac was: So then, briefly to recapitulate all these, would ye know the way that believers are Christ's feed? 1. He begets them, and they have their spiritual life of him. 2. He is tender of them, as of his own children. 3. They are furnished with qualifications, and dispositions suitable to him. 4. They have a rich portion from him, and are well provided for. 5. What good they get, is for his fake, who is their Father: Here we may allude to that word. Rom. xi. They are beloved for the Father's sake; by a right and title to him, they come to have a good and goodly portion; they claim not to their portion, because of this or that thing in themselves, but by their being served heirs to Christ; being come of him, they come to get a right to what is his.

Ufη. As all relations betwixt Christ and believers speak out much consolation, so doth this, if we were in cafe to apply it; this one word hath in it, and holds forth a good condition, and is a very broad charter.

See here then, that what we are in Christ's common and debt, who are believers: It is much to be made a friend, to be freed from the curse of God, and to have all our debts paid; but this is more to be his feed, to be his own children, to have our life of him, to have our provision and portion from him. It is really a wonder, that we wonder not more at this, and other relations that are betwixt him and believers: as namely, he is the believers Father, and takes them to be his sons and daughters; he is the believers Brother, and is not ashamed to call them brethren; he is the believers Husband, and they are his spouse; he is their Bridegroom, and they are his bride: Such relations as these are pitched upon, and made choice of, to fill (if I may speak so) the faith of the believer, and that the believer may feed sweetly and delicately on them, till time come that the veil of similitudes be taken away, and they be brought to see him as he is, even face to face; and that thereby they may be helped to win to read their advantages and privileges, which they have in him. What can be the reason, then, that so few think and esteem suitably of the excellent and desirable condition of believers, and that words of this kind relish not? Here is the reason, he of whom they hold all these privileges, and by whom they are put into this notable and non-such condition, is not suitably esteemed of, and accounted precious; therefore believers in him are thought the less of. Our hearts

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hearts should melt in: ye to him, and in sorrow for offending him, at the the reading and hearing of such expressions, whereof the scriptures of God are filled full.

2dly, Are there any that would have a good and happy condition fummled up and compounded? Here it is, even to have our Lord Jesus to be a Father, and to be his feed, to come in as sons and daugh-
ters to him. I appeal to you all, if any condition can be put in the balance with this; is there any honour and dignity like it, or comparable with it?

Who can claim to be come of such a parent as is he, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, the Prince of the kings of the earth, the Father of glory, his eldest and only begotten Son, by an e-
ternal and unspakeable generation, who in all things hath the pre-eminency.

What is your pedigree, who will say, and boast, that ye are of such a laird’s or lord’s house, and of such an ancient family and stock; yea, tho’ ye were of blood royal, what is it to this?

What will become of mens gentility or nobility of birth, yea, of royalty of birth, in that day, when Chrift shall set his throne in the clouds? To have this relation to Chrift, will be more valuable and honourable, in that day, than to have been great commanders, lairds, lords, marquisses, dukes, princes, and kings, who will all in that day stand upon the same level with the poorest peafants, and when all honours and dignities, which are now so much thought of, and thirsted after, will be laid in the dust.

Therefore learn to think of this as the noblest birth and decent, which is through faith in Chrift Jesus; and covet, and be holly ambitious, to have the qualifications of his children. Look to the qualifications, parts, endowments, and accomplishments, that use to accompany, or follow any houses of the braveft of natural men; are there any of them comparable to the qualifications of believers? Is there a flock or race of people in all the world, fo truly generous and noble as believers are, who are come of Chrift, and are made vali-
ant, through the exercise of faith in him, against alloccurring difficulties; regardless of worldly things, and taken up with, and busied about high and noble projects and defigns; even to have heaven, and glo-
ry, and God himfelf; who undervalue, and holly disdain the things of the world, which earth worms fo much seek after? Their qualifications kyth es-
pecially in this, that their defigns are heavenly, their minds elevated to, and fet on the best things, and that they have a truly magnanimous and a va-
rious way of protecting them, by studying the mortification of sin, and conformity to God, when others cannot endure to cast out with, and abandon a lust; they holly scorn, and account it below them, to have their peace flanding or falling with the ebbing and flowing of creature-comforts, which the men of the world place their happiness in; their study is to be pure, as Chrift is pure: O is there any portion like theirs? Many of you think but little of it now, but ye will think more of it in that day, when the earth, and all things in it, shall be burnt up with fire; what will the earth-portion fignify then? Ye that now have your variety of fine and delicate meats, with your ale and wine at every meal, who shall be found out of Chrift, shall not get a drop of cold water to cool your tongue, under your exquisite and hellish torments, when the poor body, that believed, and had a hard life of it here, shall be in Abraham’s bosom, and with Chrift at his table, yea, and on his throne with him; and it is upon the account of their having a title to Chrift, that they come to all that glory and happiness.

Is there any right and title like the believer’s, which is founded on Chrift’s right and title, which is, or may be called, the original right of the believer, who is kept by the power of God, through faith unto falcation. If thefe be the true and faithful fayings of God, what is the reason that men think fo little of them? Why is an intereft in Chrift fo undervalued? Believe ye, that fuch and fo much good is to be gotten by being Chrift’s feed and children? If ye fay that ye believe it, how comes it to pafs that fo few have it for their design, and that your designs are fo much for this and that in a pre-
fent world, and that this is fo much flighted, and that there is fo much boafling and glorying in other things, and fo little holy boafling and glorying in this?

There are two or three marks, which we may gather from the words, that may help to fhow when this claim is warrantably made, and which may evidence the groundlesnes of the claim of many. And, 1. Chrift’s feed hath another original than that which they bring with them into the world; there is in them a change of the ground of their hope, and that on a new account: Folks come into the world sinful, children of sinful pa-
rents; but when they come to be believers, they get a new life, which men cannot give, and this new life hath new aftings and fruits: Ah! how many dream of a right to Chrift, who know no other birth or being but that which is natural. 2. They who are Chrift’s feed, carry along with them the impression of an obligation to, and an acknow-
edgment of him in whatever good they have gotten;
they think themselves much obliged to Christ, and they acknowledge him for their life, as it is, Mal. i. If a Father, where is my honour? and if a Master, where is my fear? a son honours his father, &c. A natively and genuinely disposed child acknowledgeth his father as his father, and reverenceth and loveth his father as his father; but there are many that pretend to a being from Christ, who think not themselves in his debt and common for it, and who know not what it is to walk under the conviction of their obligation to Christ for their supposed spiritual life and being. 3. They, who are Christ's feed, have in them a likenes5 to him, as they did once bear the image of the earthly, so now they bear the image of the heavenly Adam; not that they come up in all things to be exactly like to the pattern, but it is their aim; and other things, that disconform them to him, are deformed, lothfom, and ugly in their sight: Their old inclination is burdenfom to them, and is the continual ground of an inward content and wrestling; and, in a manner, they are troubled at the very heart how to keep down what is opposite to Christ; and when their corruption over-matters them, they are the more disposed and quietaed: They discern something in them, that is not like to Christ, and they abhor that, thro' it be never so near and dear to them, their very self; they see something also like to Christ in them, and they cherish and make much of it; they would fain be at more of it, and to have his image more deeply impressed on their spirits, which they reckon their greatest, yea, their only beauty.

The 3d Use is for direction to believers: If ye be Christ's feed, ye must be other sort of folk in your designs, and in your deportment and carriage: King's children ought not to carry as others; it would be highly unfitting, yea, even abominable to see them walk so trivially and lightly, as every bafe, ill-bred beggar's child doth: It is no lefs incongruous and unbecoming, that believers should be taken with this and that vanity, that mere worldlings are take with, and hunt after.

The 4th Use speaks a word of consolation to believers, and holds forth the greatnes5 of the privilege of being Christ's feed. It will be much to persuade a poor sinner, duly fenifiable of sin, to believe this, and that the Lord is in earnest, when he speaks thus; that such an one, who hath betaken himself to Christ for life, and humbly claims right to nothing, but by virtue of Christ's right, (the main thing, that our union with him is bottomed upon) who is content to be in Christ's common for life, and goes not about to establish his own righteousness, but leans to his righteousness, for life and salvation, should be his feed, and have all the privileges of sons derived to him; and yet it is the Lord's faithful word: Neither hath eye seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what good things are laid up for such a person, and that are suffused up in these expressions of our relation to Christ Jesus.

The 6th Use may be for incitation and provocation to all that would be happy, to place it here; interest in Christ Jesus, by believing on him, brings us to have interest in the enjoying of him, and all that is his; and can there be any more sought after, or wished for? Are there any, but would think it a good life, to be here? And who are they, of whom he speaks so? It is not of some sort of strange and uncouth folk, that were once in the world, but are now all out of it, and of whom there are none now in it; it is not such as want sin, and derive their life from their own works; but it is such as are, I. As considered in themselves dead in sins and trespasses, and without spiritual life and being; and who know, that all the pains that they can take, will not acquire it; and who, it may be, are quite dead to their own apprehension and sense oftentimes; and who have judged themselves, and have the sentence of death in themselves. It is such as look to him for the obtaining of life; and who acknowledge him for any life or liveliness they have; and who expect it, and bruik it, by virtue of his purchase; which is that on which all their plea for life is founded.

Now I know, that all this will not readily clear some; there are so many things that look counterfeit like: But I am now speaking to them, who have some stidlings of spiritual life, which yet are not so lively, as they can discern them to be the stirrings and stidlings of life; and they have a body of death in them, which is ready to extinguish that life; and often they think that it is extinguished already: They have convictions of their own deadness, and that things are wrong in their condition,
ISAIAH lxxx. Verse 10.

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tiation, and are quite out of all hopes of righteousness from and by themselves, or from any thing that they have done, or can do; and they have some confused looks to Christ, but they cannot rid their feet in the matter of their faith, and duties go not so with them as they expected, and would have them. To such I shall speak a word or two, and close. I. I would ask, Whence comes that flickering of life, or feeling of that body of death? What is the original of it? will nature discover the corruption of nature, and bring folks to be out of love with corrupt nature? Certainly, where this is, it is not like nature, but is the life of Christ; especially, when it puts folk to discern, and take up their own deadness, to quit their own righteousness, and to be content to lay their mouth in the dust, and to betake themselves to the righteousness of Christ, if they could win to be distinct in it: This looks to be from Christ, whose Spirit convinces the world of sin, and of the sin of unbelief in particular; and of righteousness, as being only to be had in Christ; and of judgment, that is, of the reasonableness that he should have a dominion over them, and that they should walk in holiness: Yet, notwithstanding of all this, they are hanging in a kind of suspense and hover, and know not whether to look on themselves as believers or not; they wot well that it is not right with them, that they are lost in themselves, and that no other way will do their turn, but faith in the righteousness of a Mediator: The thing whereat they flick and halt, is, that they know not how to through, and maintain the content that they have given; and they cannot think, that their faith is true faith, because they know not how to follow forth the exercise of it; though they have renounced their own righteousness, and laid their reckoning, to be in Christ's debt and common, for righteousness and life, if ever they come by them. All their difficulty is, how to through their believing. Now it is not to

SERM. XLI.

the sounding of life, that we are here speaking, but to the exercise of life, and to the finding out of life: And we say, that such an exercise supposes life to be, though it be not discernable in its exercise to the soul itself. There are many poor creatures born and brought forth into the world, that can neither talk nor walk, but must be carried and keepe: and that are somehow, as if they were brought out of the womb: So is it with many believers; and it were good to be in Christ's common as for life, so for bringing life to exercise, and by diligence and waiting on him, in the use of his own appointed means, to seek to come to some distinctness in nothing, and exercising of any life, that he hath given: And it is no small encouragement to this, that Christ shall see his seed, that he must have saints and believers in him; which should make poor souls, that have no life in themselves, with the more confidence to commit themselves to him, upon this very ground, that the Father hath engaged to Christ, that he shall have many such for his seed; the which promise is performed to him, in the gathering in of poor, confused, and mind-perplexed sinners, to be in his debt for life, and to hold their life of him for ever. It will sure be no small part of the ground of saints praise in heaven, that he not only bought life for them, but that he made application of life to them, and trained them on, till he had got them fitted to speak to his praise; wherein the body of death makes many a fall short, and makes poor believers to flther, as it were, while they are here. But it is good news, that Jesu Christ hath bought life, and brought it to light; and that, by this gospel, he is making application of it, and declaring that he is content to deliver it freely, on all them that will be in his common for it.
SERMON XLII.

Isaiah lxxx. 10.——He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

It was once a riddle, how out of the strong could come forth meat, and how out of the eater come forth sweet; it is here most clearly unriddled, and that in a most wonderful and comfortable manner: Our Lord Jesus, the strong Lion of the tribe of Judah, is put to grief and bruised, and his soul is made an offering for sin; and here is the sweet meat that comes out of it, He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, &c. The substance of the words is, That by his death many shall be brought to life: It is the same death that hath given us the hope we have of life, and all the ground that we have to speak of it to you; which had never been, had he not been bruised and put to grief.

We shew, that here is holden forth the Lord's great design in the contrivance of the work of redemption; and that these words are a further answer to the trembling objection proposed before, to wit, how the innocent Son of God could suffer? It pleased the Father to bruise him, when he shall make his soul an offering for sin, &c. which justifies God in that proceeding, and serves to wipe away that reproach that might seem to stick to him. In sum, it is this, If we consider the notable and noble fruits, and comfortable effects, that follow on his sufferings and death; there is no ground to stumble at God's giving his Son, or at the Son's condescending as Mediator, to suffer, to be despised and put to death: And this is the first fruit, and effect thereof, that He shall see his seed: whereby is meant, that by his death, the elect, who are given to him, do by faith in him receive a new life from him, and are taken in, under a most sweet and kindly relation to him, by their being begotten again to a lively hope, through his resurrection from the dead.

We spoke to this point, that believers are Christ's seed; which shews the great privilege that they are admitted to, and their great obligation to Christ on that account: They are obliged to him for their spiritual life and being; as children are obliged to their natural parents for their natural life and being; and infinitely more obliged, insomuch as the one life is infinitely preferable to the other.

There are three things more to be observed from the words, 1. Considering them as they stand in dependence on the former; "That God's design in sending his Son in to the world, and the Mediator's design in coming so low, is to have a seed begotten to the hope of eternal life; and to have poor souls, dead in themselves, sharing of life in and through him; even to have many partaking of life through his death." 2. Considering the words, as for telling the event of Christ's death and sufferings, we have this observation from them, "That our Lord's death shall certainly procure life to many; or thus, It cannot be, but his death must have fruit to the saving of souls from death, and to the making of them partakers of life." 3. Looking on the words, as a promise made to the Mediator, we observe from them, "That the seeing of a seed, is exceeding much thought of by Jesus Christ, it pleased him wondrous well; therefore this promise of a seed is made to him, to encourage him to lay down his life." We shall speak a word to each of these, and shall leave the consideration of the words, as they hold out, not only our Lord's outliving his sufferings, but his seeing a seed on the back of them, to the second effect that follows, He shall prolong his days.

For the first doctrine, we suppose it will be clear, if we consider how the seeing of his seed is subjoined to, and dependeth upon the former words anent his making his soul an offering for sin; which holds out this, that the great design of God, and of Christ the Mediator, in his sufferings, is to beget a people to eternal life, and to make way, that sinners, naturally dead in sin, may partake of spiritual and heavenly life, and may be begotten to the hope of eternal life through him. And what other design, I pray, could there be than this? For the Lord had nothing to procure for himself; to speak simply, there could be no addition made to the glory of God thereby: Therefore it is said, John vi. 39, 40. This is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day: And this,
Isaiah liii. 10.  

VERSE 10.  

This is the will of him that sent me, that every one who believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day. 1 Tim. 1. 15. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation; and what is it? That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners: and that, John x. 10. I came, that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

There are two things that we would speak a word to, for clearing of the doctrine, and then make use of it. The 1st, How this can be God's design, in Christ's humiliation, to beget many sons to life? 2dly, How Christ's death contributes to this design? For the first, When we speak of God's design here, we mean not his last and ultimate design, but his immediate design in the gospel, which is subservient to that his last and ultimate design; to wit, the glorifying of his grace and justice, in giving the Mediator to satisfy justice for dyounge sinners, who are not able to satisfy for themselves; and he having chosen this as the mids to that highest end, we may well say, that this is his immediate design in the gospel, that thereby the glory of his grace and justice might be manifested. For the 2d, which is, How Christ's sufferings contribute to this end? It may be soon cleared, if we consider that there is a twofold lett in the way of finners partaking of life, which Christ's sufferings do remove. The 1st lett is a standing quarrel betwixt God and the elect, they having sinned, and having nothing to pay their debt; this our Lord Jesus by his death removes, he pays the debt, and tears the obligation, called the hand writting that was against them, nailing it to his cross, Col. ii. And, in this respect, his death is called a ransom for many; and in the words before, he is said to make his soul an offering for sin, on the same account, to wit, that the principal debtor might be set free. The 2d lett is man's utter unfitness to walk with God: For tho' the debt were taken away, yet they have no life; but Jesus Christ by his death, hath laid down a ground how a sinner may be reconciled to God, and may partake of grace here, and to be in case to walk with God, even while sojourning in the world, in some good measure, and of the life of glory hereafter; his sufferings are not only a ransom for their debt, but also a bridge (to speak so) to help over the gulf of the distance that is betwixt God and them, unto glory, whether he as the Fore-runner is gone before them: In this sense, we have our graces, as the fruits of Christ's sufferings; the life of grace, faith, love, perseverence, &c. we have also protec-

VERSE 11.  

Use i. See here, believers, what ye are in the Father's debt for sending his Son, and what ye are in the Son's debt for coming to die for you: ye behoved to have been the curse yourselves, if he had not born it; but he took it on himself, that ye might be freed from it: Thus it flood with you, ye deferred to be shut out for ever from God, to have the sword of his justice awakened against you; and he gave his back to the sinners, and, his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, and was content that the sword of justice should awake against him, and finite him, that he might by his stripes heal you, and by his death procure life to you: Yea, it flood thus with you, and it could not be otherwise; the justice of God being provoked, and the elect being under the curse, as it is, Gal. iii. 10. Curfed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the law to do them: Ezek. viii. 4. The soul that sinne: shall die. Either they behoved to die, or the Cautioner; and our Lord was content to be a sin-offering, thereby to set sinners free; To be lifted up on the cross, that he might draw all men after him: to pay their debt, which all the creatures could never have paid: And therefore we would ask you, if you think heaven and glory to be of worth, and if ye think it to be of great mercy, to be free of wrath to come, and from the damned state and condition of the reprobate angels, and of reprobate men and women in hell, and to be admitted to enter with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob into the kingdom of God, and into these heavenly mansions; are ye not much in Christ's debt, that procured this for you, and at such a rate, that thereby life might he communicate to you, who were naturally dead in trespasses and sins? Whatever the rest of the world think of it, if any of you be born again, as ye ought in a special manner to think much of it, so ye will do in some measure; for ye are as much in Christ's common as all that is worth, who was content, that poor sinners should partake of him and of the life that is in him, to taste of death himself; and who hath said, Because I live, ye shall live also: In a most wonderful way, his death is the price, by which
which life is communicated to us; and it would become
believers well, to be often reckoning, what they are
in his debt. It is one of God's great ends in the
work of redemption, even to have sinners esteeming
highly of, and much ravished with his grace, and
with his love brightly shining in the way thereof;
yet less conscience is made of this, than of many o-
other duties, by believers: We will lend an ear to a
practical point of doctrine, and will some way aim
to mind it; if we be bidden pray, we will pray; if
we be commanded to mortify sin, we will endeavour
it, and so in other duties: But who minds this as a
duty, when we are called of God, to admire, and
praise his grace and love, and humbly to glory in
him, so as seriously to set ourselves to fall about it?
and yet this were a most native, proper, and kindly
exercize for believers, even like the work of those,
who say, 

Salvation to our God, that sits upon the
throne, and unto the Lamb, Rev. vii. 10. To him
who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his
own blood, &c. Rev. i. 5. To be taken up with
such foliloquies in ourselves about this subject,
and with such fongs of praise to him, who hath
given us so noble a being and life, which is con-
voyed to us by his blood, is sure a suitable use of
this point; for, if our life be of much worth, he
must be of infinitely much more worth in himself,
and should be so to us, who purchased it at such a
dear price.

The 2d Use is to exhort you, whom we sup-
pose to be renewed, (as some of you now hearing
me are, and O that all of you were) that whenever
ye think of enjoying of heaven, and glory, ye would
think also, whence it came to be thus with you; O
think on that rock, out of which ye are hewn, as
ye are believers, and are intitled to life; and this
will lay the natural pride, which, alas! too often
believers have going along with their hope of life,
as if they were something better by nature than o-
thers, because they have hope to come to heaven:
But think this also with yourselves, that there are
no thanks to you, but to him who loved you, and
washed you from your sins in his own blood; which
should make you walk softly, and with a stopped
mouth; and in this case, every thought of your
title unto, and of your hope of heaven, would be
both singularly pleant, and profitable to you.

Use 3. See here, that which maketh the glad
tidings of Christ's death wonderfully comfortable.
It is much that Christ came, and suffered; but if
we add this, that his death in suffering was to be
get sinners to a new and spiritual life, to raise and
quicken them that were dead in sins and trespasses,
to pay their debt, and to cancel their obligation, it
makes it to be much more wonderful. Alas! we
have great want of spiritual affections, that are not
more affected with this, even with this, that the
Father should send his Son, and that the Son should
come into the world; And wherefore? That he
might have a feed; that poor bodies, that were
dead and without life, might be quickened; and
that such, as had no hope of heaven, might have it.
That in such a way an entry into heaven should
be made to sinners, this is the wonder. Do ye,
believers, indeed believe this, that the Lord's de-
sign, in all the work of redemption, was to bring
dead sinners to life? This is it that makes Christ
get the name of a Saviour, that the Shepherd being
smitten, God might turn his hand on the little
ones.

And therefore, as a 4th Use, See here a good
ground, whereupon to preach to you by the death
of Christ, the offer of life, and the remission of sin,
as the apostle hath it, Acts xiii. 39, 40. Be it
known therefore to you, men and brethren, that
through this Man is preached unto you the forgive-
ess of sins: and by him all that believe, are justi-

fied from all things, from which ye could not be
justified by the law of Moses: And there is never a
text, that speaks of the end of Christ's sufferings,
but readily it some way lays a ground, how a sinner
may get life; and it is as if it were a proclamation
to sinners to make the right use of what is offered
to them. If our Lord Jesus had not suffered, there
had not been a warrant for us to speak of life to
you; there had been no treaty with sinners, no
doors open for access to heaven, no ground for
any to call God, Father: But on the contrary,
Christ having suffered, and satisfied justice, it gives
us ground to make this proclamation to you, Be it
known unto you, that through this Man is preached
unto you the forgiveness of sins. And these two
put together, 1. That there is a sufficient price laid
dow for the satisfying of the justice of God, for the
debt of elect sinners. 2. That this is the Lord's
design in laying of the price down, even to pro-
cure and communicate life to them, according to
that of John iii. 16. God so loved the world, that
he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever be-
thov on him should not perish, but have everla-
ing life; and that of John xii. 32. And if I be
lifted up, I will draw all men after me: This de-
monstrates, that there is a sufficient warrant to
make use of Christ, for pardon of sin, and for ob-
taining of life, through him: For readily the ex-
ception is one of two; either, (1.) That the price
will
and that cannot be said, for the death of Christ is a price sufficient: Or, (2) That sinners know not what is the Lord's purpose in it; this text holds out that, and tells us, it is, that he may have a feed. This is the sum of the covenant of redemption; faith the Father, Son if thou wilt lay down thy life, thou shalt see a feed, that shall have life through thy sufferings; and the Lord would have never given his Son to die, if he had not minded the salvation of sinners, and to begin, and promote life in them, through his sufferings; and to what end is the gospel preached, by which life and immortality are brought to light, but that what he hath bought may be applied to sinners?

And therefore, as a 5th Use, We beseech you to concur with Christ in the design of his laying down his life: Is it not (think ye) great ingratitude to him, and great cruelty, to yourselves, that when the Lord hath designed such a thing by the laying down of his life, that ye should, as far as ye can, stand in the way of it? Now his design is, to have many in his common for-life, that he may have a feed; and to have poor sinners, that are dead and lifeless in themselves, taking with their sin, and coming to him, to get justice satisfied, and a right to life, by his offering: And is this a prejudicial design, or unprofitable to sinners? why then should ye stand in the way of that? When our Lord hath designed sinners good, and hath been content to lay down his life to make life possible to you; when all his design in dying, is, to have sinners saved by their betaking themselves to him, and that by their betaking themselves to him the second Adam, they may get a right to life transferred to them; is it not folly and madness for sinners, to obstruct what they can this blessed design? The apostle makes use of this argument, 2 Cor. v. 8, 19. He hath given us the word of reconciliation, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them: We therefore, as ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. And what is the reason? For he was made sin for us, who knew no sin; and for this end, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. And is not this the same argument that is in the text? Our Lord was made a sin-offering, that he might see a feed; and if so, then we would interreat you, if the bleeding bowels of Christ can have any weight with you, and if you would do him a pleasure, not to mar his design, as far as ye can, (for he will infrufrably accomplish his design) and that is to have souls brought in to make sinners peace with God, and that they may make use of his sufferings for that end. Need we use arguments, to persuade you to this, which is so much for your own good and welfare, even to save your souls; to come and be reconciled to God, to make use of Christ for life, to prevent the wrath that is to come, and to make heaven sure to yourselves; which is impossible for you, honestly to aim at, but God shall have the glory of his grace and wisdom from you? and if this be not your aim and endeavour, God will not have the glory of his grace in you, though passively he shall have the glory of his justice in punishing you eternally in hell. But that is not his great, and proper design, in sending of his Son; for he could have had his glory that way, though he had never sent him into the world: And therefore, in his name, and in his stead, we do again and again seriously beseech and solemnly obtest you, to give our Lord Jesus satisfaction in this particular. Ye that are going to hell, or are in hazard of it, come to Christ Jesus, the Prince of life, the Purchaser and Giver of life, and get life from him; come, as dead sinners in yourselves, and by the law, to get a new gift of life by his right: And we propose this suit and request in his name, who tells us that he laid down his life, to get a feed. This gospel comes to every one of your doors, and says to you, Will ye be obliged to Christ for life? Will ye be his children? If the heart be honest, and ye can sincerely say, Content, Lord, and will creep in under his wings, that ye may be found in him, and may be covered with his righteousness, there is good ground to expect a closed bargain; for our Lord purposely died, that he might have a feed; and is calling upon you for this very end, and will not go back of his word, if ye be content to bargain with him: And therefore I would again say unto you, Shift not his call; it is his design to have a feed; and it should be yours to seek to be of that feed: O let him have his errand among you! The offer comes (as I just now said) to every one of your doors; and your answer will be, and must be, either yea or nay; either that ye are content to be his children, that his grace may be glorified in you; or that ye are not content, and that ye will not come to him, that ye may have life, as it is, John v. that ye be born to be his seed, and children: But ah! the day comes, when ye would be glad of such an offer, and will not get it.

But, to come a little nearer in the application of this Use, (1.) Are there not many of you without life, yea, hundreds of you? not one among many
is renewed: if ye think yourselves to be dead, this word of life and salvation is sent unto you; and sure you have need of it. (2.) There is life in Christ to be had, a fair purchase made, and a way laid down, to bring sinners to have a right to life; and are not these two, think ye, well met and tried? On what ground then is it bottomed? Upon one of these two, or rather on both of them, implied in this phrase, of being Christ's seed. 1. It implies, that there be a coming to Christ, as void of life; and an actual truilling to him, for the attaining of life: that sinners, pricked with fear, or feeling of the wrath of God, acknowledge Christ as the Father of their life, and credit him with the application of life to them. 2. It implies, not only the crediting him with the application of life, but that we commit ourselves to be alone in his debt and common for it; which is implied in that word, John v. Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life: The life-making of Christ, for the attaining of life; is implied in the word coming; and that is, for slain and dead souls to go to Christ for abolution and life, called, Heb. vii. 25. A coming to God by Christ. And again, it is not, you will not come unto me, that ye may buy or procure life, or work it to yourselves; but ye will not come to me, that ye may have it, ye will not be in my common for it: The first word expresses where we get our life, and that is in Christ's sufferings; the second word, how we get it, even as the child gets life from its parent, we get it fully and freely conferred on us by him. So that the similitude says this much, Come to Christ, who hath procured your life; and trust your getting of life to him, on the terms of grace: And since this is all that Christ seeks of you, not to make your performances the ground of your pleading for life, but his purchase; and that having need on your side, and fulness on his side, ye should come and have; what hinders your closing of a bargain? This is the very thing your salvation will stand or fall on; even on your yielding to come to him, and to be in his common for life, and on your leaning to his righteousness, or not; and according as ye act faith or not on him, in this respect, so will the sentence of your abolution or condemnation pass in the great day. And therefore, let me beseech you yet again, above any thing to make this sure. And when I speak of making it sure, it is not only to have a glance of the thing in your minds, as many may have, to whose door Christ comes, when yet they will not go out of doors to him; nor is it only to have a conviction in your judgment and conscience of the reasonableness of it; as ma-

ny of you have so many convictions of sin, and of the necessity of faith in your judgment, as will make you inexcusable; ye are convinced, that such a thing should be, and there it holds; the Lord draws you by his word to give assent to the reasonableness of the offer, but ye further the conviction, ye come Agrippa's length in assenting to the truth; but come no further; ye laid your account, it may be, that ye could not save yourselves, and that your salvation was only in Christ, and ye took that for faith: But, believe me, there must be something more than that, even a laying of yourselves over on him, and a making application to him, to fill the empty room in the heart. I remember a dying person, that had a good word to this purpose: who, when it was asked at him, How his faith did now differ from that which he had in his health? answered. When I was in health, I was convinced that I should believe; but now my soul actually calls itself on Christ. The many convictions that men have, that they should believe, will flick to them, and go with them to hell, and make them the more inexcusable, that they held there, and went no further.

6thly, And lastly, It serves to be a ground of expostulation with many hearers of the gospel, who have heard of this noble design, and yet make no use of it. O hypocrites, formalists, and profane persons, what a reckoning will ye have to make, when this shall be found on your score, ye were dead in sin, and the Lord contrived a design to save lost sinners, in sending his Son to be an offering for sin; and the Son came and laid down his life; and ye were called and invited to come to him, and to have life in him; the glad tidings of redemption were preached, and made offer of to you; and ye would not be content to close with Christ, but would, so far as ye could, thwart with him, in his design, tho' it cost him his heart-blood to bring it about: What will come of this? or, what will ye answer him for it? Ye will say, it may be, That ye were content to concur with Christ, and froad not in the way of it; but it will be replied, Why then did ye live and die in your sin, and bring your soul to this dreadful hazard and loss? Your conscience and God will hear it in upon you, and ye will not get it shifted, that your destruction was of yourselves, because ye would not be fayed; and will that, think ye, be a suitable and satisfying answer, that tho' Christ would have saved my soul, I would not be fayed, by him, and then to go to hell for that? what a tormenting thing will it be in the confidence, that life was offered.
SERMON XLIII.

Isaiah liii. 10. — He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

HERE is not one reading of these words but it might put us to this wondering question, For what is it that this great design of all Christ's sufferings hath been driven? and what hath been the great end of this covenant of redemption, that hath such sharp, sore, and sad sufferings following thereon to the Mediator, who engaged in it? This world was made with little noise, (to say so) there was no engagement on God for bringing about of that work, tho' very great, as there is in bringing about this; this then certainly must be a quite other thing that hath an offering, and such an offering, as had in it the bruising and dying of the Person, that was the Son of God, interposed, for the obtaining of it. But this answers the question, He shall see his seed, &c. Which, in sum, is this, his life shall procure life to many dead sinners, and they shall get it certainly applied to them: And the work of the ministry (to speak so) and of the mediatory office of Christ shall thrive well in his hand; so that there is not one soul, that is designed to life and glory, but it shall be brought to the possession of it in due time.

There are two things, which we hinted at the last day, that we shall now speak a word to; and the first of them is this, "That it is an agreed upon, and a concluded article in the covenant of redemption, that our Lord Jesus shall, and must "have a seed." This is a most certain and infallible truth; it is an effect laid down here, as a necessary consequent of his offering up of his soul for sin: It is a determined thing, if we look, 1. To the certainty of the event: Our Lord Jesus Christ must have a seed, to wit, believers in him; that is concluded on, and promiseth to him. 2. If we look to the seed that he shall have; they are particularly determined upon, to wit, how many children he shall have, and who they shall be: That was both a promise in the covenant, and a prophecy, as we have it, Psal. xxi. where the psalmist, speaking before of Christ, says, verse 30. A seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation: and this is laid down as a solid conclusion, John vi. 37. All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me; which supposeth both a determinate number given, and the certainty of their coming: Become of the rest of the world what may, they shall undoubtedly come. And indeed, if we look to the nature of this transact, we will find it to be a promiseth, and a promise of God to the Mediator, that can neither be altered, nor unaccomplished; yea, it is a covenanted promise, made on a condition, to wit, the laying down of his life, as the foundation on his side; and that which he hath for so doing from the Father, on his side, is this, That he shall see his seed. And when

the god of this world, who hath put out your eyes; but the day comes, when ye will find yourselves greatly mistaken. I shall insist no further; only, seeing that ye are naturally dead in sins and trespasses, and seeing that Christ's design in dying is to have a seed, as ye would not prejudice yourselves of life, as ye would not be found to be despisers of his sufferings, and such as have trode the blood of the covenant under foot, studly to make sure eternal life to yourselves, by betaking yourselves to him for it; or lay your reckoning to be reputed guilty of this horrid crime, with all the aggravations of it.
Ij'aiah  

SERM. XLIII.  

I am not only a promise, but such a promise as is grounded on a transaction, bearing a condition, which the Son hath performed, as he himself faith, John xvii. 4. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; there is a justice and faithfulness in the performance of the promise on the Father's side to him, that he shall have a feed. 3. It is clear also, if we consider the end of this transaction, which is, to glorify the grace of God by Christ's purchase, in the salvation of elect sinners; in respect of this end, it cannot fail, but Christ must have a feed, that the end may be attained: So then, our Lord Jesus must have, and certainly shall have, many that shall partake of eternal life by him.

The 1st Use of it serves to let us see the unwarrantableness of that doctrine, that leaves the fruit of Christ's death, as to the seeing of a feed, to an uncertainty, laying the weight of it on man's free-will; a thing that is very caking with natural men, and even concite carnal reason: But if it were left to men's option, to receive Christ or not, then the execution of the work of redemption and the performance of such a promise, as this is, behoved to have the certainty of it subjected to man's will, and should be made effectual, or not, as he pleased: But it is God's great mercy to us, that we know it is not so: and that there is an equity here (to speak with reverence of the Majesty of God) that seeing our Lord Jesus hath done his part, the promise should be made effectual to him, and that he should have a feed.

Use 2. It layeth a ground, serving greatly to quiet us in the reeling of times, when the world is going through other, and turned up-side-down, and when we are disposed to wonder what will become of the Church, that is nowfore assaulted, and made to stagger; what, by the old enemy Antichrist, who is besieving himself mightily; what through abounding security, and formality, whereby Satan is seeking to draw away many, some to error, and some to profanitv: But tho' Antichrist, and the devil, with all their emissaries and agents, had said the contrary, our Lord Jesus shall have a feed: It may be, they are not the plurality of a kingdom, or nation, of a city, or of a congregation, but they shall be so many, as shall serve to the making out of the promise. Our Lord makes use of this, John vi. 37, and 44. where, when a number are turning away from him, he says, Murmur not at this, no man can come to me, except the Father that sent me, draw him: and all that the Father hath given me, shall come to me: I will get as many (as if he had said) as are appointed to receive my word from myself, or from my servants speaking in my name; as for others, I look not for them. It is true, we would beware of having any sinful accession to the marrying of the progress of the gospel, and be suitably affected with any such thing in others; but withal, we would reverence the Lord's sovereignty, who knows how to have a care of his Church in the worst of times: And let us quiet our hearts, amidst all the reeling and confusions of these times, that our Lord shall have a feed, and that he shall not want any of all these that are given' him of his Father, but shall raise them up at the last day.

Use 3. Seeing this is the Lord's design, it would commend to the hearers of the gospel a study to concur in this design (if we may speak so) in their public and private stations, in reference to themselves, and in reference to others: As it is the Lord's design, that Christ shall have a feed, so we would make it ours. We may not fail safely, and strike in here with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, whose design runs on this; and (to speak so) they have, must have, and shall have a poor and cold game of it, who thwart with the Lord in his design, whoever they be, and in whatever station or capacity, public or private. As it is no wisdom, so it will be no advantage, to struggle or strive with God: But here is matter of great encouragement to any that would have the gospel prospering, religion countenanced, error suppressed, the power of godliness promoted, and profanity born down; that our Lord Jesus Christ does concur with them in the same design. I know not any other design that a man can strike in with, without fear to come short in it, but this; and whatsoever strike in with this, it shall not misgive them, for Christ shall have a feed. And tho' we cannot, nor ought not absolutely and peremptorily, to design particular persons; yet in the general, we ought to concur, to have the promise made to Christ, of a feed, performed to him. And indeed it is not a small privilege and prerogative, that we are admitted, by prayer or any other way, to concur with him in this design; according to that memorable word of promise, concerning this matter, Phil. Ixxxii. 15. Prayer also shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised.

Use 4. There is here great encouragement to sinners, that are in their own apprehension void of life, and have some sense of their deadness, and would fain be at Christ for life, and have him for their Father: Such, I say, are, by this doctrine, encouraged to step to; for it is a thing determined and
and promised: And since it is so, we may and ought to essay and endeavour that he may have a seed, and may be sure it will not displease him that we endeavour to offer ourselves to be of his seed. It is a foolish, and yet often a puzzling and perplexing doubt, that comes in the way of serious souls, when they offer to come to Christ, that they know not but that they may be presuming: If there be any acquaintance with God's and Christ's design, manifested in the gospel, there is no ground for such a doubt; and such a soul may as well question, whether God and the Mediator be pleased, that the promise made to him of a seed be performed? Certainly it will be displeasing to neither of them, but well-pleasing to both; and therefore the sinner would be strengthened on this ground, and take it for granted in his address to God, that such a thing is designed, to wit, that Christ shall have a seed.

Use 5. It shews what must be the condition that others stand in, who do not come and make offer of themselves to be Christ's seed; they do, in so far as they can, thwart with God's design: And this will come on their account, if Christ should never have a seed, they would not for their parts betake themselves to him, nor be of his seed: but, as far as they could, would stand in the way of the performance of this promise, to him: And this will be ground of a sad challenge from God; I designed that Christ my Son should have a seed, and I engaged by promise to give it to him; and ye scorned and disdained (to speak so with reverence, in such a subject) to satisfy God that far, as to yield to Christ, to be of his seed, that that promise might have its accomplishment in you.

1. From the words complexly considered, Observe, That Christ's having and obtaining of a seed, his getting of souls to believe in him, is a thing most welcome, and acceptable, both to Jehovah that makes the promise, and to the Mediator to whom it is promised. There is nothing that pleases God and the Mediator better, than for lost sinners to betake themselves to Christ, and his righteousness, for life; it is the satisfaction that he hath for the travel of his soul; it is the recompense here promised to him; it is (to speak after the manner of men) as if the Son were saying, What shall I get, if I lay down my life for sinners? Here the Father promiseth, Thou shalt see thy seed, that is, many shall believe, and be justified through thy death: and this is so acceptable to the Mediator, that he says, Le, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will.
f combined to believe, do warrant them to believe, and lay down grounds, whereupon they may found their faith: but they also declare, that it is well-pleasing to them, and that they shall be very welcome that come. The carriage of the father of the prodigal, Luke xv. is but a little shadow of that welcome that a sinner, in returning to God by faith in Jesus Christ, may expect; tho' indeed that parable shews plainly, how heartily a welcome returning sinners may expect: *It was meet (faith he) that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive; and was lost, but is found again.*

Ufo. 2. It serves to banish away that unworthy apprehension, that is in the minds of too many, that there is greater rigidity and austerity in God the Father, than there is in the Mediator towards poor sinners. If we look to God as God, his grace abounds in the Person of the Father, as it doth in the Person of the Son; and if we look to the Son as God, he is the same just God, that will not acquit the guilty, more than the Father will do; so that there is no ground for this apprehension, which forders a sort of blasphemous conception of the blessed Trinity, as if they were of different natures and dispositions, most unbecoming Christiani ans: Hence is it, that many, who are ignorant of God, will speak of Christ as being easier to be dealt withal than the Father is; a conceit most derogatory to the divine Majesty, and unworthy of Christians. Indeed, if we abstract God from the Mediator, there is no dealing with him; but if we look on God, and come to him in the Mediator, there we find him easy to be dealt with: Therefore, that which is called the satisfaction of the Mediator, verfe 11. is called here, the pleasure of the Lord, because he delights in the performing of his promise to the Mediator, in reference to his having of a seed. It is from this also, that some folks will pray to Christ, as if he were a different Thing or Being from God; and they would first make their peace with Christ, and then, by his moyen, bring themselves in good terms with God. The Mediator indeed, considered as Mediator, is different from God, who, without him, or out of him, is a consuming fire: But, considered as God, he hath the same properties, and gives pardon on the same terms; and, in this respect, we are to make use of his own righteousness for obtaining of pardon from himself, there being but one God. There is occasion too frequently to meet with this error, and I know not how many inconveniences it hath following upon it: Some think that they are always 

Verfe 10.

SURE of Christ's friendship, but they doubt of God's, as if the Father had not the same delight to save sinners, that Christ the Son hath. And another abuse follows on the former, that there is no more use made of Christ, but by a word of prayer to him, without exercising faith on his Godhead: if there were no more to rectify this gross mistake, this alone text might do it; if ye make use of Christ's righteousness, ye may expect friendship from the Father, and from the Son; and if ye do it not, ye have no ground to expect friendship from either of them.

Ufo. 3. There is here ground of glad tidings to sinners, and that which makes the covenant of redemption to be deservedly called the Gospel, and that made the angels to sing, *Glory be to God in the highest, peace on earth,* and good will to men; that there is such a covenant laid down, for bringing life to dead sinners; and that the Father and the Mediator are delighted, comforted, (to say so) satisfied, and well pleased with sinners making use of the Mediator for life. Is there then any sinner here, whose conscience lays open to him his hazard, applies the curse to him, and passes sentence on himself, and hath some desire to be at Christ, and yet wots not if he will hold out the golden sceptre? Behold, this text doth hold it out to such, and bids them come in boldly, for Christ makes them welcome; yea, the Lord Jehovah makes them welcome: It is the Father's, and Christ's delight that thou come forward. If there be a doctrine in all the scripture sweet, it is this; and, without this, no preaching, nor point of truth, would be sweet: I say, without this, to wit, that God hath not only provided a price, and makes offer of it, but is well content that it be made use of; yea, and is delighted that a sinner, dead in himself, tryst and concredit himself to the Mediator, for obtaining of life through him. And can there be any question of this? For, 1. If it had not been the Lord Jehovah his delight, why then did he make such a covenant? Why did he (as it were) part and find to the Son of his love? why did he accept of a Cautioner? and why transferred he on his own Son, and exacted of him, the debt that was due by elect sinners, and made the sword of his justice to awake against him? If he had not had a great delight in the salvation of sinners, would he have taken that way, to infinite the only Son of his love, to spare them? And if it had not been the Son's pleasure, would he with such delight have undertaken, and done the Father's will, in reference to their salvation.
do thy will, O my God: It was the Father's will, and he had a delight in it; and it was the Son's will and delight, and he came, and, according to his undertaking, laid down his life. 

2. Wherefore else are all the promises and encouragements that are given to sinners to believe? as that of Math. xi. 28. Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy-laden, &c. and that, 2 Cor. v. 20, where both are put together, We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. Ministers press you in the name of God, and by vertue of a warrant from him, to be reconciled; and they have Christ's warrant, in a more peculiar manner, as the great Prophet of his Church, to tell you; it is a thing that the Lord Jehovah and the Mediator have pleasure in, even in this, that ye should be reconciled. 3. Wherefore are the many expostulations with sinners, that they will not come to Christ for life, that they will not be gathered, that when he stretches out his hand all the day long, they will not behold him? &c. Do not all these confirm this truth, that there is nothing he is better pleased with, than with a sinner's coming to Christ for life? Let me therefore beseech you, by the love that ye pretend to Jesus Christ, and in his name, and in the name of Jehovah, ob- tell you, be ye reconciled to God in Christ; let him have satisfaction; let this pleasure be done to the Lord, even to receive life from him: This is no hard nor hurtful, no unreasonable nor rigid request, I am sure; all that he requires of you, is, that ye would come to him, and get life: O! if ye could but suitably apprehend this to be that which the Lord aims at, in this preached gospel, that we might (to speak so with reverence) put an obligation on the Majesty of God, in making sure, in this his own way, the salvation of our own souls; and that we could not do him a better turn: (But I pray take the expressions right, for we cannot set forth his love, but in our own language, which comes infinitely far short of the thing) we could not find in our hearts to refuse to grant such a loving, and highly rational a request. As it is sure then upon the one side, that we cannot do that which will please him better; so it is as sure on the other side, that we cannot do that which will displease him more, than to slight his counsel in this. Though we would give our bodies to be burnt, and all our goods to the poor, he will not count it a pleasure done him, if this be not done: We would look upon this, as low condescendancy, and great grace in the Lord, that he seeks no more of us, but the making sure eternal life to ourselves, as that which will be most pleasing to him; it is even as if a son should say to his father, Father, what will please thee? And as the father should say to his son, Son, have a care of thyself, and that will please me; because, by our so doing, he reacheth his great end, to wit, the glorifying of his grace and love, which sinners, by their unbelief, do what in them lieth to mar and obstruct. If we could speak seriously to you in this matter, it might be a text to speak on every day: Always, seeing he hath purchased redemption to sinners at a dear rate, and all that he requires of you, is to close with him, and to seek after the application of his purchase, we again earnestly pray you, be ye reconciled to God, and take heed that ye receive not this grace in vain. What can ye do that will be pleasing to God, or profitable to yourselves, without this? Or what fruit of the gospel can be brought forth, when this fruit is not brought forth, if Jesus Christ in his offices get not employment, and if his offering be not fled to for making of your peace? We may, in consideration of this great and grave subject, go from the congregation partly refreshed, that there is such a doctrine to be spoken of, tho' we cannot, alas! speak of it suitably; and partly afraid, left we be found, as far as we can, thwarting with, and running crofs unto God's good-will and design in it, notwithstanding all the favour and grace he hath made offer of to us. It were good that we carried serious meditation on this subject along with us.
SERMON XLV.

Isaih liv. 11. He shall see the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied: By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

This is a great work that the Mediator hath to do; a great price that he hath to lay down for the satisfying of divine justice, and for redeeming of the lost elect: Now, what shall he have for all the travel of his soul? Here it is answered, and the terms of the covenant of redemption again compendied. As for the effects and fruits of his death, spoken of in the close of the former verse, He shall prolong his days, that being spoken to, on the matter, from verse 8, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand, being spoken to by another lately in your hearing, from John xvi. 4. and in part by us, from verse 10, now read over again; we shall forbear further speaking to them, and come to that which follows in the 11th verse.

In this verse then there are these three. 1. An offer and promise made to the Mediator, That if he will accept of the propofal, and lay down his life for redeeming of the lost elect, it shall not be fruitless, He shall see the travel of his soul and shall be satisfied. 2. The way how this satisfaction shall be brought about, By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; that is, by faith in him, his purchase shall be applied to all these for whom he should suffer, who thereby should be justified. 3. The ground of this, which also shews the way how he shall justify many, For he shall bear their iniquities; that is, by his undertaking, and paying of their debt, he should meritoriously procure their absolution, and the setting of them free. In the first part, we have these three things implied. 1. A supposed condition, or stipulation on the Mediator's side, that his soul shall be put to travel; which expresses both the nature of his sufferings, that they shall not only be bodily, but also, and mainly, soul-sufferings, and conflicts with the wrath of God, which the elects sins deserved, as the main and principal thing articulated, and that wherein the price of their redemption lay; And the greatness and extremity of his sufferings, here called travel, from the similitude of a woman in travel, and the travel of his soul: This being the way foretold, how Christ should be used; he should travel in his sufferings, to procure life to his people. 2. A promise made to him, That he shall see the travel of his soul, that is, he shall not bring forth wind, but shall have a large offspring, which, in the 2d part of the verse, is called a justifying of many by his knowledge: This is the fruit he shall have of his soul travel. 3. The extent of this, which is, his being satisfied, and quiet; which looks to two things, (1.) To the certain and infallible success of his sufferings: Not one of the elect shall be amissed, none that he hath bought life to shall want it; he shall get as many justified and saved, as he conditioned for. (2.) To the great delight and complacency that our Lord hath, in performing the work of redemption, and in sinners getting the benefit of it: He shall think all well bestowed, when they come to get the application thereof, and by faith in him to be justified. From the first of these, Observe, " That the Mediator, in performing the work of redemption, and in satisfying the justice of God for the debt of elect sinners, was not only put external and bodily, but also, and mainly, to inward, spiritual and soul-sufferings: Or, The redeeming of lost sinners cost our Lord Jesus much soul-travel and sufferings."

We have hinted at his sufferings often before, but this place especially speaks his soul-sufferings, and the inward anguish and agony that he was brought under: We shall therefore speak a little to this, it being most useful, and extensive in the fruits and benefits of it, to the people of God; and shall, 1/2. Confirm it by some places in the gospel, where we have the fulfilling of this prophecy clearly holden out to us; And 2dly, By a fourfold reason: Only take this for an advertisement, That when we speak of the soul-sufferings of our Lord, we do not mean of any sufferings after death (as Papists falsely calumniate us) but of these sufferings especially, that were about the time of his passion, when he got the full cup of the Father's wrath put in his hand, towards his approaching to the cross, and when he was upon it, when he was arraigned, and when he was exacted upon for the elects debt, The first passage, to confirm it, is that of John xii. 27. Now is my soul.
Isaiah iii. verse 10.

foul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, face me from this hour: Here his soul-sufferings begin clearly to shew themselves, when there was no crofs, nor suffering in his body; yet he is put to fuch a pinch, confidered as Man, that he is, in a manner, vanquished, and put to fay, What shall I fay? the horror of that which was begun, and was further coming on him, being beyond all expression; whereupon follows that prayer, Father, face me from this hour: His finful human nature fearing some way to enter on it. The 2d passage is that of John xiii. 21. where it is faid, that He began to be troubled in spirit, and testified, &c. But let us come forward, and put Matthew, Mark and Luke together, and we shall fee what an inexplorable and inconceivable height and heap of forrows, his foul-trouble and travel will amount to: Matthew fays, Ch. xxvi. 37, 38. that He began to be forrowful, and very heavy; and in the next words, My foul is exceeding forrowful even unto death: And what made him fo forrowful? The next words, Father, if it be poifible, let this cup pafs from me, fwear that it was the cup of his Father’s wrathful juftice put in his hand. Mark fays, Chap. xiv. 33. that when he came to the garden, he began to be forrowful, and very heavy: A wonderful expreffion to be used of the Son of God, that the Perfon that was God fhou’d be amazed; yet being confidered as Man, he was fo. Luke fays, Chap. xxii. 44. that being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: There is a fore exercife, and fad foul-travel indeed, when the word of God’s juftice awaked against the Man that was God’s Fellow, and when he hath the curfe that was due to all the elect to encounter and meet with; this was fuch a combat, the like whereof was never in the world, and the effect of it is, His sweat as great drops of blood falling down to the ground. When there was no hand of man stirring him, nor any man to trouble him by him; but God, as a severe, and holyly rigid Exactor, putting him to pay the debt, which he had undertaken to pay, according to his obligation; the inward preffure of his foul, preffed great drops of blood from his body. And if we will yet look a little forward to Matth. xxvii. 46. we will find him brought to that extremity on the crofs, that he cries, My God, my God, why haft thou forsaken me? Which tho’ it fay, that there was still faith in the Mediator, in adhering to the Father as his God; yet it fets out that great horror which he had inwardly to wafele with, when there was fome reftraint on the fensibly comforting influence of the Godhead: Now, when all the evan-
justice for one sin, that it is more to satisfy justice for all the sins of one person, which all the angels in heaven, and men on earth, cannot do; and therefore the punishment of the damned in hell is drawn out to eternity's length, and yet there is never a compleat equivalent satisfaction made to justice: But it is most of all, to satisfy justice for all the sins of all the elect; who, tho' they be few in comparison of the reprobate world, yet simply considered they are many, yea, even innumerable. And our Lord having taken all their sins on him, he is peremptorily required to satisfy for them all: And if this wibtal be added, that he is to satisfy for all the sins of all the elect at once, in a very short time, and hath the curse and wrath of God due to them, murthered, and marshalled in battallie against him, and as it were in a great body, in a most formidable manner marching up towards him, and furiously charging him; and all the wrath which they should have drunken through all eternity (which yet would never have been drunk out, nor made the less) put in one cup, and propinied to him, as the word is, Psa. cx. 7. He shall drink of the brook in the way; the wrath of God running like an impetuous river, must be drunk up at once, and made dry by him: These, being put together, do clearly, and convincingly shew, that it could not be but an inexplicable and inconceivable soul-travel and suffering, that our Lord Jesus was put to.

The use of this doctrine is large, and the 1st use is this, That ye would take it for a most certain truth, which the scripture doth so frequently and significantly hold forth, That our Lord Jesus, in performing the work of redemption, had much sad soul-travel and sorrow: The faith of this is very useful to demonstrate the great love of God, and of the Mediator; for doubtless, the more suffering be undergone by the Mediator, the more love kyles therein to the elect. 2. It serves to hold out the sovereignty and justice of God, and the horribleness of sin. 3. In respect of God's people, it is useful, that they may be through and clear in the reality and worth of Christ's satisfaction; he having no other end in it, but to satisfy justice for their sin. 4. It is useful to shew the vanity and emptiness of men's suppos'd and fancied merits, and of any thing that can be alleged to be in man's suffering, or doing, for the satisfying of divine justice, seeing it drew so deep on Christ to the Cautioner. And here two gross errors come to be refuted and, reproued; one of the Socinians, who seek quite to overturn Christ's satisfaction; and another of the Papists, that diminish his satisfaction, and extenuate and derogate from the great privilege of the pardon of sin, as if any thing could procure it, but this satisfaction of Christ by his soul-travel; both which are abundantly refuted by this text.

But to speak a word more particularly to the First, For clearing of which, ye will ask, What could there be to affect the holy human soul of our Lord? Or what was that, wherein his soul-sufferings did consist? But, before we speak to this, we would premise this word of advertisement in the entry, That there are two sorts of punishments, or penal effects of sin: The 1st sort, are such as are simply penal and satisfying, as proceeding from some extrinsic cause. The 2d sort are sinful; one sin, in the righteous judgment of God, drawing one another: And this proceeds not simply from the nature of justice, but from the nature of a mere sinful creature, and so from an intrinsic cause of a sinful principle in the creature. Now, when we speak of the soul-sufferings of Christ, which he was put to, in satisfying for the sins of the elect; we mean of the former, that is, sufferings that are simply penal; for there was no intrinsic principle of corrupt nature, nor ground of challenge in him, as there is in sinful creatures: And therefore we are to conceive of his soul-sufferings, as of something inflicted from without; and are not to conceive of them, as we do of sinful creatures, or that have sin in them, whereof he was altogether free.

Having premised this, we shall speak a little to these: two, 1st, To that wherein this soul-suffering did not consist. 2dly, To that wherein it did consist. For the former, wherein it was not, 1. We are not to suppose, or imagine any actual separation betwixt his Godhead, and his Manhead, as if there had been an interruption of the personal union; nor so, for the union of the two natures in one Person remains full; he was God and Man still, tho' (as was hinted before) there was a suspension of such a measure, at least, of the sensible comforting influence of the divine nature from the human, as had wont to be let out thereto; and yet there was even then a sustaining power, flowing from the Godhead, that supported him, so that he was not swallowed up of that, which would have quite and for ever swallowed up all creatures, as is evident in his crying, My God, my God, why hast thou forfaken me? Which shews, that tho' the union and relation stood firm, yet a comfortable influence was much restrained. 2. There was no
Isaiah iii.

verse 11.

fretting, no impatience, nor carnal anxiety in our Lord, all along his sufferings; for he did most willingly undergo them, and had a kindly submission in them all; as is evident by these words, *But for this cause, came I into this hour:*, and, *Not my will, but thy will be done.*

3. There was not in him any distrust of God's love, nor any unbelief of his approbation before God, neither any the least diffidence as to the outgate; for, in the saddest and sharpest of all his conflicts, he was clear about his Father's love to him, that the relation good firm, and that there would be a comfortable outgate; as his prayer before shews, wherein he *siles God, Father;* and these hardeist like words uttered by him on the crofs, *My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?* do also shew, wherein twice over, he confidently afferts his interest, *My God, my God;* though he was most terribly assaulted, yet the tentation did not prevail over him. 4. Neither are we to conceive, that there was any inward confusion, challenge, or gnawing of conscience in him, such as is in desperate sinners, cast under the wrath of God, because there was no inward cause of it, nor any thing that could breed it; yea, even in that wherein he was Cautioner, he was clear, that he was doing the Father's will, and finishing the work that was committed to him, and that even under the greatest apprehensions of wrath: Therefore all such things are to be guarded against, in our thoughts, lest otherwise we reflect upon our innocent and spotless Mediator. But, 2dly, To speak a word to that wherein it doth confit: 1. It did confit (as we hinted before) in the Godhead's suspending its comfortable influence for a time from the human nature: Though our Lord had no culpable anxiety, yet he had a finless fear, considering him as Man; and that the infinite God was angry, and executing angrily the sentence of the law against him, (though he was not angry at him, considered as in himself, but as he stood in the room of the elect, as their Cautioner, of whom he was to exact the payment of their debt) he could not but be in a wonderful amazement, as the word is, Mark xiv. 35. *He was fore amazed;* and, Heb. v. 7. it is said, *When he had offered up prayers, and supplications, with strong cries and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, he was heard in that which he feared;* which looks to his wrestling in the garden. 2. He had an inexplicable sense of grief; not only from the petty outward afflictions that he was under; (which may be called petty comparatively, tho' they were very great in themselves) but also from the torrent of the wrath flowing in on his soul: That cup behoved to have a most bitter reli; and an inconceivable anguish with it, when he was a drinking of it, as appeared in his agony. O as he was pained and pinched in his soul! The soul being specially sensible of the wrath of God. 3. It confitt in a sort of wonderful horror, which no question, the marching up (to say so) of so many mighty squadrons of the highly provoked wrath of God, and making so furious and formidable an assault on the innocent human nature of Christ (that, considered truly in itself, as a finite creature) behoved necessarily to be attended with: Hence he prays, Father, if it be possible, *let this cup depart from me;* intimating, that there was a finless lothness, and a holy abhorrence to meddle with it, and to adventure upon it. Tho' we have not hearts rightly to conceive, nor tongues suitably to express these most exquisite sufferings, yet these things shew that our Lord Jesus was exceedingly put to it, in his holy human soul.

The 2d Use serves to stir us up to wonder at the love of God the Father, that gave his own Son, and exacted the elect's debt off him; and made the sword of his justice to awake against him; and to wonder at the love of the Son, that engaged to be Surety for them, and humbled himself so low, to lift them up: It was wonderful, that he should stoop to become Man, and to be a poor Man, and to die; but more, that he should come this length, as to be in an agony of soul, and to be so tossed with a tempest of terrible wrath, tho' he was not capable of tolling as meer creatures are: This, being well considered, would heighten exceedingly the praise of grace in the Church, and very much warm the hearts of sinners to him. And for prefiguring this Use a little, and for provoking to holy wondering at this love; consider these four, 1. Who it was that suffered thus? Even he that was without guile; he that was God's Delight, his Father's Fellow, the express Image of his Person, he that made all things; and who will one day be judge of all: it is even he that thus suffered. 2. What he suffered? Even the wrath of God, and the wrath of God in such a degree and measure, as was equivalent to all that the elect should have suffered eternally in hell; which prefigith forth from him these expriphs which we hinted at before. 3. For whom all this was? which makes it appear to be yet more wonderful: It was for a number of lost straying sheep, that were turned every one to his own way, as it is verfe, 6. for dyvours and debauched bankrups, that were enemies to, and in tops with him: Some
Some of them fputting in his face, some of them upon the consultation of taking away his life, as may be gathered from Acts ii. Yea, take the best of them, for whom he suffered, even tho' those whom he took to the garden with him, to be witnesses of his agony; and we will find them sleeping, when he is in the height of it, and is thereby call into a top-sweat of blood; and out of cafe to wait and to bear-burden with him, but for one hour. It had been much for him to have suffered for righteous persons; but, as it is Rom. v. God commands his love to us in this, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 4. The manner how he suffered, to wit, most willingly and patiently; tho' he easily could have commanded more than twelve legions of angels to rescue him, yet he would not, but would needs be apprehended by a number of poor worms, that will, with many mo, one day crawl at his footstool; that being the over-word of every article of the covenant of redemption on the Mediator's part, both as to the undertaking and the performance, I delight to do thy will, O my God: And now, for what end are all these things spoken? is it (think ye) only, that we should speak, and that ye should hear of them, and no more? Surely no; it is a wonder, that this, which concerns us so nearly, is not more affecting to us. Are there any here that have any hope of benefit from Christ's sufferings, or that have win comfortably to apply them? Do not ye behold a depth of love here, that cannot be founded? Is it suitable, think ye, that sinners, who have the hope of heaven thro' Christ's sufferings, should be so little moved at the hearing and reading of them? he suffers much by sinners, when his love shining forth in his sufferings is not taken notice of. I would pose you, when was your heart suitably affected with thinking on them? Or, when did ye make it an errand to God, purposely to blest him for this, that he lent his Son to suffer, and that the Mediator came and suffered such things for you sinners? This is a part, and a considerable part of your duty; and gratitude should constrain you to it: And you should not minch, nor derogate from the just esteem of his love; tho' through your own fault, ye be not sure of your interest in it, yet his condescending grace is not the less.

Uf*: 3. Behold here, as upon the one side the exceeding severity of justice, and terriflenefs of wrath; so, upon the other side, the exceeding abominablenels of sin. Would ye know what sin is, what wrath is, how jufly and severely the law is? read all these here, even in what is exacted by justice of the Cautioner, for the e-

left's sins. The moft part of men and women, alas! do not believe how evil and bitter a thing it is, and therefore they daily and play with it; they know not what wrath is, and therefore they dare hazard on it; they know not how strictly the law is, and therefore they promise themselves peace, thou they walk in the imagination of their own hearts, and add drunkenness to thirfs. But, O secure sinners! what mean ye? have ye, or can ye have any hopes, that God will deal more gently with you, than he dealt with his own Son, when he was but Cautioner, and the finner only by imputation: You are finite creatures, and drink in fin as the ox drinks water, and have an inward sinfull principle, and an evil conscience, filled with jufit grounds of many challenges. Consider with yourselves, what a de-

perate condition, under inevitable and intolerable wrath, ye have to look for, who have no ground to look otherwife on God than as an enemy: When wrath was fo horrible to innocent Jesus Christ, who had no fin, no challenge, no doubt of an interest in God, what will it be to you? Certainly the day is coming, when many of you will think ye have greatly beguiled and cheated yourselves, in think-

ing, that justice would be fo easily satisfied as ye did: O then ye will be made to know to your cost, the nature of wrath and justice, and the nature of fin, who would never suffer these things to light before. The cafe of the rich glut-

toon in hell may persuade many that the law is strict, and that fin is an ill and bitter thing, and that wrath is sore to bide: Therefore let me intreat you, as ye would eschew the wrath of God, and the hate of his revenging justice; beware of fin, daily not with it, as ye would not have it aggravated by this circumstance, above many, that ye hazarded to commit it, upon the consideration of God's good-

es, that in reason shou'dhave led you to repentance.

Uf': 4. See here the absolute necessity that lies on sinners, who hear this gospel, to receive Christ by faith, and to improve his satisfaction for obtaining of life through him: For one of these two must be resolved on, either to come to this reckoning with justice yourselves, or to endeavour the removal of wrath by the satisfaction of Christ; there being no other way to come to freedom from guilt, and from the wrath that guilt draws on: That Christ Jesus suffered thus, as sinners Cautioner, it lays, that wherever sin is, God will exact satisfaction: and where he exacts, he does it severely, tho' most jufly; and if he exact it severely off the Caution-

er, what will he do with the devour debtor, espe-

cially when he hath sighted the Cautioner, and de-
Ifaiah liii. 11. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied: By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be made perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works; and that his people may be made wise unto salvation: Yet these scriptures, wherein our Lord Jesus is holden forth more clearly, are eminently useful: he being the foundation and ground of all, to whom the law and the prophets bear witness, and they are only profitable to us, in the eflate wherein we are, in so far as they relate to him, and point him out to us. And we may further say, that these scriptures, wherein his sufferings and death are holden forth, in the richness and fruitfulness of them, are singularly so; that being the very life of the covenant, and the very door, by, and through which we step from death to life; and whatever they be to others, sure they have a special sweetness in them to sensible sinners: And therefore the sum of the gospel, and of saving knowledge, is by the apostle, 2 Cor. ii. 2. compendified in the knowledge of Christ, and of him crucified; which unfolds his very heart and bowels to us.

The prophet hath been pointing out this in several verses, and hath hinted at the effects of his sufferings in the former verse: And now, in these words, he put a new title on them, calling them the travel of Christ's soul; not only to set out the exceeding greatness of them, but with respect to the foregoing words, wherein it is said, he shall see his seed; which is repeated here, when it is said, he shall be satisfied: so that, as a mother is in travel, for bringing forth of a child; so, says he, Christ shall be put to soul-travel, for bringing life and immortality to the seed given him, to be faved by him: And seeing he is put to travel, he must needs bring forth, and see his seed. Here we may allude to that of Isaiah lxvi. 9. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord; shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? faith my God.
We have spoken of the nature and greatness of these sufferings: Now, euere we proceed to any more observations, we would speak a word further to the Use of this; it being indeed an eater out of which comes meat; and a strong, out of which comes sweet; these pangs having calmed and quieted the pangs, and showers (to speak so) of many travelling souls, and brought forth a birth at last.

And therefore, beside what I spake to in the Use the last day, I would add this, that we would endeavour to have the solid faith, not only of his sufferings, but of the greatness of his sufferings, imprinted deeply on our hearts; that (I say) the sufferings of a dying blood-sweat-Christ, wrestling and struggling, even to his being in an agony, with the wrath of God, and putting up strong cries with tears, may be born in on our hearts; and that we may throughly be persuaded of the greatness of the work of redemption, and that it was a most dear and colly bargain to Christ: For it was not gold nor silver, it was not kingdoms, nor visible worlds, nor angels, that were given as a price for elect sinners; but it was the precious blood of the Son of God; nay, it was the bitter and sharp soul-travel, fadness, sorrow, and agony of our Lord Jesus, which (to speak comparatively) was beyond the shedding of his blood: And what a price do ye think this to be? That he, that made all, and preferred all in their being, and was before all things, should come thus low, as to be a Man, and a mean, sorrowful, suffering and dying Man, yea to be a cursed Man, and to go out of this life, as being under a curse, yet being always the beloved Son of the Father, and being even then, when at his lowest, the Prince of the kings of the earth, and shining forth gloriously in the power, and riches, and freeness of his love and grace? Sure this wonderful low flopping, and humbling of himself preacheth out the love that straitened and constrained him to run upon that which was his own death, there being no hand that could have taken away his life, had he not willingly laid it down, which he did with delight: Could we make use of this, there is much here to be said for our use.

We shall draw what, we would say on it, to these four heads. 1. To something for instruction. 2. To something for consolation. 3. To something for exhortation. 4. To something for reproof, and expostulation.

I say, 1st, It serves for Instruction; and ye would from it be instructed in several things. 1. How to think aright of the great severity of the justice of God, and of the horror of wrath, and of the dreadful consequents of sin, which it will.

molt certainly have following on it. May it not make your souls to tremble to think upon, and consider, that our Lord Jesus was brought to such a pafs, as to be in such an agony, to be so exceeding sorrowful, and even amazed; to be so troubled in soul, that he was thereby made to sweat great drops of blood, and to be wrestling with somewhat, that his holy human nature had a scarring at? O the desert and wages of sin, is dreadful! when the law purifies its controversy, and when justice exacts what a broken covenant deserves. alas! the most of men believe not this; but it is here that may convince us, what an evil thing sin is, and what a dreadful thing it is to fall into the hands of an angry God. O that ye would think upon it, that ye may beware of sin by all means, and may always be minding that word which our Saviour hath, if these be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? If it was so done with him, who in the action (if I may so call it) was performing his Father's will, and giving an admirable proof of his respect to the honour of God; what will he do to the dry ficks, the dammed reprobate, who have flighted the offer of his grace, despised the sufferings of a Mediator, and disdained to be reclaimed? Hear it, and tremble, and be persuaded that the horror that sin shall bring upon the sinner, when God comes to reckon with him, is inexplicable. 2. Be instructed, and see here, how great the difficulty is of making peace with God, when once his law is broken; a thing that is little believed by moit, who are disposed to think that they will get God sooner pleased and pacified, than they will get their neighbour or master pacified and pleased; which says, that either they think nothing or but very little of his wrath, or that they will soon get it put by, that a word will do that: Hence it is, that they think, that an equivalent price is not necessary for satisfying the justice of God, and for preventing of his wrath; but if it be so easy a thing to pacify God, and to satisfy his justice, why did our Lord undertake the debt? why did he become so low, and pay so dear a price, to procure a discharge of it? why was his soul put to such travel, when no shame nor reproach, nor pain of his blessed body could do it, but his soul, in the fore travel thereof, behoved to be made a sacrifice for sin? Sinners greatly ignorant mistakers of the justice of God, appear palpably in this: There was never a person that was called to it, and did undertake to remove God's wrath from others, but our Lord Jesus; and ye see here what it cost him: And what do ye imagine will be the lot of others, who shall
VERSE 11.

"What shall I render thee?" saith the Sacrifice. "For I am a man of grief, and full of fear."

Verse 12.

"I said, I will not know this; but as it is an hideous thing with me, I will not hear it."
Serm. XLV.

Ifaiah lii, 18. 

him; and to procure from him the application of his purchase, by their prayers and good living; but what is there in this, more than is in the former? what price is there that can be given to him, that is equivalent to his sufferings? It must therefore of necessity come to this, that as it was freely purchased, so it is freely applied: And it were very suitable for sinners to carry the faith of this along with them in their bosom; If he procured heaven to us, by his soul-suffering and travel, we cannot procure it to ourselves, and therefore a necessity lies on all that would be at heaven, to be in Christ's common for it: And this is the upshot of all that dyvour sinners may know, that they are in his common, as for his purchase, so for the application of it.

Uso 2. This doctrine yields much consolation, and it is the fountain and rise of it; his soul-travel bought it all, and makes way to the bringing of us to the possession of it: And, in many respects, our consolation depends on it; we shall look upon it; as the rite thereof, more generally, in these respects, 1. That, to a poor sinner lying under the curse, there is a possibility of getting it put by, and kept off; that heaven is not desperate, and that the fear of coming before the tribunal of justice is not absolute: For our Lord hath satisfied justice; the price that he laid down was not for nought, but levelled at this very scope, as the apostle hath it, 2 Cor. v. ult. He was made sin for us, that knew no sin that we sinners might be made the righteousness of God in, or through, him? And what strong consolation is this, for a sinner, under the curse of God, to have this word spoken to him, Tho' thou cannot satisfy justice for thyself, yet there is a way laid down to satisfy it for thee? The Mediator having the price that was required, proposed to him, did not flink at the terms, but held the bargain, and hath accordingly actually performed it. 2 It is a consolation in this respect, That not only is there a compleat satisfaction given to justice, but a willing Saviour, ready to make that satisfaction forthcoming, and to make it forthcoming freely. Can there be a greater proof of our Lord Jesus his love to sinners than this, that when they were considered with all their debt lying on their heads, he undertook this soul-travel for them, to procure them salvation from wrath and justice? This is more than his giving them his word for it, tho' that had been enough; it is more than the giving them his oath, thus to commend his love, as it is, John xv. 13. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friend? But,

Verse 11. says the apostle, Rom. v. 8, 9. God commands his love to us, that while we were yet sinners, our enemies, Christ died for us; this good Shepherd laid down his life for his sheep. 3. It is a consolation in this respect, that there is also a willingness in the Lord Jehovah, the provoked Party, to accept of this satisfaction, and to absolve the elect, on account of this satisfaction: For what I pray was all this soul-travel that the Lord underwent, but Jehovah his transferring of the debt of the elect on him, according to the transfaction that had past in the covenant of redemption? He would never have made the sword of his justice to awake against the Man that was his Fellow, if he had not been content to accept of his satisfaction for them that should make use of it: For we have not only the Mediator, and his satisfaction, to look upon in this soul-travel; but also the contrivance of the covenant, called in the former words, The pleasure of the Lord, who, while we were enemies, gave his Son, and was content to want him for a time (to speak so) and to be a distinct Party to purifie him. Is not this then a good bargain, when we have a willing Mediator, and Merchant, content to give the price and satisfaction; and a gracious and willing God, content to accept of this satisfaction; and both of them content to make the application of it to us freely? as it is, Rev. iii. 18. Here is matter of strong consolation, the ground whereof will not fail, to wit, the Mediator's soul-travel; And the Lord Jehovah will not call the bargain, when the poor sinners say, I have nothing to pay; but there is a price in Christ's satisfaction offered in the gospel, and the Judge says, or admits it for the sinner that lays claim to it, as if the sinner had never sinned, or had actually paid the price himself.

But, 4. Look a little further, and we will find more consolation, though this be much. Consider a sinner in a tempted condition, and under sad soul-exercise, that was not what to do with unbelief, with the devil, and with the wrath of God, all which are like to overwhelm and swallow him up, and the heart is like to sink; here is the native and kindly fountain for such a soul to drink at, that our Lord Jesus suffered more, and that it was another sort of cup that he drank of, and drank out, and for these ends, (1.) To take away the fling and bitterness of thy cup; (2.) To procure and meritoriously to purchase a freedom and outgate from these temptations to thee; (3.) Also, that he might be made a sympathizing high Priest, and the more compassionate towards the person that should
Be so tempted; according that, Heb. ii. ult. For that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able also to succour those that are tempted: He was tempted, that he might have kindly sympathy with tempted souls; and therefore, when such are ready to fall awon, he darts and dandles them, as it were on his knee; and when they are in hazard to turn their back on the conflict, he comes up with fresh strength and recruits them: So, Heb. iv. 15. 

We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin; we have such an High Priest, as was not only mocked and scorned of men, and some way deserted of God, but who was tempted, tho' not from sin within (for he was without sin) yet to sin, for he was assaulted by the devil, and tempted to unbelief, and other gross sins; as is clear, Matth. iv. tho' (as he faith himself) The prince of this world had nothing in him. And he was not only tempted to sin, but, as if he had actually sinned, he met with wrath from all: There is a sweet and strong sympathy flowing from such bowels, as one brother hath towards another; yea inconceivably beyond the tenderest bowels, that the most warmly loving brethren in all the world have one towards another:

And therefore he knows well what apprehensions, temptations riding thick (to speak so) will attempt to beat in upon poor souls, and can from experience sympathize with them. It is not so to be understood, as if there were any additional degree made to his kindnes, skill, and grace, as he is God; these being infinite in him, as so considered: Yet being Man as well as God, or having a human nature, he hath from his personal experience a sympathy, and that in a human way, though infinitely above what we can conceive, with his own, under their temptations, and in soul-exercise. And seeing the scripture holds out such a thing as this, that our High Priest is a Man that hath bowels of sympathy, it may sufficiently warrand a believer to expect much good, this and other ways from Christ; he having grace infinite in him as God, and a tender heart as Man, to befriend them, and to communicate and let out of that grace unto them: And this is great ground of consolation to believers, under any cross and piece of hard exercise, to know that we have a Mediator, who knows in experience, tho' not the sinfulness that accompanies these hard exercises in us, yet what these fears are of being snared out from God, and how dreadful a thing it is, to be at controversy with him; and is like to these, who, having come thorow a sad trial, and piece of exercise themselves, are thereby the more ready to sympathize with others under it. (5.) and lastly, The consideration of this may comfort believers even in their outward afflicted: It had been another fort of croffes that they would have been made to meet with, if he had not taken this cup of wrath and drunken it for them; and therefore they would be comforted, and blest God, who hath taken this soul-travel from off them, and made way for a retreat and shelter for them in him: And it should even shame believers, who are ready to think so much of any little bit of inward exercise, or of outward affliction; seeing our blessed Lord Jesus endured so much, not only outward and bodily affliction, but also so much inward trouble and soul-travel, that thereby their burden might be made light, and their yoke easy.

Verse 3. For exhortation, Seeing our Lord Jesus was put to such sore soul-travel, sure it lays a great obligation on them, for whom he suffered, to endeavour to make some suitable and grateful return; seeing therefore we are so much in his common and debt, we should give him a friendly meeting in these four, which this calls for; 1. It calleth for love to him that vended such love to us. 2. It calleth for faith. That seeing he gave such a price for us, we should trust our souls to him. 3. It calleth for holiness and obedience, even living to him, and to the glorifying of him that hath bought us: This argument will sure weigh with you, who on solid grounds lay claim to his purchase. 4. It calleth for thankfulness and praise, in magnifying his grace and love, that hath so loved us: And are not all these very suitable and becoming, that sinners should love him; and that these who love him not, should be Anathema Maranatha, accursed to the coming of the Lord; that sinners should believe on him, and to be obedient to him, and thankful?

If ye believe this truth, this comfortable and soul-ravishing truth, let me exhort you, and be exhorted and prevailed with, to love our Lord Jesus Christ, and to give him that answerable respect, meeting, and welcome, that becomes; if we may plead for any thing from you, sure we may plead for this. If it be true that he engaged in such a bargain, in which, if he had not engaged himself, we had inevitably gone to the pit; and if he hath actually paid the price which he undertook to pay; let your consciences speak, if it should not melt the hearts of such, to whom the benefit of this is offered, with love to him? And if ye have the faith of the doctrine, can ye deny, but this obligation
Sermon XLV.

Isaiab liii. Verfe 14.

nothing lieth upon you? Look into your confidences and hearts and see if ye be able to shift it: And if ye had suitable palaces for entertaining him in, if ye be not bound to open to him, and give him patent entry to them; and if your eyes were fountains of tears, if it would not become you to wash his feet with them, and to wipe them with the hair of your heads? Would to God that you were under the suitable impresfion of this, and that ye were by the gospel, and the privileges ye have by it, constrained to love the Lord Jesus Christ! It may be some of you think, If this be all that is called for, he shall not want it. We allure you it is called for; My son (faith he) give me thine heart. But we are afraid, that tho' ye will confess, that this is your duty, and that ye should have love to him; yet the most part of you want it: For, when we speak of love to Christ, it is not a pretext or apprehension of love, that will be taken for love; but such love, as hath these qualifications; if Christ be loved, he will be esteemed of, as the most excellent Thing, or Person, the most excellent Bargain, the most kind Friend, the most loving Husband, and as the most full, compleat and abfolute Sufficiency, or sufficient One; as he is spoken of, and esteemed of by the Spoufe, Cant. vi. His countenance is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars, his mouth is most sweet, he is altogether lovely. The heart is brought to esteem of him, and to prefer him beyond all—that it can set the eye upon. It were indeed somewhat, if ye were brought under a conviction, and thorough persuasion of this, that Jesus Christ is the incomparable belft Thing that a finner can have a title to: But alas! He is despifed, and rejected of men, tho' he be the Chief of ten thousands; and men play the fool egregiously, in preferring other things to him, who is infinitely worthy of the preference unto, and of the pre-eminency above them all. A 2d evidence of love is, the heart's longing and panting after the enjoyment of him, and after the enjoyment of him, as the most excellent Object, quite surpassing all other objects; and when the thirst and

longing of the soul is so carried out after him, as it cannot be satisfied without him, which is to be sick of love for him, as it is, Can. ii. 5. and v. verse 8.

Even to count all things to be but lost and dung; and to cast all things as it were over board, to win to him, and to be found in him; to count of him as the pearl of price, and as the treasure hid in the field, for the fake of which, ye would strip yourselves to the skin, and sell all that ye have to buy it. This love to Christ Jesus hath in it a satisfying delight in him, and the soul's blessing of itself in him, its contenting itself with him, and its rejoicing in that sweetnefs which it findeth to be in him, as being the only attractive Object, that hath such a lovelynefs in it, as breeds satisfaction; which satisfaction begets a kindly warmnefs in the heart to himself, even till the soul be put in a holy lowe or flame of love to him. More of this love would make Christ and the gospel much more sweet, and would make every one of these words, that expressth his love in his sufferings, to be like marrow and fatnefs, and would also make the promises to be like breafhs full of conflation; it would withal cause, that there would not be such mistakes of Christ, nor such gaddings and whorings from him, and such preferring of idols to him, as, alas! there are. Where this love is not, there can be no other thing that will be acceptable. We shall say no more for the time, but only this, that we do appeal to your confidences, if there be not here an excellent and non-such Object of love, and if there be not here much reafon to be in love with that Object? A very Heathen will return love for love; and should not we much more do so in this case? God himself kindle this love in us, and make us know more the great advantages of it.
SERMON XLVI.

He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied: By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

The work of redemption is a business that was very gravely and very seriously contrived and prosecuted, in respect of God, and of the Mediator; there was much earnestness in it as to them, and yet notwithstanding (which is a wonder) men, whom it concerns so much, whose salvation depends on it, and to whom the benefit of it redounds, are but very little serious in their thoughts of it: Our Lord Jesus was in travel, soul-travel, soul-travel to bring about this work, and that the gospel might be preached to sinners, that they might have thereby a ground to their faith, to expect life and remission of sins through him; is it not then said that we should speak and hear of it, and be, in a manner, like the stone in the wall, no more, or little more affected with it, than if it were a matter that did not at all concern us? The reading and hearing of these words will doubtless be a great convition to secure sinners, that our Lord Jesus was at such pains, and put to such sore soul-travel and suffering, and that yet such sinners were never stirred, nor made serious, to have the application of this purchased redemption made to them.

The scope of these words is to shew the great inward soul-travels, conflicts, and strains that our blessed Lord Jesus had and was put to, in thoroughly the work of redemption, and in paying the price due to the justice of God for the sins of the elect. It is a wonder that ever we should have it to speak of, and that ye should hear of this subject, which is the very text, (to say so) and sum of the gospel; and therefore before we leave it, we shall speak a little more to the Use of it: And truly, if we make not use of this doctrine, we will make use of none; tho' I confess it is a great practique, how to draw it to use, and to conform ourselves in our practice to the use of it.

We proposed some things the last day, which we could not then prosecute; As, 1. Something for exhortation, 2. Something for reproof and expostulation; which rising clearly from the doctrine drawn from the words, we may now insist a little on them.

1. For exhortation, considering Christ's sufferings, and the extremity of them, and that they were undergone for sinners, we would exhort you to love him as ye ought. There is a ground and warrant here to require it of you, seeing that love in his bosom came to such an height, that he was content to lay down his life, yea, seeing he was in such a hot flame of love, that the cup of wrath did not quench it, but his love drank and dried it up, Greater love than this hath no man: It is a most wonderful love, considered with all the circumstances, whereby it is heightened; and there is ground here to excite and stir you up to give him a kindly meeting, and to welcome his love with love: It will sure be a great shame, if our Lord's love flat at nothing, so that he might do the Father's will, and finish the work committed to him, which was the perfecting of the work of sinners redemption, the redemption of his lost sheep; if every trifle, or any trifle, shall quench love in our hearts to him. O what a shame will it be in the day of Judgment to many, when this man shall be brought forth loving this idol, and another man loving that idol more than Christ; this man loving his lust, that man his ease, and another man his wealth or honour, and preferring them to Christ; and when it shall be found, that they would not quit nor part with their right eye nor their right hand (which are not worth the name of members, being called so, because they are members of the body of death) out of love to him! Think folks what they will, that native impression of the obligation that lies upon them to love Christ, is wanting, and that divine and soul-ravishing influence, that his love should have on hearts. It is true, ye all think that ye love him, unless it be some of them who indeed love him; but, if ye could reflect upon yourselves, ye will find that ye have little or no love at all to him indeed: And therefore, for undeceiving of you, beside what we said the last day, take two or three characters of kindly love to Christ, 1. This love is never satisfied with any degree or measure that it hath attained, so as to sit down on it: It hath these two things in it, a desire be further on in love, and a 

weightedness.
believe on him, as the prince of life, and the Saviour, that is well fitted and qualified to give repentance and remission of sins: and this is the very native use that flows from this doctrine, even to lay a solid ground of faith to a soul lying under the sense of sin, to step forward to God's bar, with confidence, considering Jesus Christ crucified, and put to soul-travel for elect sinners, who should betake themselves to him; which if it had not been, there had not been any ground for faith: and the lower he came in his sufferings, we have the more native and broad ground of faith, and the stronger motive to draw us to take hold of him, and to found and fix our faith on his satisfaction. To clear this branch of the use a little, 1. Consider here a ground for faith, in a fourfold respect; And, 2. The force of the motives that arise from these grounds, pressing a sensible sinner to exercise faith on them; or on him by them; And 3. The necessity that we are under, so to do.

For the first, 1. In general, there is ground here to bring the heart to be through in the historical faith of what is spoken concerning the truths of the covenant: For, doth not this soul-travel of our Lord say, that men are lying naturally in a sinful condition, and obnoxious to wrath; that there is a covenant past betwixt the Father and the Son, for delivering of elect sinners out of that condition, and that by the sufferings of the Mediator; and that, by our betaking of ourselves to him, we may be freed from sin and wrath? Otherwife, why did the Mediator come thus low, except it had been true that man was under a debt that he could not pay? And why did the Father send his Son, except he had been really minded that he should offer himself up a propitiatory sacrifice to God for man's sin? And his accepting of the satisfaction tells plainly, that he was content, that the cautioner's payment should stand for the principal debtors. All this supposeth a covenant, which is as real, as if we had seen, and had been ear-witnesses of the reading over of the covenant in all the articles of it. We wish that many were come this length, as to be confirmed in the historical faith of the general truths of the gospel, fummed up in Christ's sufferings: And there cannot be any serious reading or hearing of Christ's sufferings, but there must also be some considering of their rise and end; if it be otherwise, we do but superficially run over them. 2. As this shews the Lord's seriousnes in prelving the offer of redemption on sinners, so it calleth you to be serious in accepting of it; according to that in John xii. When I am lifted up, I will draw all men after me;
where Christ's lifting up is made an attractive to draw lost sinners after him. And can there be a greater ground of faith, or a stronger motive to persuade a sinner to be reconciled to God, and to rest upon Christ's satisfaction, in order to that, than this, that Jesus Christ hath purposely laid down his life, and undergone a suffering, even to such an extremity, to bring it about? 3. When we say that Christ's soul-travel calls for faith; it requires this, and gives ground for it, that they that betake themselves to Christ for justification before God, may confidently commit themselves to his guiding in all other things: For, will he not be render of them in thee, when out of respect to them, when there was not a covenant betwixt him and them (though they were mentioned in the covenant of redemption) he laid down his life, and suffered such things for them? May we not, from this, reason, as the apostle doth, Rom. viii. He that spared not his own Son, but gave him to the death for us, how shall he be not with him also freely give us all things? Can there be a greater ground for sinners, that fear to give him credit, to trust him with all things that concern them, than this, that he suffered so much for them? 4. Having betaken ourselves to him, it serves to confirm our faith, and to bring us to the quieting of ourselves in resting on him, and acquiescing in him: For, what more could we require for our settlement and quieting than this, that he who hath come so low, and condenced so far for the behoof of poor sinners? Therefore, in all these respects, let me exhort you, and in his name, who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, obtest you, not to keep at distance from him, but take with your sin, by faith to flee unto him, and to the efficacy of his blood; O yield yourselves by faith to him, for use-making of him for your justification. And a little more particularly, let me here speak a word to two sorts of persons, 1. To them that are estrangers to God. 2. To them that are looking towards Christ. And (1.) For you that are strangers to God, whose hearts were never yet affected with the conviction of the necessity of believing, who can ly down, and rise up, without serious thoughts of your soul's estate, or of the necessity of making sure your peace with God; I beseech you, lay to heart your condition, and beware of trampling the blood of the covenant under your feet; let not the grace that is offered to you in this gospel be heard and received in vain; but, by the acknowledgment of sin, and of God's justice to which ye are liable for the same, timeously betake yourselves to Christ's sufferings, for a shelter from the wrath of God, that will be as a storm against the wall. This we press as the great use of this doctrine upon you, that ye improve the cup of wrath that the Mediator hath drunken; for your exempting from the curse that is due to you, and that cup that ye deferred to have drunken eternally. (2.) For you, who, under the conviction of sin, are looking towards Christ; let me intreat you not to stay on this side of the City of refuge, but step forward, and improve the soul-travel of the Lord for your spiritual ease, settlement, quiet and comfort, as well as for keeping you from wrath, otherwise it will bring bitterness in the end: If ye make not use of Christ's sufferings, if ye betake not yourself to him, and do not trust him for justification and life, ye will make yourselves guilty of his blood, and will be found treaders of it under foot.

And therefore, let me here speak a word to the second thing proposed, that is, the grounds, or reasons, or motives, that should press you to make use of these sufferings; and of the grounds of faith, that they hold out unto you. And, 1st, In general, let me ask, is there not need that ye should do so? is there not guilt, and hazard of wrath because of guilt? And if so, why stand ye at a distance from the Saviour? If it were sinless saints and angels that were exorted to make use of him, it would be the less wonder, that there were so little thinking of a Mediator; but when it is sinners that are called upon, and sinners in such imminent hazard, it is indeed a wonder that there is not greater flocking unto him, and preflinging on him: If there had not been need, would the Father have so pursued the Son? Or, do ye think that it was for a complement that he laid down his life? which sure he would not have done, if salvation could have been had any other way. 2dly, And more particularly, as ye would consider the marvellous-grounds that he hath laid down for faith to rest upon, so ye would consider the many motives that ye have to press you to rest on these grounds, which we shall draw to these four. 1. The fulness and sufficiency of the ground that is given to faith in Christ's sufferings; which, the deeper they draw on his soul, faith hath the fuller and better ground to make use of them. 2. The power and ability that are conspicuously in him, to make application of his purchase; He hath encountered wrath, and hath overcome; he is absolved and justified before God, and is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins; and, having satisfied justice, and defeated the devil, and being thus
thus exalted, he can bring through, and land fair, such sinners as betake themselves to him: And these two, to wit, a sufficient price paid for the debt of the elect; and a sufficient Prince and Saviour, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him, and who is exalted, and siteth at God’s right hand to make intercession for us, as they are a solid ground for faith to rest on, so a strong motive to press believing. 3. The great faithfulness of God, that brightly shines, and wonderfully appears here, who, according to the covenant, sends his Son, and pursues the quarrel against him, and in so doing keeps the promise made to Abraham; and the great faithfulness of the Mediator, in coming and performing all that he undertook for the elect: Both of them are so faithful in performing all that was covenanted, to the least iota thereof; as is evident by what our Lord says, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. Seeing therefore there is such exact faithfulness in keeping, and fulfilling of all that passed in the covenant of redemption, and of all that was promised to the fathers; and seeing the Mediator hath said, That of all that came unto him, he will cast out none, nor put them away; is there not here a strong motive to believing? Will not the Lord Jesus be as faithful in keeping the promises made to comers unto him, as the Father and he have been in performing of what was covenanted concerning their redemption? The 4th is the great love of God and of the Mediator, that eminently shine here, in their willingness to make the application: As he is faithful, so is he willing to be employed; and what greater evidence of love would we have than this, that our Lord Jesus hath delighted so much in the salvation of sinners, that he laid down his life, and endured much for soul-travel, for this very end? We beheld, (says John, chap. i. 14.) his glory, the glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth: in his humiliation, he was glorious in both these; glorious in his truth, making his faithfulness to shine, in exact keeping of what was agreed upon and promised; glorious in his grace to poor sinners, in making application of his purchase, freely and fully: Yea, the more that he was ob- feued by his humiliation, the more did his grace shine forth; how much more glorious will he be in thefe, when he is now exalted? 3dly, If these two perfwade you not to believe on him, to wit, the grounds that he hath given for believing, and the powerfully preffing motives to make ufe of these grounds; consider the absolute necessity that ye ly under of making ufe of these grounds, without which ye will never be able to shift the wrath of God. Is there any that can give God a recom- pense? The redemption of the soul is precious, and cease not for ever, as to you: Or, If any could have been able, why did the mediator come thus low? And where should have been the glory of grace and truth, that hath shined so radiantly in his sufferings? And therefore, from all these be exhorted to give him the credit of your salvation, by making ufe of his righteousness, and by founding your plea before God on his sufferings, as ever ye would have your souls saved: Otherways ye can expect nothing, but to fall under the rigour of justice, and to be made to satisfy for your own debt to the uttemost farthing; and when will that be? Dare the moft in- nocent amongst you step in to satisfy justice for themselves? if not, is there not a necessity to make ufe of his sufferings for that end, which he hath made attainable by his tearing the veil of his own flesh, that sinners may step in with humble boldness to the holy of holies? This is the end of our preaching, and of your hearing, which, when it is not singly aimed at, and endeavoured to be reach- ed, we are useless in both.

And therefore, 2dly, May we not expatiate with you, that are hearers of this gospel, and yet continue strangers to Christ; that can hear of his sufferings, and of his having been in agony, for this very end, that sinners might have a warrant to their faith, and yet have never to this very hour actually fled unto him to find shelter? I know that many will not take with this; and therefore, in more close application of this use (seeing here lieth the great treasure of the gospel, which, if it be not, what can be improven to any purpose?) We shall speak a word to the generality of hearers, who are strangers to the right ufe-making of Christ’s rightoufness: And tho’ ye may think this to be a hard charge, and cannot well endure to be expatulated with as unbelievers; yet let me ask you, 1. Do you think that all of you will go to heaven? If not, but that it is a truth, that the moft part of the hear- ers of the gospel will perish; then sure all are not believers; for all believers will go to heaven, and not one of them shall perish: And tho’ ye will not now believe this, the day is coming, when ye shall, if grace prevent not, see and find it; when believers will be taken in with Christ, and others shut out. Many of you may think that this doctrine is need- les; the more needles that many of you think it to be, it is fo much the more needful, and useful to be insinuted on with you. 2. If ye say, ye have faith; I ask you, Whence came it, and how got you
you it? I know, many of you will say, We believed always since we had understanding to know good by ill: Yet, when ye are put to tell what it is, ye know not how to answer, nor can ye give the least satisfying account of it; and yet ye question not but it will be well with you, and never once feared to go to hell: And is that faith, think ye? Alas no, it is a plain counterfeit, and a very cheat. Others are ready to say, We believed not always, yet we believe sometimes, to wit, when we do some duties and abstain from gross evils; but when challenges come from the neglects of duties, and for the commil-
sion of sins, we want it, and have nothing of it; and when death comes, such are forced to say, We fear we have been beguiling ourselves: whence comes this? but even from this ground, that they would never suffer it to light, but they had faith; which yet will never be accounted to be faith, be-
cause it hath not Christ's righteousness for the ground of it; and therefore, when any challenge is awake-
ned, it is a seeking and quite gone: Whereas true faith will in some measure stand it out against a challenge, and will abide the trial of a challenge, on the account of Christ's righteousness fled to. 3. We ask you this question, Are ye sure of your faith? Ye will say, We hope so, and believe so; and this is all ye can say: Which in effect comes to this, We groundlessly presumed so. And it is observable, that if ye be put to a second question, What ground have ye for your faith? Ye have none at all: If ye be asked, Whether ye be certain that ye are believers? Ye will answer, No body is certain, God knows that: Is not this strange? and hath it not in it an utter incon sistency, that men and women should confidently assert and maintain their faith, and yet, when they are put to prove it, they will tell you that they are uncertain, and that none can be certain of it? Therefore, think it not strange that we expostulate with you; that ye have been so long hearing of Christ, and that yet ye have little, or rather no faith at all in the use-making of his righteousness. But to make this the more convincingly clear, we shall give you four characters, whereby true faith may be tried and known; which will serve also to discover the unfoundness of the faith of many. (1.) It may be tried by the ground that it leaneth upon; solid faith hath for the ground of it Christ's righteousness and satisfaction, his suf-
ferrings, the price that he paid to justice for sinners debt; that He, who knew no sin, might be-
come sin for us, as it is, 2 Cor. v. ult. Ye that say, Ye hope to come to heaven, and will assert strongly that ye believe: Try it I beseech you, by this, What is it that warrants you to believe? or, whereon is your faith founded? Is it Christ's righteous-
ousness that gives your faith a ground? Ye will say, Yes, and who do other wise? are there any, but they expect life through Christ? But deceive not yourselves, there are many that have some sort of respect to Christ, who do not at all rightly respect his sufferings: Many will look upon Christ as a Sovereign, and as one that can pardon them their sins, and will pray to him for pardon of them; who yet never seriously lay the weight of their obtaining pardon on his death, but expect pardon immediately, without an interveening satisfaction; yea, they never look upon that as needful. Others again look only to Christ's ability to save, and will pray to him as to an able Saviour; and here also, by suici, his righteousness and merit is flushed out, as if it were superfluous and unecessary. A third fort look to his mercy, and think that he is very kind and gracious, and that as one man forgives another, so will he forgive them; and do not respect his righteousness, nor found their faith and expectation of pardon upon him, as upon one that hath satisfied justice by the travel of his soul, that pardon might come to them who come to him. But, where true faith is, the soul begins to look on itself, as arraign-
ed before the tribunal of justice, and libelled, as unable to pay its own debt, judges itself, and hath not only some piece of exercise to be freed from a challenge (which is all the faith that many have) but hath serious exercise, how to have the challenge anwered, by betaking itself to Christ's satisfaction: From these grounds, that a satisfaction is given, that this satisfaction is made offer of in the gospel, and that the soul is content to make use of it, it draws the conclusion anent pardon: It hath inter-
veening, betwixt the consideration of its guilt, and its application of pardon, both the covenant of re-
demption on God's side, and the covenant of recon-
ciliation on the sinner's side, which the soul doth eye, as that which gives it warrant to lay hold on Christ's sufferings; which the other, who presumes, doth not: The believing soul says, If this satisfaction had not been, I could never have expected mercy. (2.) In the solid faith of a believer, there is an use-making of Christ crucified, allenearly, as the meritorious cause of justification and life; fo he is exercized in this, to be allenearly settled on him as such: As for presumptuous souls, as they find it easy to believe, so they find it easy to believe, and to rest on him only. But as the true believer hath it for one piece of exercise to him, how to win to Christ; so it is a second piece of exercise to
him, to get him relented on only, and to get him, as crucified, made the ground of his faith; as the apostle infinuates, when he says, 1 Cor. ii. 2. I determine to know nothing among you, but Christ Jesus, and him crucified: Where we have three grounds of saving faith, or knowledge, 1. Jefus Christ; 2. Him as crucified; and, 3. A determining to know no other thing, but him, to rest upon for life and salvation: It is in this respect that the apostle, Philip. iii. 8. doth count all things to be but los and dying, and cast, as it were, all over board, that he may win Christ, and be found in him. Many find it no difficult business to rest on Christ only, and to keep out other things from being joined with him, and never once suspect themselves in this by any thing; but the believer (as I just now said) hath here an exercise and difficulty to get Christ alone rested on, so that nothing else be in the least rested on, because he knows nothing else to be a sure foundation, and because he knows that it is natural to him to rest on other things beside Christ. (3.) The true believer is taken up, not only to have a sure ground to build on, but also to have his own gripping at, and building, on that ground, made sure: It is his exercise to have it out of question, that his faith is true faith, and not presumption or guelling; to have the grace of faith actually and really taking hold of, or apprehending Christ: Whereas another that presumeth, and hath only an opinion, or conjecture, in place of faith; as he is in his own opinion easily brought to Christ, so he finds it easy to exercise believing on him; he will, it may be, grant that he cannot sanctify the sabbath-day, and yet he can believe, as if believing were less difficult than to sanctify the sabbath: So many will grant, that they cannot pray, and therefore do decline the worshipping of God in their families; who yet will confidently say, they can believe, and that they do believe always, as if believing were less difficult than to pray for a quarter, or half a quarter of an hour: But, where solid faith is, the exercise of it is a difficult thing; and the person that hath it, hath a holy jealousy of it; and the experience of many others, and of himself, sometime telling him, that he may be mistaken, he is often trying it, and doth not, nay, he dare not trust much to it, and is put often with that man spoken of, Mark ix. to cry, and sometimes with tears, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief: He dare not trust much to his own grip, and therefore hath recourse to Christ to get it fickered, and to have him taking and keeping the grip of his grip, as it was with the apostle, Phil. iii. 12. (4.) When believers have betaken themselves to Christ, they have a new exercise, to know that it is so indeed. It is not only an exercise to them how to ground their faith right, how to quit all other things, and to betake themselves to Christ only, and to cast their burden on him; but it is an exercise to them, to be clear that it is Christ indeed that they rest on, or to be clear that they have rested on him. It is no good token, when folks are soon satisfied with their believing, and never put it to the trial; and this is it that makes many go on guelling, till they come to death, which makes a divorce betwixt them and their fancied faith, and discovers it to be but a delusion: Whereas it is believers work, to try whether they have, and to know that they have believed, which they win not soon to know; and the reason is, because the sense of sin, the apprehension of wrath, and their love to God, and to Christ the Mediator, with their desire to enjoy him, suffer them not to be quiet till they be ficker. We may see all the four together, Phil. iii. 7, 8, 9, 10. where the apostle, speaking of his case when he was a converted Christian, in opposition to what it was when he was a Pharisee, and thought himself to be very well, and a strong believer, faith, What things were gain to me, I counted los for Christ: Yea, doubtless I count all things to be but los for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the los of all things; and do count them, but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, &c. The Object he would be at, is Christ; the manner how, is, Not having mine own righteousness; the mean through which, is faith in him; this is it that brings him to union with him: And then he would know experimentally, that he doth know him savagly, as a believer in him, by finding the power of his resurrection, by having fellowship in his sufferings and by being made conformed to his death; whereby he would prove, and make out, to his own quieting and consolation, that he is indeed a believer. The believer is never right till he be in Christ, and it is his exercise to be quite rid of all other things, and to rest upon him alone; neither doth he rest here, but he must be clear that he is in him, and that he hath fellowship in his sufferings, and conformity to his death: This we would recommend to you as your main study as ever ye would comfortably evidence to yourselves, your believing in him.
SERMON XLVII.

Isaiah liii. 11. *He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied*. By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

The bargain of redemption is a great bargain, and we may say that it is a good bargain, wherein the greatest things that ever were imagined are transacted: The sum whereof is in these two, 1. What shall be the satisfaction that must be given to the infinite justice of God? Or, what shall be the amends that must be made to God for the satisfying of his justice for the sins of all the elect? And that is compendied in these words, *The travel of Christ’s soul*. That is the condition, or these are the terms, on which only the Lord Jehovah will try it, (to speak so) and he will try it on no other terms. 2. What shall be the satisfaction that the Mediator shall have for all his sufferings, and soul-travel? And this is summed up in these words, *He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied*; upon which two stands the covenant of redemption: And hence it is, that all things relating to the salvation of the elect, are soicker and firm, that there is no possibility of the misgiving or failing of whatever is here transacted upon.

We have spoken somewhat of the price, which the Son, the Mediator, was to give; and of the soul-travel which he underwent in the paying of it: We shall now speak of the words, as they hold out the promises made to the Mediator; and it is twofold, 1st. *He shall see of the travel of his soul*: Which words being an explication of the former, and looking also to these which follow, there is a word to be supplied, which will take in both, and it is fruit, *He shall see the fruit of the travel of his soul*: that is, he cannot but have a seed, and a numerous offspring, because of his soul-travel, in bringing them forth: And so the promise, in this respect, shews the certainty of the effect, that is, that he shall most certainly bring forth in his travelling. The 2d promise is, That he shall see the fruit of his soul-travel, or his seed: It is much to have a seed, but it is more to see it; it is not only this, that Christ shall have a numerous issue, but that he shall out-live death, to see and oversee, and be a Tutor to them, tho’ by his death he purchase life to them.

We shall from the 1st promise take two observations: the 1st is this, “That our Lord Jesus, by his suffering and soul-travel, shall certainly attain the fruit he aims at in it; his death and sufferings shall not be fruitless, but shall certainly have the intended fruit.” Whatever we take the fruit to be, whether we take it out of the former words, it is a seed that he shall see, or have; or whether we take it out of the following words, it is the justifying of many; both these come to the same thing, and it shall certainly come to pass, and be made effectual in the up-shot of it; as the Lord himself faith, John xii. 24. *Except a corn of wheats fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit*: Where he compares his own death to the sowing of seed, which, when sown, doth rot, and then springs up, and hath fruit; So (as if he had said) my death shall be a seed, or seed-time, whereon abundant fruit shall follow, for the good and salvation of many. This doctrine supposes, 1st. That our Lord Jesus had a respect, in the laying down of his life, to the salvation of his own elect people; or thus, That our Lord Jesus, in the laying down of his life, had a design and purpose to save the elect, as often he said, *I lay down my life for my sheep*; and here they are called a Seed, and Fruit and such as are justified in due time. 2. That this purpose should by his sufferings be certainly made effectual; this being the Father’s promise to him, *He shall see his fruit, or the travel of his soul, and he shall be satisfied*, it cannot be frustrated. And we may further confirm it from these grounds, 1. Because it is a covenanted and transacted business betwixt the Father and the Son, and is here promised: If therefore there cannot be a failing of the transact and bargain, it must certainly have the full effect. 2. Because the Mediator hath faithfully fulfilled his part of the covenant; and if he hath been so faithful on his side, then Jehovah on the other side of the covenant, who hath in it promised satisfaction to him for the travel of his soul, cannot but perform his part also: The Mediator performed his part, even till it came to the sweet words, uttered by him on the cross, *It is finished*; and therefore, as I said, the other part, that *He shall see the*...
the fruit of his soul-travel, must also be performed. 3. It
is also clear, as from the end and design of the
sufferings and the covenant of redemption betwixt the Father and
and, of Christ’s laying down his life, which
was to bring about life unto, and to make it forth-
coming for all them that the Father had given him;
and to, and for no more; nor to, and for no fewer:
Therefore he faith, All that the Father hath given me, fhall come unto me; and, I give them eternal
life, and will raise them up at the last day. Now,
this being the end of the covenant, and of Christ’s
death, and the mean whereby the glory of grace is
manifested, that life might not only be purchased
for the dead, but also actually conferred on them
according to the Father’s and the Mediator’s design
in the covenant; Christ Jesus cannot but have the
promise made good unto him, there being an
engagement of, and on the Godhead (to speak after
the manner of men) as to the reality, certainty and
success of the performance, and for making out this
promise to the Mediator.

The 1st Use serves for instructing and clearing
of us in several things controverted by unfound men:
For if this be a truth, that our Lord’s sufferings and
soul-travel cannot but have fruit, and the fruit that
he aimed at therein; then, 1. There is a definite,
particular and certain number elected, to partake of
the benefit of Christ’s sufferings; because there is
only such a particular number that is given to Christ
and that do actually partake of the benefit of his sufferings, which cannot fail.
2. That Christ’s sufferings are not intended as a
price and satisfaction for the sins of all and every
one; for he should not see the fruit of the travel
of his soul, but should in a great part miss and lose
it, if he had intended that the travel of his soul
should have been undergone for Judas, as well as
for Peter. 3. There is here a ground for the cer-
tainty and efficacy of the grace of God in converting
eled-finers: For Christ Jesus cannot lose these
who are committed to him to be redeemed, more
than he can lose the fruit of his sufferings; then
those faithful and true that are given, shall and must come
to me: there is a put t, or a powerful draught of
the Spirit of God, which is nothing else but the ef-
cacy of his grace, by which this is made infruftra-
ably sure, and not left contingent. 4. See here the
truth of the perseverance of the elect and regene-
rate saints, who are appointed to be the fruit of his
soul-travel, and a satisfaction to him for the fame:
for if they should fail, and not persevere to the end,
the promise made to the Mediator should be call
loose, and not be necessarily performed and fulfilled.
5. See here how the salvation of elect sinners de-
ends on the engagement betwixt God and the Me-
diator: Their redemption depends on his pay-
ing of the price, and their attaining the benefit of it
depends on God’s engagement to the Mediator;
therefore we are said, 1 Pet. 1. to be kept in the
power of God through faith unto salvation. It
serves withal to clear the sovereignty of God, and
the freeness of his grace, when finnors cannot pre-
tend to have any hand in the work, to mar the
beauty and efficacy of grace that shine thein.

Use 2d. There is here, 1. Something for the en-
couragement of such as would fail believe in Christ.
And, 2. Somewhat for comfort to, and for confir-
mation of them, who have betaken themselves by
faith to Christ. 3. It serves withal to encourage
them who would be at believing, and find difficulty
in the way, while they are breathing after him: It
is certainly promised, that He shall have a feed,
and shall see of the fruit of the travel of his soul:
such therefore may expect that they shall come
speed, who would gain be at that which is the ful-
filling of God’s engagement to the Mediator; for
it was transacted in the covenant of redemption,
that his suffering should be for the good of elect
sinners, and that the Father should make application
of his purchase made thereby to them. I say,
it serves to comfort, encourage and confirm such as
are fled to Christ, and find their own difficulty
how to win through; for they have a good Caution-
er to make out their faith, and what concerns their
salvation: God’s promise to the Mediator shall not
be for nought, nor in vain, but shall have its ac-
complishment. If poor sinners were left to their
own guiding, the bargain should never take effect,
nor be made out; but it may encourage, and com-
fort the poor believer, that it should also humble
him, that the business is put in another and better
der hand than his own: This hath strengthened the
waving hearts of many believers before, that
both sides of the covenant, as to their forthcoming
and performance, depend on the Father, and on
the Mediator; the Mediator undertaking the pay-
ment of their debt, and the Lord Jehovah under-
taking to draw them in to the Mediator, and by his
power to bear them through, till they get all that
the Mediator hath purchased for them, conferred
on them.

2dly, Observe, “That all the benefits and ad-
O 0 2
vantages
vantages, that any have ever gotten, or shall get
that lead to life eternal, and which concur to
promote the work of their salvation, are the fruits
of Chrifl’s purchase, by his foul-travel.” Is a
finner brought to believe? It is a fruit of his sufferen-
ing: Is a finner glorified? It is a fruit of the fame:
And therefore, when in the one word it is said, He
shall see his feed; it is said in the next word, He
shall fee of the fruit of the travel of his foul:
to shew that a foul’s engaging to Chrifl by faith,
whereby the person becomes one of his feed, flows
from his sufferings, and is a fruit of the travel of
his foul, as it is, 2 Cor. v. ult. He was made fin
for us, who knew no fin, that we might be made
the righteousness of God through him, or in him;
where our righteousness, and what conduces to our
justification, is derived from his being made fin, or
a Sin-offering for us: And Gal. iii. 13. it is said,
that Chrifl hath redeemed us from the curse of the
law, being made a curfe for us, that the blessing
of Abraham might come on us Gentiles: whatever
is comprehended under that blessing, as taking in
both the end and means by which we come by it,
flows from his being a curfe for us, and from his
being brought under fin suffering, and fore foul-
travel for us. In this doctrine ye would consider
something for clearing of it, or rather take the
document itself several ways, and it will help to clear
itself. (1.) Then, when we speak of the fruit of
Chrifl’s sufferings, we mean, not only that our justifi-
cation, the pardon of our fins, and our entry in
to heaven, are fruits of it; but that our believing,
repentance, holiness, and every thing that leads
thereunto, are fruits of it also: Therefore it is
promised to Chrifl, Psal. cx. 3. Tho people shall
be willing in the day of thy power. And that these
that are given to Chrifl shall come, is a promise;
as well as it is a promise, that these that come shall
be justified: And the one follows upon Chrifl’s en-
gagement, as well as the other. (2.) If we take
the doctrine thus, That there is nothing that a
finner gets, that leads to life and salvation, but it
is a fruit of Chrifl’s purchase; we get neither re-
pentance, nor faith, nor holiness, nor any other
fuch thing, but on account of Chrifl’s satisfaction.
Or, (3.) Take it thus, Whatever is needful for
compleating of them that are Chrifl’s feed, whom
he hath purchased, whatever they want or stand in
need of, whether righteousness, holiness, repent-
ance, faith, hope, &c. all are purchased by him,
and are the fruits of his death and foul-travel;
this rifeth clearly from the words, He shall fee of
the fruit of the travel of his soul: That is, He
shall fee finners believing on him, and repenting
for sin, as well as he shall fee them glorified: Which
will be clear, if we consider these two reasons,
1. The nature of the covenant, wherein all the
promises concerning finners salvation are compre-
prehended: There being but one covenant of redemp-
tion, and that being a promise of this covenant, to
circumife the heart to love God, and to write his
law in it, as well as to pardon fin; and all the
promises of the covenant depending on Chrifl’s fi-
pulation, and thefe things in the promises flowing
from the covenant betwixt God and the Mediator:
finners can have no right to any thing that is pro-
mised, but by a covenant; neither can they have
any access to them, but through Chrifl’s sufferings.
2. It is clear, from the end of the covenant, that
whatever finners stand in need of, they must be in
Chrifl’s common for it: Now, if we had faith, or
repentance, or any other grace, from ourselves, or
on our own account, we fhould not be in his debt
or common for all that we need, as indeed we are,
according to that, 1 Cor. i. 30. 31. He is made
of God unto us, Wisdom, to be our Guide and
Teacher; Righteousness, to be our Juftifier, and
the meritorious caufe of it; Sanification, to be the
Worker and Procure of it; and, in a word, compleat Redemption: And this is subjoined as the
reafon of all, That be that glories, or rejoices,
may glory, or rejoice in the Lord; that is, whether
there be a looking to faith or repentance, or any
other grace, there may be no caufe to be vain or
proud of it, but that knowing these to be from
Chrifl, and fruits of his purchase, all the praise
of them may be to him alone.

The Ufe of this is large; it speaks something
more generally to them that are strangers to Chrifl,
and who think that they would be at him; and
something to them that are in him; and something
to both. And the 1ft thing that it speaks is this
(which we have often heard of, but cannot hear of
it too often) even the great and glad tidings, and
very good news, which we have to speak of through
Jesus Chrifl, That redemption is purchafed by him
to poor finners; and that through him there is ac-
cess to life, and peace, and reconciliation with God,
from which through fin we had fallen, and run our-
elves under a forfeiture of, and from which we had
been barred up eternally; except he had fuffered:
There was a wall of separation and partition stand-
ing betwixt God and us, which by his fufferings
was demolifhed and broken down, and thereby a
door of access to God ftuck up, even through the
vail of his flesh. Theref should be refrehing and
frefh
freh news to us every day, as indeed they would be, if we rightly knew, and, believed the benefit of God’s friendship, and what were our hazard in lying still in nature, and what was the price that Christ laid down, to purchase for sinners friendship with God, and delivery from his curse; that it behoved to cost him fore soul-travel, ere any special grace could be bestowed on sinners; and that this famous gospel that is preached to you, is a fruit of the travel of his soul; and that, in making the covenant of redemption, this fame was a part of the indenture (to speak so) that these good news might be published in this fame place, and these glad tidings spoken of among you. And therefore, 2dly, Put a great price on the means that may further your salvation; oh! repentance, faith, holiness, peace with God, &c. for they are the fruits of a very dear purchase, and the results of a great and fore conflict, which the Mediator had with the justice of God, ere there could be access for a finer to any of them: There was not so much paid to get the world created, as was paid to buy faith, repentance, access to God, and an entry to heaven, to run-away sinners; nothing was paid for the one, but a mighty great price for the other. And therefore, 3dly, We would expostulate with many of you, how it comes to pass, that ye think so little of these things that Christ hath purchased; and that ye think so little of faith in him; and that so many of you take a counterfeit for it, try not if you have it, trouble not yourselves tho’ ye want it; and that other things of little value are much esteemed of, and overvalued by you. Is there any thing comparable to that, which Christ hath put such a price on, that he gave his own life for it; and that God hath put such a price on, that he promised it to Christ, as a part of the satisfaction for the travel of his soul? and yet it is lightly valued by many, yea, by most men and women: The day will come, when ye will think faith to be of more value, and will think the pardon of sin, and an interest in Christ’s blood, to be valuable above the whole world, though ye had it, when ye shall be brought to reckon with God for the slighting thereof. And therefore, 4thly, Seein this is a truth, that every thing that leads to life eternal, is a fruit of Christ’s purchase; take the right way to attain it. The exhortation implies these two: 1. That ye make a right choice of, and put a jujf value on these things, that ye should choose and value. 2. That ye take the right way for attaining of these things. (1.) Then, would ye know what is to be valued and chosen? It is certainly these things, that God and the Mediator esteem of, and that the congregation of the first-born esteem of: The things that Christ hath purchased, and which are the fruits of the travel of his soul, are most excellent; and therefore mind, study, and seek after these things, that may lead your souls in to life eternal; seek after faith and repentance, to have your peace made with God, to have the heart purified, to be of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God are of great price, as the apostle Peter speaks; to have pardon of sin, and holiness, for adorning the gospel of God; and to have glory, that ye may fee God and enjoy him: These things are the best things, this is undoubtedly the better part, which will never be taken from them, whose choice thro’ grace it is. God will give great estates, countries and kingdoms in the world, to men, to whom he will not give so much faith as is like a grain of mustard-seed, nor a draff of true holiness, because he thinks much less of the one than the other, and because the one is not so like God, nor will it have such abiding fruit as the other.

(2.) What way may folk win to make this choice, and to attain these best and most valuable things? No other way, but that which this doctrine holds out: If all things that lead to life and salvation be fruits of Christ’s purchase, then sure it is by virtue of Christ’s purchase alone, that ye must come by them; pardon of sin comes by the blood of sprinkling; peace with God, grace, and more grace, the the exercice of grace, and growth in holiness, faith in all its exercices and advances, and every other grace, comes by his sufferings; as also doth glory, because he hath purchased these graces of the Spirit, as well as pardon of sin, and heaven. Often Christ is miflent; and passed by here; many think they shall obtain pardon of sin, and go to heaven without him; others, tho’ they will not own that, yet fall in the second, and would make use of him for pardon of sin, and for paying of their debt, if they could repent and believe in him; but till they find these in themselves, they fear to come unto him: Whereas the sinner that is convinced of sin, and of his hazard, would lay down this as the first step of his way in coming to Christ. Any repentance, and believing, and the making of the heart willing to clofe with, and to cleave to him, is the fruit of Christ’s purchase, and I must be in his common for it, for there is no other possible way to get it. The first aith (to speak so) that a wakered and sensible sinner should look unto for pardon and
Isaiah liii.

Peace, for repentance, faith and all things, would be to Christ, and his sufferings, whence all these come. Sinners at first are disposed to take too far a look, and so mistake in the order of things; therefore, when the sense of sin pinches them, and they fret about to believe, and find that their hearts are very averse from believing, and can hardly be brought to it, then they are fainted, when they consider and find, that, if it flood but on this, even to content to take Christ, they cannot do it: But then, and in that case, the Lord minds that they should be much in his common, for faith, and repentance, and for a soft and tender heart, and that they should seek these from him, as well as pardon of sin, considering that all this is Christ's purchase, and that there is a possibility to win to it this way, when they can win to it no other way; if ye would take this way, even to eye and look to Christ as the Author and Finisher of faith, and be in his common for it, through his grace it should go better with you: This is it which the apostle hath, Heb. xii. where he, calls, to lay aside every weight, and the sin that easily be- fets us, and to run the race with patience that is set before us; and if it should be said, How shall that be done? even by looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith; and then follows, Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross and despised the shame; thus leading folk into his sufferings, as the solid foundation of their faith.

Use 2. See here ground for qualifying the natural pride that is amongst men and women, as to spiritual things: How so? where is the ground for this? Here it is, because all is Christ's purchase; which may also give a check to thefe, who, because they have nothing in themselves, think not that they shall come-speed upon this ground; as it doth to these others, who have gotten somthing, and are proud of it. To clear it a little, we would consider, that there is a pride in folk, ere they come to Christ, they cannot well endure to be in Christ's debt for every thing; they will take pardon of sin from him, but they would have faith and repentance of themselves, as some money in their purse to bring with them to him, that they may buy it: But where will you, I pray, get faith, or repentance, if not from him? are they not his gifts, and fruits of his purchase? Which, if it were well considered, there would be no access to the proud reafonings of unbelief: Dare ye say but these things are the fruits of Christ's sufferings, and his gifts? and if so, must ye not be in his common for them? And as it silenceth the reafonings of unbelief, so it flops the mouth of the sinner, and humbles him much more than if he had these things in, or from himself, and were only to be in his common for righteousness and justification. 2. We would consider, that there is often some pride and conceit in them that have faith, disposing them to think themselves to be better than other folks: But, if ye have faith, whence is it? or who hath made you to differ? Is it not a fruit of Christ's purchase, and will ye be vain or conceit of that which is the purchase of another? This is a spiritual poor pride, that flinks in the nostrils of the holy Lord, to abuse his goodnes, as to be proud because he hath bought and bestowed that which ye could never have procured nor attained yourselves: If then folks have nothing, it is good to mind this, that Christ hath purchased what sinners stand in need of, and that it may be had in and from him; and if folks have any thing, they should not be proud or conceit of it, but mind that what they have is a fruit of Christ's purchase, and that therefore there is no ground to be proud of it.

The 3d Use serves to shew what great obligation lies on sinners, that get any special good from God: It is Christ that hath purchased all, and therefore they ought to improve all that they have gotten for him who hath bought all; as it is, 1 Cor. vi. 20. Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price, and therefore glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits, which are God's: Whatever ye have of faith, of repentance, of holiness, or of ability to serve and honour God in your flation, it is bought with a price, and a dear price; and therefore glorify God in the right use making, and managing of it. We would think it no little progress and advancement in religion, if ye were brought to walk under the suitable impression of your engagement to Christ, as holding all that ye have, and all that serves for your through-bearing of him; for what do we, or can we do? It is Christ that buys all, and that confers all; we can do nothing of ourselves but abuse his purchase: And, were it not that the sickness and ability of our covenanting depends on the first covenant, even the covenant of redemption, transacted betwixt these two repontal Parties, Jehovah and the Mediator, we would quite mar and break all the bargain betwixt God and us, and cast all loose every day, if not every moment.

The other promife is, that he shall fee his seed: And, as we hinted before, it is one thing, to have a seed, and another thing to fee a seed; the former promife looks to his having of a seed, and this to his seeing of that seed: Whence observe, "That
S E R M O N XLVIII.

Isaiah lxxxiii. 11. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied: By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

As it is a most wonderful work that our Lord Jesus hath in hand, and a mighty -great bargain, that sell him the travel of his soul; so it may be thought, that it must be a very great price that our Lord Jesus hath to expect, as his satisfaction for all that fore labour and travel: This is it that the text holds forth, He shall see of the fruit of the travel of his soul, which in sum is this, he shall see poor sinners getting good of him, justified by his grace, and admitted to friendship with God, and that to his satisfaction, as the words following clear, he shall be satisfied, to wit, as to that fruit, and shall acquitfee in it, as his satisfaction for all the travel of his soul.

We told you, that there were three things in these words, 1. The price that is called for from the Mediator, in performing the work of redemption, and making reconciliation betwixt God and sinners, to wit, the travel of his soul, the sad and forely pinching straits and pressures that he was put to, and brought under, not only in his body, but also in his soul. 2. The promise made to him, upon his undertaking and paying of the price, he shall see of the travel of his soul, that is, the fruits and effects of his soul-travel; it shall not be for nought, but shall certainly have fruit, he shall have a numerous issue. 3. There is here holden forth the Mediator's acquiescence in the bargain so proposed, that he undertaking the condition of laying down his life, on these same terms that he shall see a feed, he requires no other satisfaction, and therefore he accepts of it, and acquiesces in it, as the refult of this design, and shall be satisfied.

Having spoken of the former two, we come now to speak of the third; and we may consider it in these three respects, 1. As it looks to Christ's design, who is like to one that is running a race, and hath the prize before him, and in his eye; and this breach in our consolation; but when he is Executor of his own testament, and by his Spirit makes the application, what is, or can be wanting? We shall say no more, but that here it is clear, that we have a living Mediator, as himself says, Rev. i. 18. I was dead, and am alive, and live for evermore; and therefore, sinners, step forward to his sufferings, and seek the application of his purchase, since he lives to make it; it will no doubt be great ground of challenge against you, who slight his sufferings, and keep at a distance from him, since he is alive, and since what is much accounted of by him, even the fruits of his sufferings, is by you set at nought, who neglect, refuse, or despise him, and the benefit of his sufferings. O what an aggravation of your guilt will this be, when he is looking on, to see what comes of the fruit of his sufferings, and soul-travel, to be found thus to flight, and in a manner to affront him! He knows, and takes notice of the breathings of faith, where they are, and is well pleased with them, and with the least minings at it; he knows also, who despise him, and refuse to believe in him, and hath all put on record. God give us wisdom to make the right choice.
11. Alluded unto; therefore our Lord’s sufferings are called travel, because of the pains that he was put unto in them, and because the end of them was to bring forth children, before called his seed: As if the prophet had said, Our Lord Jesus shall be put to great sorrow in suffering, but he shall bring forth; and, as a woman hath joy in the man-child brought forth, so shall he have more comfort and delight in the bringing forth of believers, than he had sorrow in the procuring of life to them, tho’ that was very great.

From the words, thus considered and explained, take these two observations, 1. That our Lord Jesus is exceedingly delighted, satisfied, and well-pleased with poor sinners making use of, and getting good of his suffering: It is a thing most satisfying, and well-pleasing to him. 2. That seeing our Lord Jesus is so well pleased with sinners making use of him, there is all equity and reason for it, that he should have this satisfaction.

And this follows not only on the former, but clearly riseth from the words; for this satisfaction is allowed him for his soul-travel: And as it is just, that they that labour should partake of their labour, and that the hireling should have his hire; so it is not only satisfying to Christ, that sinners get good of him, but it is just, he having purchased it at so dear a rate.

For the first of these, That our Lord Jesus is exceedingly delighted and satisfied with sinners making use of, and getting good of him; if there were no other scripture to confirm it, this fame is sufficient: Would ye then know what Christ aims at in his sufferings, what will content and satisfy him, as a recompence for all his soul-travel? it is even this, to see of the fruit of the travel of his soul, to have sinners getting good of him, and saved by him; and there is nothing but this that will satisfy him: It were a great matter to have the faith of this settled and rooted in our hearts; if we could rightly take up what he hath suffered, how low he hath condescended to come, even to be a Man, and a Man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, to be reproached and mocked, to take on him the curse, and to be in pain and soul-travel; and then, if we could rightly take up what he aimed at, and designed in all this, and what he accounted to be a recompence to him for it all; even this, that when his gospel is preached, such and such poor sinners, under hazard of wrath, and challenges for sin, should, through closing with him, be brought to answer all their challenges by this; our Lord Jesus hath satisfied justice for sinners: And when poor sinners
The sinners are under the sense of a hard heart, that they should call their eye on the same ground for a remedy of that spiritual malady and plague, even his sufferings, which have purchased the mollifying of the heart, as well as justification, and pardon of sin; and when a sinner is confirmed and deemed, because of sin and divine displeasure, that he should be cheered, and comforted in his sufferings: this, even this, is refreshing, and is delight-

fome to him: We say, it were much to get this thoroughly believed, that sinners are not half so

fan to come in under his sufferings for shelter and refreshment, as our Lord Jesus is (to speak with reverence) to see them sheltered, refreshed, and thriving; the very mentioning of this ought to be as marrow to the bones.

But, for further clearing of it, we would speak, a word. 1. To what this delight and satisfaction is, 2. To some grounds, to confirm the truth of it, that our Lord Jesus is indeed delighted to see poor sinners coming to him, and getting good of him.

For the first of these, we did, when we were speaking of these words, verse 10. The plauge of the Lord shall prosper in his hand, shew how it was a delightfom thing to Jehovah: And now, speaking of it from the 11th verse, in reference to the Mediator, we shall take it up in these particulars; first, There is in our Lord Jesus, not only a delight in sinners getting good of him, as it is a thing he calls for, and is agreeable to his revealed will, and as being required of them as their duty, in which respect it is acceptable to God, and cannot but be acceptable and well pleasing unto him: Neither, 2dly, Is this delight only in respect of the end of his sufferings, which were undergone to make a way for, and to strike open a door to the throne of grace, through the vail which is his flesh, that poor sinners might come to the fountain and wash, and have access to God through him; which being the end he had before him in his death, cannot but be acceptable to God, because it was his end in giving of his Son to die; and so it is delighfom to the Mediator. But also, 3dly, It is so in these two respects further; sinners coming to him, relating on him, and getting good of him, is his delight, 1. In respect of the honour that is done unto him; when a sinner believes on him, he counts it the putting of the crown on his head, as it is. Can. iii. 11. See also, to this purpose, John v. 23, 24. And that there could have been a possibility of honouring God before, yet there is no honouring of the Mediator, till folk make use of his sufferings by faith; and it is on this ground that

Christ complains, when he is not made use of: And therefore when sinners give him credit, by committing the saving of their souls to him, and by making use of his offices for that end, and for his performing in them that wherefore they were appointed, it cannot but be acceptable and well pleasing to him. 2. In respect of that sympathy, that our Lord Jesus hath with his own members; for tho' the Mediator be now glorified in heaven, yet he hath a human heart and affection still, tho' inconceivably glorious, and to a kindly sympathy with them and is some way affected with both their good and their ill: And, considering him thus, he hath a delight in the good and welfare of his people; and their being delighted in, and satisfied with him, proves a delight and satisfaction to him.

For the next thing, to wit, the clearing and confirming of it; it might be cleared and confirmed from many grounds, but we shall only touch on some, that may make it out most convincingly, that it is most delightfom to Jesus Christ to see sinners making use of him, and getting good of his sufferings: And this his delight may be drawn from eternity, and carried on to eternity. 1. In the making of the covenant of redemption, it was delightfom to him to enter in it, as is clear, Plai. xi. I delight to do thy will, O my God: The bargain was no sooner proposed (if we may speak so to that which is eternal) but heartily it was closed with by him; and this is confirmed, Prov. viii. 30, 31, where the substantial wisdom of the Father is brought in, saying, Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men: Our Lord Jesus, before the world began, was delighted in the fore-thought that such a thing was a coming, that in such and such parts of the world, such and such poor sinners should be called by his grace, and get good of his sufferings; as a man in a long journey or voyage, may be delighted in the foresight of the end of it, before he come at it. 2. Look forward to his executing of his office of Mediator, and to his going about the work of redemption, and we will find that he does it with delight: Therefore, John iv. when he is sitting on the well side, and is weary with his journey, and hath neither to eat nor to drink, he calleth a preaching to a poor sinful woman; and when the disciples would fain have refreshed him with that which they had bought, he fays to them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of; and when they did begin to wonder what that could be, he fays further to them.
I thall a little explain this, and then procure the use of it. Ye will ask then, What is the fruit of Christ's soul-travel that satisfies him? I answer, That we take in under it, not only, 1. That ye should aim to be at heaven; neither, 2. This, That ye be serious in the duties of holiness, as if these were well pleasing to God, without respect to Christ's sufferings; but it is the use-making and improving of Christ's sufferings for attaining of these: When folk by this mids, by this new and living way, step forward to heaven, and seek to be serious in the study of holiness; when they that could not walk in the way of holiness, do now walk in it, leaning on their Beloved, and study to live by faith in him; this is it mainly wherein his delight and satisfaction doth lie, even when a poor sinner is brought to make use of him for peace and reconciliation with God, for through-bearing in all called-for duties, for his consolation, and for his admission to heaven in the close: And therefore they do not only fail here, who are prophane, living securely, never minding heaven, their peace with God, nor the study of holiness, neither only these, who cast the law and its reproofs behind their backs (these are lothsome to God and Jesus Christ); but by this, these are also reproved, that do not improve the sufferings of Christ for peace and reconciliation with God, for righteousness and for strength, for comfort and encouragement, and who hope not in his mercy; the reason is, Because, tho' it were possible they could make progress in holiness, and attain to comfort and peace that way, yet it would not be thus the fruit of the travel of Christ's soul, he being past by, and so could not be satisfaction to him: But where a poor sinner sees that he cannot come to God of himself, cannot make his peace, nor can he walk in the way of holiness, so as to please God, and so flees to Christ for refuge, and makes use of his purchase; there lieth Christ's delight, to see such a sinner come and hide himself under the shadow of his sufferings: And in this respect, the more hardly a sinner is put at it, it is the more satisfaction to him, that he in his death and sufferings be made use of, because, this way, the sinner's life is more entirely the benefit of his sufferings; and that such a person hath any strength, comfort or peace, and is admitted to heaven, it is allenarily through the travel of his soul, which is his great satisfaction.

And therefore we would, 2dly, Command to you, that as ye would do Christ a favour (to speak so with reverence); and O what a motive is this for vile sinners, the dust of his feet, to be put in a capacity
capacity to do him a pleasure) endeavour this especially, that, as to you, Christ may see the fruit of the travel of his soul, and be satisfied, and that all his kindness offered to you may not be fruitless:

This is the great hinge of the gospel, as to that which is prefixed upon you; and this is the wonderful motive that is given to press it, that it is delightful to Christ, and therefore ye should believe on him: It were encouragement enough that it is profitable to yourselves; but if ye had hearts of stone, this should move you to it, that our Lord Jesus seeks no more satisfaction from you, for all his soul-travel, but that ye make use of his sufferings, that ye do not receive this offer of his grace in vain, nor be fruitless under it. In a word, we have here laid before us (and think upon it) the most wonderful, inconceivable, and inexplicable suit and request of him who is the Creator, to us poor sinful creatures; and what is it? I have been (lays he on the matter) in sore travel and pain for you; now, I pray you, let it not be for nought, let me see the fruit of it: And (to speak it with reverence of the Majesty of God) it would lay this to you, Let not our Lord Jesus rue of his sufferings; for as many as hear of this offer, and do not credit him with their souls, they do what they can, to make him repent that ever he became Man, and suffered so much, when he is thus shifted, and unkindly required of them, to whom he makes the offer: And this is a very home and urgent pressing of the necessity of making use of him, when such an argument is made use of; for thus it stands with you, and his offer speaks this, either make use of Christ, and of his soul-travel, for saving of your souls, that so he may be satisfied; or if ye fly him, ye not only destroy and cause to perish your own souls, but ye refuse to satisfy Christ for his soul-travel, and do what in you lies to mar and defeat the end and design of his sufferings; and is not this a great and strongly pushing dilemma? The result of your receiving or rejecting of Christ will be this, if ye receive him, ye satisfy him; if ye reject him, ye say, ye are not content that he should be satisfied: And what can be expected to come of it, when Christ suffered so much, and when all that was craved of you, was to make use of him, and when it was told that that would satisfy him, and yet that was refused? What a horrible challenge will this be in the great day? And therefore, to press this Use a little, we shall shew you here, 1. What it is that we exhort you to; and, 2. What is the force of this motive. 1st, We would commend to you in general, that ye would endeavour the salvation of your own souls; this is it he cries to you, Prov. i. 22. How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and ye scorners delight in scorning? turn ye at my reproof, &c. He aims at this, that ye should get your souls saved from wrath; and this should not be prejudicial, nor at the long-run unsatisfying to yourselves, and it will be very satisfying to him. 2. It is not only to aim at salvation simply, but to aim at it by him, to aim at pardon of sin and justification through his righteousness and satisfaction; and that ye would bring no other argument before God to plead upon, for your peace with him, but this; and that ye would aim at holiness, as a fruit of his death, He having purchased a peculiar people to himself, to be zealous of good works, as it is, Tit. ii. 14. and that ye would aim to do holy duties, by his strengthening of you; and that ye would live by faith in him, which is your victory over the world, and the very soul of the practice of all holy duties. And 3. That ye aim to have a comfortable, refreshful and cheerful life in him, and by what is in him, as if it were your own, it being legally yours by faith in him; to be stopping your own mouth, as having nothing in yourselves to boast of, and (as I just now said) to be clearing and delighting yourselves from that which is in him; and as it is, Psal. cxlvii. even to be hoping in his mercy. In a word, it is to be studying peace with God through him, to be studying holiness in his strength, and to be studying a comfortable and cheerful walk, through the grounds of joy that are given you in him, which is very reasonable. Would ye then do him a favour, and have him delighted and satisfied, do but this, give him your souls to be saved by him, in his own way; come to him, sensible of sin, and founding your peace on him, tho' weak in yourselves, yet strong in him, on whom, as the mighty One, God hath laid help: and studying holiness in his strength, drawing virtue from him only, to mortify your lusts; that it may be known that Christ hath died, and is risen again, because grace shines in such a person: And be comforted in him; He that gleareth shall shine in the Lord, having given up with creature comforts and conditions, with your own gifts, parts, duties, &c. and having betaken yourselves to the peace, strength and consolation that are in a Mediator, and which run through the covenant of grace, and flow forth from him, as the fountain from whom all the graces and comforts that come to us are derived. 2dly, For the force of the motive, consider seriously, if this be not a pinching strain that ye are put to: If this be it wherein our Lord's satisfaction lies, and wherein
the salvation and edification of your own souls cons-

ts; we pofe you, if it be any great difficulty, or

unreasonable thing, that is called for from you?

And if the motive wherein it is poffible not mot.

just and reasonable, that these who have or prove

to have the faith of this, that it will be satisfaction

for him to all his foul-travel, that finners make use

of him, should yield it to him? And whether, in

day of the Lord, it will not be a molt hainous

shameful and abominable guilt, that when the busi-

ness of your own salvation stood on this, even on

your satisfying of Christ by yielding, ye refused,
difdained, and fcorned it, and would not make use

of him for your peace, and would not in his

strength folly holiness, though your own souls

should never be faved, nor he satisfied for his foul-

travel? This, of all other challenges, will be the

sharpest and most biting; and upon the other hand,
it may be most comforting to a poor body that is

fensible of fin, and afraid of wrath. Is there, or

can there be hazard to do Christ a pleafure by be-

lieving on him? Is it a thing delightfom to him;

and therefore, let this be one great motive to prefs

believing in Christ, among the refi, which tho' it

be crofs, and thwarting to the unbelieving heart,

and may look like prefumption to look a promis-

ing in the face, and to offer to make application of

it to the poor finner's felf; yet fceming it is a thing fo

pleafing to Christ, that it satisfies him for all his

fuffering, effay it upon this very account, remember-

ing always, that He delights in them that hope

in his mercy: And to him be praise for ever.

SERMON XLIX.

Isayah liii. 11. He fhall fee of the travel of his soul, and fhall be satisfied: By his knowledge fhall my

righteous Servant justify many; for he fhall bear their iniquities.

It is a great work that our Lord Jefus hath un-
dertaken, in fatisfying the justice of God for the

fins of the elect, and he hath at a dear rate, and

with great expence and travel, performed it:
Now it is but reafon that he fhould again be fa-

tified, that fo Jehovah's fatisfaction and the Media-
tor's fatisfaction may go together; and that is the

thing that is promised here in these words. What

this fatisfaction is which is promised to him, as the

great thing in which he delights, and by which he

is fatisfied, in the undertaking and performing of

the work of redemption, it is also fet down here,

He fhall fee of the travel of his soul, and fhall be satisfied: which, in a word, is this, he fhall fee many, who had perifhed if he had not

fuffered, getting good of his fufferings, and to be

benefited by them; who, by his taking on him the

curse, and by his undergoing his foul-travel, fhall

be freed from the curse, and made to partake of the

benefits, privileges and comforts that he hath bought

by fo great and precious a price.

We propofed this as the main doctrine from the

words the laft day, " That it is great fatisfaction

" to our Lord Jefus, to fee finners making use of,

" and getting good of his fufferings." Or thus,

" That finners making use of Chrifl's fufferings

" for their good, is his fatisfaction, for all the foul-

" travel, and fufferings that he endured." He fhall

fee of the travel of his soul, and fhall be satisfied. I fhall inift no further in clearing and con-

firming this, but come clofe to the Ufe of it; and

if any point of doctrine have ufe, this may have,

and hath it, to the gladning and making joyful and

fain the hearts of loft finners, that our Lord Jefus

fhould fuffer fo much, and fcc no more fatisfaction

for it all, but to fee finners improving his fufferings

for their good, to have a feed brought forth by his

foul-travel, and to have them getting life by his

death, and the bleffing by his bearing of the curse;

and yet this is it that this doctrine bears forth.

We may draw the ref Ufe to these four, from

and by which we may learn and know in some

measure, how to anfwer this quifition. Seeing we

have heard fo much of Chrifl's fuffering and foul-

travel, what fhall we give to Chrifl for all that?
how fhall we fatisfy him? If there were any af-

tected suitably with thankfulnefs from the hearing of

Chrifl's being brought to low by his fad fufferings,

this would be, and could not but be their quefion.

Here is an anfwer to it; That our Lord Jefus feeks
Serm. XLIX.

Ifatub liii.

Verit. 11. no more as a satisfaction for all his sufferings, but that ye improve them for your good: This will delight and satisfy him, ye cannot do him a greater pleasure, nothing will be more acceptable; nay, nothing will be acceptable to him, nor taken off your hand, but this, even to see you coming in to him, and making use of his sufferings for your own good, that as to you in particular, his sufferings may not be in vain, and for nought, but that ye improve them, and so improve them, as that ye may not live and die in the case: that ye would have been in for ever, had he not suffered, that is, under the dominion of sin and Satan, under the wrath and curse of God, in an anxious heartless life, without God, and without hope in the world? It is even this in a word, That hearing of his sad sufferings, and of the design of them, ye may be take yourselves to him for pardon of sin, for sanctification in both the parts of it, and for consolation, and that in the end ye may get your souls saved, on the account of his sufferings, and by virtue thereof.

2f. then, Ye would seek to be reconciled to God, as the apostle, 2 Cor. v. 20, 21. exhorts, We ae ambassadors for Christ, and in his stead, beseech you to be reconciled to God; and the argument whereby it is pressed, is the same that the doctrine holds forth, For he was made fin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him: hence it follows also, chap. vi. 1. We beseech you, receive not this grace of God in vain. Are there any of you, who are convinced that Christ should be satisfied, and that he should not be at all this travel and pains for nought, and that think ye would fain satisfy him, if it were in your power? Behold, our Lord hath told you what will satisfy him; it is not thousand of rams, nor ten thousand rivers of oil, but that his sufferings be so improved by you, as the native fruits of them may follow and be found in you; that, considering the woful case ye are in by nature, ye may make use of his satisfaction to divine justice, as the alone atonement, and may by faith take hold of it as the ground of your peace: If this be not, Christ will be to you as if he had never suffered. 2dly. It calls for holiness and mortification of sin: This is much pressed, Rom. vi. from verfe 2. to 14. and by this same argument, to wit, That seeing Christ died for believers, we should die with him; that being it wherein the power of his death kylthes, even in the mortification of our lufts, which he came to destroy: But when folks live as they had wont to do, in their prophanity and loofeness, there is nothing of the fruit of the travel of

his soul to be seen in them. 3dly. Christ travelled for the consolation of his people: And this is another fruit of his death and sufferings, that these who have betaken themselves to Christ, may comfort themselves on this ground, That once, and that ere long, they will get the mastery over a body of death, and will get both Satan and it bruised under their feet, through him, who was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification, and who hath blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, nailing it to his cross, and that through the veil, which is his flesh, there might a way be made patent to us unto the most holy; and that with confidence we might approach to God, and in his sufferings drown all our challenges. And indeed believers are behind, and greatly at a loss, who have betaken themselves to Christ, and yet live as anxiously and uncomfortably, as if they had not a plain Mediator to comfort themselves in, who, by his sufferings, soul-travel, and death, hath made a purchase of so great things for them. And, in a word, the up-shot of his sufferings is, to get the souls of believers in him, carried unto heaven, and kept there perfect, till the body be raised, and in a perfect state re-united to the soul, at the great day; according to that of the apostle, Eph. v. 26, 27. He gave himself for his Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, and present her to himself a glorious Church, without spot and wrinkle, or any such thing: And when souls are not taking the right way to heaven, he hath nothing of the travel of his soul from such, more than if he had not undergone it, nor suffered at all.

Use 2. If this be Christ's satisfaction for all the travel of his soul, that he see sinners getting good of his sufferings; then, if any motive be weighty to move people to give him their souls to save, this must sure have weight with them; even that thereby he may have satisfaction for his soul-travel: And therefore we would exhort you, on this ground, to give him your souls to be saved by him, in order to his satisfaction. And what is spoken in common, take it as spoken to every one of you in particular, men and women, old and young, rich and poor; if ye would do Christ a favour and pleasure, give him employment for pardon of sin, for peace with God, for sanctification, for consolation, and for access to heaven: Or, if ye would know what motive we would use to persuade you to make use of this gospel for all these, take this for one, and a main one, That it will satisfy, and even (to speak so with reverence) comfort Christ for all the travel
of his soul, and for all the hard labour that he endured; even as it satisfies a wooer for all his pains and patience, in waiting on after many refusals and slights, when he gains the woman’s consent, and when the match is made up: So it will satisfy him, when he sees souls, by virtue of his sufferings, brought to believe on him, and to lay the weight of their salvation upon him; for then he sees it was not for nought that he laid down his life: And truly, if this motive prevail not, I know not what motive will prevail.

But, to make it the more clear and convincing, consider these things, 1. What it is that Christ seeks, when he seeks satisfaction for the travel of his soul; he even seeks your benefit and good: If he had sought that which would have been painful to you, ye would, I suppose, have judged yourselves obliged readily to have gone about it, had it been (as we use to speak) to have gone through the fire for him; but now, when this is all that he seeks, that by making use of his sufferings ye may be justified, made holy, comforted in your life, and brought to heaven at your death, should it not much more engage you to give him this satisfaction? 2. Who seeks this satisfaction, and to whom is it to be given? Is it not to our Lord Jesus Christ? There is very great weight in this part of the argument, that by believing on him, and making use of his sufferings, we not only satisfy and save ourselves, but make glad the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, being considered as God; needs no satisfaction, neither is capable of any additional satisfaction from creatures, he being infinitely happy, and fully satisfied in the enjoyment of his own all-sufficient Self; nothing from without can be added unto him; Yet he having condescended to become Man, and Mediator betwixt God and man, to reconcile lost sinners to God, he is graciously pleased to account it satisfaction to him for all his soul-travel, to have sinners making use of him for their good; and if there be any weight in the satisfaction of One that is great and good, and good to us, this hath weight in it, that our doing so will satisfy him, that is matchlessly great and good, and superlatively so to sinners. 3. Consider the ground on which this satisfaction is pleaded for, and it will add yet more weight to this argument; it is satisfaction to him for his soul travel: And can any find in their hearts to think but he should be satisfied on this account? Is there not reason for it? Who (as the apostle says, 1 Cor. ix. 7.) goeth a warfare on his own charges? who plants a vineyard, and eats not of the fruit thereof? or who seedeth

Isaiah liii. Verse 11. SERM. XLIX. a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Ah! should our Lord Jesus bete all this labour and pains for nothing? And further, 4. Whose satisfaction is it that is sought? (This consideration is somewhat diversified from the 2d, and would not therefore be look’d on as any tautology) Is it not his, who is Lord of all, and who will one day be judge; when, if we had all the world, we would give it to please him; and who will pronounce the sentence or the sentence? 5. From whom requires he this satisfaction? Is it not from them, who like sheep have gone astray? From these who have many iniquities lying on them, and are lying under the curse of God by nature? From these, who must either be healed by his stripes, or else they will never be healed, but will die of their wounds? May not this make the argument yet the more strong, that he is not seeking this satisfaction of strangers, but of his own people, nor of righteous folk, but of sinners, who are lying under the curse, and whose happiness lies in giving him this satisfaction? And when it is thus with you, that either your sins must be taken away by him, or else ye must lie under them for ever; that either he must bear the curse for you, or ye must bear it yourselves; if these things be obvious, as indeed they are, O! give him the satisfaction that he calls for, and let him not be put to say, as it is, Isaiah. xlix. 4. I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought, and in vain. 2dly, To press this yet a little more (altho’ it should be said to us, that there should be need to press that so much on us, which is so profitable to us, and satisfying to him) even that we would make use of him for our spiritual good and advantage; these considerations will add weight to the argument, 1. What esteem Christ hath of it; he thinks it as it were to be payment, and a sort of compensation for all his labour and sufferings: The price was not gold nor silver, nor any such thing, which he gave for sinners; but it was his precious blood, his own life, who was the Prince of life, and the Prince of the kings of the earth: And O what a vast and infinite disproportion is there betwixt his life, and all our lives! and yet he accounts it a sufficient reward, if we will but give him ourselves to be fated by him in his own way, and will make use of his death and sufferings.
I hear help. 11. I delight to do thy will, O my God: and Luke xii. I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished? and Luke xxii. With desire have I desired to eat this passover before I suffer: He opened not his mouth, in order to his delivery, so well did he love the salvation of sinners. Now, what if a meer and ordinary man had done something to the hazard of his life for you, would it not plead with the most carnal persons, having the least measure of natural or moral ingenuity, to give him a meeting? Very Heathens will love those that love them, much more ought ye to satisfy him in what he requires, who hath done so much for sinners. 5. Consider what he seeketh as a satisfaction (hinted at before) If it were a great matter, or which were to your prejudice, there might be some shadow of a ground to refuse; but when it is no more but to make use of his sufferings for your own good, how can it be refused? It is in this case, as if the physician should satisfy the physician, as if a poor man's receiving of a sum of money would satisfy the rich friend, who is pleased to bestow it; or, as one that is naked would satisfy another, by putting on the clothes laid to his hand by him: What reason is there to refuse such offer? And yet this that Christ calls for, is, even as if the physician should say to his dying patient, I will be satisfied greatly, if thou wilt take this potion that is for thy recovery, health and cure; and will not be content, if thou take it not, tho' the ingredients stand myself very dear; besides that, it is for thy good, and will recover thee: Or, as if the Father should say to the child, I will not be content, if thou put not on such a fine suit, that, by a word, that which makes the dyes your sinner happy, is that which satisfies him. 6. Consider, if Jesus Christ get not this satisfaction, what will become of it? if ye please him not in this, he will be highly displeased, no other thing will satisfy him, tho' ye should pray and weep an hundred years, and do many good works; if he get not this fruit of his soul-sufferings, to wit, that ye improve them for your soul's good and salvation, he will be continually displeased: Therefore it is said, Psal. ii: Kifs the Son lest he be angry; And that is nothing else, but to make use of him in his offices; and it says, that there is no way to please him and to eschew his anger, but this: And indeed, if ye anger him, ye anger him that can be your best Friend and your greatest foe. 7. Consider further, how our Lord Jesus seeketh, and presses for this satisfaction from you; he sends forth his friends and ambassadors; to woo in his name;
and to beseech you to be reconciled, and to tell you,
that it will not be thousands of rams, nor your
first-born, that will do the business; but that ye
must humble yourselves, and walk with God, which
necessarily supposeth the use-making of Christ: If
there had been no pleading with you in his name,
there had not been such sin, in not improving his
satisfaction; but when he pleads so much and so
often for this, and intreats every one in particular
to satisfy him, saying, as it were, Let me see of the
travel of my foul, let me have this much satisfac-
tion for all my sufferings, that ye will make use
of my righteousness; and when he is so very serious
in beseeching and intreating, it should, no doubt,
make us more willing to grant him what he seeks.

8. Ye would look upon this, not only as a discourse
in the general to sinners, but ye would also look
on it, as addressed to every one of you in particular;
and therefore remember, that ye will all be called
to give an account of this matter, and it will be
asked you, What became of such and such an offer
of grace, and whether ye gave him the satisfaction
that he called for, or not; according to that word,
Acts xvii. 31. He hath appointed a day, wherein
he will judge the world in righteousness, by that
Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given
assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him
from the dead. He would have judged the world,
the Chrift had not come; but he will have a day
wherein he will call all the hearers of the gospel to
an account, especially as to this, to wit, What
welcome they have given to Chrift: And seeing
such a day is coming, when folk will be called to
an account, what use they made of him; with what
face will many come before him, when it shall be
told them, that he craved no more satisfaction from
them for all that he suffered, but that they would
have improved his sufferings for their own good,
and that yet they would not give him that much?
Doth not this say, that there is need that we should
look well what fruit there is of his sufferings that
there may be more than if he had not suffered at all?

9. Consider the great weight that will be laid
on this sin, of refusing to believe, and to satisfy him
in this, to wit, in improving of his sufferings, above
all other sins: This is a sin that will be found to be
against equity, thankfulness and ingenuity, that
when he had done and suffered so much, he was so ill
required; yea, it will be found to be a wilful and
licentious sin, that, when your good and his satisfac-
tion were joined together, ye would rather choose
to destroy yourselves, than to satisfy him, in having
yourselves, through use making of his sufferings.
There are two remarkable words to this purpose,
Heb. vi. x. in the 6th Chap, it is said of such, that
they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh,
and put him to an open shame; that is, they do dif-
please and anger him, and do what in them lies to
to call reproach upon him, as if he were no Saviour
at all; or an insufficient Saviour, to put him to suf-
fer over again, in his wanting of satisfaction for his
sufferings; as it is a great pain for a mother to be
in travel, but it is another, and, in some respect,
greater pain, if the child die in the bringing forth:
In the 10th Chap. verse. 28. it is called, a tread-
ing under foot the Son of God, and an accounting
the blood of the covenant to an unholy thing; and
in the 16 verse. before it is said, There remains no
more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking
for of judgment; and it is upon this very account,
(as we did, at another occasion, make use of these
two scriptures to a like purpose, and did thus cau-
tion our application of them against mistakes) for
what greater indignity can be put on him, than,
when his satisfaction depends on the improving of
his sufferings, yet people will not do it? As nothing
pleases him better than to improve his sufferings,
s0 on the contrary, there is no sin that doth di-
please him more, than when they are not improved:
And if ye will not now believe this to be a truth, yet,
when the Lord shall call you to account for it, ye
will find it to be a most certain and sad truth, that he
called you to believe, and that ye would ly still in
your unbelief, ignorance and prophanity; that ye
destroyed your own souls, and made his sufferings
as ufeless, as to you, as if there had never a door
been opened to sinners to heaven, by them. Is there
any of you that will be able to answer to this chal-
lenge? If not, then let him have this satisfaction,
by improving of his sufferings, that he may find (to
say fo) that his death hath not been for nought, as
to you: Study to have him great in your esteem,
and to have yourselves faved by the virtue and ef-
cicacy of his sufferings, otherwise the challenge will
be unanswerable; conidering, that he declared that
this would satisfy him, and ye knew that it would
have pleased him, and removed the quarrel, and
faved yourselves; and that withal, by this means,
a comfortable sentence at judgment might have been
procured to you, and that yet ye disdained to do it.
And therefore, since it stands so with you, be
intreated to make earnest, and greater earnest of
believing and of the great work of getting
your own souls saved, which he hath thought
so much of, else it had been better for you that
ye had never had a deligbtful hour in the world;
and had the encounter been, that ye will have
with
Sermon L.

Isaiah liii. 11. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied: By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

There are two things of great concernment for men to know, for sinful men to know; (if any thing be of concernment) the one is, How the justice of God that is provoked may be satisfied? or what it is, by which provoked justice is satisfied? And the other is, What the way is, how we come to get that satisfaction applied to us? or, what is the way to get the benefit of it made ours? And both of them are answered in this verse clearly and shortly: The first is holden out in the first part of the verse to be the travel of Christ's soul, which hath a special look to the covenant of redemption, and to the condition on which it is accomplished and performed, that is, his soul-travel, under which all his sufferings are comprehended: The other is in the latter part of the verse, By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities; this holds forth in short the gospel-way, how a sinner may be brought to get the benefit of Christ's satisfaction; these two being the sum of the gospel, to wit, Christ's purchase, and the application of it to sinners.

In this last part of the verse, we have these five things to be considered, which express this, 1. The great benefit that flows from Christ's sufferings, and it is justification; which in a word is this much, to be absolved, acquitted and set free from the guilt of sin, and from the curse of God; justifying here being opposed to condemning: So that, when it is said, They shall be justified; the meaning is, that these that were before obnoxious to the curse, and that were by the law to be condemned, (according to that word, Gal. iii. 10. Curfed is every one that abides not in all things written in the law to do them) shall now, thro' the benefit of Christ's sufferings, be declared free, and set at liberty, even as a debtor is set free by the intervening of a responful caution. 2. The parties made partakers of the benefit, and they are called, many; tho' they are few, being compared with the world, yet in themselves they are many: They shall come, or many shall come, from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. And, comparing this word with the last words of the verse, it fals, that they are as many as these are whose iniquities he bare, and the payment of whose debt he undertook. It is not to be taken universally for all, but for some singular selected persons, whose iniquities he bare. 3. The fountain from which, or from whom this benefit flows to many: It is the Lord's righteous Servant, he shall justify many: where the effect is attributed alone to him. 4. The way how Christ justifies: It is not simply, by forgiving, (as he indeed hath power to forgive sins) but meritoriously, to wit, by his satisfying for them; therefore it is added, For he shall bear their iniquities; he shall take on their sins, and pay their debt:
Isaiah liii. 5, 6. 7. 8. 9, 10. 11.

Verses 11-15.

Verse 11.

Christ's righteousness, and takes hold of the benefit of Christ's purchase: Therefore it is added, Because he shall bear their iniquities, because by faith they take hold of his sufferings and satisfaction; whereby their sin is taken away, and God becomes well pleased with them for his sake. This then is a most material place of scripture, and we had need, in entering upon it, to have an eye to this righteous Servant, that he would be pleased to make the meaning of it known to us, and to give us the right understanding of this great mystery.

First, in general, observe here, in what estate men are naturally, and as abstracted from Christ: They are unjustified, and lying under God's curse, obnoxious to his wrath; this is supposed: Consider men then in their natural estate, this is it, they are even obnoxious to the wrath and curse of God, which is ready to seize upon them for their breach of God's covenant, and for provoking of him by sin; if men thought seriously on this, how could they sleep, or have peace, not knowing when they may be arrested, and put in prison, till they pay the uttermost farthing, which will never be?

O that ye knew and believed this, who are ready to defy any that will offer to charge you with one penny of debt, and who walk up and down without all fear of your hazard? Lay your natural estate to heart, and ye will have quite other thoughts of yourselves.

2dly, Observe the way how freedom from this debt of sin, and from liableness to the curse, is derived; and to this, many things concur, each of which hath its own place. 1. The Mediator and his satisfaction; this is the ground of the freedom. 2. The covenant of redemption, and the promise made to the Mediator in it, He shall see his seed, &c. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied: By his knowledge shall many be justified, &c., wherein it is articulated, that these for whom he suffered shall be pardoned and set free: And it is this that gives sinners access to expect the benefit of Christ's sufferings: otherwise, tho' Christ had suffered, they had not been the better of his sufferings, if this covenant had not been, which gives them warrant to lay hold on the same: ere faith can all on Christ's sufferings, it must have this ground laid down, That it hath a warrant by virtue of this covenant to lay hold on them. 3. The knowledge and offer of this mysterious contrivance of grace, is also necessary, and doth concur to bring about the freedom: This must be manifested, that there is such a Saviour, such a satisfaction, and such a covenant, wherein the
the ground is laid down, and a warrant given, by virtue of this covenant to make use of Christ's satisfaction, and to come by the benefit of it; this is implied in that word, His knowledge: So, Rom. x. it is said, How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? which says plainly, that there cannot be faith, except knowledge proceed. I observe this the rather, because many think to come to heaven without knowledge, and so continue still in their ignorance: But ere there can be found faith, there must necessarily be some measure of knowledge of these things that are necessary to be known; as that we are sinners, and that we are lost in ourselves, that Jesus Christ is the alone propitiation for sin, and that, according to the covenant of grace, they that believe on him shall be abounded and set free. 4. There is a concurring of faith, for taking hold of this benefit of offered salvation through Christ: How faith concurs with Christ's satisfaction, in order to the making of our peace with God, we shall not now speak particularly; only in general, it is by his knowledge that it justifies: For, tho' he have sufficient righteousness, and tho' the covenant give warrant to take hold of it, yet, if there be not an actual taking hold of it, it will not profit us; therefore, Rom. iii. 22. and ix. 30. it is called, The righteousness which is by faith in him; and Rom. iv. 5. the apostle faith, To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness. It is not faith without its Object Christ, nor the Object Christ without faith; but it is faith taking hold of him as its Object, by which we have access to plead for abolution: Without Christ, our faith will do us no good; and without faith, Christ will not profit us; for, without faith, we have no title to Christ: And each of these would be put in their own room and place; Christ in his room, and faith in its room, as the condition on which his purchase is made offer of to us.

More particularly let me, First, Consider the title that Christ gets in these words; he is called the Lord's Servant, and his righteous Servant. 1st, As for Servant, It looks to him as Mediator, as this whole Chapter, with Chapter xlii. i. and lii. 13. do abundantly clear: Christ Jesus then, as Mediator, is the Lord's Servant: or he, in performing the office of Mediator, is his Father's Servant; so the Lord calls him, Psal. lxxxix. 19. when he says, I have laid help upon One that is mighty, I have found David my Servant, &c.

For he is there speaking of Jesus Christ, with whom the covenant of grace, as with the Head of the confederated party, is principally made. It imports these Four, which may be as so many reasons of this designation. i. An humiliation, and inferiority in respect of God, as it is said, Phil. ii. He humbled himself, and became of no reputation. In which respect, he himself says, that the Father is greater than he; and that he is sent, that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. This holds forth a great wonder in the dispensation of grace, that the Father's Fellow and Equal, he that was Lord and Master of all, should become a Servant in the work of redemption, for the saving of souls: This must surely be a great work, wherein the Son becomes a Servant, as it must be a greater wonder, that grace so far descending, as to make him, who is the Prince of life, to become a Servant: And we would look at it as a much greater, and far more momentous businesse, than we use to do, to get a soul saved.

2. It imports his prerogative, as being singularly and eminently God's Servant; he is called, Heb. xiii. 20. The great Shepherd; so may he be called the great Steward and Deputy over all the Lord's house; So then, he is a singular, choice, and non-such Servant; Behold, says Jehovah, Isaiah xlii. 1. my Servant whom I uphold, mine Eleazar in whom my soul delighteth: Tho' all be God's servants, yet in this respect, he is singularly, and solely a Servant, as he is great Lord-deputy, made Head over all things to the Church, who was before all things, and is preferred to all things. This is very comfortable to believers, to consider, that tho' our Lord Jesus be a Servant, yet he is a choice and singular Servant, Administrator, and Steward for their good, it being for them that he becomes a Servant. 3. It imports the particular task or work that is laid on him, and the commission that he hath gotten to follow forth and prosecute that work; which is the main reason of this designation of a Servant, because he is intrusted with carrying on the great work of the redemption of elect sinners: Therefore he says, I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work; and, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; because he is particularly intrusted with the bringing about of that work. He hath gotten so many given him to redeem and save, to whom he appointed a Shepherd, a Head, and Overseer or Bishop? Therefore he calls himself the good Shepherd, and is called by the apostle, the Shepherd and Bishop (or Overseer) of souls: And of all
that are given him he loseth none, but maketh account of them all. And this is yet more comfortable, when we consider that Christ is not a Servant simply, but a Servant commissioneate to gather in souls, to bring home the lost sheep of the house of Israel; this is his office and service, even to satisfy for the sins of such, to destroy the power that the devil hath over them, and so subdue sin in them. 4. It imports this, that the work which he performs, in the redeeming of souls, is so acceptable to God, and doth so mightily concur and co-operate, to the promoting of his design, that the Lord owns every thing that he performs, as performed by his great Ambassador, and by him, who hath the trust of all the affairs of his house committed to him; so that our Lord Jesu, in performing the work of redemption, cannot but be acceptable to Jehovah, because it is a performing of that with which he hath intrusted him: Therefore, John iv. he says, that it is his meat to do his Father's will, and to finish his work; and to this purpose, he says to his suppos'd father, and to his mother, Luke ii. 49. Wilt ye not that I must be about my Father's business? It is his business, because it is so on the matter, it is so accounted of, and comes to be so in the end; and therefore in the 10th verse of this Chap. it is said, The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

2dly, As for being the Lord's righteous Servant; he is not only a Servant, but an excellent Servant; not righteous simply, as he is God only; nor righteous finely, as he is Man; but righteous, in the administration of his offices, and in the discharge of the great trust committed to him. Whence observe, 1. That our Lord Jesu, in performing the office and work of Mediation and redemption, is most truly and faithful. There is not any the least fault or failing in his performing of it: He is the Lord's Servant, that never wronged his Master, who never miscarried in his commission, nor mismanaged it in the least; faith be, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. If we look a little to the qualifications, that shine eminently in the administration of his office, they will make out this; for he administers them. 1. Wonderfully wisely. 2. Very tenderly. 3. Most diligently and effectually. 4. With all faithfulness: Thus both he intirely and holily, without the least touch of unrighteousness, perform all the trust committed to him, and that both towards God, and towards the sheep; so as he is eminently, by the Lord's own testimony, his righteous Servant, with whom he is well pleased, and cannot but be well pleased. It will not be needful to separate these qualifications of his service in the administration of his offices: In speaking to them, we shall only desire you to take notice of some few places of Scripture that hold them out, the first whereof is that, Isa. xl. It. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young: Never shepherd was so careful of his flock, for he feeds them, and in feeding them waits diligently on them, and takes them to these places where it is best for them to feed: He thinks fit now and then, it is true, that dogs be hounded at them, yet he is so warm to, and tender of them, that he gathers them with his arm, and he is so dexterous and skilful in conducting them, that he gently leads them that are with young; that is, such of them as are in pangs of the new-birth, he will by no means overdrive: To speak it with reverence, he is as a skilful midwife, to make those that are with child safely to bring forth; well then may he get this name, of the Lord's righteous Servant. The next place is, Isa. xlii. 1, 2, 3, 4. Behold my Servant whom I uphold; my Elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles: He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street: A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth, &c. Is there not here a wonderful commendation that the Father gives to the Son, and that the gracious Master gives to the righteous Servant in his offices? He is his elect choice Servant, in whom his soul delighteth; he does not cry, nor lift up his voice; he is busier about his work, than in making any din about it; there is no frowardness in his way, but he is tender of souls, that are like to a bruised reed, and smoking flax; he will not break the one, nor put out the other; where a soul is weak, or wounded, he will not break or bruise it, by a rough touch, or word; and where there are the least breathings of sincere desires after him, he will not quench, nor stifle them: And tho' the talk be great that he hath in hand, he fails not in going through with it; he fits not up, nor is he discouraged under it, notwithstanding of all the wrath he hath to meet with in his way: Therefore when the cup is put in his hand, at which his holy human nature some way shrank and scarred, yet he takes it pleasantly, saying, But for this cause came I unto this hour; and pro-
prosecuted his work courageously and constantly, till he bring forth judgment to victory, and till he gain his point: This shews him to be a most choice and faithful servant. A 3d place is I sa. lii.
13. Behold my Servant shall deal prudently, &c. It cannot be imagined, what a spiritual canny and dexterous way he hath in the saving of souls, and how wisely and prudently he pursues that work.

There is a 4th place, Psal. lxxxix. 19, 20. I have laid help upon One that is mighty, I have exalted One chosen out of the people, I have found David my Servant: The enemy shall not exact upon him, &c. He is so dexterous and powerful, that the devil shall gain no ground of him, but he shall gain ground of him, and defeat him; so that we come after only to gather the spoil. He is able to save to the uttermost (as it is, Heb. vii. 26.) all that come unto God through him; and near the close of that Chap. it is said, Such an high Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens. These are his qualifications, he is an holy and harmless high Priest, a sweet and (to say so) illes Mediator, by whom there was never any hurt; his ill was never heard of, in the place where he was: He was undefiled, pure and spotless, in the management of all the trust committed to him; there was never any thing done by him, of which it could be said, that it might have been done better: He is separate from sinners, and so another kind of high Priest than those who were before him; and all this, both as to God, so as he could say, and go to death with it, It is finished; and as to them that were intrusted to him, so as he could say, Of all that thou hast given me, I have left none; he makes a full and faithful account of all committed to him.

This is a plain, and yet a most useful truth: For use of it, behold here, and wonder at the way of grace, that not only gives a Mediator, but such a Mediator, who (as it is, Heb. iii.) is faithful over the house of God: This is the very life of our consolation, that we have an able Mediator, a good Shepherd, a wise, prudent tender One, and faithful; and indeed it would well become us to wonder more that the Lord in the way of his grace hath thus condescended; and it should exceedingly provoke us to be thankful on this account, that not only there is a way of grace, but such a way of grace found out and established, whereby we have such an high Priest, that manages all well, and so dexterously, O have ye ever suitably prized this, that God hath given such a righ-

Verse II.

teous and faithful Mediator and Servant! I fear many suffer this most observable dispensation to pass without due observation. Though the Lord Jehovah speaks not of him, without commending him; yet wretched and ungrateful we, can, alas! speak of him, and hear himspoken of, with hearts very little affected: Believers may be ashamed of this; we think lamentably little of him, we esteem not suitably of him; when we see him, there is scarce any form or beauty seen in him, wherefore we should desire him; we do in a great measure undervalue this way of grace's administration, that should be in a special manner ravishing to us, that we are thereby brought under such a tutory.

The 2d Use is for believers comfort and encouragement; O but they are happy, that have committed themselves to him, as to a faithful Shepherd and Overseer! They may be sure that he is a notable and non-such Overseer, as might be more fully cleared, if we would descend to the particulars of believers need: Have they little grace? is it scarce smoking? he is not a rigid task-master, like to the Egyptians, nay, nor like to the law, he quenches not the smoking flax. Are they staggering because of apprehended or real weakness, and their hearts shaking like the trees in the wood, or rather like so many straws? they may with comfort give him the oversight of them; he will not break the bruised reed, he will bear the heaviest end of his own yoke. Have they a flattening disposition? Are they like young-wanton lambs leaping out from the reft? He will gather them with his arm; and when he takes a rougher way, yet grace shines still in it. Are they fainting and swooning? he will take them into his bosom; he will lead the blind, he bears the weak, he hath a way of supporting his own that is most tender; My grace (says he to Paul) is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness. Are there any of them with child, (to speak so) or is their bringing forth quick and lively? He gently leads those that are with young, and will not suffer them to miscarry, in the bringing forth; he will not put new wine into old bottles, he will not cause to travel, and not make to bring forth: The Lord hath given believers such a Servant as they stood in need of, even a righteous Servant, suited every way to their condition, who will not be behind, nor wanting, in looking to the leaft wriggling (to speak so) under his care and over-sight.

It serves therefore, in the 3d place, to reprove the suspicions and jealousies that believers have oftentimes of Christ, who are disposed to say with the Psalmist,
If we had such thoughts of the salvation of our own souls, as the Lord had, and still hath, of the salvation of souls, we could not but be more seriously concerned about them, and more taken up, how to get them saved: This work of the salvation of sinners did before the world was (to speak so with reverence) take up the Persons of the glorious Godhead; and was singled out, and made choice of, as an employment worthy of the Son of God, who was chosen for this very work, that by him many might be justified and saved; for the accomplishment of which, he became a Servant: Must it not then be an excellent work, that none but he could be trusted with, who is Heir of all things, and by whom the world was made?

We shew you the meaning of these words the last day, and observed two things from this designation, that our Lord gets here. “1. That our Lord
SERM. LII.

"Lord Jesus, in the work of mediation, and of the redemption of sinners, was God's Servant." Not so much to denote his being inferior, as Mediator, to the Father; as to hold forth his being commissioned for this service, and the Lord accepting of him in it. "2. That our Lord Jesus did excellently discharge this trust committed to him." Therefore he is not only called a Servant, but my righteous Servant, as having most faithfully acquitted himself, and as being fully approved and accepted in the trust committed to him. When the Lord speaks so of Christ, it ought mightily to engage us to be much in love with God, who hath given such a faithful Mediator and Servant; and with Jesus Christ, that condescended to take the trust of poor sinners salvation, and that doth so kindly discharge it. There are some things here, that may be passingly hinted at, and then we shall come more closely and particularly to the words.

1. Observe, "That it is a privilege and prerogative to be God's Servant." Therefore it is mentioned here, as a piece of the Mediator's privilege: It is true he was singularly and eminently a Servant, even the Lord's choice Servant, in whom his soul delighted, and does delight, above what any other can be capable of; yet to be a servant to God, to take direction from him, to do his will, to seek his honour, to give obedience to him, in what he calleth for, is certainly a privilege, and a great one; yea, it is spoken of as a privilege of glorified saints in heaven, Rev. xxii.

2. "His servants shall serve him:" And if it be a privilege in heaven, we would think it so here on earth; and yet, if the language of our hearts were known, there would be found a secret disdaining of, and repining at service to God, and a saying on the matter, Let us break his bands afunder, and cast away his cords from us. But, know ye what ye are doing? even disclaiming and defiling that which is your great privilege: All these that are in heaven, and all those who are in a right frame on earth, count it their privilege to be his servants; and we are commanded to pray, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven:" or, Be thou served on earth, as thou art in heaven: Therefore it ought to be accounted of, as a privilege, as a great and glorious privilege, to be his servants.

3. Observe, "That the Lord can tell exactly and infallibly, how every servant carries himself;" who are ill and slothful, and who are good and faithful servants; who are righteous servants according to their measure, and who not." Will he take notice how Christ carries himself in his service and trust, and will he not take notice of others? Most certainly he will; and therefore, Mat. xxv. and Luke xix. he calls the servants to a reckoning, to whom the talents are given; and as they have made use of them, and improved them, or not, so doth he commend and reward them, or not: There are none of us, but have gotten some one talent and trust or another, and no doubt, there will be much to reckon for; I am afraid, that when he calls us all to an account, though there will be some to whom it will be said, Well done, good and faithful servant; there will be many to whom it will be said, Thou evil and slothful servant: And the slothful servant will be found to be the ill servant; and, amongst other aggravations of his guilt, this will be one, that he was unlike to Christ the righteous Servant.

4. Observe, "That the right improvement and discharge of the trust committed to us, and of our service to God, is a commendable and honourable thing." It is recorded here, to Christ's commendation, that he was a righteous Servant, even faithful over the house of God, in all things; and proportionably is the commendation of the ordinary under-servants, when they, in their places and stations, perform their service honestly and faithfully, so as they may be accepted of God on his account: The day is coming when every man's work will be rewarded; and as we sow, so we shall reap; in that day, if we had all the world, we would give it, to hear that word from Christ's mouth, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant;" but few will get that testimony. Ye think it much now, to get a name of fidelity amongst men, and to be esteemed such as keep your word, and will not break your promise, nor parcel, (and it's good in so far, that it be so) but many such will be found to have broken many a word to God, and falsified many a promise. Think upon it, and lay it to heart, that it will be better to have a word of testimony from God in that day, and to have it said to you by him, Faithful servant, thou improved well the little that I gave thee; it was laid out, and expended, not so much to buy and to put on brave clothes, nor to buy or build fine houses, as it was for me, and for my honour; whatever place, station, capacity or employment thou wast in, thou endeavoured to do good in it; and when thou couldst not do for my work, for my people, and for my honour, thou waft praying for them; and when thou hadst an opportunity to hear my word, thou didst not slight, nor let that slip.
This, I say, will be better than a great name and testimony from and amongst men; but alas, we fear that it shall be said of many, Ye had many opportunities of getting and doing good, but what use made ye of them? It had been better that ye had never had them, it had been better that ye had never had a groat or two pence, than to have had all these riches; and to have had none, rather than to have had such and such a lucrative or gainful place and employment, which ye improved not for God. It is a fore matter, that we should preach, and ye should hear these general truths of the gospel, from day to day, and that yet they do not sink into your hearts. Ye will not readily deny, that there is a day of reckoning coming, and that it will be a great favour to be commended of him in that day; and yet, how few do by their practice evidence, that they lay weight on it? It is very sad that religion should be so trifled in. Many of you will come to the church, and seem there, and in your other carriages, as if ye were going to heaven; when, in the mean time, ye have few serious thoughts, either of heaven or of hell: But in that day wherein ye shall stand trembling before his tribunal, and shall there receive the sentence of an evil and slothful-servant, ye will find to your cost, that there was weight in these truths, that now ye take but little notice of.

4. In general, Observe, "That it is singular, "proper and peculiar to our Lord Jesus, to be "God's approved Servant, so as to be without all "ground of challenge, in the discharge of his du-"uty and trust." And indeed there is no righteous servant, in this sense, but he only, who according to the very rigour of the law, was such; the law could not charge him with any the least violation of it, or want of conformity unto it, for "he ful-
"filled all righteousness." We spake to this on verse 9, and shall not now insist on it: Only it is a fore matter, that this truth should be called in question, and called an untruth in those days; and that men should say, that this designation and title is not proper to Christ, but that it is common to all true Christians, as if they were all free of sin; and that not by the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them, but by their own doing of righteousness: Lord have us! what a high injury is this to the Son of God? and what gross ignorance is here of the corruption of man's nature, which in the best and holiest of men, is never in this life finally expelled, as the scriptures of the Old and New Testament most convincingly clear! and what a wronging is this of the truth of God, which holds forth our Lord Jesus, as singled out to be, and who

Verse 11.

Serm. LI. is designed by this name, The Lord's righteous Servant! Now, if there were any more properly so called, we could not say that it were meant of him. But it is not very profitable to insist in speaking of these dotages and follies.

But to come more particularly to the benefits that flow from, and come by this righteous Servant, and from the service intrusted to him, and so faithfully managed and discharged by him: "By "his knowledge (faith Jehovah) shall he justify many; "that is, his service is to absolve sinners, and set them free from the guilt of sin, and from the curse that naturally they are under, and liable to.

Looking on these words in the connexion with the former, we shall observe three or four things, ere we come to the more close and particular consideration of the words in themselves.

The 1s of which is this, "That the justifying of many sinners, even of all the elect, is the speci-"fical trust committed by Jehovah, to the Mediа-"ator; It is in this especialy wherein his service "consists." Would ye then know, what is the em-"ployment of this righteous Servant? It is even this, "he shall justify many;" he shall procure their ab-
"solution from the guilt of sin, and from the curse of God, and shall set them free from the judgment which the law hath against them, whereby they are laid under the curse, for disobedience therein-
to: This we may consider, 1. As it relates to God; and so it imports, that the justification of sinners is very acceptable to him: For it is that for which he hath given a commission to the Mediator; and what he hath commissioned him in, the performance of it must needs be acceptable to him: Therefore, that which is here called the Lord's service, is called the Lord's pleasure, verse 10. to wit, to see a poor sinner brought in by the Mediator, and on the account of his satisfaction justified; he is pleased with, and takes it well. 2. It may be considered as it looks to the Mediator; and so it speaks out the Mediator's design and work: It is that wherein he is employed, and with which he is taken up, even to get elect sinners brought from under the curse of God, and freely justified through himself; So that, if ye would know what is the sum and effect of Christ's errand and work in the world, here it is, he came to save sinners, as it is, Tim. i. 15, He came to seek and to save that which was lost, to bring home the lost sheep on his shoulder, to seek and find the lost, and to reclaim prodigals, as it is, Luke xv. This is his meat and his drink, his work and business, as himself says, John iv. 34. "My meat is to do the "will of him that sent me, and to finish his work;" and
SERM. LI.  

and Luke ii. "Know ye not that I must be about "my Father's business?" which is to rescue poor 

sinners from the devil, and to engage them to God, 

that their sins may be pardoned. 3. It imports 

the Mediator's meetness for this service, that he is 

furnished, fitted and qualified for, as well as taken 

up with the justifying of sinners, and setting them 

free before the throne of God: He hath a full purse 

(to speak so) to pay their debt; therefore, Rev. iii. 

18. he bids sinners come and buy of him eye-falve, 

gold, and white raiment; he hath eye-salve for the 

blind, gold to enrich the poor, garments for the 

naked; and in a word, every thing that is needful 

for sinners. It is comfortable to hear that Christ is 

a Servant; but to hear that this is his service, to 

justify sinners, and that he is so well fitted for it, 

makes it so much the more comfortable: and were 

we suitably sensible of it, and did we thoroughly 

believe this truth, our hearts would laugh within 

us, as Abraham's once did, to know that this was 

given to Christ in commision to justify sinners, and 

that he is so well fitted for this business that he is 

commissioned about and employed in; especially 

now, when he is so busy about this work and em-

ployment, for tho' he be ascended on high, yet he 
hath received gifts for, and given them to men, 
even for the rebellious, that God the Lord might 
dwell among them; as it is, Psal. lxviii. compar-
ed with Eph. iv. This is the end of the ministry 

and ordinances, even to further this work of the 

justification of sinners, that by acknowledging and 
making use of Christ, this work may be brought 

about, and this effect made to follow: This is the 

end of facts and communions, even to arrest perishing 
sinners a while, to try and treat with him a-

bout the concerns of their souls; these are special 

reasons for putting him to exercise his office in ju-

stifying of them: And this day this scripture is ful-

filled in your ears, and ye should let it sink in your 

hearts, that our Lord Jesus is purifying his commis-
nion, and performing his service, keeping up the 
treaty, and inviting and per suading sinners to come 
to him, that the pleasure of the Lord may prosper 
in his hand. And therefore know assuredly, that 
this is it, that Christ is employed in, and taken up 
with, even to get sinners freed from the guilt of sin 
and from wrath by his righteousness; it is not only, 

nor mainly, to get them brought to the church, and 
to his supper, or to get them made formal, and to 
abstain from cursing, swearing and profanity, (tho' 
these will follow of will) but it is to get them 
brought in to himself, and justified. And we have 
these two words to say to you further in this mat-
ter, 1. There is here good ground of encourage-
ment to a poor soul, that would fain make use of 
Christ for pardon of sin: This is even it that Christ 
is intrusted with, it is for this end that he is legated 
and commissioned of the Father? and will he not, 
thinkst thou, do that which he is intrusted with, 
and for which he is mainly sent? "This is (faith 
he, John vi. 39.) the will of him that sent me, 
that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth, 
on him, should have everlasting life, and that I 
should raise him up at the last day;" which is 
in sum, "that by his knowledge many should be 
justified." And it is added, "For he shall 
bear their iniquities," to anticipate and anfwer 
an objection: For a sensible finner might say, How 
can I be justified, that have so many sins? here is 
a solution of that doubt, he "shall satisfy for them." 
All these words are (as it were) big with child of 
consolation, being the very heart and life of the 
gospel, as any thing that comes so near to Christ's 
commiffion, and unfolds so much of it, is. A 2d 
word is this, That ye mistake Christ's errand, work 
and service very far, who think to content him, and 
put him off with this; who would give him the 
name of a Saviour, and yet would be at the faving 
of yourselves without him; who would compli-
mint him (as it were) with fair generals, but will 
have none of his phyfick, or of his cures, nor will 
renounce your own righteousnefs, and make use of 
his, for your justification: this says one of thefe 
four, Either that he is not commissioned, and 
trusted for this end; or, that he is not meet for that 
truth; or that he is not faithful in it; or else, that 
ye can do your own turn without him, and that 
there is no need of his office: And which of all 
these can abide the trial before God? And yet it 
shall be upon one of thefe that ye shall be found to 
have caft at Christ, and to have refused to permit 
him, (so far as ye could hinder and obstruct,) to do 
is Father's business; and if ye adjuit not accompts 
with him, there will be a moft dreadful reckoning etwixt God and you.

2dy, Observe, That this particular truft anent 
the justifying of sinners, our Lord Jesus doth moft 
righteously, diligently, dexterously, tenderly and 
faithfully discharge. It was his Father's will, that 
he should be baptized, and fulfil all righteousnefs; 
and more especially that he should justify many: 
In this he is very fkillful and faithful, and it is on 
this account he is called the good Shepherd, and 
that he is said to lay down his life for his sheep: 
that he is called, a faithful high Priest, and is said 
to be One that is able to save to the uttermoft those 
that come unto God through him; and that he is 

R f

boly.
I tn h holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, fit to make peace between God and sinners; another sort of Priest than Aaron was, or any that were before him: He is, in a word, such an high Priest as became us, and as we stood in need of, who needed not to offer sacrifice for his own sins; he had no more to do, but to satisfy for us. The prophet Isaiah, chap. xl. 11, tells how tender he is in bringing fouls to heaven; He gathers the lambs with his arm, he carries them in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young; and chap. xlii. 3, that a bruised reed he will not break, and the smoking flax he will not quench: And it is said, 1 John ii. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; and who is he? Jesus Christ the righteous; righteous in the faithful managing of his trust, by making sinners peace with God. Would ye know then, in what respects, or on what account it is, that Christ is called a righteous Servant? We answer, In these respects, 1. Tho' we have failed and broken the law, yet he hath not; and God will not look down on him. 2. In this respect, that he pleads for no sinners pardon, but he can fully pay their debt, and hath done it: If he seek one thing from God, he yields in another, and according to the covenant of redemption exactly proceeds; for he is a propitiation: He seeks nothing but he pays for it, and wrongs not him in the leaf that hath trusted him; the Lord Jehovah is not a lofer, but hath his honour restored by him. 3. In respect of his keeping faith to the persons that have need of him, for whom he hath undertaken: He is not only faithful to the Master, but to the children and servants; he owns and acknowledges them, when they come to him under their necessities, and is forthcoming to them, every way suitable and answerable to his place and trust, in doing good to sinners.

Use. Had we sensible sinners to speak to, sinners groaning under a body of death, with prickled hearts crying out, What shall we do for the wrongs that we have done to God? Sinners under holy fear to spoil and mar the bargain, and to hazard their own souls; had we (I say) such sinners to speak to, there are good news here to them: The trust of saving souls is committed to a faithful Shepherd; it is not committed to yourselves, for so it had been a doleful trust; but it is committed to him, that hath gotten the sheep by name given to him, to be kept by him, and he will not suffer them to miscarry, nor to go quite wrong: And what more would ye have? A salvation and a price is much, but it is more to have a Saviour to make the application of his purchase, a Bishop of souls to justify and carry sinners.

Jer. i. 11. 

Verse 11. 

through, to make it sure before God, and to make it out: The sinner may sleep found, which in the sense of sin hath betaken himself to him, to be justified by his righteousness, and to be in his debt and common for obtaining of pardon, and for making the application of what by his sufferings he hath purchased. We can say but little to this purpose to you, who care not for your souls, and are not sensible of your sin; for he came to save sinners, and if any such do trust him with the salvation of their souls, he is faithful, and will not suffer them to perish.

3dly, From comparing these words, "By his knowledge he shall justify many," with the former, "He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied:" We observe, "That our Lord Jesus is never satisfied with sinners, nor content till he be employed by them in this piece of service, even to justify them by his knowledge, or by faith in him." He gets not satisfaction for the travel of his soul till this be, and this is it which satisfies him: He cares not for compliments, great professions of respect to religion, and Hophannah's, without this; he wept over Jerusalem, notwithstanding of these, because of the want of this: He cares not for Martha's cumber-some service, but is content of Mary's sitting down to hear and receive his word; if he get not this employment, no other thing will content him, as we may see in these three parables, Luke xv. when the lost sheep is amiss, he is not satisfied till it be brought home; the making the house clean will not please him, if the lost piece of money be not found; the finding whereof brings out that, Come and rejoice with me: And when the prodigal returns then, and not till then, are uttered these joyful words, "This my son was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found: Then comes the mirth, and all the mindstrels are yoked.

Would ye lay the hair of your head under Christ's feet, would ye give him thousands of rams, and rivers of oil, and the first-born of your bodies for the sin of your souls; all these will not please him, if ye get not yourselves to be justified by his knowledge; nothing will content and satisfy him but that: The reasons are, 1. Because he gets not his work, intrusted to him, carried on otherwise (if I may speak so) for as the Father delights to see the work which he hath truelled him with prospering, so doth he. 2. Because he gets not the native credit and honour of his office, till he get this, but counts himself to be like to an Ambassador, who comes to woo a wife for the King.
his Master, who is well treat and entertained, but gets a refuill of what he came for: It was the disciples commendation, John xvii. that they received his word; though all other things could be, if this be not, he never gets kindly respect.

3. Because, without this, folk can never love Christ; for it is this benefit of justification and pardon of sin, that much engages to love and praise him: Because (say and sing the redeemed, Rev. v. 9.) thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, thou art any thy: to receive all praise, dominion, power, and glory. It is impossible that they can suitably esteem of him, and love him, who are not justified by him; and therefore they that believe not on him to justification, are called defpisers of him, and treads of the blood of the covenant under foot; and they fall under that sad complaint which is made, John i. 11. He came to his own, and his own received him not; he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

There is then a necessity laid upon you, either to give him employment in this, or to lay under his displeasure, and to be made countable for standing in the way, so far as ye could, of his satisfaction. The Lord hath so moulded the way of his grace, that not only he doth invite and allure sinners but also he lays strong bonds on them for their good, and leaves it not indifferent to them, to make use of Christ, or not, for their justification; but they must either take this way, or have God and the Mediator to be their enemies, in the greatest measure, and in the highest degree: Choose you then, whether ye will satisfy Christ Jesus or not. How shall he be satisfied? will ye say: Even by your betaking of yourselves to him, and by improving his righteousness, for your peace with God, and for your justification before him; humbly pleading guilty at the bar of justice, and begging pardon and acceptance on the account of his satisfaction, and by faith extracting your discharge and abolution, that so the application of his purchase being obtained, the conscience may be quieted on that ground. And do ye think this a matter to cast out with Christ about, that he would have you justified, and that ye will not; that he would have you washen in his blood from your sins, and that ye had rather ly still in them? Think ye this reasonable? And yet thus it stands with you; and we declare it to you in his name, that Christ and ye shall never be friends, except on these terms, that ye take with your sins, and natural enmity against God, and welcome heartily the news of a Mediator, and embrace his righteousness, tramp-

ling your own under your feet, as to all expectation of justification by it: that in a word ye do by faith take hold of the offer of salvation through him in the gospel, resigning yourselves absolutely to him, and founding your humble plea before God thereupon. This is the shield of faith that quenches the fiery darts of the devil, and that which gives wings to the soul, to flee to heaven upon; and we wot well this is no unfriendly meffage nor evil bargain, and ye may have it of him: He is indeed a dexterous and skilful Handler of souls, that commit themselves unto him; why do you not then, in his own way, hazard your souls on him? Were sinners hazard known, and what solid confidence they may have, in putting their souls in Christ's hand, they would be thronging in upon him, to get hold laid on his offer, which is like a banner displayed, and spread out in this word of the gospel, to which every one may put his hand: This is the very sum of the gospel, to pray you to be reconciled to God, to admit of the Mediator, and to give him a commission (to speak so with reverence) or rather to intreat him to make your peace, that is, to give him the credit of saving you; that if justice were purifying you, ye might be found in him, not having your own righteousness, but his, and in him have one answer to all challenges; not thinking yourselves the less sicker and sure, that ye have given up with your own righteousness, and betaken yourselves to his. Who knows but souls might be getting good at such a time, if this were made use of, and believed? O so faithful as he is! he dare give his word and seal, that he will keep to you; and this is his end in word and sacrament, that sinners might be brought to trust in him, in giving him the employment to justify them; that they, being in themselves blind, may come to him for light; being poor, may come to him for gold to enrich them; being naked, may come to him for garments to clothe them; being ungodly, may come to him that he may justify them: But alas, people are for the most part fensless and regardless of their fin and mifery, and therefore he gets no employment from them: Many fit very brave and fine here, and have no legal bar on them to keep them from the communion, who yet have sleepy and sensless souls, and are ruining and destroying themselves; this we assure you is the condition of many of you, who never knew to make use of Christ, and of his righteousness, and yet will boast of your faith, and of your good heart to God. Away with your old presumptuous faith,
SERMON LII.

Isaiah liii. 11.—By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

There hath been much spoken from this sweet scripture of our Lord Jesus his sufferings, and somewhat also of the promises made to him, that his sufferings should not be for nought:

In these words, we have a compendious explication of the effects that flow from them, by which he shall be satisfied for them all; which ye may take up in these four, 1. The great benefit itself, that is holden out here, and that is justification. 2. Those to whom it shall come, it is many; so that his having a seed, spoken of, verse 10, is expounded here by this, that many shall be justified. 3. The way how this is derived to them, by his knowledge; which we shew, is to be underfoot of faith in him. 4. The ground from which this flows, and on which it is built, and that confirms it; For he shall bear their iniquities; and as it is in the following verse be bare the sins of many, and therefore they must be justified; it being but reason, that these many, whose iniquities he bears, and whose debt of sin he pays, should be justified.

We may speak more particularly to the explication of each of these, as we come to them. We shall then first expone and give the meaning of this word justification, or to justify, ere we come to the doctrine, because it will serve to clear it, and will make way for it, and so much the rather as it is the very hinge of the gospel, and that on which our salvation depends, tho’ yet but very little and very ill understood; there being many that cannot tell what it is, tho’ there be not many words more frequently mentioned in the scripture, and which it be that whereby a person is translated from the estate of enmity, into the state of friendship with God.

As for this word to justify, or justification, then, there are three senses given of it, two whereof are erroneous, and the last only is according to the mind of the Spirit of God speaking in the scripture, which we shall clear and confirm.

1st. Some take this word physically, as if it were to make just, by the instilling of habitual grace, or by a physical and real change; and, so taken, it is the same with that which we call sanctification: But in all the scripture, we know not one place, where needlessly the word is so to be understood; although this acceptance of the word, is the great rise of the Popish error, in that controversy concerning justification. 2dly, Others take it for God’s revealing, manifesting or declaring the way how a guilty person comes to be just: And so to justify, is for ministers to teach the way to people, how they may live holily; as it is said, Dan. xii. 3. They that turn many to righteousness, &c. By which sense, some wickedly and blasphemosly detract from Christ’s satisfaction, as if his justifying were no more, but a teaching of sinners the way how to be justified, to wit, by living holily and justly. But the word that follows in the text, For he shall bear their iniquities, cuts the throat of that exposition; for it is by Christ’s bearing of the punishment of the elects iniquities, and for paying of their debt, that they come to be justified; therefore the one is given for a reason of the other. 3dly, Considering the word according to the meaning of it in scripture, we take it for a legal, forensic, or court word, borrowed from mens courts, wherein a person arraigned for such a crime is either condemned or absolved; and when he is absolved, and declared to be acquitted or made free from that which is laid to his charge, he is said to be justified: So is it before God, and in his court; justification is the freeing of a sinner from the charge that the law giveth in against him, and the abfolving and declaring of him to be free from the guilt of sin; and from the punishment thereof, which by the sentence of the law is due to him. The former two senses run to the making of a man to be inherently holy, or without a fault; which is, as if a guilty man, or a criminal, being lifted before
Isaiah lii.

1 Before a civil court of judicature, were declared to be innocent: But this true meaning of the words
sets out a man arraigned before God’s tribunal, and charged with guilt, and found faulty, but absolved,
and acquitted, not because he wants sin, but because his debt is paid, and his sins satisfied for by a Cautioner.
Even as a man, that is called before a civil court for such a sum of money, and
is found liable to the debt; but his cautioner coming in, and paying the debt for him, there is both
in reason and law just ground why that man should be absolved, and declared free of the debt: So is
it here, Christ Jesus taking on and satisfying for the debt of the elect, and procuring absolution for
them for whom he hath paid the price; there is
reason and ground in law that they should be ju-
stitied and absolved. All these opinions agree in
these two. 1. That men naturally have sin, and
that they must count for it. 2. That this justifi-
cation, whatever it be, where it is, doth fully ab-
solve and acquit the sinner, and makes him free
of sin, as to the guilt, the punishment, and con-
sequences of it, death and the curse, as if he had never
had sin. But the difference lieth here, that
this left acceptance of the word, absolves a man,
that he have sin in himself, by the interposing of
a Surety and Cautioner, who pays his debt, and
procurers the sentence of absolution to him: And
in this sense, justification is, as if a man were standing
at the bar of God’s tribunal guilty, and having
a witness of his guilt in himself; and God, out of
respect to the Mediator his satisfaction, and pay-
ment of his debt, which he hath laid hold upon
by faith, does pronounce that sinful person to be
free, absolved, and acquitted from the guilt and
punishment of sin; and doth accordingly absolve
him upon that account. So then, justification
is not to be considered, as God’s creating and in-
suing of gracious habits in us, but the declaring of
of us to be free, and acquitted from the guilt of sin,
upon the account of Christ’s satisfying for our debt.

This we will find to be very clear, if we con-
der how the word is taken, both in the Old and
New testament, as namely, Isaiah v. 23. Wo un-
to them that justify the wicked for a reward, and
take away the righteousness of the righteous from
him; and Prov. xvii. 15. He that justifieth the
wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they
both are abomination to the Lord; where the plain
meaning of the word can be no other than this,
that when a judge pronounces a man to be just,
altho’ he be unjust, it is a wicked thing, which
the Lord abhors: And so, Psalm. li. 4. That thou

Verse ii. 11. mightest be justified when thou speakest, that is,
that thou mightest be declared to be so; and Matthew,
xi. 19. Wisdom is justified of her children. 2dly.
We will find this meaning of the word to be clear,
if we consider justification, as distinguished from
sanctification; for in that Popish sense, they are
both made one and the same: but they are distin-
guished in scripture; as, 1 Cor. vi. 11. Such were
some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sancti-
fied, but ye are justified; where he looks on these
two benefits of justification and sanctification as di-
fined, and distinguishing the one of them from the
other: Now, sanctification being the grace that re-
news our nature, and makes an inward spiritual
change, justification must needs be that act of God’s
grace, that takes away the guilt of sin, and makes
sinners to be friends with God, through Christ’s
righteousnes; and so it is a relative change of
their state. 3dly. It will be clear, if we consider
to what it is opposed in scripture: It is not oppo-
ed to sinning, as sanctification is; but to these
two, 1. To the charging of a sinner with somewhat
unto condemnation: And, 2. To the act of con-
demning. Now the opposite to condemnation is ab-
solement, as is clear, Rom. viii. 33. Who shall lay
any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God
that justifieth, who shall condemn? &c. God’s ju-
 stiflying is put in as opposite to the charging and
libelling of the elect, and to the condemning of
them, therefore none of these can be: And so ju-
stification there, looks both to the part of an Ad-
 vocate pleading and declaring a man to be free, and
to the part of a Judge pronouncing him to be ab-
soled and justified; which well agrees to our Lord
Jesus, who justifieth his people both ways. 4thly,
It may also be cleared from parallel scriptures, where
justifying is called reconciling; as 2 Cor. v. 18,
19, 20. God was in Christ reconciling the world
to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them,
and hath committed to us, &c. And how that comes
to pass, is told in the last verse. For he made him to
be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be
made the righteousness of God in him: So that to
be made the righteousness of God; is to be justifi-
ed; and to be justified, is to be made friends with,
or to be reconciled to God; and that by working
a moral change, but upon the account of Christ’s
satisfaction, bringing us into friendship with God.
So, Eph. i. 6. where to be justified, is expounded
to be made accepted in the Beloved: And what else is
that, but to be in good terms with God, to have
him passing by all quarrels, as having nothing to
say against us, but accepting us through Christ as
righteous
Isaiab lili.

righteous? So, Acts xiii. 38, 39. Be it known unto you, that through this Man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins; and by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. A place that clearly holds forth that as all the elect are naturally chargeable by the law, as been guilty of the breach thereof, and that they cannot be absolved from it by ought in themselves; so they are through faith in Jesus Christ freed from it; As if the Lord had said, Ye are freed from the sentence of the law, because through Christ is preached unto you remission of sins; and there is a way laid down for your abolution, who believe, from the guilt of sin, and from all the consequents of it. 5thly, It is clear from the text, because it is such a justifying, as hath in it Christ's being sentenced in our room, as the cause of it: Now, he was sentenced in our room, not by having sin infused in him, which were blasphemous to think, but by having our sin imputed to him; and therefore our justification must be our abolution, by having his righteousness imputed to us, as is clear throughout this chapter: Therefore it is said, He hath carried our sorrows, and born our griefs; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, by his stripes we are healed, he laid on him the iniquity of us all; and in these words, By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. It is a justification that comes to us by Christ's taking on our debt; and this we cannot imagine to be otherwise, but by a legal change, or by a change of law-rooms; he coming as Saviour in our room, and we having absolution by virtue of his satisfaction: So that the meaning of the words in short is, as if the prophet had said, Would ye know what ye have by Christ's sufferings? even this, to wit, that many, as many as whose iniquities he bore and satisfied for, shall be acquitted and absolved from the guilt and punishment of their sin, through his satisfaction; they shall be freed from the sentence and curse of the law, which they deserved; and shall be declared righteous, through the righteousness of their Saviour, which they have laid hold upon by faith.

Hence observe, "1. That all men and women, even all the elect themselves, are by nature liable "to an arraignment before the justice-seat of God." That they are justified, supposes a bringing of them, as it were, before his tribunal, ere they can be justified, and have the sentence of abolution past in their favours: The apostle takes this for granted, Rom. xiv. 10. We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; and Heb. ix. 27. It is ap-

Serm. LII.

Ver. 11. pointed for all men once to die, and after that comes "the judgment; there is a solemn decree past, that "as all men shall die, so every man shall be brought to a reckoning and judgment: And Acts xvii. 31. He hath appointed a day in which he shall judge the world in righteousness, &c. and that cannot be renversed: See 2 Cor. v. 10. For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; we must, there is an unavoidable necessity of it. For further clearing and confirming of this, ye would know, that there are three courts, that especially the hearers of the gospel are liable unto, which we would make ourselves for; they are all put together, Rom. ii. 12, 15, 16. Thereis, 1/3, The court of the word, wherein God keeps a justice-seat, or tribunal, condemning the wicked, and absolving the righteous; as Christ says, John. xii. The word which I speak shall judge you in the last day: And this is it that the apostle hath in that forecited place, Rom. ii. 12. As many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law. A 2d court is the court of the conscience; and this is more broad and extensive, reaching all men without, as well as within the church; wherein God hath his own way of libelling, and accusing of, and passing sentence upon sinners; as verle 14, 15. When the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not a law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another. A 3d court or judgment-seat, is that which is more discernable, distinct and terrible, and that is the judgment-seat of God, when he shall convene all and every one before himself immediately, and shall judge and pass sentence upon them; whether this be done to a particular person, or to the whole world, as verse 16. In that day, when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Usc. We would have you confirmed in the faith of this truth, that there are none of us, but we are liable to all these courts; and therefore ye would live so, as ye may be in a posture fit for this appearing: Many of us, alas! live as if we were never ro be called to an account, and as if there were no tribunal that we were to appear before.

2dly, Observe, "That all men and women, even "the elect themselves, are naturally, and as in them "felves, obnoxious to condemnation, and liable to "the sentence of it before God's tribunal." For Jesus Christ is justifying them, and procuring their
that their abhition, implies this much, that they, as considered in themselves, are liable to, and cannot receive another sentence than that of condemnation: It says, that not only they have sinned, but that, because of their sin, they are liable and obnoxious to condemnation; that for their sin God's curse is due to them, John iii. 18, 36. He that believeth not, is condemned already; and, He that believeth not, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him: The sentence is standing against him unappealed, even that sentence which we have, Gal. iii. 10. Curfed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. The sinner comes no sooner to look to the court of the word, nor to the court of his own conscience, but that sentence is laid before him; and when he comes before God, he can expect no other thing, the Lord proceeding according to the rule of the word: So, Rom. iii. 19. We know that whatever thing the law faith, it faith to them who are under the law, that every month may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God; which supposes a liableness to his curse, and a subjection to the judgment of God, as the word is rendered on the margin; there are none, as considered in their natural condition, who have a word to say against it. To clear it a little, ye would consider two things in the law, as it is a covenant of works, under which all men are by nature, 1. The directive, or commanding part of it, that carves out man's duty, and so is the rule of righteousnes to men and women; and what is not conform to the commands and directions of it, is sin, and hath a guilt with it: This is most certain, that the law, even as to believers, is a rule of righteousnes, according to which they are to walk. 2. There is in it the sentence of a curse, whereby the person that sins, is not only declared to be guilty, but liable to God's wrath and curse; this may be separated from the former: The law was, no doubt, a law of righteousness to man in his innocency, and is so to the believer still, who is absolved from the curse of it; but yet the believer, as considered in his natural condition, is not only guilty, but stated under the curse: And this is the meaning of the doctrine, that naturally not only are all men sinful, but they are stated under the curse of God; the law fayc on the matter, Man and woman, thou haft not abidden in what is written, and therefore thou muft die, thou art liable to the curse, which will light, if it be not prevented. If there were any need of reasons to prove this, they are not wanting: It is so, 1. That the Lord may humble all flesh, as the apostle says, Rom. iii. 19.
as it were, to have a ladder set up for you to ascend to heaven by, and that in such a way, as by Christ's becoming a curse! They will certainly never think much of the grace of God, and of the love of Christ, they will never think much of their own hazard, nor will they ever in earnest make use of Christ's righteousness, who have not some quick and lively impression and sense of this their condition by nature; and therefore, whenever ye go to read, to hear, to pray, to meditate, &c. take up yourselves, as naturally arrested before the court of God, and obnoxious to his wrath; this would lay your pride, and make Christ's offers in the gospel lovely to you.

Use 3. This shews, that thefe, who get any good of Christ, are much in Christ's debt and common, and have in themselves no caufe to boast of it. If this be true, even of the elect, that they are all once under the sentence of condemnation, else they could not be justified and absolved by Christ; ye that think yourselves to be something, what have ye to boast of? Who hath made you to differ? and what have ye, but what ye have received? It lets you well therefore to be humble, and to put a price upon Christ, as the apostle doth, on the fame consideration, Gal. ii. 20. when he says, Who loved me, and gave himself for me; that makes him relish sweetly to the believer; and this is the ground of his triumph, Rom. viii. 33, 34. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, &c. This way of justification makes Christ's death wondrous lovely, and it is on this that the song of the redeemed is founded, Rev. i. 5. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our fins 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; and of that new song, Rev. v. 9, 10. Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, &c. It is an evil token, when folks can talk at a high rate of their hope of being justified, when in the mean time they have so little estimation of Christ, and their hearts are so little warmed with love to him, who is so lovely to believers; and when they can so confidently make application of his purchase to themselves, and yet cannot tell when their heart was ever in the least measure ravished with the consideration of Christ's love, neither did it ever relish to them, nor were their hearts ever in the least engaged to him, on that consideration.

Use 4. All of you; who are lying in this natural condition, and know not what is your hazard, who are living in your profanity, or at best in your hypocrisy, civility, formality, not regenerate or born again, but have still the same faith and love that ye were born with, and no other, what is your posture? Ye are not in Christ, but lying naked, obnoxious to the wrath and curse of God, condemned already; and what if your breath go out in this doleful condition? what if a palsy or appleyx overtake you suddenly? what if a stone fall upon you, ere ye go home out of this place? There is even but that much betwixt you and hell; ye are liable to be arrested before the court of God's justice, and how will it be with you when ye come there, and when it shall be said, that such a person hath broken the law, and therefore God's curse is due to him, and therefore, Away with him? For he judgeth according to men's works. Are there none of you afraid of this? do ye believe it to be a truth? O that ye did, who are lying contentedly and secure in your natural condition, and it does not trouble you? Will you yet lie still contentedly in this dreadful state? Is it possible that ye can be well in this condition, though ye would heap up riches as the sand? Ye cannot look into the Bible, nor into your own heart, but it curseth you; ye cannot look to the bar of God's justice, but the sentence meets you, Depart from me, ye cursed. This is the truth of God, and if ye think there be any here lying still in black nature, (and we are not, sure, all renewed) think then upon your own; that ye faw your posture! The hand-writing coming forth on the wall did not so affright Belthefazar, as the curse would affright you, if it were believed. And, 2dly, If this be your natural condition, and if ye believe it to be truly so, we would expostulate with you, and even wonder, 1. How comes it to pass, that so many of you lie still in your natural condition, and endeavour not a change of your state? It will be wondered at by angels, and by all the elect, yea, and even by the reprobate that never heard of Christ, that so many hear the gospel, and had the offer of Christ, and yet did not stir up themselves to make use of him. Is it not a wonder that folk can sleep secure under the curse of God, and bless themselves, till their iniquities be found to be hateful? To be in this condition, and to sleep quietly under it, will have a doleful waking. 2. How is it that so few take pains to try how it is with them? If any of you were lying under the decreet of an hundred pound Scots, ye would not be so secure, till ye knew that ye were freed of it: And if it be true, that this
The way of ab solv ing a guilty sin ner, in the justice of God, is the great sum and scope of all the gospel; even to shew how a lost sinner, obnoxious to the sentence of a trans gress law, may, without prejudice to the justice of God, come to be justified: We are per suaded, that there is nothing of greater concern ment to sinners; and if we knew our debt, and our hazard, we would think, that there is nothing of greater concern ment to us in particular. The sum of the covenant of redemption runs on this, and it is the great thing aimed at in all this chapter, wherein the prophet lets us see, i. What is the great thing that satisfies justice; and, for this end, much hath been spoken of Christ's sufferings and soul-travel. 2. He lets us see, what is the benefit that comes to us by Christ's sufferings, and that is justification, or absolution from the guilt of sin, and from the curse which it deserves. 3. He lets us see the way how this benefit is derived, and it is by his knowledge: This, faith he, shall be the great result of Christ's sufferings, Many shall be justified; and this shall be the way how it shall be derived to these men, and that is, by his knowledge, or by faith in him, resting on his righteousness and satisfaction.

We opened up the meaning of the words the last day, and pointed at two Doctrines from them, 1. “That all men and women have a judgment to abide before God, an arraignment and indiction there, to which they must answer.” They must all come to get a sentence from God. 2. “That all men naturally are liable to the sentence of condemnation. This is supposed here; for, in as far as sinners are only by faith in Christ justified, in as far the sentence of the law, and of the covenant of works, is standing against them, and over their heads, who are not by faith united to Christ Jesus, and justified by his righteousness.
The 3d Doctrine (which is almost the very words of the text) that now we intend to speak to, is this, "That tho' all men naturally be obnoxious to the sentence of the law, and to the curse of God;" yet there is a way laid down, how a sinner, so obnoxious, may be justified, and freed from that sentence, and this is by faith in Jesus Christ "only." If any doctrine be of concernment for us to know, and to be well, and experimentally acquainted with, this is of concernment to us; By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many. There are three things in this doctrine implied, which by one and the same labour will be proven; and therefore we shall put them together. 1. That altho' all men be naturally obnoxious to the wrath and curse of God, yet he hath appointed a way how guilty sinners may be justified and absoved. 2. That the way of attaining to this benefit of justification, and freedom from the curse, is by faith in Christ's righteousness; it is by his knowledge, faith the text. 3. That there is no other way by which a sinner, obnoxious to the curse, can be justified, but by faith in Christ's righteousness allenearly: This last branch of the doctrine says not only, that there is no other mean to satisfy justice, but Christ's merit and satisfaction; but that there is no other way, but the way of faith, to win to the application of his satisfaction: Whereby many questions may be answered, and many errors in doctrine and practice confuted; but our present purpose is to shew, how a guilty sinner may be justified.

And therefore we shall, 1. Give you a general view of the truth of the doctrine, by confirming it from scripture, in all the parts of it. 2. We shall speak more particularly to the several branches of it. And, 3. To the way of attaining justification, in the several caues of it, as it is here holden forth.

For confirmation of the general doctrine, ye shall, 1. Look upon some scriptures, and, 2. To some grounds of reason.

As for the confirmation of it by scripture, if we look through the gospel, it is our Lord Jesus Christ his own doctrine which he preached, and the way which he laid down therein, for justifying and saving a sinner; so, John iii. where it is three or four times repeated, as, ver. 16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have eternal life: ver. 18. He that believeth on him, is not condemned, but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God: ver. 36. He that believes on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him; and, ver. 14. 15. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have eternal life: And that is all one as to say, He that believes shall be justified; Mark xvi. 16. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. These are the terms on which the apostles are by Christ warranted to preach the gospel, and to make the offer of life to every creature; and therefore, if we look forward to their preaching, we will find it to run in the same strain, as Acts xiii. 38, 39. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man. is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and that by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses: Where, while Paul is summing up the whole message that he had to deliver, he goes upon the same ground; and wherein we have these three clearly holden forth, 1. That all men are liable, as in their natural estate, to God's curse, and by the law cannot be justified. 2. That there is a way laid down, thro' Jesus Christ, to come by justifiction and remission of sins. 3. That the way, how sinners come by this, is faith in Christ; All that believe are justified: Look to the Epistles, especially these written to the Romans and Galatians, where this question about justification is expressly and of purpose handled, and we will find, that it is the sum of both; as Rom. iii. where, having said, ver. 23. That all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, and so, that all are liable to God's judgment, he subjoins, ver. 24. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; where is the great mean of our justification: And then he adds, ver. 25. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood; where we have the mean of application, to wit, faith: And chap. iv. 5. To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness; which place demonstrates this, That an ungodly person, taking hold by faith of Christ's righteousness, may be, and is justified and absoved, and freed from the guilt of sin, as if he had never sinned: So, Gal. ii. 15, 16. We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, or not without the covenant, as they are, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed.
For further confirmation of the doctrine, ye would consider these four grounds, and ye will see from them good reason for it: Only remember this, that justification looks always to a judicial procedure, (as we hinted before) wherein the Lord is (as it were) on the throne, and the guilty sinner at the bar, pleading through Christ's righteousness and satisfaction to be absolved; which is even as if a debtor, arrested for debt, should plead for a libration, not because he is not owing the debt, neither because he hath paid the debt, but because his Cautioner hath paid it for him: This being suppos'd and remembred, ye would (we say) consider these grounds or reasons for confirming the doctrine; 1. The sufferings that Christ hath endured, and the satisfaction that he hath made, in the room of sinners, as the next words hold out, for he shall bear their iniquities; and ver. ult. He bare the sins of many: Nay, this is the great scope of the chapter; therefore we said, that he hath born our griefs, and carried our forrow's, and that the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all; this makes a ground of confirmation. 2. Consider, how that there is not only a sufficient price paid, but there is a covenant of redemption warranting him to pay it, and accepting it off his hand, as complete payment and satisfaction for the elect's debt: And except there be a look had to this covenant, faith hath not a sufficient ground to rest on for justification through Jesus his satisfaction, because otherwise, we see not a reason why his sufferings can be accepted for us; for suppose (if such a supposition may warrantably be made) Christ to have suffered, yet it was free for God to have accepted that as a satisfaction for our debt, or not: But the consideration of the covenant of redemption removes that doubt, and gives faith a ground to lay hold on Christ's sufferings, as satisfactory to the justice of God; because in the covenant of redemption, it is so transacted and agreed upon betwixt God and the Mediator; therefore the apostle, speaking, Heb. x. 8, 9. and forward, from Psal. xi. of this covenant, these, that when sacrifices and offerings will not do the turn, Christ comes in, saying, Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God: By which will (faith the apostle) we are sanctified: And had there not been such a will, his sufferings had not been useful to us. 3. Consider the offer that is made in the gospel to sinners, which is the object of our faith: For the covenant of redemption is not the ground and object of our faith; tho' it clears the ground and reason of our faith; but it is God's offer in the gospel, according to that place, Mark xvi. 15, 16. Go ye and preach the gospel to every creature; be that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: He warrants them to go and make it known to all to whom they shall preach, that there is remission of sins to be had through faith in Christ; and this is a ground to faith, when God makes offer of Christ's satisfaction in the gospel, on condition that we believe, and accept of him; when we by faith close with the offer, it gives us, as it were, an allsignment to Christ's purchase: The gospel says, as Paul doth, Acts xiii. 38. “Be it known to you, that through this Man is preached to you remission of sins, and by him all that believe are justified;” and faith confents to that, as giving God credit, and accordingly closes with, and rests upon it, as the ground of its plea before God: So that when the question comes to be asked, What have ye to answer the law, and to pay your debt with? Faith, or the believing sinner, answers, I have nothing of my own, but there is a satisfaction in Christ, according to the covenant of redemption, which is holden out and made offer of to me in the gospel, and is given and allowed to me, for defence against what the law or justice can say; and I betake me to that: And this is the native and kindly act of faith in justification, when it makes use of this defence, and trusts to it alone. This is even it that Paul hath, Phil. iii. 9. compared with ver. 8. I count all things loss, that I may win Christ, and be found in him; that when it shall be asked, Paul, where art thou? I may have it to say, I am here, Lord, even in Christ, and in his righteousness: This is the ground of his plea, having given up with his own righteousness as to his justification before God, and he will have no other defence but that. 4. Consider the end of all these, to wit, of Christ's sufferings, of the covenant of redemption, and of the offer of the gospel; it is the praise of the glory.
of his grace, that God may make it known, that he is gracious, and freely gracious, without respect to any thing in the sinner: This end is not only set out in these two places put together, one is, Rom. iii. 10. To declare, I say, his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus; that he might be just, that is, one that will fulfill his threatenings, and therefore he hath provided one to satisfy his justice, and one that is faithful in keeping his promises, and therefore he is the justifier of them that believe in Jesus: The other place is, Eph. i. 6. where, when the apostle hath spoken of election, predestination, and adoption, he sets down the end of all, to wit, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved: And this is a ground that makes all sure; for God cannot fail to justify the sinner that believeth in Christ as he is offered in the gospel, because that is the very end of his justifying sinners, the praise of the glory of grace, which he will not miss, but must certainly and infallibly come by.

The Uses are four in general. The 1st whereof is for information, and it is such a lesson of information, as, without it, all the preaching of the gospel is to no purpose; and the hope of eternal life were utterly desperate, if such a doctrine were not in the gospel, that through faith in Christ a sinner may be justified. Would any know then how they may be absolved? This answers the question, and tells us that it is through faith in Christ's righteousness, and no other way: And if we digestedly believed the former two doctrines, 1. That we must all come before the tribunal of God; And, 2. That we are all obnoxious to the curse of God; we would think this were a very concerning question to be put, How such a guilty sinner may be absolved and justified? And indeed, if we be not clear in this point, it is, as to any fruit, in vain for us to preach, and for you to hear, or to think of coming to heaven; which is in a word, That a sinner, through relying on Christ's righteousness, according to the covenant of grace, may come to be absolved, and freed from the guilt of sin, and from the curse, as if he had never sinned, nor been liable to that curse.

For further clearing of this Use, Consider, 1. What justification is. 2. What we mean by faith. And, 3. What are the causes of this justification spoken of in the text. 1st, By justification, in this place, is not to be understood the making of a person perfectly holy, nor to have grace infused into him, for that is sanctification; but it is to be absolved, and declared free, in respect of the guilt of sin, and of the curse, as if a man had never sinned; as it is said, Eph. ii. 16. Wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved: It is an act of God's free grace, whereby our sins are pardoned, and we accepted as righteous in his sight, &c. (as our Catechism hath it) as if our sin had never been. 2dly, When we speak of faith, we mean not a general historical faith, that devils, or reprobate men may have, and whereby an affent of the judgment is given to the truths of the word, tho' indeed justifying faith doth presuppose that; neither by faith do we mean such a faith whereby a man doth at the very first believe that he is pardoned, and which puts away all doubting, and lifts him in his own conceit to the height of assurance about the obtaining of the thing; it is the Antinomian presumption, to believe at first hand, that I am justified and pardoned: But it is such a faith, that takes hold of Christ's righteousness, made offer of in the gospel, that I may obtain justification and pardon of sin through him; according as it is said, Gal. ii. 16. We believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ: It is an actual closing with the offer of Christ's righteousness, and a submitting to the terms of it, for justification: the soul's founding of all its defence before God, on Christ's righteousness, and purchase offered to it in the gospel, and resting on it for life and salvation: As, suppose there were a multitude of rebels, to whom pardon were by proclamation offered, on condition that at such a time they should lay down their arms, and come in; and if one of them were challenged, and called to a reckoning, after his coming in, for his rebellion; the ground of his plea would not be, that he never was out in rebellion, but that such an offer was made, and that he did hazard his life on it: So it is here, a sinner is a rebel against God by nature, and being in rebellion, hath the offer of pardon and life made to him, on condition that he close by faith with Christ's righteousness, and the sinner doth by faith give God credit, and hazards his soul on that; whereas unbelief (to follow the similitude) is, as if a rebel, hearing of such a pardon offered, would not think that a sure way to come off, but would either plead innocent, or take him to some other shift: This then is the faith that I mean of, which actually closes with, and makes use of God's offer of Christ's righteousness for abolition. 3dly, Consider the causes of justification: and there are three in the words. 1. The meritorious cause, that he hath procured and bought this benefit, is Christ's satisfaction, his bearing of our iniquities; he shall justify many, for he shall bear their.
their iniquities. 2. The instrumental cause, condition, or mean, or way, how that benefit is derived to us, is faith, called here his knowledge; it is the true faith we spoke of just now: faith taking hold of such a promise, and resting on God's faithfulness for the making out of it; it is this which gives the soul a title to Christ's righteousness, which formerly it had not, and makes Christ's purchase of due to belong to it, by virtue of God's offer; and consequent the benefit of justification is derived to it, by its taking hold of the offer, which otherwise it could not partake of. 3. The formal cause, wherein justification properly consists, is this, even God's absoving or judicial pronouncing of the sinner to be free, and his accounting of him as righteous, on account of Christ's righteousness imputed to him, and taken hold of by his faith. Where the sentence is past, we need not curiously enquire: It is like, as the sentence of condemnation stands in the word, while the sinner is in unbelief; so by believing in Christ, he hath absolution in the word, as John iii. 18. He that believeth in him, is not condemned; and this sentence of the word is as effectual for absoving of the sinner, as if the sentence were pronounced in an immediate way, or with an audible voice from heaven, by God, with the sinner's name, and fir-name in it: And therefore let me commend this, with the other places I named before to you, that from them ye may learn to take up the way, how a sinner is absolved and justified; it is Christ's satisfaction that makes the amends, and is the meritorious cause; it is God's word that makes the offer of that satisfaction; and it is our faith, begotten and quickned by God's Spirit, that taketh hold of it; and justification itself is God's absoving, and accepting of the person, as righteous in his sight, who is fled to Christ's righteousness. And thus, though God's grace and mercy be the efficient cause that admits of the ransom, yet neither is grace in us the formal cause, nor is grace in God the meritorious cause, but it is that which lays down the way, how a satisfaction shall be provided, and accepts of it when provided, and of the sinner on account of it, when by faith he betakes himself to it.

Use 2d. Seeing there is such a way of justification provided, and by the gospel brought to light, revealed and made manifest, as the words, Rom. 1. 17. and iii. 21. Since, I say, that mystery, which before was hid, is disclosed, and life and immortality brought to light by the gospel; let me earnestly intreat you, that ye would make use of this mean and way of justification, for the obtaining of absolution before God: The end of preaching (as we said) is to reveal this righteousness; and the end of the revealing of it is, to engage sinners to make use of it; of which thou we should preach to you from the one end of the year to the other, if ye do not betake yourselves to it, so as to clothe with it, and heartily to submit unto it, it will all be to no purpose.

For pressing of this Use a little further, consider the great concern and moment of this application, and what may induce you, seriously to mind it: And, to this purpose, 1. I would pofe and put you to it, if ye believe that by nature ye are liable to God's curse, and that ye must compass before his judgment-feat; and if ye be found in nature when you compare, that will be a woful and dreadful sentence, that ye will meet with from God: And if withal ye believe this, that by justification, ye may have sin pardoned, be reconciled to God, and have the curse removed from you, and be put in such a state as if ye had never sinned: If, I say, ye believe these things to be the truths of God, is not this of your concernment, whether ye be made friends with God, and have your sins pardoned, or not; whether ye shall be eternally happy, or eternally miserable; whether ye shall get God's blessing, or ly ever under his curse: If this, I say, be of your concernment, then surely obedience to this exhortation, is of your concernment, because there is no other way to win to absolution but this. 2. Consider, that it is the very design of the gospel, and of this benefit that is made offer of to you therein, which all the nations that have not the gospel want, the privilege being denied to them: God makes offer of a way to you, how ye may be justified; and ye profess your desire to learn it; and to get it practically made use of, and improved, and (as Paul hath it, Philip. iii. 8, 9, 10.) that ye may know Christ; that ye may win him, and be found in him; and it is the sum of the gospel, as we have it, Acts. xiii. 38. Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that thro' this Man is preached unto you remission of sins, and by him all that believe are justified: This is even the time that the Lord is making this proclamation, that was before prophets of, and published by Isaiah, By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; this is it that is even now revealed, declared, and made manifest to you, that by Christ Jesus alone righteousness is to be attained: And if it be of such concernment, that, for this very
I shall here speak a little to some sorts of people, that ought mainly to lay this to heart. 1/6. To some that are so utterly careless and indifferent in making their peace with God; that to this day all warnings, threatenings, and dispensations that they have met with, could never prevail with them, once to make them that far serious, as to ask that question, What they should do to be saved? to whom much preaching is but a beating in the air, to whom such preaching is fruitless, and Christ useless, it is of these that he speaks, Mat. xxii. who being invited to the wedding, They made light of it, and went away, one to his farm another to his merchandise: There is a generation of such persons amongst us to this day, who never thought seriously of the gospel, nor of this doctrine, which is the substance and life of the gospel, and without which we can enjoy no mercy nor benefit holden forth and made offer in the word; but slight pardon of sin, and think little of justification who will, the day is coming, when it will be much thought of, and when many of you, if God prevent not, would give all the world for an offer of it, and would be glad to be burnt with the world, or covered with, and smothered under a hill or mountain, rather than to come and receive your fearful doom and sentence from the Judge, because ye had this favour in your offer, and made not use of it. A 2d sort are a prophane company, who if their carriage be looked on, it says plainly, nay it openly proclaims, that such men believe not that there is a judgment coming; otherwise they durst not for a world live as they do: Is this, think ye, the way to be justified, to be laughing, sporting, gaming, tippling, and trifling away your time, in spending it in decking and dressing of your bodies, in bestowing of more time in one day on the body, than ye do in eight, or many more days on the soul; to be glutting in the world, to be following the desires of your hearts, and the sight of your eyes? Prophane as ye are, think upon it, for we declare even unto you, that there is a way how the ungodly may be justified, held forth, and offered in this gospel; and if ye contemn it, God shall vindicate his grace, and your trampling on it shall return on your own head. A 3d sort are such as have never taken with their sin, nor with the feud betwixt God and them: We invite the filthy to come and wash, sinners to come and get pardon; the ungodly to come and be justified; but alas! we cannot get sinners that walk under the due sense of their sin to preach to; I dare say, that to many of you,
the doctrine of justification is in some respect needless; I am sure for the time useless; for ye were never convinced of your sin, nor of your hazard, but thought that ye were always sure of your justification; you never evened yourselves (to speak so) to hell; God always, ye think, loved you; and perish who will, ye will not perish: These, and such as these, have been your thoughts of yourselves, and of your state; and we have more difficulty to get you prevailed with, to think seriously of making your peace with God, than we would readily have in this to prevail with Pagans, or with adulterers and murderers, whose natural conscience would sooner be awakened than yours. Justification is not a serious matter to many of you, ye think to skip thro' God's judgment: if ye be asked, Whether or no ye be abolished? Yes, that we are, will ye say, long since: But ah! how came ye to be abolished? was ye ever chaced, and did ye ever flee for refuge to the hope set before you? was ye ever pursu'd by the law to Christ? and were ye ever made cordially to clofe with him, and to found your plea on his righteousness? It will be strange, if so many shall slip into heaven, and never know how: We grant, there may be some brought in, who have not distinctly discerned the manner how; but that almost whole congregations, and country-sides should be made friends with God, and never know, or at least never kindly take with the feud, we profess, we see not through it, it is to us an unintelligible riddle and a paradox: therefore be intreated to reckon over again; tho' there be a justification, thro' the blood of Christ to be gotten, yet assure yourselves that ye are not in the way to it, while ye continue sinners of your sin and of your hazard. A 4th, fort are these, who think that they have nothing to do with this doctrine; they are rich, they are wise, they are of honest rank, and have a name and commendation in the place where they live, and they have, may be, some schoolcraft, and learning, and therefore they are persuaded that they cannot mis justify; and where is there one person amongst many, if it be not some poor body, even it may be poor in the world, that ever thinks that the severity of the law, or the threatenings thereof, concern them? But, are there any more ways to heaven, but one? or is there one for the rich, and another for the poor? do not all come in at this door? is not this the way, even to take with your sin, and to flee to Christ for life? And yet, are there not some amongst you, that cannot endure to think of hell, to dread it, or (as we use to speak) to even yourselves to it? because ye are thought something of, able to do your turn, and have some parts, and abilities: But there are many more rich, more wise and learned folk than you are in hell, that were never absoved before God, nor never shall; yet there is a propensity in great men, in rich men, and in men of parts, to flight this doctrine: But such have in some respect more need to give all diligence to make your calling and election sure, than many others, and yet ye go not so far as they do, who yet go not the just length. A 5th fort, are such as never knew any inward work, or exercise of the Spirit of God upon their consciences, but have lived with a fort of wholesomeness of heart all their days: If any be called to take notice of this doctrine, they are called to take notice of it: There is a generation, faith Solomon, Prov. xxxi. 12. which are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness; they conclude they are abolished, but never look inward, to see if there be ground to bear that conclusion. 6thly, There are a fort that are formal, and hypocritical; they were never grossly prophane but they were as little truly and seriously religious: Ye had need, therefore, to take heed whereon ye found your peace, and beware that ye take not the form of godliness for the power of it, especially when the form is come to so great a height. And seeing this way of justification is holden out to you through Christ, we exhort and beseech you all, and especially those of such sorts as we have named, to look well that this grace be not received in vain. In a word, these two forts should take special heed to this doctrine. 1. Some that mind not religion at all. 2. Others, who, if they mind it, mind it not in the way of grace, but as it were by the works of the law: We declare to you, that justification is by faith in Jesus Christ, and by resting on his righteousness; as many as take that way, they may be assured to come speed; and they that milk, and slight that way, shall never win to heaven; for there is no other name given, whereby a sinner can be saved, but the name of Jesus only; he is the way, the truth, and the life, and no man cometh to the Father but by him.
SERMON LIV.

Isaiah liii. 11.—By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many.

Here is (as I said lately) nothing of greater concernment to a sinner to know, than these two, 1. What it is that satisfies justice, and makes a sinner acceptable before God? 2. To know how that may be attained, or what way it is to be applied? And this verse, shortly, but very clearly, answers both. If, That which satisfies justice, is the travail of Christ's soul, or his sufferings. 2. The way how this is applied, derived, or communicate, is set down in the latter part of the verse, By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. This is the effect of Christ's sufferings, that many by them shall be absolved from the guilt of sin, and from the curse; and this is the way how these many come to be thus absolved, it is by believing on him; for thus his satisfaction is accounted theirs, as if they themselves had satisfied. We proposed, the last day, this doctrine to be spoken to from the words, "That there is a way through faith in Christ, "and resting on his sufferings, by which a sinner, "obnoxious to God's curse, may attain to be jus- "tified, and declared free before the throne of "God." This doctrine implies these two things in general, 1. That there is such a thing possibly attainable by a guilty sinner, as justification. 2. That justification is to be attained allenarrowly by faith in Jesus Christ, resting on his righteousness; By his knowledge shall be justified many. As there is a necessity to be absolved, so there is a necessity to take this way for absolution; because this, and this only, is holden out to be the way by which justification is attained: It is by Christ's knowledge, which in short is by faith in him.

We discoursed somewhat of the positive part of this truth the other day, which is of great concernment; the understanding thereof being the very hinge of the gospel, and that wherein, in a special manner, the gospel and covenant of grace differs from the law and covenant of works; and pointing out a way for coming by righteousness and life through Christ, in opposition to the law as a covenant of works, that holds out a way to righteousness and life through our own performances.

We touched also at some uses of the doctrine, for directing of you to the believing use-making of Christ, for coming at peace with God; it would follow now, that we should speak a little to that use of refutation, that flows natively from this doctrine: For if this be the way, and the only way of the justification of a sinner before God, to wit, by or thro' faith in Christ's righteousness; then all these ways that lead not sinners to resting on Christ's righteousness alone for justification and peace, must be inconsistent with the gospel, and so to be rejected and abhorred, whether they be in doctrine or in practice: And we choose the rather to speak a word to this, because it will clear the doctrine of justification by faith the more, when we come to see and consider these corruptions and errors that are foisted in by heterodox men, in this great truth of God, to the preventing and corrupting thereof; and it will the more provoke us to thankfulness to God, who hath graciously delivered us from these snares, errors and corruptions; an error and mistake here, about the substance of this truth, being fuch, as, though we held all other truths incorrupt, will ruin us.

There are, we suppose, four sorts of errors especially, that contradict this grand truth, anent justification by faith in Christ's righteousness, to which we shall speak a little. The 1st is that old rooted error of Papists, who, in this point, enervate and overturn the whole way of the gospel: And because this is it that a great part of the Christian world hath been deluded with, though it be in those days little thought of by many, and because it is not one single error, but as it were a chain of very momentous and fundamental errors; we shall inflict a little, in laying it out before you: and ye would not so much look on it, as a controversial, or meerly speculative, as a grossly practical error, and such as is naturally rooted in all men; ye would also look upon it, with holy fear and jealousy over yourselves, lest inadvertently ye slide into it; and withal, ye would look on it, and make use of it, as a motive, to provoke you to love the truth more, and to be, as I said, the more thankful to God, who hath freed you from that dark, heavy and comfortless way of justification by works, which is now impossible.

It may be that this error of Papists will not be thought much of by some, when they hear that they speak of justification by Christ, and by
Ser. LIV. Isaiah lili. Verte II.

his merits, and by faith, as well as we Protestants do; but it is the more dangerous that they do so: and therefore, ere I shew their way of justification, and the inconsistency of it with the gospel, I would have you to advert to these Three things, 1. That in this manner of justification, though Papists acknowledge the name, yet they do not acknowledge the thing itself; and so, upon the matter, the controversy is not so much, what justification is, as whether there be such a thing as justification at all, taking it to be a thing distinct from sanctification, and regeneration, which they in effect deny: For if the form constitute justification, and if to them, the form of justification, be the infusing of habitual grace in the soul, then it is nothing different from regeneration and sanctification; and therefore, when they speak of justification, they speak of it in this sense: For a justified person, to them, is a man renewed, and made holy, even as to justify, or to heat water, is to make that hot which before was cold; so justification to them, is to make a sinful person just, because of inherent righteousness in himself. 2. When they speak of justification, they make a two-fold justification: The first, whereof is that which they call the justification of a wicked person, or of an unregenerated man; when grace is first infused into him, which they grant a man cannot of himself condignly merit: The second is of a man's growing, or increasing in grace, when he attains to more grace, and to more glory; grace and glory being of the same nature, (wherein they and we do not differ,) and to this second justification, they make necessary a man's proper merit of works; for they say, That the first justification will not do a man's turn, who is come to age, though to a child it be sufficient; because their attaining of glory, who are at age, is the proper hire of their works, which supposes holiness: And therefore, when they say, that Christ's merit procures justification, their meaning is, that it procures the first justification, but not the second; that is in effect to say, that it buys habitual grace, as a stock to a man, wherewith he may trade: But when they come to speak of heaven and glory, which is obtained (as they say) by the second justification, that is come at by the man's own trading with that flocks of habitual grace; and so the man's trading, or trafficking with this stock, comes in, as that which procurers, wins, and merits the prize. 3. Though they use the same names that we use, as of faith, and pardon, or remission of sins, yet there is very great difference betwixt them and us, as to the thing; for they count nothing to be faith, but historical faith, which the devils have; and for remission of sin, they divide and distinguish betwixt the removing, or remission of the blot of sin; and the removing, and remission of the punishment of sin; and they say, that in the first justification, the blot of sin is expelled, by the infusion of habitual grace, even as darkness is expelled by the coming in of light: But as to the punishment of sin, they leave a man to satisfy in part for himself, after his justification.

Now, (as we said) because there is not one error or two here, but a concatenation, or chain of many errors, therefore, for further clearing of the truth, and discovering of these errors, we would consider, that when the question is proposed, this is the great state of it, What that is, on which a sinner may ground his peace before the tribunal of God's justice, as a solid defence, to answer all the challenges of the law, and whereupon he may expect to be absolved, and admitted to heaven? They say, that it is inherent holiness, wherewith a man's soul is sanctified, renewed and made conform to the image of God, which (say they) is of that nature, that it cannot but make the person acceptable to God; in that, in coming before God's tribunal of justice, he hath in himself whereby to answer all his challenges, or all the challenges that the law can bring against his inward and habitual grace and sanctification: It is true, they grant, That God works this grace in them, and that men are not naturally born with it, and that Christ's merit procures the receiving of this grace; but yet they say, That though the man do not merit this first grace, yet he must dispose himself for it, by the exercise of his free-will, faith, alms-deeds, and the like; and so he makes himself congruously meet for, and capable of sanctification, and habitual grace, without which God does not believe it: and, if we look to the instrumental cause, they take in the sacraments of baptism, penance and extreme unction, as means whereby God worketh that grace, (and that, as they say, by the very work wrought,) if he be a man come to age, and if there be not opportunity of getting the sacrament, he hath it in his vow, which comes in place of the sacrament; by which means, they have these two effects: The first is a positive bringing in of grace into the soul; the second is privative, whereby the blot or spot of sin is expelled, as heat expels cold, or light expels darkness: and this they call remif-
...of sin, when grace shuns, and drives it out, so that the soul is not polluted with it: And because all this takes in but the guilt of sin, which they say is removed in the First justification; they have a Second justification, whereby they say that the punishment of sin is removed, and whereby they merit Glory; and here come in their 

Ibid. iii.

2d thing we would speak a word to, even to shew that this way of justification is inconsistent with the gospel, and that wherein a soul can neither have solid peace nor comfort: And we shall speak a little to this, 1. In general, and then, 2. more particularly. 1. In general, their way of justification is the re-establishing of the covenant of works; for it supposeth, that God hath conditioned life to none, but on condition of their works, which in their value are meritorious. It is true, they First allow to Christ's merit this much, that he hath thereby procured this merit to their works. And 2dly, That he hath procured to them habitual Grace, to work these works; though (as we said before) they must dispose themselves for that Grace. But that doth not alter the nature of a covenant of works, seeing the terms are still the same: For, consider; Adam before the fall, he was to expect life according to the terms of the covenant, Do this and live; and here the terms of the covenant are the same, tho' their use be different; and if the scriptures do oppose these two, that if it be of grace, it is no more of works; and contrarily, then sure this way of justification, that puts a man to the same terms of the covenant that Adam had to expect life by, must necessarily be inconsistent with the gospel. This will be the more clear, if we consider, how they themselves illustrate their meriting by the works of the faints, by Adam his merit of life while he travailed; the which meriting flows from an intrinsic worth in the works themselves, without respect to Christ's merits; and if the covenant of works hath these same terms, then their justification, no doubt, must be a re-establishing of that covenant. 2. The scripture speaks of our obtaining justification and righteousness always in this sense, to wit, by God's imputing the righteousness of Christ to us, not only for coming at the first grace, but for attaining heaven and glory; it is that which Paul leans to, when he comes before God, Phil. iii. That I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is by the law, but the righteousness which is through faith of Christ; he lays by the one, and betakes himself to the other, as his only defence, and that wherein he doth ground his plea before God. Now, this being the scripture way of justification, and their way being quite contrary to it, (for if they were asked, How think ye to answer before God? they behoved to say, By the merits of our good works) it must needs be inconsistent with the grace of the gospel, and that which Paul would by no means hazard his peace upon. We will find nothing more frequently mentioned in script...
Serm. LIV.

Isaiah lini.

Scripture, for the making of our peace with God, than coveting with God, the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and justification by faith: But all these three are here, in their way of justification, shut out and excluded; for they have no such thing as coveting, they scorn the imputation of Christ's righteousness, as but a putative and imaginary thing, and they cannot endure justification by faith.

But, 2dly, and more particularly, Behold and consider how universally it corrupts, and even destroys the doctrine of the gospel. 1. It corrupts and destroys the nature of grace; for it hangeth it on man's free-will, he must dispose himself for it, and gives him liberty to choose, or reject it as he pleazeth; and it makes that flow from man himself that satisfies God's justice, as if remission of sins were not free: And in the second, justification and admission to heaven and glory, it utterly excludes grace, and takes in merit, and makes heaven the proper reward of man's own merit. 2. It enervates the merit of Christ, and his purchase, though it seem in words to acknowledge it; because it neither admits of the merit of Christ, as the satisfaction to justice, by which the punishment is taken away; nor to be that by which lice is procured: but it takes in works, satisfaction by penance, whippings, pilgrimages, &c. and all that it leaveth to Christ's death, is the procuring of a new covenant of works, and the buying of a flock of habitual grace to man to fend for himself: but lays not the removing of the punishment on Christ as our cautioner in our name satisfying the justice of God for our sins; but it leaves it on ourselves, and on our keeping the covenant of works, as that whereunto the promise is made. 3. It overturns the nature of God's covenant; for either it makes no covenant at all, or it transforms the covenant of grace into a covenant of works, putting us to expect life through the merits of works; for they will have no promise of life to be made on condition of Christ's merit, laid hold upon by faith, but on condition of our own works alone: for though they pretend that it may be called Christ's merit, because, say they, he hath procured grace to work these works; yet in fact their way of justification is to restore us to that covenant which Adam had, and to ability to keep the same terms, though, as we said, the rife be different. 4. It is inconsistent with our natural state; for it supposes man before conversion to have a free-will to good; and ability to dispose himself to receive grace, and gives him a hand in turning himself to God, as if he were not dead in sins and trespasses; and so the sovereignty of God is bounded and limited to wait on a man so disposed, and so disposing himself. 5. It destroys the nature of God's law, as if it were consistent with his holy law, to have such and such lusts abounding within, and did not exact a reckoning for such breaches of it, as they call venial sins. 6. It overturns the scripture-doctrine concerning sin, for it makes many sins to be in effect no sins. 7. It corrupts and destroys the nature of all the sacraments, and makes new sacraments that God never appointed; and gives them power to work that which God never gave them, as if the very works wrought did confer grace. 8. It is inconsistent with the justice of God; as if, forsooth, such poor trifles and toys as these which they invent, were satisfaction enough to his justice: yea, as if some men could more than satisfy justice, and could not only merit heaven to themselves, but also help to merit heaven to others; and as if God were bound in proper justice to the creature, and that not only on the account of this promise, but also, if not mainly, on the account of merit of condignity: all these things are involved in this Popish way of justification, and inconsistent with the truth of the gospel; and we have touched on them, to let you see, that it is not one error that is here, but a complication of errors: and truly, if there be not an abhorrence of Popery, because of this gross error of justification, there is but little ground to expect, that men will keep at suitable distance from it in other things.

And therefore, from what hath been said, take, a few directions, as your use of it; and if we were tender, it might do us good, now and then to get a little view of such errors. 1st, Then see here the necessity of being more distinct and clear in God's way of justification, in the way how peace is made betwixt him and a sinner, when we see how many errors follow and creep in after one error; and when we consider, how Popish priests and Jesuits are moving, and how this same error, which hath so many errors with it, is stealthy in, ye had much need to be well acquainted with the truth, and to be guarding yourselves against error, especially when some lay so little weight on it, that they call it a striving about words, which faith that there is but little abhorrence of the thing. I am apt to think, that the most part of them that are called Chriftians, could not well tell how to oppose Popery, Arminianism, or Antinomianism, if they were tempted to embrace them, or any other error or hereby;
Isaiah liii.

Verse II. We would beware of taking that way of justification, and of making our peace with God, that seems to be most rational like to our corrupt nature; for, as many say, to be sorry for sin, to study to make amends, and to do what they dow, seems to be the most reasonable way, and agrees best with our corrupt nature: but that is not it which will do your turn, but the way which God hath holden out, and that is, by his knowledge, by faith in the righteous Servant. 3dly, See here, how much we are obliged to God, for holding out to us the right way to life. If ye look to many nations abroad, the way to life is holden out to them on this ground, even their own inherent holiness, their own good works, their giving of considerable parts of their estates, their penances, &c. which yet can never quiet the conscience, nor satisfy God's justice: Yea, our own predeceffors in this nation were drowned in the same errors, and were as foolishly and senselessly superstitious as the inhabitants of any other nations, before the light of the gospel brake up among us; accounting such and such sins to be no sins, leaning to their merits, to the merits of saints, to indulgences, to foul-maies, whippings, and a number of things of that kind: And now, that God hath mercifully freed us of these fooleries, how much are we obliged to him? Hath ever Scotland been thankful as it becomes, for this mercy? We do, by our unthankfulness, darken and obscure the freedom of grace, that by this gospel is preached unto us; and there needs no other evidence of it but this, that many are to this day as ignorant of the way of justification of sinners, and as abstrait from, and as great strangers to the right way of making use of Christ's righteousness, as if it had never been revealed unto them; or if they know, and can speak any thing of it, all the use they make of it, is to turn the grace of God into wantonness; and, because holiness is not the ground of making their peace with God, to take the more liberty to looseness: these are not fruits of the gospel, other fruits must be brought forth, or else ye will repent it, when ye cannot mend it. Let it therefore affect you, that God is so ill requit for his goodness; and study to be more thankful to him, that we may speak of these truths, and uncover these errors, and that we are not judicially blinded as many other people and nations are. 4thly, Pity them that are lying under darknes of their delusions and errors, and pray for them: It is a sore matter, that the most part of the Christian world should have the name of Christians, and yet should maintain such doc-
doctrine, and lay down and hold such a way, as keepeth from benefit by Christ Jesus; yea, as denies on the matter, that he is come: For this is indeed the spirit of Antichrist, and of the man of sin, that takes souls off from Christ; and yet how few make conscience to pray for these poor people, and that God would pursue the whore, and break up and skale that market spoken of, Rev. xviii. and would discover his truth, and make his gospel to be purely preached to them that are sitting in the region of darkness, and in the shadow of death; ye would pity bound up and imprisoned souls in this error, and pray for their reclaiming, and that God would keep this land from it: It is an old seated and rooted error, and the rest are but foolries in comparison of it; this is the devil’s great engine and army, others are but vapours, to say so; which may tell us, that speaking and hearing of such a busines is not altogether useless. What if the day should come, that all our Bibles, and every English book that serves to hold out truth, and to discover error; should be taken from you, and ordered to be burnt, and that books stuffed with their errors should come in their room? Many of you think little or nothing now of the light and liberty of the gospel which ye enjoy; but if heaven be so much worth, this gospel is of much worth to you, and this truth of it in particular. 5thly, Let not this gospel be preached for nought; O! receive not this grace in vain, that is, this grace offered to you in the gospel, and the clearing of such truths to you. O what a challenge, and aggravation of our guilt will it be, when we come before the throne! when many other nations will be condemned, because they leaned to their own merits, and made no use of Christ; and many of us shall be condemned, because tho’ we professed an indignation at these errors, yet we made no more use of Christ than these, who by their doctrine excluded him. If our predecessors could speak, what would they say? would it not be this, It is unjust that ye perish, for ye had Christ and his righteousness clearly preached to you, which we had not, and yet ye flighted him? Therefore take hold of, and improve the opportunity. God hath clearly revealed this truth to the land, and to this place; walk in the light while ye have it, else your condemnation will be the greater, as it is, John iii. 19. 6thly, Seeing God hath given us this singular mercy, even the clear revelation of the way of justification by Christ’s righteousness and merits, let us not, through our evil conversation, make the truth of God to be evil spoken of; turn not the grace of God into wantonness. It was an evil that soon arose in the primitive church, and which the apostle disputes against, Rom. ii. 3, 6. Because he preached justification by grace, and not by the works of the law, some were ready to abuse that sweet doctrine, and to say, Let us sin, that grace may abound; and let us do evil, that good may come of it, whose damnation, says he, is just: And he follows out these objections, and insists in answering of them; and O but this is damnable, from the abounding of God’s grace, to take the more liberty to sin! And yet, what other language have the lives of many, but this. Because justification and happiness are not built on our works, therefore we may live as we lift? despitefully and presumptuously reflecting on the way of justification by faith, and on God who hath contrived it: But if any of you will abuse God’s grace, and sin the more, God shall charge it on your own heads, this gospel shall never do you good, God will require it of you; your sins are multiplied, and your plagues shall be multiplied above any that have lived under black Popery. I dare say, many of you would probably have had a greater restraint on you from sin, and would have been more charitable, and forward in many external good works, if ye had been profest Papists, than now ye are, being profest Protestants; a judicial stroke on you, for the abusing of grace: And is this the fruit of the gospel? No certainly; grace was never preached, that men should grow cold and indifferent in the practice of good works, but that, through the laying hold on Christ’s righteousness, they might have peace with God; and that, through the study of holiness, God might be glorified: Therefore study the exercise of faith so, as ye seclude not holiness; and study holiness so, as ye mark not the freedom of grace; and put these two together, which are the compend of the gospel, when suitably practised.
SERMON LV.

Isaiah lvi. 11.---By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, &c.

This blessed death and soul-travel, of our Lord Jesus, hath been good news to many; and it is the ground of all the hope of life that arises from the word to a sinner: It should never be taletells nor disrelishing to us, in mentioning, reading, or thinking of it; but it should in reason make sinners glad, that ever there was such a subject to be spoken of, and to be considered; it behoved certainly to be a great business, that brought the Son of God to die; the salvation of sinners is a great work, though many of us think but very little of it.

The sum and scope of Christ's sufferings and death, are briefly holden forth in these words, By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many: Where we have, 1. The great benefit that comes by his death, which is justification, or the absolving of sinners from the guilt of sin, and from the curse of God due to them for sin: by Christ's interposing himself to become a Sin-offering, there is a way laid down, how sinners may be relieved. 2. The parties made partakers of this benefit, and they are called many. 3. The way how it is derived to these many, it is by his knowledge; that is, by, or through faith in him.

We have spoken somewhat of the benefit itself, justification; which is the thing aimed at, for the most part, in preaching, and in all other ordinances, that God may, by the righteousness of his Son in the gospel, carry on the justification of sinners, through their knowledge of him, or by causing them to rest upon his righteousness by faith, in order to their salvation. It is sad, that in this point, which is of so great concernment, so many should go so far wrong, and mistake so grossly, that it is no great matter, in some respect, whether they be called Christians, or not; this being the advantage of a Christian, that he hath a way to justification, and absolution from sin and wrath before God, revealed to him, which others have not; who, if he come short of this, or fall in gross errors about it, he had little or no advantage beyond Heathens, who may have more of the fat of the earth, and of the things of the world, than these who are within the visible church have: But in this, in a special manner, the Christian excels and goes beyond the Pagan or Heathen, that he hath a way laid down to him, how he may come to be reconciled to God, and freed from wrath, and from his curse due for sin; which we have shewed to be by fleeing to Christ, and by faith resting on his righteousness and satisfaction: For Christ the Cautioner having paid the debt, by laying down a price fully satisfactory to divine justice; and this satisfaction being offered in the Gospel, upon the condition of receiving him; a sinner giving his consent to God's offer, and closing therewith, may confidently expect, according to that offer to be justified, and no other ways.

We shew you one particular, great and gross error, wherewith these, who are under the darknes of Poperity, are wofully carried away; which we did the rather touch upon, because tho' it be a doctrinal error in respect of them, and disputed for by them; yet, in respect of the practice of many Protestant Christians, it is very rife and ordinary, that is, to mistake, err, or go wrong in the way of making of their peace with God: And there are three sorts especially, who do exceedingly mistake, err, and go wrong here; thefe of whom I mean, and am now speaking, are not such as are maintaining, disputing, or writing for such errors, but such as count themselves to be found Protestant Christians, and haters of the gross Popish error, that we spake somewhat to the last day. The first sort are those who to this hour never laid down any solid reckoning how to make their peace with God, or what way to come at abolution before him; these persons do in practice deny, whatever may be their professions, that there is any such thing as a reckoning to be made betwixt God and them; or that there is a necessity of justification, for preventing of their eternal ruin and destruction: they live from their birth, with a hope of coming to heaven, without looking how they may pass this great step of justification before God, they never saw nor laid to heart their need of it; are there not many hearing me to day, that are of this number? who will needs keeps up confidently their fancied hope of heaven, and yet never knew what it was to answer a challenge for Sin, or a threatening of the curse, for the breach of God's law, from Christ's righteousness; nor did they ever lift, and arraign themselves before God's tribunal, as guilty; nor did they ever think seriously of their charge, nor of
of their summons, nor of the way of making their peace with God, by taking hold of Christ's righteousness. A second sort are the generality of legal Professors; I do not say, that they are legal in their practice; that is, that they make it their business to keep the law, for they are as little concerned, or careful in that as any; but they are legal in this respect, that when it comes to the making of their peace with God, they know nothing but the law to deal with, as that man spokem of, Matth. xxxv. that got the one talent, and was utterly careless to improve it; yet, when it comes to a reckoning, he stands and sticks to the rigor of the law; Master, faith he, lo, here thou hast that which is thine: just so, such will be ready to say, We have no more grace than God hath given us, we have a good heart to God, we are doing what we do or can. Here come in profligate men, meer civil men, and hypocrites; and more especially the meer civil men, who do much in the duties of the second table of the law, and they will profess that they do mind judgment and a reckoning; but, as if they had been bred and brought up in a Papish school, they foil in a legal righteousness, instead of Christ's, as the ground of their justification before the tribunal of God. Ye may take these instances of this sort of persons, which are very common, and who in their practice almoft in every thing agree with the Papish doctrine. The ifth instance is of such persons that know nothing of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, yet if we speak of it, they will fall out in such expressions as these, We can do nothing of ourselves, there is no good in us, its God's grace that must do our turn; yet in the mean time it is not Christ's righteousness, they lay down to themselves as the ground of their justification, but the good which they have done as they suppose in Christ's strength, and the grace which is given them to work, and do that good by; which is the same thing with the Papish way of justification, as if Christ had procured an ability to us to keep the law ourselves, in order to our being justified thereby: Hence they will believe, pray, hear the word, praise, and go about other duties, and will profess that they acknowledge Christ in thee, and that they have the grace from him to perform them; He furnishes the flock, and they trade with it, and so for the attaining of life, they are obliged to their own trading; which is in words to pretend grace, but really to put our own works and righteousness in the room of Christ's righteousness, as the ground, or meritorious cause of justification; for the grace given to us, enabling us to work, is not Christ's righteousness, but our own, because given to us, and working in us; and so it is always ourselves and our own righteousness, not Christ's and his righteousness, that we rest upon. A second instance of some folk, that spokem of Christ, and of attaining life through him, yet it is not in respect of his merit, but in respect of his strength; for such will say, We hope through Christ's strength to come to heaven; their meaning wherein is, that he will help them so to repeat and believe, so to be holy and resist temptations, as they shall come to heaven thereby, as the deserving cause of their coming thither. It is true, there is something right here, when in its own place; if whole Christ were rested upon, justification being put in the first place, and his merit rested up for that, it were good that his strength were leaned to, and made use of, for performing the duties of sanctification: but when his strength is rested upon as the alone thing, and when we look not to Christ's purchase and merit as the ground of our acceptance, but to Christ as enabling us, to do duties, to the end that we may give God a recompence thereby; at the best it is but he and we together: This certainly is wrong; for nothing is proposed as a satisfaction to God's justice here, but what is immediately our own. A third sort are somewhat wiser, who, it may be, think, that any thing that is in themselves, is not worth the naming; but, partly through Christ's matter, and partly through what they have, and can do themselves, or by these joined together, they hope to be saved. This was the doctrinal error of the Galatians, who attributed justification to Christ, and to the works of the law jointly. This way ascribes to Christ's righteousness this much, that it makes our own righteousness to be accepted, as the ground of our justification before God, which in some respect is worse than the covenant of works; for the covenant of works fought a perfect righteousness: but this way offers an imperfect righteousness, and to amend, and to eke out our imperfect righteousness, it takes in the righteousness of Christ; but there is no such covenant, or way of justification in scripture; for God made but two covenants for men to attain life by, one of works, which is now impossible; the other of grace, by which only it is possible to attain justification and life: This makes a third covenant, or contrivance, by a mixture, partly of some works in us, and partly of some grace in Christ, to make up what.
is lacking in our works; and yet this way is very pleasing to our nature, and to that which we are much inclined for justification; for men are naturally disposed to think that they give Christ enough, when they allow his righteousness to make up what is defective in their own. It is true indeed, that Christ's merits do wash our duties, but our duties come never up to be the ground of our justification in whole, or in part; which is evident from this, that, ere Christ make our duties or performances acceptable, he makes our persons first to be accepted; and that once being, then any thing performed by us, in Christ's strength, according to the will of God, is acceptable also.

But now we proceed further in the words of the text; and, before we come to the cauæs of our justification, we shall briefly observe two or three things that lie obviously in our way; the 1/3, whereof is this, that the absolving of a sinner, through the imputation of Christ's righteousness, is the proper and native result of Christ's purchase, and the great intendment of it; his sufferings and soul-travel were undergone, to procure justification to many; so that if we would know what is the fruit of Christ's soul-travel, here it is, by his knowledge shall many be justified; therefore, Rom. v. 9, it is attributed to his blood, being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath; and, 2 Cor. v. ult. he was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God through him; that which I mean is this, that Christ's intendment in his dying was to redeem, and really and actually to procure absolution and justification before the throne of God, to so many as should believe on him; or we may take the doctrine these two ways, which yet come both to the same account. 1. Thus, That the thing which Christ intended in his death, was not a mere possibility, that sinners might be justified, nor to lay down a conditional way of their justification, whereby they might come, or not come to it, and so to make it possible; but that which he intended was, that their justification might follow absolutely; I do not mean instant, and without the interveening of a condition; for here his knowledge comes in, as the condition: but that which I mean is, that he died, that their justification might actually and certainly follow as a fruit of his purchase. In a word, his death and sufferings were not to make justification possible to all, but that so many as he bargained for might be absolutely justifi-
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Chrift, and it is this that is the native fruit of his death, without which it will be fruitlefs: and this may remove the great obftruftion that reafonably a finner, when he is feroius, feeth lying in his way, to wit, the want of righteousnefs, and the fear of not being abfolved; the want of inherent righteousnefs in himfelf, which makes him liable to the curse of the law; when he feeth upon what terms Chrift died. 

First, To procure a righteousnefs to them that wanted righteousnefs. And, Secondly, Upon these terms, that fanners through faith in him, might be justified, and freed from the guilt of fin, as if they never had finned themselves. Conceiving this to be his intendment, according to the terms of the covenant of grace, what have they, or what can they have, to fear or fright them from expecting the fuffilling of this promife? because the contrivance of the covenant of redemption, is to buy justification absolutely, and not the poftibility of it: only; not to buy grace to us, whereby to justify ourfelves, but justification itself, fo as we may be beholden to him alone for it.

Again, 2dly, When we fay, that the justification of a finner is the proper reful of Chrift's death, it may be thus underftood, that the righteousnefs whereby a finner is justified, is immediately Chrift's death and purchafe, as to the meritorious caufe thereof: fo that if we look to what justifies a finner, as to the meritorious caufe of it, the knitting of these two together, He fhall fee of the travel of his fowl, and fhall be fatisfied; and, By his knowledge fhall my righteous Servant juftify many, doth hold it forth to be Chrift's death and purchafe; the travel of his fowl is, and muft be the ground on which a loft finner is juftified before the throne of God. This both confirms what we formerly propofed concerning this doctrine, and also fhews that the justification of a finner is not by inherent holinefs. Whence comes it, I pray, that makes a finner acceptable before God? It is not from habitual, nor actual inherent grace, but from Chrift's righteousnefs, laid hold on by faith, that gripeth and adhereth to it: but from the latter part of the words, we will have more particular occafion to speak to this, where these two are knit together; By his knowledge fhall my righteous Servant juftify many, for he fhall bear their iniquity; therefore we do now pafs it.

The Objeft of this benefit is many: many ordinarily in Scripture implies these two things, 1f. A great number, and fo it fhews the extent of the object; that is, that Chrift fhall purchafe and redeem many, or by his death procure justification to many. 2dly, A reftriftion, and thus many is oppofed to all; and fo the meaning is, there fhall many be juftified by Chrift's death, but not all; and therefore, as none can from these words plead for an univerfality in justification, fo neither can they in redemption, for he only bare their iniquities, whom by his knowledge he juftifies.

Looking on thofe many, in this twofold consideration, we may take thofe Observations from it. 1f, Taking it extenfively, Obferve, 1. That the righteousnefs of Chrift is of itelf able to juftify many; it is a righteousnefs that can fatisfy for the fins of many; or thus, That in the covenant of redemption, there is an intended application of Chrift's righteousnefs and purchafe to many. 2dly, That there are many, who fhall indeed partake of Chrift's righteousnefs, and be juftified by it; it is not one, or two, or a thoufand, but as it was intended to juftify many, fo it fhall be actually applied to many for their justification. 3dly, Comparing the former words, He fhall fee of the travel of his foul, and fhall be fatisfied, with thofe words, By his knowledge fhall my righteous Servant juftify many; Obferve, That Chrift is not juftified for the travel of his fowl, except many be juftified by it; or thus, It is Chrift's fatisfaction, how many there be that make ufe of him, and that, by making ufe of him, come to be juftified by him, as afterward we will fee: Thofe many are all thofe that believe, all thofe that have this true and faving knowledge of him, and do rightly acknowledge him.

The making out of one of these doctrines will make them all out, that Chrift's righteousnefs is able to juftify many; that many fhall be juftified by it; and that it is his fatisfaction and delight, that many may be juftified, and get this good of it: it is faid, Matth. xx. 28. That he came to lay down his life a ransom for many, and Rom. v. 15. That the gift of grace, which is by one man Jeifts Chrift, hath abounded unto many; and verfe 19. As by one man's obedience many were made finners, fo by the obedience of one fhall many be made righteous. Let but thofe four things be put together and compared, and if it be found, that there is no juft ground to quarrel these doctrines, 1f. The native worth, and intrinfick value that is in the fatisfaction of Chrift; it is the blood of God, of the Perfom that is God: it is an offering that flows from a willing and cheerful Giver, which makes it the more acceptable; he
was content with delight to pay the price; there cannot be a limiting or bounding of this worth or value, because there cannot be any bounding or limiting of the Person that gives the value to it, if it be considered in itself. 2dly, Consider the freeness of the offer, which takes in many: our Lord communicates very freely what he hath bought very dear; and it is done with respect to his taking in of many, to take away all exceptions from the poor and needy, and from them that want money. 3dly, As the terms are free, so the offer is very broad, and comprehensive, as we see, (Nak lvi. 1.) Ho, every one that thirsts, come to the waters: and Rev. xxii. Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely. And we find these expressions, all that believe; and, whosoever believes, to be frequently used in the scriptures; which takes in all that will yield themselves to him on the terms of the covenant, to close the bargain with him. 4thly, Consider God's end in the justification of sinners, which is to make his grace to shine, and to triumph, and to make its victory over man's sins conspicuous and glorious, by being beyond it; not in respect of the number of persons, but in this respect, that as Adam's one sin brought death on many, so the death of Christ hath brought justification to many; as it is Rom. v. The judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. Whereas Adam's one offence brought death on many, here the relieving of one sinner is the procuring of freedom to many, because in that respect Christ is a satisfaction for many offences. But it may be objected here, Is it not said, that the way to Heaven is narrow, and few there be that enter in thereat? They are thin foun, to say so, that are heirs of this inheritance. I answer, by a distinction; Though they be comparatively few, yet, considered in themselves absolutely, they are many, or they are singly many, though comparatively but few: consider and compare them with the multitude of reprobates that are even in the visible church, they are few; yet if ye will consider them in themselves, they are many: and it is most true that is spoken, Rev. vii. 9. I saw a number which no man could number: if we look since the beginning of the world, how some are taken in this age, and some in that, some of this nation, and some of another, they will be found to be but few, when all nations are put together; yet in themselves they are many. There are these three uses of it, which may be reasons why it is put in here. The first is, to let us see the largeness of the extent of the worth of Christ, and of the allowance of grace, in reference to the justification of sinners through him; which should make us stand, pause, and wonder. It had been much, if grace had saved but one, more if it had saved a thousand, or twenty thousand: But O! what ground of admiration is it, when many are saved by it! This is the native end, why it is put in here, even to shew, that it is not for nought that Christ died, it shall be a blessing to many. I mark it, because, though the preposterous thoughts of many lead them to extend the merits of Christ to all in the visible church; yet it may be, that in others there are too narrow limiting thoughts of the extent of his merits, and of the allowance of grace, as to the number of the elect that shall be saved: it being certain, that as we are in hazard, and ready to abuse any thing; so this, if it be said that they are many that are justified, we are ready to exclude none; and if it be said that they are few, we are ready to make grace as it were a rigard and churl, and to contract and narrow too much the application of it.

The second use of it, (which is a second reason, why this word many is put in here) may serve for encouragement to sinners, and to hearten them to effay to get this benefit of justification made their own: many trow (and in some respect it is a truth) that it is a singular and odd thing to come by justification; and hence they conclude, that they will never get it; and indeed, if the thought of its singularity and raresness made them careful to win at the thing, it were a profitable use of it; but, when it makes them heartless to attain the thing, it is a wrong and prejudicial use of it: but sinners, there is here ground of encouragement, provocation and up-stirring to you, to seek after justification through Jesus Christ, because there are many that are the objects of it. The righteousness of Christ is a righteousness that will save many; it is an article of the covenant of redemption, that Christ shall get many; the promise will give title and right to many, he will not be content, if he get not many. Now, putting these together, it cannot but be very great encouragement to seek, and a strong ground to expect justification on this account, because, 1. That which a believing sinner gets, is justification, pardon of sin, both original and actual, and its complete actual justification, not only the procuring the offer of it, but the application of it, justification from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses, and justification never to be reversed.
I say, It serves to be a most terrible ground of inexcusableness to thefe, to whom Christ's righteousness is spoken of, and offered in the gospel, who yet neglect to make use of it, that he was content to lay down his life, and that as a ransom for many. None needs to say, I knew not if I would be welcome; he said, It was for many: and though he said not, it was for all, yet it is for all that will believe in him; and therefore it is not, nor shall not, because he hath confined the benefit to few, that ye are, or shall be excluded; but because, tho' he extended the benefit to many, yet ye excluded yourselves: and none of you, who hear this gospel, shall have it to say, I be- took myself to Christ by faith, but he refused to admit of me, and he would have no more than he had. There are many who please themselves with such a word as this, when they hear that many will be faved; but it will be the deareft bought doctrine that ever ye heard: It had been in some respect better, that ye had heard that it was but two or three that would come to heaven; because the hearing of many's coming thither, will greatly aggravate your guilt, who neglect so great a salvation.

Therefore take two or three caveats of this Doctrine. And, 1. Beware of being secure because there are many that shall be jufhified, there are many more that shall perish; compare these that perish with these that will be faved, and it will be found, that they are but a handful that will be faved, and that swarms and multitudes will go to hell: Therefore, when ye hear that the door is opened to many, let it encourage you to enter in; but remember this, that more will be excluded, and perifh, than will enter in and be faved. The Scripture fays, Many are called, but few are chosen, even in refpect of the called within the vifible church. 2. Consider that grace is enlarging of this benefic: to take in many, will be your greatest challenge and aggravation, that shall mifs, and come short of it; Therefore let us (as it is, Heb. iv.) fear, left taking a province left us of entering into his reft, any of us should feme to come short of it. When this door is opened to us, we would by all means fear coming short, or not entering, through unbelief; for it will be worse with us, than if the door had never been opened. Folks ordinarily think not so much to misl or come short of a privilege, which but one or two have access to; but when it is such a privilege as is made attainable by many, the miffing of it galleth and tormenteth the more; and when many fhall come from the eafc, west, fouth and north, and fhall fit down with Abraham, I- faac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, what weeping and gnifhing of teeth will it caufe to them, who fhall be excluded? And therefore, 3. Beware of thinking that there is the lefs diligence or fear required, because we fay, that many will be juftified; for, tho' there be many that are redeemed, and many that fhall be juftified, yet all thofe come to be juftified through Christ's knowledge: And therefore fuch as are ignorant and profane can but take little or no comfort hence, while they continue to be fuch. Tho' there be many that are juftified, yet none but believers are juftified; and none can warrantably look on themselves to be believers, but fuch as are fincerel students of holiness: I would not therefore have you laying weight, either on many or few's being juftified, except by way of motive, but on the way that ye take to come by the end, tho' a great many more were faved than will be; if ye take not the way of faith and holiness to come to salva- tion, ye will not get yourselves fhrouded in the croud, but tho' there were never fo few damned, ye fhall make up the number. In a word, it is ground of encouragement to a poor finner, that would fain be juftified in God's own way; it is also ground of shame and confusion of face to the unbeliever, that refrains the benefit of Christ's purchase, and fhuts himfelf out, when grace doth, make ufe of fuch expreffions to bring him in; and it will be ground of conviction to all that have fo wide a door opened to them, and do not ftrive
to enter in. It may be many of you think little of this now; but in the day when many shall be taken into the kingdom of heaven, and others shut out, it will be known to be a matter of the great eff concerament. If once we could be induced

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It is a great matter to have the solid impression of Christ's fulness on your spirits, and to be thoroughly persuaded that there is a righteousness to be had in him; yet the consolation is not full, unless there be a clearness in the way how this righteousness is applied and come by, and a kindly yielding to follow that way: For, tho' we know that Christ died, and that there is a righteousness purchased, yet there are many that are never justified, and that shall never be faved by it; and therefore it would not be so much to know that there is such a thing, if he had not laid down a way how we may be partakers of it; which way can no more fail and misgive, than Christ's righteousness can: and these words hold out the way, *By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many*; that is, Through faith in Christ many shall be made righteous; his satisfaction shall be accounted the believers, whereby it shall come to pass, that they shall be as really justified, as if they had born their own iniqities, because his bearing of them shall be accounted theirs.

We spake, 1. Of this general, That there is such a thing as justification, or God's absolving of a sinner, who by his own iniquity is liable to the curse. 2. That this justification is the proper effect of Christ's death. 3. From the objects of it; That they are many, yet not all, who are justified, many being put as a mids betwixt two extremes, neither including all, nor only taking in a very few. Having put by these more general doctrines, we would now speak a little to this great benefit of justification, in reference to the particular causes that concur to the attaining of it, which will lead us to a more distinct uptaking of it: there is ground for them all in the text; and therefore we shall put them together, that we may have a short view of this great benefit complexly.

There are commonly fix causes assigned to, or made necessary to concur in justification, tho' we know not well how to express them, so as ye may take them up, because of the ignorance of many of you. 1. There is the efficient cause, and that

is God, the Party that doth justify. 2. The end, or final cause, and that is his own glory. 3. The meritorious cause, or that which procures it, or the ground on which God justifies, and that is Christ's merit. 4. The inward instrumental cause, by which we get a title to, and an interest in Christ's merit, and that is faith. 5. The formal cause, or that wherein justification consists, and that is imputation of Christ's righteousness to the sinner upon his acceptance of it, and the absolving of the sinner by virtue of his righteousness. 6. The external instrumental cause, and that is the word of God, by which this justification is revealed, and wherein God declares and passeth the sentence.

For the first, ye would, for clearing of it, remember what we spake in our entrying on this doctrine, that this word *justification* is a legal, forensic, or judicial word: and we are to conceive of God, who is the Party offended, as the Judge; and of the sinner arraigned, and brought before his tribunal to be judged, as a delinquent: the law gives in the libel or indictment, founds the challenge or accusation; the sinner's conscience and actions are so many witnesses, proving the breaking of the law, and him to be obnoxious to the curse on that account. In this we say that God is the efficient cause, and so we may take the words, *By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many*, actively and efficiently to look to Christ, as having this power, as he is God; which is proper to God alone, as is clear, Rom. viii. 34. *It is God that justifies*. 1 Cor. iv. 4. *The* I know nothing by myself, yet *I* am not hereby justified, but *he* that judgeth me is the Lord: And this is a reason of the former, to wit, that no other can absolve but God, the Party offended, who is Judge.

We mark it for this practical use, which the Apostle makes of it, which is to bid us lay less weight upon others thinking well of us, or absolving us, and on our own absolving ourselves; the Lord chargeth some thus, Luke xvi. 15. *Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but

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Ser. LVI.

God knows your hearts: Paul will not justify himself, for that is God's place and prerogative. How many are there, who take another person's testimony for God's, and think, that since others love, respect, and commend them, they are in a good condition, and well enough? But, alas, is that person God? Except mens testimony be founded on the grounds that are held forth in the word (and if so, then it is God's testimony) it will not do the business, nor avail you any thing; except there be a sentence of abolution pronounced and paid by him, their sentence, or yours, will be recalled; though many of you do not downward profess this, yet many of you pratically fall into it: always remember that it is God that justifies, and that his abolution is different from mens, and from your own; many have good thoughts of you, and so may ye of yourselves, when God may have none.

For the 2d. to wit, the Final cause, it is clear here also, by comparing the former verse with the word going before, in this same verse; and ye may take it in this Observation, That the glory of God, and of the Mediator, is the end that God hath before him, in the justifying of sinners; therefore it is called the Lord's pleasure, or delight, and the Mediator's satisfaction; because he hath propos'd to himself therein the glory of his grace especially, and also of others of his attributes, as his end, and so hath a kind of longing desire and thirst after; for the Lord, being absolutely glorious, cannot but love his own glory; and being the infinitely pure, all-sufficient Good, he cannot but love himself and his own glory; and therefore for attaining of this end, he justifies and abolves poor sinners. Now God is glorified here two ways, 1. He gets the glory of his grace, that is exceedingly magnified thereby, as is clear, Eph. i. 5. 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: It is the Lord's pleasure, to glorify his grace; and this proves to be the glory of his grace, when a sinner liable to wrath is fully justified, and intitled to heaven. 2. He gets thereby the glory of his justice and righteousness, which takes in the glorifying of God's holiness and wisdom: He is seen here to be a holy God, who will needs testify his dislike at sin, wherever it is; a just God, that will needs punish it; a gracious God, that will pardon; and such a wife God, as finds out the way, how both to punish and pardon, without any the least imputation, either to his justice, or to his mercy and grace; and so he shews himself to be infinitely just, gracious, wise, and holy, in the justification of sinners: these we may see, Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, there justice and grace shine clearly: justification is free, yet there is a price laid down, and a satisfaction made to justice; and the 26. verse shews the end, to wit, To declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of them who believe in Jesus.

He hath indeed taken a way, how to pardon sin, but so as it is through a redemption, or by the executing of a price, that he may be seen to be just, who will not pardon sin without a satisfaction; justice kithes in this, that Christ is put to pay a great price: and that he may be seen to be gracious, he hath laid down a way, how the price, that was to be paid by Christ, might be imputed to, or reskoned on the account of the guilty sinner, and that he might be thereby absolved: And thus justice and grace may kifs each other, in this admirable contrivance. And although none almost except Socinians deny the justice of God, in the justification of sinners; yet as they do doctrinally in substance deny it, so many of us, who profess to abhor their doctrine, do practically deny it also.

And therefore, as the 1st Use of it, let me speak a little to unbelievers, and ask you, What think ye will become of you? ye must either betake yourselves to Christ's satisfaction, or ye must resolve to satisfy for yourselves: Secure hypocrites think of nothing but of grace, and that God will always be gracious, and never suffer themselves to think of the necessity of a satisfaction to be made to his justice; and thus they flight, and on the matter deny his justice, as if he were not to be glorified in that attribute, as well as in his grace and mercy; whereas there is no other way to declare God to be just in the justification of them that believe, but this, which brings them to Christ's satisfaction.

Use 2. It is ground of notable consolation, and encouragement to a poor exercised soul, sensible of sin, whereupon to expect justification: It is God's end, in justifying sinners, to set out the glory of his grace: and is it not much, that God should contrive such a way for glorifying of himself, as should carry along with it good to us, yea, such a way as should resolve in our good, which comes in as a subordinate end, to the glorifying of his grace, as the ultimate end? may not this be an encouragement to them, to seek after justification on these terms, and for this end?
Jer. liii. 11.

Verse II.

In the 3d, that is the meritorious cause: take it in this Doctrine, That the meritorious cause, that procures our justification, and with respect to which God justifies a sinner, is the alone merit and satisfaction of Christ Jesus. And this arises from the text, on these two considerations, 1st, Because this justification is laid down, as an effect of Christ's soul-travel, and suffering: if justification be the proper and immediate effect of Christ's sufferings, then his soul-sufferings must be the meritorious cause of it, we cannot imagine another: He purposeth, by his sufferings for the elect, that they shall by his knowledge be justified; therefore they must be absolved, and justified, by his interposing to take on our debt, and so his sufferings must be the procuring cause of it.

The 2d consideration is taken from the words following, He shall justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities: if Christ's bearing of our iniquities be the ground of our justification, or that by which it is procured, then his sufferings must be the meritorious cause of our justification, or that on account whereof we are justified; because his bearing of our iniquities can no other ways be the cause of our justification, but by his interposing to merit the fame to us by his sufferings. Would ye know, as if the prophet had said, how Christ's sufferings shall be the cause of our justification? here it is, he shall bear our iniquities, and therefore our justification flows therefrom: the Lord, by the prophet, hath so knit these two together, that his sufferings both go before, and are subjoined to his justifying of many, that it may be put out of question, that the Mediator's sufferings is the alone meritorious cause of his pronouncing the sentence of justification, and of accepting and accounting us as righteous before him.

This is not in so many words professedly controverted, or denied by the Papists, with whom we here deal: for they grant, that Christ by his sufferings procures grace, and God's acceptance of our good works, in so far as they are rewarded beyond their condignity: but, to make the difference between them and us the more clear, we shall put in four words in the doctrine, and speak a little to them; we say then, that Christ's satisfaction is not only the meritorious cause of justification, but also, 1. It is the nearest and most immediate cause. 2. The alone meritorious cause. 3. The meritorious cause, as contradistinguished from, and opposed to our works, and inherent righteousness, by both. 4. It is the meritorious cause, as inherent in him, and as imputed to us. These four are clear in the text, and may very well be put in the doctrine.

1st, Then we say, it is not only the meritorious cause, but the next immediate cause, causa præcipuæ (as we use to speak in schools) of our justification; so that if it be asked, What is the cause or ground on which God absolves a sinner, or the next immediate thing, that he hath a respect to in his justifying of him? It is Christ's merit, his soul-travel and sufferings: Papists deny this, and make the next immediate cause to be the grace infused in us, that which is called, gratia gratum faciens: but if ye ask the prophet, what is the ground, I mean the next immediate cause, on which justification is derived to many? he tells us, that it is not the inherent righteousness of these who are justified, but that it is Christ's soul-travel, and his bearing of our iniquities: hence, 1 Cor. i. 30. Christ is called our righteousness, He is (faith the apostle) made of God unto us, wisdom, righteousness, &c. Not only by Christ have we a righteousness, that makes us acceptable to God, but his righteousness is ours, and God's respecting of us, in, or through it, making us acceptable.

2dly, Not only is his righteousness the meritorious cause, but it is the only meritorious, or the alone meritorious cause; and herein Papists and we differ: They grant, that Christ's satisfaction is the meritorious cause; but remotely only, as it procures inward or inherent grace, by which we merit; but they will not have it to be the only meritorious cause, but will needs have our own works to merit also, and that properly; whereas the prophet speaks of justification, as the effect of Christ's soul-travel only: and if so, then
there can be no other thing admitted, for there cannot be two focial or joint meritorious caufes; therefore throughout the scripture, when the merit of justification is attributed to Christ, it excludes all other things, and is opposed to our own works; which is the Third thing.

3dly, Then we say, That Christ's righteousness is the meritorious caufe of our justification, as contradistinguished from, and opposed to our own inherent righteousness, or works; and herein also Papifts and we differ: they grant indeed a meritorious influence to Christ's righteousness; but that is (say they) as it makes our own righteousness meritorious, not as contradistinguished from, and opposed to our own righteousness, but as having influence on it. Now these are directly opposed in scripture; I shall only name that one clear place, Phil. iii. 9. That I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is by the faith of Christ; where Paul is consulting, and resolving what he will take himself to, as his defence at the bar of God; we see, 1. That it is his scope and design, that, in the day of judgment, he may be found in such a cafe and posture, that he may be able to abide the trial. And, 2. That he speaks of Two righteousnesses, the One is his own, that is the inherent grace which he hath gotten, and the works which he hath done: the Other is the righteousness of Christ without him, which is by faith: Now, when he lays his reckoning, he is so far from joining these two together, as co-causes, or foci- cal caufes of his justification, that he opposes them; That I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness; without my own, or, not having my own, &c. in him, as having given up with, denied and renounced my own righteousness: He will not admit of that, on any terms, in less or in more; so clearly doth he, as to his justification before God, exclude his own righteousness, and betake himself to Christ's righteousness alone, as contradistinguished to his own.

4thly. We say, That Christ's righteousness, as it is in him, and imputed to us, or made ours by imputation, is the alone meritorious caufe of our justification and salvation; fo as that which he hath purchased is reckoned and accounted the sinner's, as if it were his own inherently and personally: This I also gather from the words, By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities; Would ye know, as if the prophet had said, how Christ is the meritorious caufe of justification? Thus it is, because he shall bear their iniquities; if he hath taken on the burden of their fins, and had their fins imputed to him, then it will follow by proportion, that they are justified by the imputation of his righteousness to them. And there is nothing that the scripture doth more inculcate than this, that we are justified by the righteousness of Christ, without us, and imputed to us, or reckoned ours; we by faith laying holding upon it, and God's accepting of it for us, makes it become ours; and yet there is nothing that we do more practically err in, and which Papifts do more scorn and flout at, wholly enervating the way and contrivance of grace, by excluding and shrouding out the righteousness of Christ, calling it, in derision, a putative, or merely farried, and imaginary righteousness, (as if there were no reality in it) and by bringing in, and establishing their own righteousness; though it be very clear from this, and many other scriptures, that Christ's righteousness must be ours by imputation, because we bare our iniquities: He became our righteousness, by paying of our debt, as our Cautioner, and no other ways; the scripture never speaks of his being our righteousness, by procuring ability to us to pay our own debt.

I shall clear this 4th Branch a little further, because it will serve to clear the reft, that is, That Christ's righteousness, as it is in him, and imputed to us, is the only meritorious caufe of our justification; and if we consider, First, The way of justification that is used among men, this will be the more plain; There being two covenants, by the one of which life was once attainable, and by the other of which it is now attainable: 1. The covenant of works, which absolves a man that never brake it, which is, as when one among men, or before mens court, is declared to be free, because he was never owing the debt. 2. The covenant of grace, that provides a Cautioner to pay the sinner's debt, upon whose payment thereof, had recourse to by faith, there is access in law to the sinner to call for absolution: Even as it is in mens courts, though the principal debitor hath nothing to pay, yet if the cautioner pay the debt, it is the principal debitor's clearing; and if he should be again charged to pay the debt, his immediate defence would be, that the cautioner had paid it already; So is it here, the Lord hath borrowed, and made ufe of this way, that is used among men, to make the mystery of justification, which paffeth in the court of God, the more clear to us: it is as if one should allege, that such a person is owing so much, and he should say, I cannot
not be charged with it, and upon what ground? no, because I am not owing the debt, but because such a one has paid it for me; so says the apostle, Rom. viii. 34. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who shall condemn? It is Christ that died, &c. The defence proposed before the tribunal of God, is Christ dying, and that is as much as he hath paid the price, or debt; who then can charge it on the principal debtor? And the frame and contexture of the words shews, that it is a judicial procedure; for they suppose a charge or libel, and a sentence; and the meritorious cause of the sentence of abso-

'curity is, that Christ hath died.  

2dly, If we consider the nature of the two covenants, and compare them together, it will be clear, the Papists confound the two covenants; for works to them is the condition of both covenants, making ufe of that place, Matth. xix. 17, 21. Keep the commandments; if thou wilt be perfect, fall all thou hast, and give to the poor; quite con-

trary to the scope of it: For therein Christ is putting the man to a thing impoible to himself, to bring him to see the necessity of a Mediator, and discover his unfoundness, when he will not forego his great poffeffions for him: But the scripture doth clearly difference the covenant of grace, and the covenant of works, that they are opposed; for the covenant of works faith, Do this and live; and the covenant of grace faith, If thou shalt believe with thy heart in the Lord Jesus, and confess with thy mouth, thou shalt be saved; and therefore the account of one's being justified in the covenant of grace, must be different from the account whereon one is justified in the covenant of works, otherways they could not be opposite; the covenant of works respects the inherent righteous-

ness, as the condition; the covenant of grace re-

spects faith, taking hold of the righteousness of Christ; and therefore his righteousness must justify, as being in him without us, and as imputed to us: it cannot be our righteousness within, that ju-

"ifies; for so, it should be the fame with the co-

venant of works; for though Christ did procure inherent righteousness to us, it makes no differ-

ence in the condition itself, which is works.

3dly, It will be clear, if we consider how the scripture speaks of Christ's righteousness becoming ours, even as our sins became Christ's, and was the cause (if we may so speak) of his condemnation; that is, as he became liable to the curse, that as he stood a legal person in our room, he became guilty, and liable to the payment of our debt; for otherways it is abomination once to speak of his condemnation; and if his righteousness be-

come ours, as our sin became his, then certainly his righteousness is the cause of our justification, as it is in him inherently, and in us by imputation only. The blasphemy of Antinomians is most de-

testable, and not at all pleaded for, even by Pa-

pists; and therefore we stand not on it here. Now our sin became Christ's by imputation, therefore his righteousness must be ours the same way: If it then were asked, How we are justified? The text answers, He shall justify many, because he shall bear their iniquities: the prophet makes his suf-

ferings to be the antecedent, whereof our justification is the consequent; for his bearing of our ini-

quities is given as a reason of our justification; this is also clear, 2 Cor. v. ult. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteous of God in him: in which words the Spirit of the Lord doth so explain, bound and in-

culate this, that there can be no rational exception against it, nor evasion from it; He was made sin, that is, a sin-offering, or an offering for our sin, though there was no guile found in his mouth; though he had no sin, neither was capable of sin, yet he was made a sacrifice for our sin: as he was made sin, so are we made the righteousness of God in him. If any should ask, What is it to be made righteous? the apostle answers, Even as Christ was made sin, the same way are we made righteous; and that is, by imputation of Christ's righteousnes to us, and not by our own merit; we have no more merit than he had sin: But as he was ac-

counted to be the sinner, though free of sin in his own person; so a believing sinner is accounted righteous, though without any merit in himself, because God hath engaged in his covenant, to make Christ's righteousnes forthcoming to the believer: Though that were enough, yet the Spirit of the Lord addeth a further word, in him, to an-

swer that question, Whether Christ hath procured inherent holiness to us, that thereby we may be justified? No, faith he, that is not the way; our righteousness is in him, and not inherent in us: even as the sin imputed to Christ is inherently in us: so the righteousness, whereby we are justified, is inherently in him.

4thly, It may be clear from this, that frequently it is called a righteousness that is attained by faith, and that it is opposed to our own rightous-

ness and working; now it cannot be conceived, how we can get a righteousness by faith, but by pleading that his righteousness may be imputed unto
unto us, Rom. iii. 22. It is called the righteousness which is by faith; and ver. 25. Whom God hath set forth for a propitiation, through faith in his blood; and chap. iv. ver. 5. To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness: Faith taking hold of his righteousness offered to sinners in the gospel, his righteousness so taken hold of, becomes a propitiation to pacify God towards the sinner, as if he had satisfied in his own person: Even as if a company of men had been out in rebellion, and a proclamation of pardon comes forth from the king, because he is satisfied by a great friend, who hath paid their ransom: Which proclamation of pardon runs on these terms, Whoever will lay down arms, and come in, and accept of the king's pardon, that is procured, and made offer of, shall be acquitted of the guilt of rebellion, and received into favour; who, whenever they are challenged, will plead their abolution on that friend's procurement, and offered on such terms in the proclamation: Now suppose (as I hinted before, not long ago) that when these rebels have yielded themselves, and accepted of the terms, if any of them should be called to answer at the bar, or the king's bench, as being challenged for his rebellion; his answer and defence would be, That such a proclamation was made to us, and I laid down my arms, and accepted of the pardon; this in justice would be admitted, and sustained as relevant, because that procurement or procured pardon becomes the person's, according to the terms of the proclamation: It is even so here, we are rebels to God, Christ Jesus steps in, as the great Friend of sinners, and satisfied justice; and thereupon the proclamation comes out, as it is, Acts xiii. 38, 39. Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses: When the sinner is arraigned before the tribunal of God, he hath two acts of his faith; one that submits to God, and to his way of abolving sinners, and another that pleads for abolution, not on the terms of his own innocency, but on the terms on which Christ's satisfaction is made offer to him; and so faith justifies, as it takes hold of the meritorious cause, and builds its defence at God's bar, on Christ's righteousness alone; it is the procurement of the Mediator that it pleads upon, and in this sense the imputed righteousness of Christ, and the righteousness of faith, are one and the same, because faith takes hold of the righteousness without us, which can be no other but the righteousness of Christ.

5thly, It is clear from the plain and direct expressions of scripture to this purpose; take but these few, as Rom. iv. 3. and 22. compared with Gen. xv. 6. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness; he had the promise of Christ to come, and received and rested on it: it was not his faith, but the promise of the Messiah rested on by faith, that was imputed to him for righteousness; and ver. 6. Even as David describeth the blessedness of the man to whom God imputed righteousness without works; It is not, Blessed is the man who is holy, (though such a man is seriously studying to be holy, albeit not in order to his justification thereby) but blessed is he to whom righteousness is imputed without works; and he confirms it from, Psal. xxxii. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputes righteousness, tho' he have it not in himself, and to whom he imputes not sin, though he have it in himself; so, 2 Cor. v. 19. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. Jesus Christ is the Reconciler of the world to God by his own merit; being God and Man in one Person, the efficacy of his sufferings reconcileth the world of the elect: and how is this purchased reconciliation applied? By not imputing their trespasses unto them. That which here is called justification, is there called not imputing of transgression, through that righteousness which Christ hath purchased, or through offering up of himself a sacrifice to God, to satisfy his justice.

6thly, We might say, That this way of justification, through the imputation of Christ's righteousness, ought to be admitted according to Papists own grounds; For, 1. they grant that young children, who cannot merit, are justified and admitted to glory by Christ's merit, as the immediate and proxime cause of their justification; and why not also of those that are at age? Is he not the common cause? what absurdity is in the one more than in the other? Is not the justification of both alike free? Though there be difference in the manner of application, yet in the meritorious Cause there is no difference; and seeing to children, Christ is the meritorious cause of their justification, why not also to these come to age? 2. They will grant an imputation of the righteousness and merits of other
other saints to them that want of their own, as to the removal of temporal plagues, and the taking them out of purgatory; and if they grant that there may be an imputation of the merits of saints, why deny they the imputation of the merits of Christ, as to the removal of eternal wrath? Is there any probability, that there can be any imputation of the one, and not an imputation of the other? 3. They allow an imputation of Christ's merits, as to the procuring of the first grace, without all faith apprehending him; and if, by their own doctrine, it be not absurd to speak of Christ's merit, as to the infusing of grace at first, why shall it be thought absurd to speak of Christ's merit, as to the procuring of glory? 4. They grant, that there is an imputation of Christ's righteousness, as to the procuring of glory, in a higher degree, (though they say, that it is a far better life, which comes by our own works) and why not, as to the procuring of glory, in a lower degree, yea, both of grace and glory, and of every good thing? We have insisted on this the more, 1. Because it is the main foundation of our faith, and the end of it, and the great scope of the gospel. 2. Because there are so many mistakes about this, and a gross mistake in this is remediless, when we come before God. Even before the tribunal of men, if we make a wrong defence, it hazards our cause; so is it here, for to have a hiding-place in Christ, and under the covert of his righteousness, is our only defence before the dreadful tribunal of God. 3. Because it serves much to clear this truth; for we would have you knowing, that it is not enough to speak of Christ's merit, as the cause of our friendship with God; a Papist will do that, who yet leaneth not to Christ's merits alone, but to his own, at least in part, and in conjunction with Christ's; and therefore we would now and then speak of this, because there is such horrible ignorance of it, though a fundamental truth. How many gay honest folks (as they are called and accounted) are there among us, that cannot tell how they came to be justified, or what is the ground which they have to rest on, if they were going to die? Is it not absurd, that men should be called Protestants, and live so long under the clear light of the gospel, and yet be ignorant of this main point of the Protestant religion?

Therefore, 1. Make this Use of it, to inform yourselves in the causes of your justification, and to turn them over into questions and answers to yourselves; so that if ye ask, what is the efficient cause of justification? It is God the Party offended. What is the final cause of it? It is his glory. What is the meritorious cause? It is Christ's merits, or his righteousness imputed to us. What is the inward instrumental cause? It is faith, &c. according to the solid answer given in our Catechism, to that question, What is justification? It is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardonneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone; where the efficient cause is God's free grace, Christ's righteousness the only meritorious cause, and the only inward instrumental cause, faith alone; the formal cause, God's pardoning our sin, and accepting of us as righteous. Remember well, that it is not Christ's righteousness, as having a merit in it, to procure inherent righteousness, but as it is imputed unto us, and accounted ours, that justifies us; thus ye will remember the difference betwixt Christ's righteousness and our own. And as for the external instrumental cause, it is holden out in these words of our Catechism, in the description of faith, as he is offered to us in the gospel: all these causes must in ordinary dispensation concur to our justification, and the pardoning of our sins. The 2d Use serves to teach us to be on our guard against the Popish error of justification by works: though we are here mercifully kept free, yet the land is tempted in several corners of it, to shuffle by Christ's righteousness, and to bring in mens own righteousness or holiness, as the ground of their acceptance before God. There are some spotlings of it within a few miles to this place; and since this error draws souls away from that which is their right and only defence before God, that is Christ's righteousness, it cannot but ruin them; which should make you all to look well about you, and upon this account to abhor it: It is one of the great delusions of the man of sin, which being once admitted, will, with your own consent, bring you again in bondage to a covenant of works. 2. Others will say, That they have a good heart to God, and they mind well, though it is but little they do do, Others will thank God, that they have been kept from gross evils, and that he hath helped them to pray, and to wait on ordinances; and tho'
S E R M. LVII.

Isaiah livi. 11. ———By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

T H E S E words shew the great scope and design of the covenant of redemption, and of Christ's sufferings agreed upon therein, which have been so much in offset in the former verses; and that in a word, that there may be a ground laid down, how a sinner may be justified; therefore there is the greater need, that this point be well studied, in all the causes of it.

It follows now, that we consider this part of the words, which holds out the mean, by which this benefit is made ours, and that is, by his knowledge, which holds out the instrumental Cause of our justification; it is ordinarily so called, and we see no cogent reason inducing us to a change of the designation. Faith here is called Knowledge, not as if it were a bare speculative notion, such as devils may have; but because knowledge is a notable antecedent to faith, and faith is consequent to, and supposes preceding knowledge, as we may see, Rom. x. How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? Thus, faith is express by knowledge, John xviii. 3. This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, &c. Now, it cannot be eternal life, to know, by a mere notional or speculative knowledge, for several reprobate men exceed many believers in this; but it is to know so, as to believe in God, and to rest on the Mediator for life through him, as it is, 2 Pet. i. 3. He hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him, &c. Mere speculative knowledge cannot be the condition of the promises, for they are made to the man that believes; which believing, takes in, not only the act of the mind, knowing and assenting, but of the will, confenting and closing with the Object known: And this will be the more clear from these:

X x 2.

two,
two, 1. That by knowledge here, is meant that by which justification is made ours, or applied to us, and that which intitles us to it: Now, mere speculative knowledge doth not that, but it is faith embracing him, who is made known. 2. If we compare that which is attributed to knowledge here, with that which is attributed to faith elsewhere, Rom. v. 1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God; and Rom. iii. 25. He is the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus; we will find, that what is called Knowledge here, is called Faith there: so that we may, without hesitation, take the meaning of the words thus, My righteous Servant shall, by faith in him, justify many, who, by his bearing of their iniquities, shall be absolved and set free. Therefore, what is spoken of knowledge in the doctrine, we may look on it as agreeing to, and meant of faith.

We shall here insist a little on this Doctrine, which is implied in the words, That justification through faith, or the obtaining of the pardon of sin, through Christ’s righteousness, taken hold of by faith, doth necessarily presuppose knowledge in the person that may expect it; or thus, Faith, where it is saving, and such as justifies, hath always knowledge going along with it, otherwise faith could not be called Knowledge; there may be knowledge without faith, but there can be no faith without knowledge; and so consequently a sinner cannot expect justification without knowledge. For making out of this, ye may consider these things. 1. Faith is of itself nothing, but as it lays hold on some object. How can faith lay hold on an object, except it know it? as the word is, Rom. x. How can they believe, except they hear? Can any person rest on an unknown Mediator? That sure were not faith, but a blind guessing; it is just, as if ye should say that ye believe such a thing, when yet ye cannot at all tell what it is; which is not faith, but, as I said, blind guessing and presumption. 2. Faith, as justifying, is always holden forth, as making use of, and giving credit to that which is revealed in the word: hence, we that hear the gospel, have that revealed to us therein, binding us to the belief of it, that Heathens have not; as it is, Rom. i. 17. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, where it is necessarily presupposed, that the revealing of the righteousness of the gospel (which here comprehends the knowing of it) must go before faith; and as a person grows in faith, he grows in the knowledge of it. Hence also, they are said to be strong in faith,

Verse 11.
who are strong in knowledge; and they are said to be weak in knowledge, who are weak in faith, Rom. xiv. 1. and xv. 1. Because they knew not that the ceremonial law was taken away, and particularly the difference of meats, and so durst not hazard on some things, which their Christian liberty gave them access to. 3. Consider, that, in justification, God would have a sinner to proceed as a man doth, who tables his defence before an earthly tribunal of justice; who, if he plead well, and on relevant grounds, he comes the better to: and as it is dangerous, in a weighty cause depending, to have an ignorant advocate, who puts in a wrong defence, so is it here, and in this case, to be ignorant; hence, Rom. x. it is given, as the reason of the Jews miscarriage in the point of justification; But being ignorant of the righteousness of God, they went about to establish their own righteousness; that is, being ignorant of that which God would accept for righteousness, they thought to patch up one of their own: and so is it still, for some hope to come speed by their prayers, others think to come speed by their good heart to God; a third fort puts in their good works, if not in express words, yet practically; all which may let us see the necessity of knowledge to justification, 4. Consider, that there must be repentance, ere a sinner can be justified, which supposes knowledge; for he must needs know his sin, and that his own righteousness will not do his turn: and so long as he is ignorant, he cannot repent, nor renounce his own righteousness; for, while he is so, he cannot know what is sin, and what is not sin; what is faith, and what is presumption, unleas it be by guess; and folk will never be suitably affected with sin by guess. The apostle Paul says, (as it is, Rom. vii. 9.) Before the law came, I was alive; that is, before it came to him, in the knowledge of its spiritual meaning, and broad extent of it: while he was a Pharisee, he was alive, in his own esteem; But when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died; he then saw need of another righteousness than his own. We preach to you sometimes the necessity of repentance, and of your being humbled; and that ye should deny your own righteousness, and betake you to Christ’s; but, except there be knowledge of your unrighteousness, it is as if we should bid you walk where there is no spot seen. 5. Look forward to the duties of holiness, which are necessary, though not to justify you, yet that ye may live as it becomes justified persons; though not to make your peace; yet to glorify God, and to keep up friendship with him. Now, can any know, or do duties, who are ignorant? Hence it comes
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It is said in verse 11:

If it be asked here, What knowledge is requisite to justification? I would speak a word to this question, not so much for satisfying of curiosity, but for your instruction, who are more ignorant; and to shew the necessity of the thing and to give you a short view of these things that are necessary to be known about this matter: and therefore,

1. Ye must know God that justifies you, ere ye can be justified; as it is, John xvii. 3. This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and him whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ; if ever ye be absolved before such a judicatory, ye must know your Judge; that there is one God, that he is one in his essence, and that there are three Persons, yet so, as the Trinity of Persons doth not hinder or obstruct the unity or oneness of the God-head, 1 John v. 7. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. Study then to know God, who is your Judge, not so much out of curiosity, seeking to know how the Persons differ, as to their manner of subsisting, as how to be fixed in the faith of the thing. 2. Ye would know yourselves, and what may be charged on you before God; can men carry rightly before a judge, or before a judicatory, if they know not how it stands with them: and this will lead to know the state and case wherein ye were made at first, and the covenant of works, which God made with man at the beginning, when he gave to him the promise of life upon condition of obedience; and that ye are liable to the curse, due for the breach of that law and covenant, else ye will never know your hazard; and knowing the breach of the law, and covenant of works, it will make you, through God’s blessing, to seek after justification, which otherwise ye will never do. And so ye are to know, that the first covenant was broken by Adam, and that this made him and all his posterity liable to the curse, as being guilty of his transgression; and this takes in the knowledge of original sin, even of the sinful estate wherein ye were born, and of your actual sins. 3. Ye must know, how a sinner, lying in such a state and case under sin and wrath, may come, to be absolved; and this leads you in to know, that there is a new covenant made through a Mediator, in which there is a promise of life and salvation, through believing in him, which, Rom. x. is called the law of faith, which gives a sinner ground of hope to be justified by the righteousness of a Cautioner, and leads him in to know the defence, that he may and ought to plead upon before
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perish: For the curse lies at the door, and we are so to repent, as that, with grief, and hatred of sin, we turn from it unto God, with full purpose of heart, and endeavour after new obedience. 6. There is also a necessity of the knowledge of Christ’s ordinances (though not absolutely) in order to justification; to know the sacraments, and how they represent Christ, and the benefits that come by him; and how they do ratify and confirm the believer’s right to him, and these good things promised through him. Let me intreat you, believers, and as many as look for justification, to study throughly to know, that these things are necessary to be known; even to know God, and yourselves, and what ye may be justly charged with before him, that your mouths may be stopped; to know Jesus Christ, and his offices, (for ye can never upon any ground expect justification, except ye know who hath procured it) to know what God requires of these who are justified: In a word, study so much as may bring you to know your lost estate, and the remedy thereof, and how to found your defence, when ye come before God, &c. And if ye would study thus to know God, and know yourselves, and your natural condition, and Jesus Christ, and the way how ye come to be justified through him, and your duty to him, and so make a catechism to yourselves out of these few heads, it was a short and sure way to come to knowledge.

The 2d Use serves for reproof and conviction to them that ly still in ignorance, which is a most sinful and dangerous condition: for if knowledge be a duty, and if ignorance be a sin, and such a sin as hazards the soul, then what a woful case are many of you in, who now hear me? lay aside all other sins, I would be ashamed to speak of the great ignorance that is among you! how many of you are there, that cannot give any tolerable account of your Catechism? who know not your natural state and condition, nor the way how to come at peace with God, nor any ground for your faith to rest upon, nor Christ, nor his offices? and alas, if it be so, what better are ye than heathens? sure ye are much worse, because ye have despised knowledge; can the gospel give you faith, to whom it never gave knowledge. There are several sorts of persons, to whom I would here speak a word. 1. There are some that never lay the necessity of knowledge to heart, betwixt whom and Turks and Pagans there is in this respect but little difference; and yet such will
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will be ready to say, We live, and do as well as we may; that there may not be a quarrel or controversy betwixt God and us: But is it possible but there must be a quarrel, if it were but on this alone account, that ye think there is none? O that ye would consider, what a sin ignorance is! when the devil appeared in the world, he made it a great part of his first work, to extinguish and put out the light of knowledge, and by this means he labours still to keep folk in ignorance; hence the apostle says, 2 Cor. iii. If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them who are lost, whose eyes the god of this world hath blinded. Profanity and error are great baits and snares, but ignorance carries more to hell than both these do; for ignorance foltereth and cherisheth, if it do not also beget, profanity and error; as the apostle Peter intimates, when he says, that the ignorant or unlearned, swearing, or pervert the scriptures unto their own destruction. Much ignorance, and conceit of knowledge, will soon and easily shake people loose, and make them a prey to error, and also to profanity: Must not ignorance then be an evil thing, when it leads the way to so many other sins, and at last to hell and destruction? Hence it is, at least in part, that the kingdom of Satan is called the kingdom of darkness; and sure they are very proper subjects of his kingdom, who are ignorant: And is it possible, think ye, that people can think of God, or of their duty aright, or have any solid peace, who are in that condition? They are just like to one sleeping on the top of a mast, in great hazard, and yet utterly senseless of it. Look but to two or three words, that hold out the dreadful danger and hazard of your condition, who are ignorant; The first is that, 2 Thess. i. Christ will come in flaming fire, to render vengeance to all them that know not God, and obey not the gospel. The 2d is, Hof. iv. My people perish for want of knowledge. The 3d is, Isa. xxvii. This is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them, will have no mercy upon them. Think not then little of ignorance, neither think yourselves to be well, so long as ye live in it. A 2d fort will readily grant, that ignorance is an evil thing, and that knowledge is good and desirable; but yet they take no pains to have their ignorance cured and removed, or to attain knowledge: they are secure and confident, that poor, blind and wretched, and make their ignorance a cloak of excuse for their other sins; hence some will say, We have been poor ignorant bodies, and we hope that God will not lay sin to our charge. O what delusion and desperate danger is here! If it be asked, (and it would become us well to enquire into it) What can be the reason of this horribly gross ignorance that is among us, which is such, that we are almost hopeless of many of you, if some extraordinary work of God's Spirit fall not in on your minds and hearts? Very readily these go together, the most ignorant are the most senseless, and the most ignorant are the most confident. The causes of this may be several; as, 1. Folks undervaluing the practice of religion; let the most ignorant persons be in earnest in the practice of religion, and they will readily through God's blessing, as seek after, so come at some measure of knowledge: This is a fountain of your ignorance, that ye are not in earnest in religion; Then shall ye know (faith the prophet Hosea, chap. vii.) if ye follow on to know the Lord. Exhute not your ignorance, and want of knowledge, by your not being book-learned, by your want of time and leisure, and by other such shifts: If ye were in good earnest, and serious in seeking after the knowledge of the things of religion, ye would soon in some measure understand, and take them up; but ye come and hear, and sit for an hour, and take no heed what is spoken: ye will not read the Catechism, nor ask a question about what ye are ignorant of, nor will take heed to what is said, when others are examined. There are none of you, but if ye were in earnest, ye might come to some good measure of knowledge; because they were sometime as ignorant as ye are, and as incapable, who yet have come to knowledge, and these will be witnesses against you, who had the same gospel, the same motives and means of knowledge, and yet continued still in your ignorance. 2. Many of you do not ponder the sinfulness and hazard of ignorance; for ye continue as secure, as if God would never lay it to your charge. Ye would not readily ly in the sin of drunkennes, or of swearing, or of any other such things, without a challenge; but ye can ly still in your ignorance, and in the sin of not profiting by the means which ye are under, and yet dispence with yourselves therein; and ye secretly lay within yourselves, If we be well otherwise, we hope knowledge will not be requir- ed of us: But will not, think ye, God's image be required to be in you? Are not faith, repen- tance and holiness required? and can any of these, I pray, be without knowledge? Do ye see any touched with the impression of their sin and guilt, but as soon they fall to the study of knowledge?
and who continue to be ignorant, but stupid bodies, that never saw their hazard? which is an ordinary companion and attendant of ignorance. A 3d cause is negligence and slothfulness. The wise man says, The hand of the diligent maketh rich, and slothfulness brings on poverty: in every thing, if ye compare folks together, ye will find, that wherever any are soberly and seriously diligent, God blesses it; so that we may gather and conclude their diligence from their knowledge.

There are many here, who I suppose are very ignorant; but let me ask you, What time and pains have ye ever bestowed on the study of knowledge? Ye hear the preaching, and ye read a chapter of the Bible now and then; but that is not enough, for ye may be present here, and yet not hear to any purpose. How many come to hear the preaching of the word, from whom, through their own fault, devils come, as so many crows on new-fownd land, and snatch away the word that is sown? and it is never known that such seed was sown. For most part, ye either hear negligently, or ye quickly forget all that ye hear; ye never speak of it in your families, neither take ye any time for reading and pondering the Catechism. How many of you did ever set any days or hours apart to study knowledge? Ye will cry out against pretended enthusiasms and inspirations, as delusions, and there is good reason for it; but, how shall ye get knowledge, if ye will be at no pains for it? Your practice says, ye expect it should come by immediate inspiration, without all use of ordinary and appointed means. 4. Others will say, that they would fain know, but they are very dull and incapable; and it is often true, that they are so: But, are such in earnest, out of love to knowledge, studying to come by it? It is said of some, 2 Thess. ii. Because they received not the truth in love, God gave them up to strong delusions, to believe a lie. There are many, who study knowledge, but not from a right principle, nor from a right motive; it may be, that they may get their token to come to the Lord's Supper, to eschew shame when they are examined, or that they may be able to talk: It is just with God to let such want knowledge. 5. Folks go not about the use of ordinary means, as having therein need of God's blessing, and of his Spirit to help them rightly to take up his mysteries; they pray not for knowledge as God's gift. How many of you, when ye take up the Catechism to read, fall down on your knees to seek God's blessing on your reading thereof! When John is speaking of the benefits that come by Christ, this is by him put in a-

mong the rest, And hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, 1 John v. 20. If therefore ye would know God aright, seek his blessing in the use of his own appointed means. Ye study the knowledge of God, even as if ye were to read a common human history; if ye seek a blessing to your meat, why seek ye not a blessing on the means of knowledge, which is as necessary to the soul, as meat is to the belly? how often hath David such a suit to God, when he says, Psal. cxix. Open mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law; teach me thy statutes, &c. he thought no shame to pray for knowledge; sure if we prayed more for it, we would thrive better in it. Other reasons fall in, in the directions, entant the study of knowledge, which we shall give you.

The 3d Use serves to exhort you to, and to commend the study of knowledge to you, as a necessary, commendable, and profitable duty. Can we hope to prevail with you in any thing, if we prevail not with you in this, even to lay the necessity of knowledge to heart? will not the excellency of the Object, the authority of God commanding it, the advantages that come by it, with the prejudices that attend and follow the want of it, commend it to you? will ye ever be persuaded to seek after faith and holiness, that will not be persuaded to study knowledge? It is a wonder how many of you can have the confidence to say, that ye keep your hearts to God, when ye are so void of the very form of religion, which much confits in knowledge; for it is that wherein it is kept, and whereby through grace it is suitably exercised. Sure ye can never have the power of religion, who want the form of it; therefore let me exhort you all, especially such of you as have some eminency above others, to study knowledge: let the more aged study it; and let those that are younger study it; if the time of youth go over without it, it is one to many if ever the loss be recovered and made up again; and ye that can read, have time and parts, study the knowledge of God; many of you will be very sad and dreadful spectacles in the great day, when ye shall be charged with this, that ye never judged precious Jesus Christ to be of that much worth, as once to put you seriously to the study to know him; this is no fable nor fiction, but a sad truth. When men value and esteem any thing, be it science or art, they will be at pains and give diligence to know it, because they prize it; therefore, for helping you to the study of knowledge, take these few directions, and a caveat or two in
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Isaiah liii.

Sermon.

1. Let none put themselves without the reach of this exhortation, let none say, We are too old to learn; if ever ye think to be justified by Christ, knowledge concerns you greatly. It were a commendable thing to see aged men and women carefully and conscientiously reading the Catechism; and could we once but get you under the impression, and conviction of this as a duty, we would think that much were gained. 2. Spend some time about this in private weekly; it may be, it were fit that some of you did so daily, ye spend much more idly; if ye knew the hazard of ignorance, ye would even take some set time to study knowledge, and this would not need to be counted any wronging of, or incroaching upon your Christian liberty; as ye flint some time for prayer, may ye not flint some time to read the Catechism, or to go to some family where ye that cannot read yourselves, may have one to read it to you? And to several, I may add for a help to this, that, were ye to take a part of that time, which ye spend on tippling; is it not obvious, that the person that is absent in the hoftler-house, or in the tavern, is ordinarily the most stupidly ignorant? Tell me whether it is better spent time to take an hour, in two or three days, and bestow it in reading of the scriptures, or of some good and edifying book, whereby you may come to knowledge, and to grow in it, than to take several hours, every day almoft, in an ale-house, or tavern. Many of you, as it is well known, will fit down in such places at four or five o'clock in the afternoon, and continue till eight or nine at night; how much ye drink, I speak not of that, but fare ye mispend much precious time, and much debauch your own spirits? What if, by such doings, ye be laying a ground for this challenge? Sir, you lived in such a place, under such means, and you spent your time so and so; you might have been freed from the guilt of mispending of your time, and of your ignorance, had you taken a part, or the whole time, and spent it in the study of knowledge; would not this be better for your families, better for your souls, and better for your bodies? Would it not prevent much sin, and much reproach? And therefore, if ye lay weight on the good of soul and body, beloee more time in the study of knowledge: that sin of tippling brings along with it many other sins; and were it not well done, to put some duty, and even this duty in particular, in the place of it? Others of you that drink and tipple not away so much of your time, ye know what time ye spend walking on the plain-stones, and in pratling and talking of idle and anedifying subjects, in drolling and jeeting, or in sitting over the fire (as we use to speak) in your houses; doing nothing; will ye take some of that time, in seeking after knowledge? Others of you, that follow your callings, will ye leave your work a little sooner than ye use to do, on the Saturday evening, or take the Sabbath afternoon for this work? Some of you, may study knowledge in your shops, others may do it in your houses, if ye would but give over to walk up and down the streets, when ye are not at all called to do so. 3. Make conscience to improve the means of knowledge which ye have; read especially the Bible, and also the grounds of religion, compendiously summed in the Catechisms lesser and larger. Ye have frequent preaching and catechizing; at every diet study to get something, and put every day's leffon to another, and this would, through God's blessing, incrase your knowledge; for instance, take this leffon to day, that nothing can justify but the righteousness of Christ, laid hold on by faith; take another with you the next day, and let not one day's lefson shoulder out another: let the husband and the wife, the children and servants, compare their notes, or what they remember of sermons together; be often speaking of what ye hear in your families. Ye have, it may be, some neighbours, who would be content that ye come in to them; or, it may be, they have children who can help you: make use of such means and persons, and that would both help your knowledge, and evidence your love (when sincerely gone about) to the communion of saints. 4. Be about the use of the means, with an eye to God for his blessing on them; pray to him for opened eyes, and, that he would give you an understanding to know him. There is a stupiditv in many of you, that makes all that ye hear to go by you, and as it were to slide off you; so that if it were known, some would wonder how there could be such ignorance amongst them that frequently hear the gospel. 5. Any light of knowledge that ye have, be tender of it in your practice; God ordinarily refufeth to give more, where that which he hath given is not used well; where men do not like to retain God in their knowledge, or where the truth is detained in unrighteousness, it provokest God to give you up to a prohibate mind, as the apostile tells us, Rom. i. If ye continue in my word, (says Christ, John viii. 31, 32.) then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free: And, John vii. 17. If any man will do his will, be shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.
He that goeth conscientiously and constantly about the duties of holiness that he knows, (for he must make conscience of all, else he will thrive in none) he shall increase in knowledge.

There are also some things that more generally conduce to knowledge, as that, magistrates, ministers, elders, parents, masters of schools, and masters of families do their respective duties. 1. Then let me desire you to see to the education of the youth; I mean of the children of the meanest and worst, to bring them up at schools: it is fad to consider, how many young ones of graceless, careless, and ignorant parents, are brought up to the devil; it were no great busines to help them that cannot entertain them at school. O that we were all willing to contribute for such a work! it might help them to know something of God, or to be civil at least; it would also remove the excuse, that we frequently meet with from many, to wit, that they cannot read; and if parents will not be seriously concerned in this themselves, God requires us to take some course to bring up their young ones in the knowledge of God; and truly, if this external easy mean be neglected, we can expect little of other means; if this were minded, it might be an ornament to the city, and the burden would not be so very great, if it were once put to the trial. Will ye that are parents, and able, be induced to put your children to the school? If ye be not able, make it known. I know there are some who will drink more in one day sometimes, than would keep their children at the school for many days; and I suppose, that there are but few who can say, that it is mere necessity that lets them. Are there any of you that can say, ye would fain bring up your children at school, and ye spake to magistrates, or to church-sessions for help, and that it was refused you? It is your part to seek for help, that are really unable, and it lieth on you, to see to it yourselves who are able; and while ye neither do yourselves, nor seek help from others, ye are utterly inexcusable.

2. I would commend to you the necessity of using private means, and that ye would not lay all the weight of your profiting on your being in the church, and on your coming to be catechised, or to hear others catechised; but give diligence in private to come to knowledge, else it will be long ere ye thrive and profit. Ye that are in one family, when ye come home from sermon, confer together now and then,

and be speaking of what ye hear on the Sabbath, betwixt Sabbath-days; and when ye can get any to answer a doubt or question to you, make use of the opportunity: though we could go through you all twice a year in examination and catechising, it will not do your turn if this be neglected: But as ye would be careful to keep your children at school, so ye would be busy in your families, at all family-duties; this was wont to be the old way of God's people, and it would make hearing of sermons profitable. 3. I would commend you to careful attendance on, and conscientious use-making of the ministry of the word, the great ordinary mean of knowledge; and that ye who are most concerned would be thinking of the great convenience, if not necessity, of more labourers. If it were known how numerous a people we are; how many hundreds every one, who labours among you, hath under his charge: how little time we have to go through you all particularly, and what abounding ignorance there is in the greatest part of the people; I suppose it would be thought, that the charge of any one of us might require two to discharge it suitably; which we do not press to spare our own labour and pains, but to flir you up to a necessary duty: the effecting of the thing is not impossible, and it is a work and duty well becoming you, and worthy of you; the Lord himself persuade you to mind it. I shall close up all with a caveat or two. 1. Beware of placing over much religion in knowledge, or of being put up with your knowledge, when ye attain to any measure of it. 2. Beware of counting mere knowledge to be faith; but when ye come to know and discern the object, be sure that ye take hold of, and rest upon that which the eye of faith discerns: the land is, to say fo, afar off, and within the vail; cast therefore the anchor of hope there. 3. Beware of thinking, that ye merely of yourselves can acquire any sound and saving knowledge, or pump it out of yourselves: we bid you not study the knowledge of God, as ye study other common things; there are here requisite humility, fear, reverence, love to the truth, dependence on God, prayer to him, and acknowledgment of him: let me again seriously commend this study to you, and through it let me commend Christ unto you, whom to know is life eternal; to him be praise for ever.
SERMON LVIII.

Ifaiah liii. II.

By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

If any thing should be studied with diligence, sure this should be, even to be clear how we may come to be at peace with God, how we may be absolved and justified, when we come to reckon before him: it is no curiosity, singly and diligently to make enquiry here, altho' the unfaithfulnes and pride of some unhappy men have made the study of it unpleasant, by corrupting and making crooked God's plain and straight way of making of our peace with him, and of our being justified before him.

We entred to speak of the great mids, or mean by which this righteousnes, that justifies a sinner before God, is derived; or, by which we come to have a title to, and an interest in it: and as we have great need to be clear in that righteousnes, which will be a relevant defence before the tribunal of God's justice, that we propose not one that will be casten and rejected; so we have as great need to be clear in the way, how that righteousnes may be made ours, seeing many are, and will be condemned, notwithstanding of Christ's righteousnes, because there is no application of it made by them to themselves.

We shew you, that by Knowledge here is meant Faith, as the scriptures in the New Testament (which hold out justification to be by faith) make clear, it being evident, that no merely speculative knowledge can intitle to this justification; yet it is called knowledge, 1. Because faith necessarily presupposes knowledge: if it be not a part of it, yet certainly it is a necessary antecedent of it. 2. Because, though there be not an evidence to reason in all the things which we believe, yet there is a certainty; and faith gets this name, because it makes men certain of these things which it takes up, as if it were a science or knowledge. 3. To distinguish it from all other sorts of knowledge, and to bound and include it, mostly at least, within this Object, Christ, to speak so; therefore it is said, By his knowledge, or as the word is better rendred, By the knowledge of him shall my righteous Servant justify many; which shews, that it is not knowledge taken largely that, he means of, but knowledge with respect to Christ, the great Object of it, as it is, 1 Cor. ii. 2. I determined to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucifed. And faith Paul, Phil. iii. 8. I count all things to be but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord. Ye will ask then, how doth knowledge and faith differ, seeing wherever there is faith there is knowledge, though not contrariwise, wherever there is knowledge there is faith? We shall not stand upon this, but shortly we conceive, that knowledge discovers the Object, and faith takes hold of the Object, and rests upon it; knowledge is the eye of the new creature, discovering such a thing; and faith is the hand that catcheth hold of, and grips that thing that is discovered: or thus, knowledge is like to the head, that takes up such a thing in a notion; and faith is as the heart, that closes with it; therefore, Rom. x. it is said, With the heart man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. I know many take knowledge for faith, which at the best is but historical faith; and it is as if a man who is a drowning should see another casting in a rope to him, and he sees and knows such a thing, but takes no hold of it, and therefore perishes; or, as a sea-man's discovering good ground to cast anchor on, but not casting forth his anchor thereon, is exposed to the violence of the storm, and so ship-wrecked; knowledge discovers the ground, but faith casts the anchor on it; it is much to get you brought up to know, but much more to get you brought to know the difference that is betwixt faith and knowledge; hence it is, that many say, that they believed ever since they knew good by ill, because they never looked on faith, but as the knowing, professing and declaring such a thing to be true; but it is one thing to know a phycian, and another thing to employ him, and to make use of his physic.

We spake of this general doctrine, that knowledge is a necessary thing, as being presupposd to faith, and particularly the knowledge of Jesus Christ; therefore it is called, The knowledge of him, because it is Christ's Jesus which is the Object of faith; therefore our study of knowledge would especially be with reference to him. There are two sorts of persons, who are not utterly ignornant, and yet are defective here. 1. There are some that love and study to be scholars, but Christ is not the object of their knowledge; it is not the knowledge spoken of here, to be well skilled in philosophy, in tongues, in mathematicks, &c. which we discourage not; nor is it to be able, speculatively
versely to dispute and discourse of divinity, but it is the knowledge of Christ's righteousness, and to study experimentally and practically to make use of it, and to be clothed with it; as one says well, If we know him, we know all; and if we know not him, though we know all, we know nothing; therefore, though Paul was a very learned man, and a great scholar, yet, says he, 1 Cor. ii. 2. I
determined to know nothing among you, but Christ. Jesus, and him crucified. A second sort, are such as want not affection to truth, nor love to piety, yet to them the studying of this doctrine, that concerns Christ, and his offices, is somewhat tasteless and wearisome; they would be at hearing of duties, cases and questions spoken of, though we may in some respect say, that none of these are objects of faith properly, at least as it is justifying, but means and midfes to guide you to make use of, and to carry suitably to the privileges that are in the covenant. Hence many have good affection, that are very shallow in their knowledge of Christ, and think but little of preaching, and books that hold out the doctrine concerning Christ, because they come not in so close to practical things and cases; whereas, if they were better settled in the knowledge of Christ, it would answer all their cases, and loose all their questions and doubts: let therefore these be well looked to, and this, by no means, be nauseated or slighted; though knowledge of the truths of God be necessary, yet it is especially the knowledge of Christ that is necessary.

There is another thing supposed here, that serves to clear the doctrine of justification, which we shall observe, ere we speak of faith itself particularly, because it is antecedent to it; and it is this, That the gospel is a necessary external mean for promoting our justification: For faith, as we have shewed, presupposes knowledge, and knowledge presupposes the revelation of God's mind in the gospel; and if knowledge be necessary to faith, then the gospel must be necessary, for it is said, Rom. i. 17. That by it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; there is great need to observe all the steps of this doctrine well, and this among the rest; the gospel is not a thing that bred in nature's breath, or a thing that men by nature have the knowledge of; nay, it is foolishness to the wise men of the world, as we may see, 1 Cor. i. We (says the apostle) preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the Greeks foolishness; Faith comes by hearing, as it is, Rom. x. 17. and hearing by the word of God; and in the same chap. ver. 14, 15. How shall they be-

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live in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? where the apostle clearly and convincingly infers the necessity of a lawfully called ministry for preaching of the gospel, and for carrying on the work of justifying and saving faith; the reason is, because, if there be a necessity of faith, and if no faith can be without knowledge, then there must necessarily be something to reveal it: I speak here of the ordinary way of God's revealing himself; what he may do extraordinarily towards dumb and deaf persons, to idiots and young children, I meddle not with that, but leave it to himself as a secret, which he thinketh not fit to impart to us. I call the gospel the external mean of promoting our justification, in four respects, 1. Because it lays before us the object of our faith; for in it (as it is, Rom. i. 17.) is the righteousness of God revealed, &c. and Rom. iii. 21, 22. Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, &c. We would never know the way how a sinner comes to be at peace with God, and to be justified without the gospel. 2. Because it not only reveals the object of faith, but it makes offer of it; and hereby a sinner, that hears the gospel, hath warrant to embrace and make use of Jesus Christ's righteousness, and to rest upon it: and therefore, if temptation should say to the sinner, Though Christ died, what is that for thee? Faith hath this to reply, The gospel calls me, and that warrants me to come to him, and to make use of his death; the promise, as it is, Acts ii. is to as many as the Lord our God shall call: and in this respect, the promise is our right and evident, whereby we come to have a claim to Christ. 3. Because God makes use of the word preached, for engaging of sinners to Christ, and for making them to take hold of him; it is true, that it is not powerful of itself, and without the Spirit, yet it is the ordinary mean that God makes use of; therefore faith the apostle, 2 Cor. x. 4. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, though they be weak in themselves, yet they are mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds. And in this respect, the gospel not only offers life, but, through God's blessing, as a mean, begets life; and, by the Spirit accompanying it, sinners are engaged to take hold of Christ, and to rest on him for salvation. 4. Because this word being taken hold of, and closed with, contains the pronouncing of the sinners absolution, or of his absolving sentence; when he says, If thou believest, thou shalt be justified and saved; upon supposition of believing, the
The 1st Use serves to clear that which we hinted at before, in naming this for a cause of justification; though it be the external instrumental cause, yet it is a cause.

The 2d Use serves to teach you to put a price on the gospel; it is the bane both of profane securer sinners, and of a sort of vain and giddy people among us; that they prize not the preaching of the gospel, as the external instrumental cause, that concurs in the justification of sinners; but if ever ye be absoved, ye will be beholden to this preached gospel; I will not say always to the preaching, but sure to the gospel that is preached. This on the one hand reproves these who will be ready to say, that they have faith, who yet never knew the gospel to do them good, and such also who seldom come to hear, and who never care for preaching; and upon the other hand, it reproves these, who, when they fall a tottering, reeling and wavering, and begin to incline to error, caufet at the preaching of the gospel, having, it may be, beflightet it before in their hearts; whither when Satan once gets them, he tosses them in a great measure, as he pleafes, and makes them fo giddy, by frequent turning about, that they scarcely leave to themselves a foot-broad of scripture-ground to fland upon: But as ye reftect the glory of Christ, the good of your fouls, and your abfolution before God, esteem much of the gospel; for it is the power of God to falfation: and if ever ye come to heaven, it will be by this gospel, as the external mean; these nations that never heard it will think you to be most desperately wicked and miserable, who have had it, and yet fo unworthily flighted it.

For prefling of this Use a little, take Two or Three doctrines in reference to it. 1. Walk under the conviction of the necefly of the gospel, for there is no abfolution without it; it is true, God might have taken another way, but on the fuppoftion, that he hath appointed faith to be a mids to justification, and that faith fupposes knowledge, then certainly knowledge doth fuppose a necefly of hearing the gospel: ye will never value preaching, nor any other ordinance of Christ, if ye fee not a necefly of them, and know them not to be for your good. 2. Study to know what is the main end and design of, and what is the advantage that is to be had by the ordinances. Many come to the preaching of the gospel, to hear and learn some lefion for informing their judgment; some come to get directions, in reference to some particular duty; fome to get a doubt loofed; none of which are to be defallowed in themselves, but rather in fo far to be commended: but how few come to it, as to a mean to carry on, and bring about their justification; and to bring them out of black nature, into a state of grace? It is the fum of Paul’s preaching, and the end of it, as the divine hislorian fhes, Acts xxvi. 18. To open blind eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of fins, and an inheritance among them that are fhantified by faith that is in him. 3. Aim in your practice to carry on this design, even to put a clofe to the treaty a- gent justification betwixt God and you. When ye come to the preaching, and hear us declare in the name of the Lord, that a believing finner hath access to have his fen taken away, and to be ju- fified through the imputation of Chrift’s righte- oufnefs; ye would step to, hearing this procla- mation made of the pardon of fen, by one of Chrift’s ambassadors in his name, and accept of, embrace and cordially close with it, if it were juf; just now, at this very occasion. 4. This would be the great design both of preachers and hearers; of preachers, to follow that way of preaching moft, that lays open the mystery of faith in Chrift; and of hearers, to love that way of preaching bet, not fo much that which fills the head with notions, as that which ferves to help to clofe a bargain betwixt God and you. This was Paul’s great design in preaching, as we fee, 1 Cor. ii. 2. and 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. He no doubt taught o- other things, but he comphended all in this, or levelled all at this, as the scope; and this was his main design in his preaching, and prefling of o- ther things.

The 3d use serves to make a fad discovery of many of you. Is this gospel the external mean of justification? Then fee if ye ever knew any bene- fit ye got by it. Ye will be like to fay, that ye are in friendfhip with God; but hoow I pray you came ye by it? There is little change to the bet- ter in your knowledge, and as little odds in your practice: ye are as much given to covetoufnefs, tipling, lyin, swearing, pride, vanity, &c, as ever; and are these, think ye, the fruits of juftifi- cation? do ye think that to be juftification, which is neither from the word, nor conform to it? If God would commend this to your hearts, I think it might alarm you to more serious thoughts of your condition. I put it to your con- Science, if ye can conceive any difference be-
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teousnes for life; which (to speak so) is the inward instrumental cause, taking hold of the external, and as I said of Christ in it. 5. And lastly follows God's imputing the righteousness of Christ to the sinner, and abaving him, by virtue of that righteousness, from the guilt of his sin, as if he had never sinned.

In speaking of this inward instrumental cause, Five things would be cleared, which we suppose are implied in the words. 1. The necessity of faith, holden out, as the mean, by which justification is come by. 2. The immediate Object of justifying faith, and that is Christ's sufferings, or Jefus Christ, as suffering, travelling in soul, and paying our debt. 3. The act of this faith on this Object, which is not a bare speculative knowledge, or a meer historical faith, but something that really acts on Christ, with respect to his sufferings. 4. The effect of this faith, taking hold on Christ and his sufferings, and that is justification, which is not the making a sinner to be just by inherent righteousness, but the actual abasing of him from the guilt of sin, and from God's curse; the changing of his state, and the bringing him from under the curse, into good terms with God. 5. The manner how faith concurs in producing, or bringing about this effect; wherein we have this general, that faith hath a peculiar influence in the justification of a sinner, that no good work nor any other grace hath. There is none of all these things but it is in this miserably declined generation (wherein the devil fets himself mightily to obscure truth, as the Lord by the gospel doth clear it) controverted: I shall only endeavour to clear the positive part, and let you see what is truth in these things, whereby ye may be brought to discover and abhor the errors that are contrary thereto.

The 1st Doctrine then is this, That, before a man can be justified and abased from the curse of God due to him for sin, there is a necessity of faith in our Lord Jefus Christ. This is clear from the words, and from what hath been said in the opening of them up; if it be by his knowledge, or the knowledge of him, that many are justified; then it cannot be that they are justified before they come to the knowledge of him, or from eternity. Only in passing, take two or three words of advertisement, and then we shall confirm the doctrine, 1. When we speak of justification, it is in respect of our being abased and freed, not from the pollution of sin, but from the guilt of it, as it makes us obnoxious to the curse: the
Isaiah lxi.

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the clearing of the effect will clear this more;
2. When we speak of faith, it is not to be understood as it were a declaration, or manifestation of our justification; or, it is not to be understood of faith in the height of full assurance, and as it is a plerophory, but of faith, as it is a laying hold upon Christ. 
3. When we speak of the necessity of faith in order to justification, we mean not, as if there were such an absolute necessity of it in itself, that God could not do otherwise, or justify without it; but we mean a necessity, in respect of the order which God hath laid down, and held forth in the Gospel, which is by the knowledge of, his Son to justify many. And from these considerations many arguments of our adversaries are made very little regardable, yea utterly void.

For confirmation of the doctrine, then, 1. Consider these scriptures, that express limit, confine and bound justification and pardon of sin to the person that doth believe: So, Rom. i. 17. The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith, Rom. iii. 24, 25. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, &c. Col. iii. 22. God hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. Acts xiii. 38, 39. Through this Man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins, and by him, all that believe are justified from all things; from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. Consult these scriptures, and ye will find, that Paul clears both these questions. 1. Who are justified? All that believe. 2. When are they justified? When they believe. 2dly, Consider these scriptures, that place all men before believing into a state of wrath, and they will furnish a second ground for this; as, John iii. 18. He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already; he lies under the covenant of works, and is condemned, as considered in himself tho’ God may have a purpose to make a change of his state: So, Eph. ii. 1, 2, 3. You hath been quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked, and were children of wrath even as others, &c. And ver. 12, 13. We were sometimes without Christ, being aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, without hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made near by the blood of Christ. And ver. 8. 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. It is faith that gives the title, which we had not before. 3dly, Consider, that the scriptures do expressly make believing to precede justification, and make justification to be an effect, or rather a consequent of faith, to which faith necessarily concurs; as all these places, which say, that we are justified by faith in Christ, do manifest: as, Rom. v. 1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; which place looks on faith’s concurring in justification with a kind of causality. Rom. iii. 22, 25. The righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe, &c. Eph. ii. 8. By grace are ye saved, through faith. See more fully to this purpose, Gal. ii. 16. where the Apostle designeth, as it were, sets himself to confirm this truth; for, speaking of the way how sinners come to be justified, and as it were entering into the debate, he says, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even so we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ. In which place we have three things considerable to make out the point; 1. He compares the concurring of faith to justification, in the covenant of grace, to the concurring of works to justification, or to the obtaining of life, in the covenant of works; as works did justify in the covenant of works, so does faith in the covenant of grace: Now certainly the performing of works, in the covenant of works, behoved to go before justification that way; therefore the want of works made Adam to come short of justification by works. 2. He looks on faith, and speaks of it, as concurring to justification, with a respect to Christ; and never looks on it in this matter, as a grace considered in, and by itself, but as acting on Christ in a peculiar manner. 3. In express words, he says, We have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified; which clearly implies, that they could not be justified before they believed: And we may well and easily gather, that the justification here meant is that which is real and actual, and not the declaring of a man to be justified to himself, else works might declare a man to be justified to himself, as well as faith; but he contradistinguishes faith and works here, and opposes the one to the other.

The first use serves for clearing of this truth,
S E R M O N  LIX.

Isaiah lxi. 11.--- _By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities._

Some further and more serious apprehensions of our sin and hazard would make the reading of these words to be refreshing and welcome to us; the stayed thoughts of an arrestment laid upon us, to appear before God's tribunal, and to reckon for our debt, would make us think much of a Cautioner; the want whereof makes the glad tidings of the gospel to be tasteless, and without relish: This is the great scope of these words, to shew how a summoned sinner, arraigned at God's bar, may be justified, and freed from the charge he is liable to; for, says the prophet, _By his knowledge, who is the Surety of the covenant, shall many be justified._ That which we last left at was this, That faith in Christ, receiving and resting on him, is necessary for the attaining of justification; so that in God's way, these are so linked and knit together, that never one shall be justified but a believer; tho' there be a righteousness in Christ, yet it shall be derived and communicated to none, come to age, but to these who by faith betake themselves to Christ: What way the Lord takes with infants, elect infants I mean, is not that which the prophet aims to speak of; tho' it be Christ's righteousness that is communicated to them, as well as it is to them who are at age, yet as to the manner of communicating it, God hath his own way, which we know not.

Now that we may learn, in speaking to these truths, not only to get some light for informing of our judgment, but also some help for our practice; take two or three _ifes_, ere we proceed any further.

The 1st _ife_ then is, _To let you see the absolute necessity of believing in Christ Jesus, and that it is as necessary for the attaining of our justification, as Christ's dying is_; for our justification is an effect flowing from several causes, and the want of any of them will mar it: There must necessarily be a concurrence of them all, to bring it about; and therefore, tho' there be an excellent worth in Christ's righteousness, yet there is a necessity of faith, to lay hold upon it, and to make it ours: God's order in the covenant bears this out, wherein he hath knit the promise of pardon of sin, and of justification, to faith, and resting on Christ; and there is good reason for it, as, 1. The Lord will have a sinner to know what he is obliged to Christ, which faith contributes much unto; for faith stands not in the way of the freedom of justification, but rather commends it; for the Lord would have us know, that we hold our life...
Isaiah liii.

Verse 11.

law, for they stumbled at that stumbling stone; when they had gone a part of the way, as it were, and come to the stone of believing, there they fell and brake their necks. Hence there are many, who promise heaven to themselves, and think that they have done something for it, who yet never laid hold on Christ for their justification; but let me tell you, that though ye could go the greatest length in holiness that ever any did since Adam’s fall, it will not avail you, if ye neglect faith in Christ: I say not this to disuade you from the duties of holiness, God forbid; but to divert you from seeking justification by them: study the duties of holiness, but seek always by any means to be found in Christ, and in his righteousness, and not in the righteousness of your duties, as to your justification. It is true none that have any tolerable measure of knowledge, will profess down-right, that they lean to holy duties; yet many are ignorant, that they cannot distinguish betwixt faith and works; and there are not a few, who have a hope of heaven, such as it is, who never knew any thing of the exercise of believing. A 3d sort are these, who, because of some common favours that they have received, as evidences of God’s care and kindness, conclude their justification. It may be some have had now and then deep convictions, or have win to tears in prayer, or as a sermon: Others, it may be, have had some joy now and then, at hearing the word: Others will, it may be, dream of such and such heavenly things, and have, as they suppose, a vision of them in their sleep, and some joy will follow on it when they are awaked: Others may have met with many deliveries by sea and land, and God hath dealt well with them, and their children, in external things; but alas, these things may befall unbelievers: not one of them, nor all of them together, if there be no more, will justify; ye would rather try these things, whether they be found, and evidences of special love, or not, by your believing; if they have faith in Christ carried along with them, it is well; if ye can say, that after ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, and that your joy followed upon your closing with, and resting upon Christ, ye have no reason to question it; but where such tastes go before, and are without believing, it is suspicious like; there are many of you that have multitudes of things, that ye lean to, beside Christ, and never seriously put yourselves to the trial, whether ye be indeed fled to him.

2. Use. We would commend this to you, as a ground of trial of yourselves, if ye be justified, if
ye have seriously taken with your sin, and embrac'd God's offer of the righteousness of Christ, and retold on it; make this once sure, that ye have been sensible of sin, that ye have been beaten from your own righteousness, that ye have fled to Jesus Christ, and closed with his righteousness offered in the gospel; then this will natively follow, that by his knowledge thou art justified; his word speaks it out plain to thee: It may be that some think this to be a broad mark, and that others will think it narrow; yet it is a solid mark, and no other thing is or can be a mark, but as it implies this. Though some may preformatiously gather from it a broad conclusion, yet it will be found to be as straiting and searching a mark, when well considered, as other marks and evidences are, that we cannot at first so easily lay hold upon; and therefore we would say, that it is not every one that thinks he believes, but it is such as really believe, who have this evidence; and for preventing of mistakes, we shall follow this evidence of justification, to wit, faith, to the very rise of it. 1. It supposes a charge and summons, as it were, given to the persons, to appear before God. 2. There is a sentence discovered, standing against them, and over their heads, by the covenant of works: now, what can ye say to these two? where I desire you not so much to speak your light, as your practice and experience; what a charge, or summons was put in your hands? Have ye read the libel of your sins? and have ye seen the breaches of the law, and your liability to the curse of God for the same? If so, then what means the good opinion that many of you have of yourselves? This is even the thing that the apostle faith of himself before his conversation, Rom. vii. 9. Before the law came, I was alive, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died: That is, before the charge was put in my hand, and I summoned to appear before God's bar, I had a good opinion of myself, and I thought that all was well; but when I came to take up the law in the spiritual meaning, and broad extent of it, I saw my self lost, and gone, and that conceit fell. These three then usually precede faith. 1. That a person hath had a good opinion of himself. 2. That this person is summoned or charged to answer at God's bar. 3. That the person is made to pass sentence on himself, as lost and undone, by reason of the law's sentence, and curse standing over his head unrepealed. Now, how hath it been with you as to these? The most part are quite of another disposition than Paul was; they think they are well enough, because they never discovered their rotten condition: but try well how it is with you; go in and see if ever ye discovered in yourselves. 1. An inclination to establish your own righteousness. 2. Was ye ever under a work of the law humbling you? And 3. Was ye ever in your own apprehensions lost? If so, then ye are such as Christ came to call. 2dly. In the next room consider what ye betook yourselves to, for answering that charge, and for a remedy of that lost condition; there is no remedy but the offer of Christ's righteousness in the gospel. Some being charged with guilt, betake themselves to prayer, and that is well done in so far; but if ye hold there, and go no farther, it is not right: it is here, as it was with thefe, who lived under the law, who, when they had finned, made use of sacrifices, and the great part held there, and went no further; whereas the believer looked through the sacrifices to Christ: so, if ye hold at prayer, and other duties, and go no further, these will not profit you; but know ye what it is to go to prayer, and in prayer to go to Christ, and rest on his sacrifice for your acceptance? I fear there is great ignorance here; the most part know not what they have done, when they were charged; or, if they did anything, they prayed; or, if they went any further on, they look to the promise of God's mercy, but that is not far enough gone. How many such are there, who have made their prayer their only intercessor, and have presumed to step in on God's mercy, without a Mediator? 3dly. Suppose that ye have betaken yourselves to Christ, as to the remedy; come on, and try how your union hath been made up with him, where did ye seek and find him? Christ Jesus is to be found in the gospel, in the ministry of the word; therefore that is put in on good reason in the definition of faith given to us in the Catechism, That it is a resting on him, as he is offered in the gospel: but I fear and suppose that many have another Christ (to speak so) whom they have gotten without knowing, or making any use of the word, or offer of the gospel, which is the power of God for salvation to them that believe. 4thly. Wherewith did ye take hold on him? or how did ye act on him? Was it by faith, or not? There are many, who act on him as they think by prayer, not as the meritorious cause, but as the efficient cause of justification, praying for pity and pardon from him; but this is not to take hold of Christ's righteousness by faith: others think, that if they can love and serve him, and please him with duties, they will engage him to give them pardon; and in this they have to (speak so) an underhand covenant of works: they will do
something to please the Mediator, and wherein they come short, they expect that he will make it up; and this is very ordinary in practice. If ye ask some, What hope have ye of justification? They will answer, Through Christ’s righteousness, and that is good in so far; but ask them again, How they will get it? They will answer, That they will do what they do or may, and they hope that he will pity them: ye would look in upon your own hearts, and see whether it be not secretly making something of this kind the ground of your title to Christ, and of your justification. And yet all this may be, and often is in them; that will not, flock to the way of grace, nor submit themselves to the righteousness of God. They will speak of Christ’s righteousness, and yet they will needs give him some compensation; and so come, never really, to renounce their own righteousness, and to flee unto his, and to hold it up as their defence before God. Take but an impartial view of these steps, and many of you, who suppose that ye are believers, will not be found to be so, nor justified before God, because ye lay not claim to it by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law.

Ufe 3d. There is here ground for all that neglect Christ, and do not by faith take hold of him, to look for a most dreadful sentence; and ground for others, who seek righteousness through faith, to look for a most comfortable sentence. If, then, Is this a truth, that justification is through faith in Christ? Then many of you are not justified, and, if the Lord prevent it not, ye will never be justified: If so, then it must be a most dreadful thing, not to believe. If ye would know what is your condition, ye may read it, John iii. 18, 36. He that believeth not is condemned already, and he shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him; and, Gal. ii. 10. As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. If ye really believed this, many of you would be under horror, to hear what a sad condition ye are in, even condemned already, and having the wrath and curse of God abiding on you; because the word curseth and condemneth all that are not in Christ by faith. This, I fear, belongs to very many, who are altogether secure and careless, and yet are in reputation among them; and is it not very sad to be professing fair, to have the offer of life, and to be treating with God about your peace, and yet to be still in the state of enmity with him, so that if death were within twenty four hours march to you, ye could have nothing to expect, but the ratifying of this sentence of God’s curse upon you? We are sure there is as much in this, as might, in reason, put you, by all means, to study, 1. To be believers, for without faith ye are never over the borders of God’s curse; which may lay a chafe to you, and put you to the necessity of fleeing to Christ for refuge. 2. To take some pains to try, whether ye be in faith, as the apostle exhorts, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove yourselves; whether ye not; your own selves, how that Christ is in you; except ye be reprobates? His meaning is, Know ye not, that this is a truth, that ye are in a reprobate or unapproved condition, except Christ be in you; and Christ is in none, but in the believer: If so, ought ye not to try yourselves, if ye be in the faith, if ye be believers. There is no ordinary way, to win to the sure and comfortable knowledge of it, but by trial; and if ye be not believers, is there not reason, and is it not of your concernment, to endeavour, by trial, to come to the knowledge of it? As this is ground of terror to the unbeliever, so it is ground of notable consolation to the believer, who, if he were even put to the reckoning with Paul, I was a blasphemer, a persecuter, injurious; yet here is hope for him, that he shall be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness; but Christ’s believing in Christ will obtain justification to such a person; his righteousness taken hold of, and put on by faith, as is pleasing and acceptable to God, as the unrighteousness of the sinner is displeasing to him. This was it that made David to sing sweetly, Psal. xxxii. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth no iniquity; to wit, through the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, as the apostle clears, Rom. iv. As the first branch of the use shews the necessity of faith for chaising sinners to Christ, fo this branch is a sweet motive to draw them to him; and if there were more sensible sinners amongst us, whose own righteousness, mitigates them; and who are brought to that pass, that the Jaylor and Peter’s hearers were in, crying out, What shall we do to be saved? This word, Believe in the Lord Jesus, and ye shall be saved, would make them come in cheerful, as he did, from the brink, not only of temporal, but of eternal death. ’Tis this faith, by which we have access to stand before God: ye would therefore be earnestly intreated to betake yourselves to it, and to Jesus Christ by it, for your pardon and peace, even for your justification before God.

2dly, Consider these words, as they hold out
**Isaiah lxxiii.**

The Object of justifying faith, which is the great thing in them, even to describe justifying faith, as to its Object, and effect, and in its concurring to produce this effect: and here there are mistakes and errors, both in the doctrinal and practical part of all these. 1. The Object of it then is him, Jesus Christ, the knowledge of him, or the faith of him, or faith in him, as other scriptures have it; or, looking more nearly to the words, it is faith in him, as suffering, as satisfying for sin, as in soul-travel, bearing our iniquities. Hence observe, That Christ Jesus, his righteousness, holden forth in God's promise of free grace, is the native and proper Object, that saving and justifying faith takes hold of, and rests upon; or, to the same purpose, The saving grace of faith, that justifies, is that faith that does peculiarly apply and rest upon Christ, Jesus, holden forth in God's promise in the gospel, as the righteousness of a sinner that believes on him; hence the prophet calleth it here, not knowledge more generally taken, but the knowledge of him, and that as he is holden out in this chapter, to wit, as Surety for sinners, and suffering for their debt. This will be clear, if we consider all these scriptures that make offer of the pardon of sin; for it is offered, not on condition of faith in a more general notion of it, but on condition of faith in him; so Rom. v. 22, 24, 25. The righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe: Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. Rom. v. 1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, John i. 12. To as many as received him, he gave power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believe in his name; where the faith that hath the promise of justification, and the privilege of adoption annexed to it, is called the receiving of Christ, and believing on his name.

It must also be cleared, and confirmed by good reason. 1. Faith does not justify as it is considered in itself, as an act, but as it relates to, and unites with Christ, as the meritorious cause of justification. 2. Neither does faith justify as it looks to every object which the word holds forth, but as it respects Christ offered in the gospel, whom it receiveth, because there is no other thing that can bear the soul's weight and burden: Therefore he, as offered in the gospel, must be the Object of faith, at it is saving and justifying. 3. The terms of the covenant, and God's offer clears it also; for God's offer of justification is not on these terms, that a

**Verse 11.**

That Christ Jesus, his righteousness, holden forth in God's promise of free grace, is the native and proper Object, that saving and justifying faith takes hold of, and rests upon; or, to the same purpose, The saving grace of faith, that justifies, is that faith that does peculiarly apply and rest upon Christ, Jesus, holden forth in God's promise in the gospel, as the righteousness of a sinner that believes on him; hence the prophet calleth it here, not knowledge more generally taken, but the knowledge of him, and that as he is holden out in this chapter, to wit, as Surety for sinners, and suffering for their debt. This will be clear, if we consider all these scriptures that make offer of the pardon of sin; for it is offered, not on condition of faith in a more general notion of it, but on condition of faith in him; so Rom. v. 22, 24, 25. The righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe: Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. Rom. v. 1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, John i. 12. To as many as received him, he gave power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believe in his name; where the faith that hath the promise of justification, and the privilege of adoption annexed to it, is called the receiving of Christ, and believing on his name.

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**Serm. LIX.**

The Use of this doctrine are such, as serve both to clear the nature of faith, and to direct us in our practice.

The first Use then serves to clear the truth; as the Papists corrupt many truths, so they corrupt this truth, concerning the nature of justifying and saving faith, in these Three, 1. In the Object. 2: In the Subject. 3. In the Act of it. As for the Object of this faith, they make it to be every thing that God reveals, and sometimes they take in their own Traditions; the reason is, because they give not faith a causality in justification, nor the capacity and place of a thing, acting on Christ peculiarly; but take it in as a common grace, or at the best, as a grace that is radical, and gives life to other graces, but never as taking hold of Christ's righteousness: which quite overturns the way of justification through faith in him; for faith, that layeth not hold on his righteousness cannot justify: and their making the Object of faith to be so broad, doth enervate both the immediate merit of Christ's righteousness, and the exercice of faith on it. 1b. Then we grant, that there is a historical faith requisite, as to the whole word of God; yet we say, That the faith that justifies is properly that faith that singles out the righteousness of Christ, and takes hold of it: so that it is not our believing that the world was made, that there will be a day of judgment, nor our believing that a Saviour of sinners is come into the world, and hath suffered; but that justifies; but it is a closing with, a receiving of, and resting on that Saviour; a fingerling out of the promise that makes offer of him, (as for instance, where it is said, If thou believe on the Lord Jesus, thou shalt be saved) and pitching on that, and resting on him holden out in the promise: faith gives the soul footing here, whereas before, its case was very desperate. 2dly, We may clear what we are to look to, as the object of justifying and saving faith, by our putting in these three words, or expressions in the doctrine, to wit, Christ Jesus his righteousness holden forth in the promise of God's...
Ifaiah liii.

**Verse II.**

*a sinner might take hold of such a promise; but, considering that the promise is of grace, and his acceptance is of grace, as is often repeated, Eph. i. ii. and iii. chapters, these Three are the great warrant that a sinner hath to roll himself over on a complete Mediator; a faithful God promising to answer all grounds of fears, doubts and jealousies; and free grace, which answers all challenges that may come in to hinder his closing with, and resting on the promise: For if it should be said, How darest thou lay hold upon the promise? The answer is, It is free, it is not the mount that may not be touched, but it is Jefus the Mediator of the new co-venant, &c. It is grace that is the rife, the end, and the condition of it: These are the Three on which faith yields itself to Christ, and which are the Object of it, on which it dare hazard, and on which it does hazard; and these Three are revealed in the gospel of the grace of him that is faithful, and cannot deny himself: May we not then say, O sinners, if ye will believe, that ye have a good resting-place, a.fure Foundation, a tried Corner-stone, as it is, Ifa. xxviii., cited Rom. ix.*

1. There is need of taking in Christ's righteousness, because it is our defence at the bar of God's justice; even as a debitor, whose debt the cautioner hath paid, hath that to answer when he is charged for it, that his cautioner hath paid it.

2. There is need to take in this, *Holden forth in God's promise in the gospel; because, tho' Christ be the Object of justifying faith, and his righteousness be the ground of the soul's defence before God, yet God's promise must be looked on by faith, for the ufe-making of Christ and his righteousness, and as a warrant to rest on him, and to expect justification through him:* And thus faith hath Christ's fulnes, or his full and complete satisfaction, for righteousness; and God's faithfulness impledged, that the believer shall be accepted through it: And it is on this ground, that faith sometimes looks on God as able, sometimes as faithful; therefore it is said, Heb. vii. 25. *He is able to save to the uttermost;* and Heb. i. *Sarah judged him faithful who had promised:* Whereupon there is a closing with the offer in the promise, and a looking to obtain that which is promised, as if they had a righteousness of their own; and this the apostle calls the law of faith, Rom. iii. 27. *because to justification there is, beside the payment of the debt, a law, declaring the man to be absolved, requisite; and the sinner, having God's offer and promise, that upon his accepting of Christ's righteousness he shall be justified, instructs that his debt is paid by his Cautioner, and that therefore he ought to be, and is accordingly absolved:* And *tho' God's promise be not so properly a law, yet the apostle calleth it so, and it is a solid defence to the soul that is fled to Christ, who may thus reafon,* I have no righteousness of my own, but Christ's righteousness by proclamation is offered to me in the gospel, and I have heartily received it, and God is faithful to make good his promise to me; and this looks to Christ as he is revealed in the gospel.

3. There is need to put in this word, *The promise of God's free grace; because hereby the sinner is made to fee whence the promise came, and of what nature it is, and gives ground to take hold of the promise, and of that which is made offer of in it.* The promise is of free grace, therefore it is always called the covenant of grace; so, Rom. iv. 16. *It is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the-fee:* For, if it were not of grace, the sinner would never think himself sure, nor would he know if such

**Serm. LIX.**

God's free grace in the gospel; and which are needful to be taken in, though it be not always necessary, that we be explicit in the uptaking of them.

1. There is need of taking in Christ's righteousness, because it is our defence at the bar of God's justice; even as a debtor, whose debt the cautioner hath paid, hath that to answer when he is charged for it, that his cautioner hath paid it.

2. There is need to take in this, *Holden forth in God's promise in the gospel; because, tho' Christ be the Object of justifying faith, and his righteousness be the ground of the soul's defence before God, yet God's promise must be looked on by faith, for the ufe-making of Christ and his righteousness, and as a warrant to rest on him, and to expect justification through him:* And thus faith hath Christ's fulnes, or his full and complete satisfaction, for righteousness; and God's faithfulness impledged, that the believer shall be accepted through it: And it is on this ground, that faith sometimes looks on God as able, sometimes as faithful; therefore it is said, Heb. vii. 25. *He is able to save to the uttermost;* and Heb. i. *Sarah judged him faithful who had promised:* Whereupon there is a closing with the offer in the promise, and a looking to obtain that which is promised, as if they had a righteousness of their own; and this the apostle calls the law of faith, Rom. iii. 27. *because to justification there is, beside the payment of the debt, a law, declaring the man to be absolved, requisite; and the sinner, having God's offer and promise, that upon his accepting of Christ's righteousness he shall be justified, instructs that his debt is paid by his Cautioner, and that therefore he ought to be, and is accordingly absolved:* And *tho' God's promise be not so properly a law, yet the apostle calleth it so, and it is a solid defence to the soul that is fled to Christ, who may thus reafon,* I have no righteousness of my own, but Christ's righteousness by proclamation is offered to me in the gospel, and I have heartily received it, and God is faithful to make good his promise to me; and this looks to Christ as he is revealed in the gospel.

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SERMON LX.

Isaiah liii. II. — By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

Whether justifying faith lays hold on Christ as a Saviour and Priest only; or whether it lays hold on him, not only as a Priest to save, but also as a King to command? Though this doth not look at first blush to be of any great moment, and that such an inconsiderable like difference is not to be found upon; yet we will find that this last wants not its own influence on altering the common and ordinary, and (as we conceive) the solid received doctrine, concerning the way of justification, if we should admit it: And therefore we answer the Question from the Text, That Christ, considered as suffering, and bearing our sins, and as offering himself in a sacrifice, is the Object that justifying faith, as such, takes hold of; therefore the connexion of these two is clear in this verse. He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied: and by his knowledge shall many be justified; and again it is subjoined, as the reason why many shall by faith in him be justified, Because he shall bear their iniquities. By the knowledge of him that offered himself in a sacrifice, many are justified; and many are justified, because he bears their iniquities; which will infer this, that faith considers him as satisfying for the iniquities of his people, in its acting on him for justification, and pardon of sin. It is true, Christ's offices are not divided, and it is not true faith, if it take not hold of him, and make not use of him in all his offices: but as there are several evils in us, which his offices do meet with, and are suited unto, so should faith take hold of them, and make use of them for curing and removing of these evils: He is King, Priest, and Prophet; and faith takes hold of him, as a King, to command and subdue us to himself; as a Prophet, to illuminate us, and cure our blindness; and as a Priest, to satisfy divine justice, and to procure the pardon of sin; as we are not to separate, so we are not to confound these: We use not to say that Christ as a Prophet doth justify us, nor that as a Priest he doth illuminate us; no more should we, nor can we well say, that as a King he satisfied justice for us; the same blessed God is wise, right.
righteous, holy, faithful, just, merciful, &c. yet he is diversely considered in respect of our conceiving and ufe-making, according to our need; fo is it here. For clearing whereof, take these grounds. 1. The scripture speaks of, and points Christ out in his sufferings, as the Object of justifying faith, Rom. iii. 25. Whom God hath set forth for a propagation through faith in his blood: where the blood of Christ, and he as suffering, is purpoled as faith's Object: fo i Cor. i. We preach Christ crucified. 1. John ii. We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins: where he is holden forth in his sufferings, as the propitiation that faith layeth hold on, John iii. 14. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, fo must the Son of man be lifted up, that whatsoever believeth on him, &c. where Christ lifted up, and as dying on the cross, is made the Object of justifying faith; even as the brazen serpent lifted up was the object that they looked to, when they were stung, and cured. 2. It is also clear from the law's libelling and charging us for the debt of our sin, that makes us liable to condemnation; and faith being the mean of our justification, and abdication from the debt, it must needs look to the Cautioner's paying of our debt, and so answering the charge, which was done in his death; for he paid our debt, satisfied the penalty of the law, and came under the curse, in suffering death; as is clear, Gal. iii. the 10, ver., being compared with ver. 13. So, Rom. viii. 34. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies, who shall condemn? It is Christ that died; which is brought in as faith's answer to the charge. The charge cannot be denied; for we are guilty of so many sins, and therefore liable to condemnation; but, faith faith, Christ hath died: It proposes him dying as a satisfaction for answering the charge, and for obtaining of abdication. 3. Christ as suffering and satisfying justice is our righteousness, and therefore must be the Object of faith, as it is justifying, whereupon it pleads an abdication before the throne of God: fo that, when we come to plead and found our defence before God's throne, it is not on this, that Christ is a King, and hath subdued us; but it is on this ground, that he is our Priest, and hath satisfied justice for us, and paid our debt, and procured a discharge to us: So the apostle, speaking of Christ's sufferings, Col. ii. says, that he blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross: It is Christ as suffering that is the ground of our peace, and therefore faith as justifying must so consider him. Tho' we desire to move nothing needlessly, yet laying it once for a ground, that justifying faith lays hold on Christ as a King, this will follow as a consequence, and, as we suppose, as a reason, that our obedience to Christ as a King hath the same influence, and the same causality in our justification, that faith's resting on Christ's satisfying for us as a Priest hath; because as Christ's priestly office gives us a warrant to rest upon him for justification, so would his kingly office, (if it were the object of justifying faith as such) when taken hold of for our obedience, We have touched upon this, 1. That ye may see the warrantableness of this doctrine which is received in the churches of Christ, and that ye may consider Christ as the high Priest of your profession, and plead justification from his sacrifice, acting faith upon him accordingly. 2. That we may put a bar against the introducing of justification by works, under one pretext or another, how specious soever, seeing the scripture so directly opposes faith and works in our justification; for if we once admit that Christ as King, is the Object of justifying faith as such, it would overturn the distinct way of faith's acting upon Christ's righteousness, for answering the charge put in the sinner's hand by the law; and when the soul geteth a challenge for sin, would put it to look what obedience it hath given to Christ as a King, to answer that challenge or charge by; and would in the same manner also put the soul to gather the ground of its peace from the one, as well as from the other, that is, both from Christ's righteousness, and from its own obedience, not only as an evidence, but a social cause, or not only to its own sense, but as to the effect: But we leave this as a thing to be regretted, that when there is ground enough of stumbling, because of our ignorance and blindness, there should, and that very unnecessarily, be such new occasion of stumbling to souls cast in the way of faith.

We come now to speak of the Act of faith as justifying, called here knowledge, and the knowledge of him, to shew that it points at justifying faith; for if it were not so, it were the same with common knowledge, whereby we believe any history of the Bible: but this being justifying knowledge, it must be knowledge of another kind. We shall here clear, 1. Wherein the act of justifying faith consists. 2. Remove some mistakes about it, and make some use of it.

For the first, We suppose there are these four requisite, in, or to justifying faith, though not always in the same degree. 1. That there be a divine
Isaiah lxxi.

Serm. Lx.

Instruct knowledge in some measure of the object; an antecedent that faith presupposes, and for which cause faith gets the name of knowledge here and elsewhere in scripture, the antecedent being put for the consequent: For faith hath always knowledge with it, tho' knowledge hath not always faith.

2. That there be an antient to the thing known; as when we know that we are sinners, and that it is the blood of Christ that must cleanse us from sin, we must assent to the truth of these, as Christ says, John viii. If ye believe not Moses his writings, how shall ye believe my words? If ye assent not to the truth of what he hath written, how can ye believe my speaking? Both these are in the understanding; and if there be no more, this makes but historical faith. 3. When the soul knows it is a sinner, and under the curse, and that Christ is a Saviour, and that there is salvation to be gotten by such a mean, and that he is an able Saviour, and hath assented to the truth of these; there is a concurring of the heart to that truth conditionally proposed, and made offer of, that is, to receive Christ as he is offered in the gospel; which in scripture is called a receiving of him, John i. 12. To as many as received him, &c. And this is an act of the will, respecting Christ as offered, and a bargain proposed that will make the soul happy, where faith accepts. 4. There is a resting on Christ received as a good bargain, which is also an act of the heart, or will, called in scripture a committing ourselves to him, a leaning on him, or rolling ourselves up him; which we conceive to be the same that Paul hath, Phil. iii. 9. That I may be found in him: When the soul places its safety here, and lippens to Christ's righteousness alone, as contradistinguished to its own; these two last acts are properly the essence of faith as justifying, and they are well holden out in the Catechism, where faith is described to be a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Christ, as he is offered in the gospel. We shall illustrate it in a comparison made use of before, to this purpose: Suppose there were a number of rebels, that had incurred the prince's displeasure, and were guilty of treason by the law; suppose also the prince's son, or some courtier, hath satisfied for them, and procured their pardon and peace; upon which there comes out a proclamation, that if they will submit, and yield themselves, and lay down their arms, they shall be pardoned, and admitted to friendship, as if they had never rebelled: Those rebels must know, 1. That there is an act of favour past, and a proclamation made on such terms. 2. They must have a general faith and assent to the thing, and that there is no question but such a thing is done. 3. There is a consultation by the understanding with the will, if they will admit of, and receive it, and trust themselves to it, and then, 4. There is the heart's consenting to accept of the offer of grace, on the terms of the proclamation, and a resting on it, which is a lippening of their defence to it, that if ever they should be called to an account, they will make use of such an act of grace, and of the proclamation for their defence and safety, and lippin to it, and and to his faithfulness who made the proclamation; believing that he will fulfil his word and promise: It is just so here, in a sinner's acting faith for justification. We may instance and illustrate it also in the example of the prodigal, wherein we may find something of all this: When he had been in the height of his distraction and madness, in his natural condition, it is said, He came to himself, he knew and believed that there was meat enough in his father's house, and resolved to go home; upon his knowledge follows his resolution, and his will contends, I will arise and go, which supposes his faith of an offer of meat, on condition of his going; and then there is that whereon he grounds his defence, I will say, Father, I have sinned; I will disclaim all, and betake me to thy grace, implied in the word Father: He resolves to take his defence on this ground, and upon this comes home.

More particularly, 1. Knowledge of the object restit upon is necessary, Rom. x. How can they believe on him of whom they have not heard? It is not possible we can believe what we know not. And as every other step hath some doctrinal mistake, and some practical, so hath this. The doctrinal mistake is that error of Papists, unworthy to be refuted; they say, There is no knowledge requisite to faith; yea, some of their prime men have said, That faith is rather ignorance than knowledge; but surely then faith would not be called knowledge, if it might rather be defined ignorance; but this they maintain, to keep the people in ignorance of the gospel; and it is the ground of many more errors, and much delusion: It is even as if a blind man could go well in a slippery place, where are many pits; for knowledge is no less necessary to faith, than eyes are to such a man. The practical errors in this, are such as we find in many of you, who think ye can believe well; but ask, and put you to it, ye cannot tell what: Many of you are obstinate maintainers of implicit faith, while ye say, ye have faith, and yet cannot tell what it is, nor whereon it is grounded; but we say, that knowledge
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Isaiab liri.

Verse 11.

Sermon LX.

Serm. LX.

Isaiab liri.

Verse 11.

Ifuiah. 

And therefore, they know no other faith but this; yet if this were justifying faith, the devils should have it, for they believe and tremble; they believe there is a God, that Christ is the Son of God, that they that believe shall not perish, that God is faithful, &c. But this historical faith is not enough, 1. Because (as I just now said) it may be in reprobates and devils. 2. Because the scripture expressly differenceth this sort of faith, from saving faith; many were called believers, to whom Christ would not commit himself, as it is, John ii. 24. For, though they believe it to be truth which he spake, yet they resisted not on him; so in the parable of the tower, Matth. xiii. there are three grounds that receive the seed, which imports, in two of them at least, a kind of believing; but the fourth ground is only good. 3. Because this faith acts upon every revealed truth alike, and assents to all passages recorded in the Bible alike; as on, and to that, Paul left his cloak at Troad, and the like; as it acts on that, This is a faithful saying, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, and such like; but, according to that ground formerly given, faith, as it justifies, acts on Christ only; and therefore this bare assent to the truth of the word cannot be justifying faith, because it acts no otherways on Christ, than it doth upon other things; ye would therefore know a difference in your practice betwixt these two, the crediting the truth of a thing, and your actual receiving, and resting upon that truth: as for example, A man propofeth marriage to a woman, and the believes that he is in earnest, and not in scorn, yet there is a great difference betwixt that and her actual confenting to marry him; so is it here, the man may believe that Christ doth really make offer of himself to him, and yet be far from cordial receiving of him; or take it in the example made use of before, Suppose that some of the rebels we fpake of, believe the proclamation to be a truth, yet thinking it hard to be under the bands of government, they do not embrace it. If it be objected here, that the scripture often calls justifying faith a believing that Christ is the Son of God, which is no more than this assent of the judgment, or historical faith; For answer, it would be considered of whom the scripture there speaks. 1. It is of Jews for the most part, who had the faith of the Messiah generally among them: And no question, the believers of them, such as the profelyted eunuch, Martha, and Mary, had the faith of the Messiah's satisfying divine justice, and of their justification through his satisfaction: But the great question of the Jews was, Whether Jesus the Son of Mary was
the Messiah or not? and it being revealed, and believed that he was, the other followed, they rested on him of will, (to say so) as the Messiah. 2. Believing of Christ to be the Son of God, doth not exclude, but include their consenting to the receiving of Christ; but it holds forth also their assent to, and persuasion of that truth that was then debated, that he was indeed the promised Messiah, and the Son of God: for the devils confessed him to be the Son of God: and none will say, but there was more in their believing him to be the Son of God, than in the devils believing it, who never believe unto salvation, as they did. 3. Consider, that as sometimes knowledge is put for faith, so this assent may be put for faith, where yet more is implied in it; especially considering that, Rom. x. faith is called, faith of the heart, With the heart man believeth: Now, believing with the heart being an act of the will, these testimonies setting out faith to be a believing Christ to be the Son of God, must imply a7ippingen to him following upon it: we are therefore never to look on these places as comprehending a bare assent only, but as including also, and carrying along with it, the cordial receiving him, and of resting upon him.

For the 3d, to wit, the receiving Act of faith, which differs from the former, as we shew in the examples hinted at before; it looks to the covenant of redemption betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator; it accepts of the terms of the covenant, as they are proposed in the gospel, and consents to the bargain; and as God proposes the righteousness of Christ, it submits to the same; which Paul, 1 Tim. i. calls a saying worthy of all acceptation, to be welcomed and believed as such; and the believers mentioned, Heb. xi. are said, not to have received the promises, but to have seen them afar off, and to have embraced (or saluted) them: This receiving is no physical, or natural act, as if we were to receive such a thing by the mouth, or bodily hand; it is an act of faith in the heart, proportioned and suited to this spiritual bargain, or marriage, proposed in the covenant of grace; and it is like a man consenting to a civil bargain, or like a woman's consenting to marry a man: As when it is said to sinners, Ye are naturally dead in sins and trespasses, and under God's curse; but, be it known to you, that we preach remission of sins to you through the blood of Christ; faith considers this offer, accepts of, and welcomes it.

The 4th and last act, is a resting on him, which is still the same faith, but another act of it; not as if there might be a receiving, and not resting, or a resting, and not a receiving; or as if we were to dif-
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I patience nor assurance in this active act of faith, which is the essence of it? We answer shortly,  

There are three sorts of confidence pleaded for, that are far from the nature of faith, and yet faith wants not its own confidence and assurance, if it be taken in a right sense. The 1st is for a man to believe, that Christ died for him in particular, on the first hand, and to think that he hath no more to do, but to believe that Christ died, and suffered for him, and that thereupon he is justified; for this layeth a ground for universal redemption against the current of the scriptures, and can never be a ground of interest in Christ’s righteousness: It supposeth that to be done already, and admits not the soul to concur by believing for coming to the application, and yet this is very rife amongst people, I believe that Christ died for me, and shed his precious blood for me: and so long as they can maintain this presumption, and not suffer themselves to admit of any debating, and questioning, whether they have ground and reason for it, or not; they think they have faith enough: but this is no act of faith, nor of the nature of true justifying faith; which is to take hold of Christ offered, that we may come to be absolved through him; therefore, whenever the scripture puts us to believe, it commands us to take hold of Christ offered, and not at first hand to believe, that he died for us in particular; I suppose many are carried away with this presumption, that will, to their cost, at last find it to be otherwise.  

2. Others think that all faith consists in this, to believe that God loved them from all eternity, and that they are already justified, which is the Antinomian way; they believe not that they may be justified, which was Paul’s way, Gal. ii. 10. but they believe that they are justified, and this also presupposes universal redemption; and to press it upon you, were to bid you all believe that God hath loved you, and pardoned you from all eternity, which were to bid you believe a lie; for we wot well from the scriptures of truth, that God hath not loved all from eternity, and yet this is the faith that many of you presumptuously practiseth; we are all naturally some way Antinomians, Papists and Arminians in our practice; and the way of error is more consistent, and current with our nature, than the way of truth: But, O! presumptuous hypocrites, will ye dareingly, and without any ground, believe God’s love to you? God shall shake you out of that confidence, and blow upon it, and make it vanity: ye cry out on them that live in error, yet ye practiseth these same errors (to speak fo) as fast as ye can; we cannot by much preaching get you brought to the knowledge of the truth, but ye can drink in error ere ye hear of it, and it will ruin your souls, if grace prevent not; and many of you shall find that thus you have destroyed yourselves. A 3d sort of rotten confidence, is that which some have, who cannot say they are for the time justified, yet they have a perdition to get heaven, and to be justified ere they die, or that at death they will be sure of it, and they not well they shall not despair. This is also naughty presumption, and continued in, as hazardous as utter desperation, and killeth more souls than despair doth; for such rest quietly in their hope of being freed from wrath, and having their peace made with God, and yet never go to Christ to have it done: this is like that man’s presumption, that says, Tush, I shall have peace, the I walk in the imagination of my own heart: God is gracious and merciful, and I hope he will not be so severe as he is called: The Lord called this a belying of him; for he says in his word, that there is no peace to the wicked; and the foolish presumer says, I shall have peace: shall his word or theirs stand? They say, Jer. v. 12. and vii. 9. The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these. They make a fair show of attendance on ordinances, and yet steal, murder and commit adultery, and say, We are delivered to all these things: Is not this a gross belying of the Lord? God shall beat back many of your vain confidences in your faces, and your faces wax pale; when God shall cause your charge and summons to come unto judgment, found in your ears; these and such like confidences will never bear you through, it is not thefe we speak of.  

Yet, 2dly, We say, that the right exerciseth of faith wants not its own confidence, comfort and assurance, when taken in a right sense, much whereof is attributed by some to the definition of faith; for some mistake faith, and others are mistaken or misunderstood in their speaking of faith; some divines that write of faith, speak of its being an assurance, defining it at its height; yet generally they take in, and presupposeth the active act of faith resting on Christ: Others define it by these two acts, a receiving of, and resting upon Christ; Therefore we would not conceive of them, at least of many of them, as making this assurance to our sense to be essential, and absolutely necessary to the being of justifying faith; much less would we think, that they misken, and pass by the true acts of receiving and resting upon Christ; only some of them (which we humbly think is their mistake) having to do with Papists, who place faith in the understand-
Isaiah liii. 

**SERMON LXI.**

Isaiah liii. 11. —*By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for he shall hear their iniquities.*

This is a great assertion, and of mighty moment, wherein to the knowledge of Christ, the justification of many is attributed: and indeed, if we knew what an advantage and benefit it were, there would be nothing more studied than how to obtain it; for it is the very inlet, and opens the door to glorification; and if to be happy in the enjoyment of God be a benefit of great concernment, then this of justification must be so.

We proposed to speak of the way how this benefit is applied, and that is by faith, set out under this expression, *his knowledge,* or the knowledge of him: and touched on the benefit of faith, and the necessity thereof for attaining justification, God having so ordered it in the covenant, that none others should be justified, but such as have faith. 2. We spoke also to the Object of this faith, Christ Jesus as our righteousness and peace: So that Christ becomes in a peculiar manner the Object of faith, beside any other thing; because it is only in Christ it can find a shelter, therefore it is only to Christ that it flees, when it is pursued. 3. We spake likewise of the nature of this faith, or its act, it being the heart’s trusting itself to Christ’s righteousness, whereon it hazards the weight of its peace, and relies here: And as all the terms of justification are borrowed from law, wherein there is supposed a charge, a tribunal, and a judge; so is this resting in like manner; it is in effect an arraigned person’s making of Christ’s righteousness his legal defence against all challenges: the substance of the phrase is in that of Phil. iii. 9. *That may be found in him,*
Verse 11.

The Mediator hath satisfied for his sin, and that satisfaction is by faith laid hold of: satisfaction takes away the pollution and blot of sin; the person that has these boils and sores is cleansed, or healed, or is a healing, and under cure (for there is no compleat healing while on this side heaven) As, suppose a man, by transgressing the law, had wounded himself, in wounding or hurting another; there is here both a guilt, and a deformity; a guilt in transgressing the law by hurting his neighbour, and a deformity in wounds inflicted: Justification is as if the penalty of the breach of such a law were not exacted, by the interposing of a cautioner; and satisfaction is like the healing of the wound in a man's self, by taking or application of some physic or plaiter: So is it here, justification sets us free from the guilt, and satisfaction cures us of the wound of sin. Man's fall was a guilt, and by that fall he wounded himself; and by Christ both are removed from the believer: by his satisfaction he justifies, and by his grace and Spirit he sanctifies him.

Use. We observe it only in passing, because it serves to clear all that concerns justification; and, therefore, when we speak of justification by Christ's righteousness, 1. It is not as if we had a righteousness communicate to us, and were made actually holy, but it is the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us; the confounding of these two does ill, and is very prejudicial, not only to the Papis, but to others, who think they are justified, when they think they have some good frame, which being wanting, they suspect their justification. 2. The meaning is not as if Christ's righteousness were our satisfaction, which is the error of the Antinomians, who make all satisfaction to be justification, even as the Papis make all justification to be satisfaction; therefore we would learn to distinguish these two, yet not so as to separate them.

2dly, Observe, That this effect, justification, is not only, nor mainly, the sense of being pardoned and abjolved; but it is real abolution and pardon itself; because this satisfaction that follows faith, is that which Christ hath purchased by his soul-travel, and bearing of our iniquities, and entitles the justified person to him, and makes him to be of his seed; and that is, not to have the sense that we are justified, but actually to be justified. And here there is another mistake to be adverted to, to think justification to be the evidence of what is past before we were born; yea from eternity: The justification here spoken of, is that which...
which makes us stand before God, is opposite to works, and to the curse, and frees us from it; but the sense of justification is not that, whereby we stand before God, and is opposite to works and the curse: And therefore take this advertisement, that justification is not to be sensible of our justification, but it is really to be so, whether we know and be sensible of it or not, and that by virtue of Christ’s righteousness apprehended by faith.

The Third, and main thing in this effect, is, That laying hold on Christ by faith, as he is offered in the gospel, does before God serve to the justifying of a sinner, and the absolving of him from the guilt of sin; that is, when a sinner, sensible of sin, is brought to lay hold on Christ’s righteousness, then follows God absolving of him, as if he had never had sin, or had satisfied for his own sin; which is not only held out here, but is frequently spoken of through the Epistles, and is the justification that stands in opposition to the way of works; to wit, when a poor sinner, sensible of sin, is persuaded by God’s Spirit to flee unto, and rest upon Christ’s righteousness offered in the gospel, upon which follows God’s absolving of him. This Doctrine takes in the substance of the text, By the knowledge of my righteous Servant shall many be justified.

There are several things that will fall to be cleared in the prosecuting of this, which we shall speak to shortly, for clearing of that question of the Catechism, What is justification? Because this Doctrine holds out the form of it, and deducteth it in this order. 1. A sinner is here supposed to be living under God’s curse, according to that, Gal. iii. 10. Curst is every one that continueth not in all things written in the law: This is man’s condition by nature. 2. It is supposed that Christ becomes Cautioner for elect sinners, and takes on their debt, and satisfies for them, on condition that if they shall believe on him, they shall be justified, and have his satisfaction imputed to them; and that the Lord Jehovah accepts of the Mediator’s satisfaction, and engageth to make out the condition. 3. The Lord in the word of the gospel hath revealed this, and hath comprehended the way of a sinner’s justification in the gospel-covenant, and promises and makes offer of it to all that hear of it, saying, He that believes in the Son shall not perish, but have eternal life; and all that believe on him shall be justified from all things, where from they could not be justified by the law of Moses: This is the external instrumental cause of justification, that holds out the way to life, which supposes the former. 4. When this is made offer of in the gospel there is the operation of God’s Spirit on the soul, enlightening the mind of the sinner, convincing him of his hazard, chastening him to Christ, and powerfully persuading him to take hold of his righteousness made offer of to him; whereupon the soul comes to put forth the act of faith, and to rest upon his righteousness; as when it was said by Philip to the eunuch, Acts viii. If thou believest, thou mayest be justified; The soul answers, I believe in Christ the Son of God; whereupon it becomes a bargain: And this is the inward mean, or instrumental cause, of justification. 5. Follows God’s imputing to that sinner, that receives Christ as he is offered, and rests upon him by faith, his righteousness; and Christ’s payment and satisfaction to justice is counted his, and according to this his sins are pardoned, for the merit of that righteousness, and he himself is accepted and accounted righteous, as if he had never sinned; and he hath such a sentence pass on him, as is held forth in these words of Psal. xxxii. i. Blessed is the man whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sin is covered, to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity; and in these, Rom. viii. 1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, &c. Even as, before he fled to Christ, there was a curse standing against him: And this is an act of God, the sovereign and efficient cause, To declare his righteousness that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus, as it is, Rom. iii. 26, which is the final cause.

We may confirm this, either as to the positive part, that by believing a sinner is justified; or as to the negative part, that there is no other way possible, whereby a sinner can be justified, but by believing: So that this great effect follows from a sensible sinner’s taking hold of Christ’s righteousness by faith. Ye may look upon a few scriptures to this purpose, as namely, Gal. ii. 16, where this apostle, enquiring in the debate, lays down this conclusion, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ: as if he had said, We have taken this way for the attaining of this end, believing that we might be justified. The apostle speaks here. 1. Of a justification by faith, which is opposite to works; and as he attributes it to faith, so he denies it to works. 2. He makes it exclusive, and will have no other thing to concur in the manner at least, by faith; Knowing (faith he) that a man is not justified by works, but by faith. 3. He holds out his own, and other believers
Believers practice; even we have believed, that we might be justified; as if he had said, we took this way of faith to be abov'd before God, which by the law, or the works of the law, would never have been. See also to this purpose, the epistle to the Romans, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. chapters, especially the 3. and 4. in the 3d chap. v. 25. when he is summing the doctrine of justification into a compend, he says, Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins, &c. Where Chrift's righteousness is called a Proposition through faith, and faith is holden out as the channel in which justification runs; and in the words following, the believer is holden out as the object of it; so chap. iv. it is holden out in the instance of Abraham, particularly in ver. 5. To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness: where the Apostle proposes two ways of a person's aiming to be justified, the 1. whereof is, When a man worketh, and on that account seeks to be justified, and that way is rejected. The 2. is, When a man hath no works, or worketh not on that account to be justified by them, but by faith betakes himself to Chrift's satisfaction; and that way is established, for that man's faith is counted for righteousness, and is the ground of his peace before God: we gave some scriptures before for this, and shall not therefore now insist. There is also good reason why it cannot be otherwise. 1. If we consider what man is in himself ungodly, rebellious, having nothing to present unto God; but when a righteousness is represented to him by way of offer, and he is through grace brought to accept of the offer of the righteousness of another, nothing can be conceived to be brought to receive it, but his faith: And if Chrift's satisfaction be his justification, and if it be faith that takes hold of it, we have a clear reason why justification is attributed to faith. 2. Consider, That this contributes most to God's end, which is, to glorify himself, especially in his grace, in the justification of sinners, even to hold forth the manifold riches of his grace; and nothing contributes to this so much, and so well, as that which speaks the sinner to be empty: and nothing empties the sinner more than faith; it being the great act of faith, to bring the soul off its own bottom, and to drop all boasting; to drive it out of itself to be found in him; therefore it is said to be of faith, that it might be of grace, Rom. iv. 16. As if he had said, If it were by any other thing, it could not be by grace. But faith claims nothing but the righteousness of Chrift to rest on; he hath paid the price, and made the satisfaction, and that satisfaction is mine, faith faith, because it was offered to me, and I have been brought to lay hold on it. And the nature of this pleading stops the mouth of the creature, and proclaims justification to be alone the effect of God's grace, and of Chrift's procurement. 3. Consider, that if it depended on any other thing, our justification could never be perfect; when we speak of justification, and call it perfect, it is not so to be understood, as if faith were perfect: but Chrift's satisfaction, which is our righteousness, and which faith lays hold on, is perfect, though our faith's grip be weak; hence it is, that the weak believer is justified, as well as the strong; all who look unto Chrift, though with a weak-lighted eye, get salvation through him, as well as Abraham, because his righteousness is perfect, which weak faith takes hold of, as well as strong faith. Now if justification were founded on ought within us, it could never be perfect, but by him all that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Mofes; and one of them made as free as another. It is not here, as if one part of the debt were scored and blotted out, and not another; but all is blotted out, because the righteousness presented before God's tribunal, and imputed to us, which is the defence that faith gives in, is perfect. We may compare strong and weak faith to two advocates, the one more able, and the other weaker, pleading the same cause before a just judge; strong faith pleads more strongly, fully and distinctly, weak faith pleads not so fully and distinctly; but both pleading on the same ground, God the judge judgeth not according to the distinctness, or undistinctness of the pleading, but according to the defence, or reason given in, and absolves both alike, and the weak believer is as fully pardoned as the strong is.

The User are many and comfortable; 1. It serves for our direction. If any were asking, how they may come to be justified? This doctrine anwers. By faith in Jesus Christ, by taking with your sin, and taking hold of Christ's righteousness offered to you in the gospel, and by making that your defence before God: And is not this a lesson worthy the learning, which the whole word of God aims at, even to instruct you how to make your peace with him? It is by the knowledge of Christ, or by faith in him, by resting on him, as he is offered in the gospel, and this cannot but be a solid and sticer way of justification, because we have God's word for
Isaiab liiii. Verse 11.

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for it; it is founded on his faithfulness, and on the
transfixion made betwixt God and the Mediator.
We have also the experience of all the saints for it;
Abraham before the law, David under the law,
and Paul since the law, all of them were led the
same way. Ye would take notice of this, not only
as the great question in catechizing, or examination,
but as the ground whereon ye build your peace,
if ye were dying; there is a perfect righteousness
in Christ, made offer of to you in the gospel, on
condition ye will receive him as he is offered; and
if ye go receive him, it shall be yours, and ye shall
at God's bar be absolved; the righteousness of
Christ shall be aseffectual for your abolution, as
if it were inherent in yourselves, and faith shall
unite you to him, and make you one with him:
In a word, ye must all come before God's tribunal;
and there are but two defences to be propounded,
either something in yourselves, as your love
and charity, or good carriage and duties; or to
take with your sin, to condemn yourselves, and to
flee to Christ, and present his righteousness, as the
righteousness of the Cautioner that hath paid your
debt; and according as ye take the one way, or
the other, ye may expect to be justified, or not;
and this Doctrine rejects the one way, and owns
and confirms the other, which is by faith.

And therefore, 2dly, (which is the great Use of
all this Doctrine) Here there is ground laid down
to any that would be justified, how they may win
to it, and a warrant to propose Justification, as a
thing attainable through faith in him; ye have it
in your offer on these terms, and therefore let me
earnestly intreat you to accept of the offer; if this
be the way of justification, take this way: seeing
there is an absolute necessity of faith in every one
that would be at justification, make it sure that ye
are indeed fled to Christ, and that it is his-righteous
ness, which ye make your defence before the
bar of God's tribunal. We shall branch forth this
Use of exhortation in these Two or Three words.
1. When Christ is spoken of in the gospel, let
him be by faith received; and if ye would know
what this is, labour, 1. To know, and to take up
the difference betwixt self-righteousness, and that
righteousness which is by faith; for, many are so
ignorant, that they know neither the one nor the
other, or at least not the one by the other. 2. When
ye are come to know the difference betwixt these
two, and are soberly weighing what ye should lipp
en to, in your coming before God; with indignation
shuffle out, and call by, disclaim and renounce your
own righteousness, and grapple to the

righteousness of Christ: here faith will have a dou-
ble work, upon the one hand to reject self-righte-
ousness, and upon the other hand to rest upon the
righteousness of Christ alone, according to that,
Philip. iii. 9. When ye have gotten your own
righteousness casten, and Christ's righteousness
closed with, there is a necessity to cover and hide
yourselves in it, that ye may never so much as in
the vague conceit of your mind, be found out of
it; it alludes to the city of refuge, wherein, when
once entred into, and abided in, the person was
safe; but if he was at any time found without, he
was in hazard to be killed by the avenger of blood:
which held out not only the act of faith fleeing to
Christ; but its abiding in him, being hid in him,
containing and keeping itself in him, and continu-
ing to plead its defence on that ground: there
may be, in a fit of glad exercise, a renouncing of
our own righteousness; but when that is over, and
we begin to conceive something of that which we
have done, we are ready to forget Christ's righte-
ousness, and to lean to our own; and that is in a
manner to come out of Christ, and from our city
of refuge, if ever we were in him: faith, as it
betakes itself to Christ, so it states itself in Christ,
where it only dare abide the trial. 2dly. We
would commend this to you, as the great ground
of your peace and hope, even that ye would put
it to the trial, and make it sure, whether ye be
in the faith or not; it is true, there are many be-
guiled in this, and take themselves to be in the
faith when they are not; and others question their
faith, and their being justified, without just
ground; yet it is impossible to win to clearness of
interest in Christ, or to the having of any solid
and comfortable hope of enjoying God, except
there be some clearness that we are in the faith,
and have indeed betaken ourselves to Christ;
which cannot be win at, without putting it to
the trial: other evidences serve to clear our justifi-
cation, as they clear our faith; and as they prove
faith, so they conclude and prove our justification,
and the out-gate promissed. Now, if believing
be such an evidence of justification, and of a
well-grounded hope of heaven, is there not reason
we should put it, in good earnest, and frequently,
to the trial, and seek to know whether we be in
the faith or not? The Apostle, 2 Cor. xiii. 5.
doubles his exhortation to this purpose, Examine
yourselves, if ye be in the faith, prove your own
selves, know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus
Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? We do
the rather press this, because, if we were serious
in
S E R M O N L X I I .

Isaiah liii. 11. — By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

THE doctrine of justification through faith in Christ Jesus was wont to be much thought of among the people of God: It is called, Gal. iii. 8. The preaching of the gospel to Abraham, when God foretold him of a way of justification and salvation, through Christ's coming of him. That in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed: This was the telling of good news to him, and we are sure it is as good news now as ever it was, and would be so to us, if we could look on it spiritually, as they did; for there is as great hazard in it, and the curse is as terrible and insufferable, and the love of God as fresh now, as they were then.

We have for some days been speaking of this doctrine of justification, and it will be much to speak and hear of it profitably. We desire not to insin on what may be unuseful, but we conceive there is some necessity in insin on this: it is our own negligence and ignorance that makes many things of this kind to be very unuseful, even so that we scarcely conceive them; and we are made heartless in speaking of them, because to many they are, as if spoken in a strange language; which is, and should be for a lamentation.

The last thing we proposed, was, to hold forth the mean by which justification is attained, to wit, Faith; which we observed, to shew how faith concurs in the attaining of justification. Few or none ever denied faith to be necessary for the attaining of justification, neither can any that read the word of God with the least consideration, but have that impression of it; but the great thing, wherein the difference lies, and wherein men mil carry, is, in attributing to faith the right or wrong manner of its concurrence, in the attaining of this effect. Tho' these things may, at first blush, look like meery notion speculations, and such as do not concern Christian practice; yet there is no error in doctrine about this matter, but there is something in folks practice, that looks like it, and is influenced by it; and it is men's inclination to error in practice, that makes them as it were to cast errors in judgment.

We shall observe two generals further, and proceed. The 1st whereof is, "That faith hath a peculiar way of concurrence for the attaining of justification, which can agree to no other grace, nor work, may nor to faith itself, considered as a work." Therefore justification of many, is here derived to them by knowledge, or by faith in him, that is, by faith in Christ, as excluding all other things; it is by faith that justification is derived and applied to us, and by faith we come to have right to it, and an interest in it.

The 2d is, "That however faith concur for attaining of justification; yet it is not faith of itself, or by any virtue or efficacy in itself, but as taking hold of Christ as the Object of it, that it justifies." Therefore it is said to be by the knowledge of him, or by faith in him; it is by receiving him, uniting us to him, and resting on him, that we are justified.

We shall shortly explicate both these branches, and then come to some practical use of them together.

1. Then, we say, That there is something in justification attributed to faith, that cannot agree to any other thing; which is implied in many scriptural phrases, and in this text, in as far as it is said, that by his knowledge, or by faith in him, justification is attained: and therefore, when we are said to be justified by faith, we affirm that faith hath a peculiar way of concurring for the attaining of justification, which can agree to no other grace, as to repentance, love, meekness, patience, &c. nor to prayer, alms-deed, or any other good works, or work. For confirming of this, consider,
1. That we are said to be justified by faith, in opposition to works; and that there is something attributed to faith, which is denied to works: Generally this is clear in these epistles written to the Romans and Galatians; particularly, Rom. iv. 2, 3. "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God; for what faith the scriptures? Abraham believed for his ungodly, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness;" where, most clearly and convincingly, believing and working are directly opposite, the one to the other; and Gal. ii. 16. "We who are Jews by nature, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ" (or, as the word is, no not by faith, that is, a man is not justified by works, but by faith). Even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law." Where the apostle cannot more purposely and prepossessingly make a difference between any two things, than he doth betwixt these two, justification by works, and justification by faith. And in all this discourse it cannot be said, that the apostle only excludes works in respect of merit, or works as they look to the works of the ceremonial law; for he opposeth faith, and all sorts of works, or works in whatsoever respect, as inconsistent: it is not one or two sorts of works, but all sorts of works of the law; and there can be no works, but such as are commanded by the law, which are excluded. Now, if the apostle exclude all these, what are the works that we can be justified by? 2. Consider the peculiar phrase, that the scripture useth to this purpose; and, where we are said to be justified by faith, there is a sort of causality attributed to faith, that can be attributed to no other grace, nor works: hence the righteousness of Christ, is called the righteousness of faith, and we are said to be justified by faith in his blood. So, Phil. iii. 8, 9. "I count all things to be but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." And Rom. iii. 25. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. Many more such phrases there are; and truly it would look very unlike the scripture,
times faith, is called our righteousness; because
is Christ, considered as suffering and satisfying,
is the meritorious cause of our justification, for
faith is the instrumental cause taking hold of his
satisfaction, which is our righteousness: both
are necessary in their own way, and Christ's right-
eousness implies faith, and faith implies Christ
and his righteousness; the one implies the other
necessarily. 3. Consider the phrases used in Scrip-
ture to this purpose; as where we are said to be
justified by faith, it ever respects Christ; and where
we are said by faith to put on Christ, it is not
faith considered as righteousness of itself, but it
is faith considered as acting on Christ, and his
righteousness; therefore it is the righteousness
which is by faith, the righteousness which is in
Christ, and by faith, taken hold of by us; and be-
coming ours.

The uses are several, 1st. For information and
conviction; and we would, (1.) be informed in,
and understand well the meaning of this doc-
trine. When we say, that faith is necessary to ju-
ification, and concurring in attaining of it, as
no other thing doth, that ye may give it its right
place, and may make no confusion of these things
that are distinct, 1. We deny not works, not-
withstanding of all that we have said, to be neces-
fary, more than we do faith; but the great dif-
tinction is anent the giving of faith and works, or
faith, as it is a work, an equal share, in respect of
causality, in our justification: And therefore we
would beware with Papists to attribute a sort of
condignity to faith, as if it merited eternal life,
which flows from their ignorance of God's co-
venant; for they think, that since he commands us
to believe and promiseth life to believing, that
there is a merit in believing, as they fancy there
is in prayer, alms-deeds, and other duties, or
good works; but in this respect, as it is a work
in us, the apostle excludes faith, and makes our
justification free; whereas, if faith in justification
were considered as a work meriting our justificati-
on, it should not be free. And altho' there be no
Papists in profession here amongst us, yet it may
be there are some, and that not a few, that think
God is obliged to them, because they believe,
and that expect heaven and life eternal on that
ground; even as when they pray, they think they
should be heard for their praying; and when they
give alms, that they should be rewarded for the
same as a meritorious work. 2. Neither do we un-
derstand, when we say that faith is necessary to
justification, and concurreth in the attaining of it;

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that by believing we are disposed to be holy, and so more enabled to justify ourselves; which is also a Popish error, wherein, I fear, many professors of the gospel amongst us by who think they are obliged to their faith, because it disposeth them to hear, read, pray, and the like, and so enableth them to work out a righteousness to themselves, whereby they expect to be justified; this is another fault, and error to be guarded against; for though we give faith a radical virtue, to keep life in other graces, yet so considered, it is still a piece of inherent holiness, and pertains to sanctification, and not to justification.

3. When we say, that faith concurs in the attaining of justification, we do not say that it concurs in the same manner that repentance, prayer and good works do concur: But it may be said here. Seeing we grant, that good works and duties are necessary, what then is the difference? I answer in these two, 1st. Faith is the proper and peculiar condition of the covenant of grace, and not our works, or holiness, whereof faith, considered as a work, is a part: Works is the condition of the covenant of works, for it saith in this manner, The man that doth these things shall live by them; but the covenant of grace, in opposition to it, saith, If thou believe with thy heart in the Lord Jesus, and confess with thy mouth, that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; as it is Rom. x. 9. What works is in the one covenant, faith is in the other covenant, and that as it is opposed to works, and to faith itself, as it is a work in us. 2dly. There is a peculiarness in faith's concurrence for the attaining of justification, in respect of its instrumentalness, in taking hold of Christ for our justification, or in receiving and resting upon him (as we said before) for that end: for, when Christ is offered in the gospel, faith flees to him, receives him, takes hold of him, and rests on him: neither repentance, nor prayer, nor any good works, hath an aptitude, and fitness to receive Christ, and present his satisfaction to God as the ground of the sinner's defence, as faith hath: and therefore it is so often said by divines according to the Scripture, that faith is the instrumental cause of our justification; which we shall clear in two or three similitudes, which the Scripture makes use.

Of. 1. Christ compares himself to the brazen Serpent lifted up in the wilderness, John iii. 14. Man by sin is slain deadly, as the Israelites were by the fiery serpents: Christ Jesus as suffering, and hung, or lifted up upon the cross, is proposed to our faith to look upon, as the brazen Serpent was proposed to them that were slain, and put up on a pole for that end; and as there was no healing to the slain Israelites, except they looked to it, and the cure followed to none but to those who did behold it; so Christ Jesus proposed as the Object and meritorious Cause of justification, justifies none but such as look to him by faith; and although they were to look to the brazen serpent, yet their look gave them no efficacy to the cure, but it flowed from God, ordaining that as a mean of their cure; even so it is not from any efficacy in faith considered in itself, that sinners are justified, but it is from Jesus Christ the Object, that faith, crying him lifted up as the Saviour of the elect, and his satisfaction as appointed of God for that end, doth justify: and therefore it may well be called an instrumental cause, because it is not Christ abstraitly considered, that justifies, more than it was the serpent considered abstraitly, without their looking to it, that did cure, but Christ considered, and laid hold on by faith; but in this respect, faith is said to justify, even as the eye looking to the brazen serpent put them in capacity of the cure, though the cure flow from God's appointment, and not from their looking; so is it in faith's concurring for the attaining of justification. A 2d similitude is that of miraculous faith, we find it often said by the Lord in his working such cures, Thy faith hath made thee whole; there, was no efficacy in faith itself for producing the cure, but it was the mean by which the cure was transmitted to the person under such a disease; so it is in believing, in order to our justification; it is by believing on Christ, that our spiritual cure in justification is transmitted to us, and we are said to be justified by faith, because by faith, it is conveyed to us. A 3d similitude, for clearing that faith may well be called the instrumental cause of justification, may be this, Even as the advocate's pleading may be called the instrumental cause of the client's abolishing; as, suppose a man, whose cautioner had paid his debt, were cited to answer for the debt, his advocate pleads his abolution and freedom from the debt, because his cautioner had paid it; although the debt was paid, yet the man had not been abolished, if it had not been so pleaded on his behalf: So, the concurrence of faith in the sinner's justification, is to table Christ's satisfaction for his defence before God, and to plead his abolution on that ground: The believing sinner's faith says, It is true I was owing so much debt of sin, but Jesus Christ my Cautioner, to whom I am fled, hath fatis-
Serm. LXII.

Isaiah liii. Verse 11.

377 satisfied for it; therefore I ought to be ab­solved: and the law al­ows of this sort of pleading, and upon this ground; in which respect faith con­cern­eth in attaining, and may well be called the in­stru­mental cau­se of our justification. I shall say no more on this Ufe, but these two words, We may partly regret our great ignorance, that we know so little of the use of faith in our justification; and partly we may lament the great con­fu­si­tion that is in these times, wherein men are set to over­turn such a clear truth, as if faith had no in­stru­mental­ity in our justification, but as if it, and other duties and works, were equal sharers, and alike in it; Which, 1. overturns the nature of God's covenant of grace, in making works the condition of it, as if there were no difference be­tween the two covenants of works and of grace. 2. It hath this miserable ill attending it, that it should­ers out Christ's righteousness, and shuffles in an inherent righteousness of our own, as our de­fence, when we come immediately before the throne of God; whereas the Gospel puts us to a righteousness without us, and imputed to us. This way leads us to seek righteousness in our­selves. Whether works, or faith as a work, be made the ground of our justification, it is all one; for if faith, considered as a work in us, dis­posing us to holiness, and as a part of sincere holiness, be the thing pre­sent­ed to God, as the ground of our justification, it is still some­thing within us, and such a thing, as is still imperfect, which would miserably mar poor souls' comfort; whereas the righteousness of Christ, laid hold on by faith, being made the ground of our justification, it affords solid consolation; for though faith in us be weak and imperfect, yet his righteousness is perfect: and as it was not the Israelites looking, as we said, that was the ground of their health and cure, but God's appointing of such a mean for their cure look­ed to; other­wise they that were weak sighted, and had bleared eyes, might think themselves not in such a capacity of healing, as those who were strong, and more clear­sighted, whereas they were all alike cured, if once they looked; even so is it here.

2d Ufe of this, and the other doctrine formerly spoken of, is, for direction, and practical information. Would any know justification by Christ? here is the way: it is by faith in him, when Christ Jesus and his satisfaction is made offer of in the gospel, for justification all self-condemning sinners that lay hold on him; sinners by faith fleeing to him, and refting on him, get a title to his righte­ousness, that cannot but save them; so that if it were, 1. asked, What is that, which a man ap­pearing before the throne, dare hazard to pre­sent to God, as the ground of his defence? It is an­swered, Christ's righteousness, his satisfaction. 2. If it were asked, How comes one to have title and right to that righteousness, so as he may own and present it for his defence? It is answered, that it is attained by believing in him. 3. If it be asked, How comes faith to get a title to that right­eousness? Is it by any virtue or efficacy in Faith, as a work in us? It is answered, No, but it comes to get title to it, by going out of itself, by receiving and taking hold, and making use of the worthiness that is in Christ's righteousness, which is as a garment, able to cover the sinner's nakedness, and to hide all his spots; and, as a complete ransom, to pay all his debt; and thus we fee here, upon the one side, a nec­es­sity of faith, in order to justification; and, upon the other side, a warning, not to count grace, and the righteousness of Christ, the less free; that faith hath an instru­mental­ity in the application of it, faith having two things that it plea­des upon; 1. Emptiness, and need in itself; whence it arrogates nothing to its own plea­ding, but, 2. founds its defence on the good ground it hath to propose; and therefore, as, upon the one hand, we would know that there is a way to come by justification, by taking hold of Christ's right­eousness by faith: So, upon the other hand, we would be afraid to let any thing fllick to us from our faith, as if we had a meritorious or efficient hand in, or were to be thanked for our winning to justification; for, as a beggar, in receiving an alms, can al­lege no merit to be in his receiving, or call­ing for it; so no more does faith's receiving mar the freedom of our justification, by any merit in it.

Ufe 3. Seeing faith concurs instru­mental­ly in the attaining of justification, there is here clear ground to exhort you, by faith to receive Christ, and to commend to you the exer­cise of believing, because without it ye cannot be justi­fied, and by it ye shall certainly be justi­fied.

Ufe 4. Here, O! here is ground of con­flation to poor sinners, sen­sible of sin, trembling at God's bar, as being obnoxious to the curse, that by receiving of Jesus Christ, they may be ab­solved from the debt of sin, and freed from the curse; there­fore, if there be any such here, put forth your hands, and receive what is in your offer; open your soul's mouth wide, and let in Christ, and he will fill it: faith having, as to our spirit­ual life, the same place that the mouth hath to the body,
as to the entertaining of the natural and bodily life; it opens and
receives what is needful to keep in the
life of the body. And are not these good news to
poor souls, burdened with sin, loathing themselves,
and their own righteousness, seeing it all to be but
as filthy rags, and crying out with the jaylor, What
shall we do to be saved? Paul would say to such,
and we say it in the Lord's name, Believe in the
Lord Jesus, and you shall be justified, and saved;
for justification is derived by faith in him to the
sinner.

Ufe 5. This serues exceedingly to humble a sin-
er, whether it be a sinner aiming, and seeking to
be justified, or a sinner that hath attained justifica-
tion, in so far as there is no ground of boasting here.
If ye be aiming to be justified, it may humble you;
for what can ye contribute to it? Being enabled,
ye can indeed receive what is offered, and that is
all; neither can ye receive, except ye be enabled,
as is said. It serves also to humble such as are ju-
ified: Have ye righteousness? It is not your own,
but Christ's; it is he only that did the turn. If
it should be said, ye believed, and may boast of that;
I ask, What did ye when ye believed? Did ye any
more but this? Ye pleaded guilty, and did confent
to take Christ's righteousness, and the pardon of
sin through him freely; and what matter of boas-
ting, I pray, is here? None at all. Thus this doc-
trine contributes, both to make those who are seek-
ing pardon, and those who have gotten pardon,
humble; Where is boasting then? (says the ap-
ople) It is excluded: By what law? By the law of
works? No, but by the law of faith, as it is, Rom.
iii. 17. The believing sinner does nothing, and hath
done nothing towards the procuring of his own ju-
justification, but gets all freely. We can never think,
or speak aright of justification, but it lays our vain
humour, and stops the mouth from boasting, while
it faith, What hast thou, O man? but what thou hast
received? and if thou hast received it, why dost thou
boast, as if thou hadst not received it.

We shall close and shut up the whole of this
doctrine, by proposing some few considerations, as
conclusions from it. 1. See here a necessity of be-
ing acquainted with the truths of the gospel; and
with this truth in particular, concerning justification: (whereof, alas! many are very ignorant) See-
ing there are so many ways to go wrong, and so
many do go wrong about it, we had need to be the
more clear in the right way: if there were more
knowledge of this, and of other truths, we might
speak and hear with more profit; and if ye did not
please yourselves with mere and airy notions, but

Sert. LXII. Verse II.
fought to be settled in what ye hear of other truths,
and of this in particular, it would contribute much
to your peace, and rid you out of many doubts and
difficulties. A 2d consideration is, That there is
much need to walk in holy fear, in studying this
and other truths; there are so many ways to err,
and a wrong step here is very dangerous: it were
exceedingly profitable to be more in the study of
justification, that is of the very narrow of the go-
pel, and is deservedly accounted to be articulus
flantis, aut cadentis ecclesiae; but ye would come
to it in fear, being jealous of your own ignorance,
and shallowness of capacity rightly to take it up,
especially when new questions are rising, and start-
ed concerning it: and as Paul and David studied
this way, and held it forth to others, as the way
whereby they went to heaven, and whereby others
must come to it; so we commend to you to follow
them. A 2d consideration is, If faith be so neces-
fary to justification, as without it ye cannot be ju-
justified, is there not reason that ye should study
to be distinct, and clear that ye have faith, and that
ye are indeed believers? this is one of the great
uses of the doctrine: if there be no way but faith,
and if in studying this one way many go wrong,
then, as ye would make your calling and election
true, to make this sure, by putting yourselves
to the trial, if ye be taking this way, as the apostle
most pathetically exhorts, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Examine
yourselves, if ye be in the faith, prove your own
fellow, &c. It is truly matter of wonder to think,
how so many men and women are so soon satisfied
in the matter of their believing, which yet is so
tickle and difficult a business: we would have none
to be jumbled and confounded about it, who desire
to be serious in the thing; yet we would have all
wakened, and put to diligence. Many men have
taken pains to go wrong in this matter of justification;
and how few of you have taken pains to go
right in it? and how is it, that many of you win
so easily at it? seeing the apostle, Rom. ix. calls
it a stumbling stone to many, and a rock of offence:
fully if it be so, your coming at it by guess, and
ignorantly, is to be suspected; and therefore, on
this consideration, ye would be awakened, to put
yourselves more seriously to the study of it, and to
try yourselves, if ye be come well to it; for it is
the special, yea, the only ground of your peace be-
fore God. There are many of you, who in a
manner think it impossible to miscarry in this; for
ye know that there is no way to be justifieth but by
faith; and yet, if many of you were put to it, ye
know not the manner nor way how faith justifies;
S E R M O N L X I I I .

Isaiah liii. 11.----For he shall bear their iniquities.

It is a thing that can neither be easily believed, nor yet understood, how by Christ's knowledge, or by faith him, many shall be justified; in these words, the prophet adds a reason, that both confirms and clears it: It shall be, faith he, that many shall be justified through faith in him, For he shall bear their iniquities; he shall take on, and pay their debt; and so, (as I said) it is a reason confirming the former truth, and shewing that it cannot be otherwise, but they must be absolved through faith in him, because he bears the punishment due to them for their sin. It serves also to clear how justification is attained by faith, to wit, not by any vertue or efficacy that is in faith, abstractly considered, as if believing of itself did the turn, but by vertue of Christ bearing their iniquities, and making satisfaction for them, which faith lays hold on; so that, when he said, By his knowledge shall many be justified; it is not by any efficacy attributed to their believing, but by vertue of Christ's righteousness, and satisfaction, which only faith gives a title to; and is the means, and way by which a believer comes to it, and so (as I have said) it serves for explication of the former truth: So that, if the question be asked, How can sinners be justified by believing? It is here answered, Because Christ shall take on their debt, and the righteousnes purchased by him shall redound to them, and be reckoned theirs. It is the same, on the matter, with that which we have, 2 Cor. v. ult. He that knew no sin, was made sin for us; and what follows, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; which clears, that this way of justification, which the gospel holds out, is not (as I just now said) by any efficacy, or worth in faith itself, nor by any inherent qualifications in the person that believes; but this is the ground of it, Christ's bearing of our iniquities: the elect were sinners, and Christ hath taken on him their iniquities, therefore they cannot but upon their fleeing to him by faith, be justified; when they plead his satisfaction for their defence before God, their abolution must needs follow. This is the scope of these words, which are as it were the bond knitting all the rest together, and containing the foundation whereon our justification is founded. There are only Three words here that need a little of explication. 1. By iniquity is not meant sin formally taken. We shew, when we spake of the 6th verse, That Christ was not the sinner formally con-
considered, that being inconsistent with his holy nature, and with the personal union of the Manhead with the God-head; but the meaning is, that he took on him the punishment due to our iniquities, or the punishment that our iniquities deserve.

2. When he is said to bear their iniquities; it imports a burdensome bearing, or his bearing it with a weight, and that there was a weight in it, as it is said, ver. 3. and 4. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; and therefore the apostle, 1 Pet. ii. 24. faith, He his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, when he was made a curse for us, as it is Gal. iii. 13. He did bear our sins, by coming under the curse that was due to us for them. In a word, his bearing of our iniquities is a real satisfying of the justice of God for them, by interposing his own blessed back, and taking on the strokes that were due to us. 3. When it is said, their iniquities, it relates to the many, that, in the former words, are said to be justified through his own knowledge: it is spoken of the iniquities of the elect, and believers, who through Christ are made friends with God; and therefore thefe being the many, they cannot but be justified, because Christ hath paid their debt, according to his engagement. These words, as almost every other verse of this chapter, contain the substance of the gospel; take shortly five or six observations from them, which we shall put together. The first is, That the person who is to be justified by faith in Christ, is naturally lying in iniquities; this is supposed, while it is said, that Christ shall bear their iniquities; even the iniquities of them, who are to be justified, through faith in him: so it is said before, The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all, and we all like sheep have gone astray; these, and many other scriptures; nay, the whole current of the scriptures, confirm the point, and put it beyond debate.

I observe it for these Ends and Ufe, which will shew why it is so frequently marked. 1. That the freedom of God's grace may khy the more in their justification: they are sinners even as others are, and it is grace that makes the difference; therefore their justification must be free. If then any would have good, or have gotten good by the gospel, and by Christ offered to them therein, let them know that it is freely. 2. That a believer, who is justified, should be very humble; for he was a sinner as well as others, and is still a sinner in part: therefore it becomes him to walk softly, with a flopped mouth, and to be tender and compas-
SERM. LXIII.

Ifaiah lii.

thousands and millions to hell? And that made our blest Lord to cry, yet without all sinful anxiety, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and, My soul is heavy to the death. And is it not that which makes the Lord say, that he is pressed, with his professing people's sins, as a cart is pressed with sheaves? All the indignation, and opprobrium of the men of this world, is nothing to him, in comparison to the sins of his people; he can break through briers and thorns, and consume them together; but the iniquities of his people are laid to press him, to shew the abominable loathableness and weightiness of them.

USe 1. It may make us wonder, that men and women think so little of sin. There are many that will trust at a challenge or threatening for sin; but let me say it, that mountains of lead, yea, though all this world turned into one mass, or lump of lead, it should not be so heavy, as sin should be to you; your drunkenness, filthiness, covetousness, living, the vaguing of the mind in private duties of worship throughout the week, and in publick duties on the Lord's day; your neglect of prayer in secret, mocking at piety, &c. shall (however Ight now) one day be found to be weighty, when, as it is, Rev. vi. 6. Ye shall cry to hills and mountains to fall upon you, and hide you from the wrath of the Lamb. A mountain would be thought light in that day, but the face and wrath of the Lamb shall be terrible; therefore either give up with sin, and study holiness, or make you for this dreadful posture, that ye would wish to have a hill or a mountain tumbling on you, and yet shall not get that with granted. What mean ye, O Atheists! and desperately secure pleaders of yourselves, with your idols, that ye dare thus to ly and live under this burden! Will ye be able to come before the throne of God with it upon your back? It is a truth, that sin is such a burden as will sink you to the pit, if ye seek not in God's way to shake it off in time.

3dly, If it be such a burden, make this twofold use of it. 1. Beware of keeping still upon you the burden of bygone sins, but take with them, seek to be suitably affected with them; betake yourselves with all speed to Christ, and cast yourselves and your burden on him; it is for this reason that faith is called a leaning on Christ, because, when the burden of sin is like to break the smoker's back, faith calls himself and his burden on Christ. 2. For the time to come, study holiness, and take on no more of this burden; always remember, that when ye take on the debt of the least sin, or seek to hoodwink (as it were) the conscience, and to put out the eyes of it, that ye may sin the more securely, and with the greater liberty, ye are all the while but heightening your burden, and making the weight of it the more intolerable: And is that wifdom, think ye, to be taking on a burden of that, which will press, crush, sink and drown you eternally, under its grievous and unsupportable weight?

34ly, Observe, That, for as heavy a burden as sin is, Christ flopped down, and took it on his blessed back, John i. 29. Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away, or beareth, and by bearing, taketh away the sins of the world, 1 Pet. ii. 24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree. So the just suffered for the unjust, Heb. ix. ult. He was once offered to bear the sins of many.

Whether it was the same very burden that the elect should have borne, or the equivalent of it, we will not now debate, having spoken somewhat more particularly to it before; either of them being according to the terms of the covenant of redemption, and accepted of the principal creditor; yet it would seem he did bear the curse in the essentials of it, and in that respect came under the same burden; he died, because he was threatened, The day thou eat'st, thou shalt surely die, and the soul that sins shall die; and he died a cursed death, because a cursed death was threatened, as it is Gal. iii. 10. compared with 13. and so came under the curse: Here is love indeed, and a true friend's kind turn, that when sin was such a heavy burden, Christ came in betwixt the elect and it, and took it on himself, and stood at the bar of God, as chargeable with our debt, which was really charged on him, as it is, Isa. 1. 6. He gave his back to the fitters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; he did not his face from shame and spitting; all these buffettings of profane soldiers, were but little to that weight of wrath that was laid on him, to the making of him groan; to that cup, which in the garden he drank out, and which made him sweat blood, and cry out, My soul is exceeding sorrowful and heavy even unto death; and, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will, but thine be done: O! what a weight was it, that made him so cry out? There needs no more to prove that he bare our sins, and that there was an exacting of him what we were owing, and that his sufferings are indeed a satisfaction to justice for them, even for the sins of all the elect.

The Uses are two, 1. It serves to hold out and confirm this truth, That our Lord Jesus his sufferings were a real satisfaction to justice, for the sins of the elect; and that by his sufferings he was indeed put to bear their iniquities; and that they were
were not only, nor mainly for example, though we may well make that use of them; but he was made liable for our debt; we sinned, and he suffered and satisfied for our fin; we debauched our stock, and played the bankrupts, he paid our debt.

2. It serves hugely to commend to us the love of God, that gave his Son; and of the Mediator, that came to buy and redeem elect sinners at so dear a rate, and to take on such a weighty burden, to eafe them of it. Were there any here (as we hope there are) that know the weight of sin, O! but they would think much of this, even of Christ's taking on the burden of sin, and calling it by, having satisfied justice for it, and loosed the knot of the law, and of the curse that tied it to them; to become man was much, but to bear the burden of our sins was more. Angels wonder at this, that he who is their head should become so low, as to siff himself before God's tribunal, and to undergo the suflering of death, and to take on the weighty burden of the elect's debt, and to satisfy for it. If we were in a right frame of spirit, we could not hear this word, but it would ravish our hearts, and put us to a pause, and holy non-plus; but the moft part, alas! walk lightly under the burden of sin, without ever considering what Christ hath done to remove it from off his people; nay, I am afraid that believers, who have ground to be lightned, through Christ's condescending to bear their burden, do not as they ought acknowledge him, who hath taken the burden off them.

4thly. From comparing these words with the former, \textit{Many shall be jufified, for he shall bear their iniquities}, Observe, Christ's bearing of their iniquities, and his satisfaction for our fins, is imputed to us, as the immediate ground of our abfolution, and justification before God; fo that if it were asked, What is the ground on which a sinner is justified before God? The Text answers, Because \textit{Christ hath borne their iniquities, he hath paid the debt} and the ground on which that debtor is abfolved, is his infructing that the caufer hath paid the debt, which being done, he is fet free: fo is it here, the believer he is God's debtor, Christ Jesus is his Cautioner, who hath paid his debt; who, when he is brought to the bar of God, and somewhat is laid to his charge, he pleads upon the ground of Christ's satisfying for his debt, and that therefore he ought not to be put to anfwerv for it himself; according to that word, Rom. viii. 34, \textit{Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Is it God that justifies, who shall condemn?} and the ground follows, \textit{It is Christ that died, he hath paid the debt.}

Ufe. Among other things, there are two con-sequences that follow upon this doctrine, that serve to clear the doctrine of justification. 1. That the righteousness, whereby we are jufified, is imputed to us, and accepted of God, as if it were our own: Ye are sometimes hearing of imputed righ- tearnefs, and it is a great concernment to you to know it well; yet I am afraid, that many of you are very ignorant of it; I shall therefore, in a word or two, explicate it, by comparing the two covenants: The righteousness of the covenant of works is an inherent righteousness, as it is, Tit. iii. 5. \textit{Not by works of righteousness, which we have done;} it is a righteousness of our own doing, made up of our praying, hearing, and other duties, as they are acts of ours: The righteousness of the covenant of grace, is an imputed righteousness, that is, when Christ's doing and suffering is accounted ours: take both in this comparison, The righteousness of the covenant of works is like a debtor, or tenant, his paying of his own debt or rent, by his managing his business providently and dexterously, and none other is troubled with it; the righteousness of the covenant of grace is like one, that hath spent up and debauched all, and hath not one penny to pay his debt or rent with, but hath a worthy, able and reftonfal cautioner, who hath paid for him: Both being purfued, and brought before the judge; the first man is abfolved, because what he was owing, he paid it at the term precisely; the other man granted, that he was owing the debt, but pleads that his cautioner hath paid it, and the law accepts of the cautioner's payment, and pursues the debtor no further, but abfolves him: fo it is here, when the believer comes to stand at God's bar, it is nothing in himself that he pleads upon, but it is Christ's sufferings; who paid on the crofs, \textit{It is jufified;} the debt of my people is fully paid: and faith pleading for abfolution on that ground, according to the law of faith, he is abfolved, as if he had paid the debt himself, or had been owing none. If then it should be asked, Believers, what ground have ye to expect to be justified? The prophet answers here, \textit{Christ hath borne our iniquities,} and this is the believer's defence: and therefore see here a possibility to reconcile these two, that some men scorn and flout at, as irreconcileable, to wit, \textit{How one can be a sinner, and yet righteous: he may be sinful in himself,}
Sermon LXIII.

Isaiah lxxiii.

and yet righteous, through the imputation of Christ’s righteousness. So, 2 Cor. v. ult. “He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Rom. iv. 5. “To him that worketh not, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” The man, ungodly in himself, is justified thro’ the satisfaction of Christ, imputed to him for righteousness, and laid hold on by faith; as if he had not sinned, or had actually satisfied himself.

2dly, This consequence followeth, that it serves to clear how faith justifies: as when we say, “Faith is our righteousness, and is imputed to us; for righteousness,” we are not to look on faith properly, as a grace in us, and divided, or abstracted from the object; no, by no means: but as it is a laying hold on the object; it is faith in him that justifies; and, Through his knowledge shall many be justified, because he shall bear their iniquities: Faith justifies by virtue of Christ’s satisfaction, and as taking hold of it; faith does not justify, as it is an act of grace in the sinner, but as a closing with Christ the Object of it; even as in the similitude we made use of before: It is not enough that the cautioner hath paid such a man’s debt, but that the man must instruct it by producing the discharge, the production whereof is the cause of his absolution in law; yet the virtue that makes the discharge so to concur, is not the discharge itself, but the cautioner’s payment, or satisfaction, mentioned, and contained in the sinner’s discharge: Even so is it here, it is Christ’s righteousness that concurreth, as the meritorious cause of the sinner’s absolution; and faith concurs as the instrumental cause, in the pleading of that defence; whereon justification follows as an effect of these causes. We know not when, or if ever hereafter, we may have occasion to speak so much to the doctrine of justification; therefore let me press the study of it upon you again and again: Seek to know what this imputed righteousness is, and how different from that which is in yourselves; what is the true meaning of it, as a main hinge of the gospel, without which the covenant of grace can never be understood aright; the ignorance whereof makes many live in insecurity upon the one side, and keeps many in much anxiety upon the other.

5thly, Observe, That although Christ Jesus hath borne the iniquities of many, even of his own people, yet not the iniquities of all men and women, but only the iniquities of them that shall be justified, and brought to the actual possession of that which he hath purchased: This may be made out from these three in the Text. 1. The relative, their, it is their iniquities, which are borne by Christ, that shall be justified; and who these are, the former words tell, through his knowledge shall be justified many. 2. The connexion made by the prophet betwixt these two, many shall be justified, for he shall bear their iniquities; all, whole iniquities Christ hath borne, shall be justified. It could not be an argument to prove their justification, if Christ should bear the iniquities of others, or of all men and women, multitudes of whom are never justified; for it might be objected, that Christ bears the iniquities of those many who are never justified, which would be quite contrary to God’s covenant, and exceedingly mar the consolation of the believer; besides that, it would make the prophet’s reasoning here inconsequent and impertinent. 3. Consider these words; not only as they stand in connexion with the former, but as they are a reason why in justice such should be absolved; and so they will also clear the doctrine: for, if considered, they imply that it is just, that the believer should be justified; even as when the cautioner hath paid the debt, it is just that the principal debtor should be absolved; and upon the other hand, it is not just that the debtor, for whom the cautioner hath not satisfied, should be absolved: the words will bear this twofold consequence; for he knits these two, their being absolved, and Christ bearing their iniquities, and being made liable to their debt; and he consequently disjoins these two, Christ’s not bearing the iniquities of others, and their not being absolved; and so, although Christ hath borne the iniquities of many, that is of the elect, and hath satisfied and suffered for them, yet not for all, but only for the many, who in due time shall thro’ his knowledge, that is, through faith in him, be justified; and these who are left to pay their own debt, Christ never died for them: it were very unlike the prophet’s reasoning, to say, that such a man is in hell, and yet Christ bare his iniquities.

Use 1. It serves to confirm the former truth. Would ye know whose iniquities Christ hath borne? It is of as many as are justified; the iniquities of such he bare, and of no more.

2. It serves to provoke you, that have gotten in Christ this privilege, to be very thankful: This is it that makes the song of praise heart-felt, Rev. v. 9. Thou hast redeemed us to God, by thy blood, out of every kindred, tongue and nation; because it is not a common, but a peculiar special mercy, if any be so.
Isaiah liiii.

6thly. From the connexion, observe, That although Christ hath not borne the iniquities of all men and women, yet he hath borne the iniquities of all that believe; and none ever believed on him, but they may conclude that he hath borne their iniquities, and on that plead their justification, thro' his satisfaction; although there be a restriction on the one side, yet there is none on the other; all are not justified, but these only whose iniquities he hath borne; yet all who, through his knowledge, or faith in him, are justified, their iniquities he hath borne. And hence it will follow, That never a person believed, but Christ hath borne his iniquities. Not that the man's believing is the cause of Christ’s bearing, for his bearing of the man's iniquities is the cause of his believing; but it is to flew the connexion, between his bearing, and the man’s believing, and that his believing is the evidence of Christ’s bearing of his iniquities. And this is more comfortable than the doctrine of universal redemption a thousand times; for it joins Christ’s dying and the justification of all that believe on him: So that there are none, that by faith betake themselves to him, but they may expect freedom from the curse, and ab dissolution before the throne of God; whereas the doctrine of universal redemption, that Christ died for all, yet all shall not be saved, and I wot not whether I shall be saved or not: and what ground of anxiety is this? But this doctrine hath fold confolation in it. Christ hath not died for all simply, but for all believers, he hath borne all their sins; but I have betaken myself to him by faith; therefore he died for me, he hath borne my iniquities, and I shall never bear them myself, but be justified.

I suppose we need not to lay on the confirmation of this. 1. It is impregnably proved from the reasoning of the prophet in this place; all that are believers cannot but be redeemed and justified, because he hath borne their iniquities, who by faith betake themselves to him. 2. If faith in Christ be a saving fruit of his death, and if none can believe but those, whose iniquities he hath borne; then, wherever faith is, the person may conclude, that Christ hath borne his iniquities, and that he shall be justified: But faith in Christ is a saving fruit and effect of his death, for he hath purchased it among the rest of these spiritual blessings spoken of, Eph. i. 3. where we are said to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in him; And it being a promise of the covenant of grace, it cannot but be purchased by the death of the Tellant Christ Jesus: therefore, &c. 3. It is clear also from the apostle’s reasoning.

Verse 11. Rom. v. 10. “For 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.” Will he not, who hath paid such a dear price for us, to purchase reconciliation to us, make it out, by beftowing on us the fruit of his purchase?

The 1st Use serves to vindicate this our doctrine, concerning Christ’s dying for, and bearing the iniquities of believers only; which is most unjustly loaded with reproaches, and debated against by mens cavillings, as if it were a comfortless doctrine; sure it is more comfortable, more sure, and more agreeable both to the wisdom and grace of God, than the doctrine of universal redemption is: For, put these together, That all believers are redeemed and justified, that Christ hath borne their iniquities; that faith is a saving grace, and a fruit of Christ’s death; that such as believe, may conclude their justification; and that Christ will make out the benefits of his purchase to them: What want believers, that may be for their comfort? Where as, if we should lay it for a ground, that Christ died for all, what comfort were in that? For all are not justified and saved, but only believers: yea, by the doctrine of universal redemption, tho’ ye were even now believers, ye could not conclude that ye should be saved, because ye might fall from it again: But our doctrine of justification hath solid consolation; for, Rom. i. 16. “It is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believes.” And, Rom. iii. 2. “It is unto all, and upon all them that believe.” And it makes the believer sure of his perseverance, for it is an express article of the covenant. We shall only say this, that ye will find, that all, that, in doctrine, or practice, make the way to heaven widest, they make it most unficker and unsure, and they are in greatest confusion: and indeed it is impos sible it can be otherwise; for, if men go once out of God’s way, which is the strait and narrow way, they can never be ficker and solidly sure, because there is no ground of confidence in it.

The 2d Use serves to answer a Question, that some out of curiosity puzzle themselves with, which, if well, soberly, and wisely followed, would be no curiosity, and it is this; How shall I know if Christ died for me? Answer, Make it sure that ye believe, and then ye shall be sure of the benefits of his death; for if he hath borne the iniquities of these that believe, and if there be no way to make it sure he hath borne our iniquities but by believing, it is a needle’s hair and no issue that is made, about the
SERMON LXIV.

Isaiah lxxiii. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with transgressors, and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for transgressors.

Here hath been a compendious sum of the covenant of redemption delivered by the prophet in this chapter, wherein, what is required as the price for elect sinners from the Mediator, is helden forth, on the one side, in a large description of his sufferings; and what is proposed, as the fruit that should follow, and as the satisfaction that the Mediator should have for his sufferings, is on the other side also laid down; as, that "he should see his seed, and prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand: "That he should see of the travel of his soul, and "be satisfied; and that by his knowledge many shall be justified." In this verse, we have a summary recapitulation, and repetition of this mutual bargain; only it is propofed in a different method: for before, what was required, and undertaken by the Mediator, was first fet down, and then the promises made to him were next fet down; here the method is altered, and the promises made to the Mediator are first set down, and the conditions required of him laft fet down; it is like, to shew the one-nets of the covenant, and the mutualnefs of the terms of it; and that though, as to our conceiving,
there be something first, and something last, yet with God there is no such thing, but it is one present act: The promises made to the Mediator are two expressions, with an inference in the word Therefore, knitting this to what went before; I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong. In short, the finilitudes here used, are taken from conquerors, and victors, who have been in a war and fight, and having defeat and routed all their enemies, and put them off the field, have a notable outgate, victory, and triumph, and a great spoil, as the fruit of war; and so the meaning is, that the Mediator, by his undertaking to satisfy for the elect, should have a great fight and combat with many enemies, but he should lose nothing by it, he should have a notable outgate, an excellent victory, and glorious triumph, great glory and spoil: so that there was never war like his, nor enemies like these that he had to encounter with; so there should never be such victory, triumph and spoil, as our Lord Jesus should have. The word portion is not in the original, but well supplied. It is only, I will divide him many, as the word is often used, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; that is, he shall, in dividing the spoil, be above the strongest.

The words infer, and take in these Three. 1. A great defeat, and victory over all the Mediator's enemies, the devil, death, and the curse; he gets a great victory over them, and gives them a great defeat, so that they are quite beat off the field, as dividing of the spoil imports, Psal. lxviii. 12. She that remained at home divided the spoil; and, Isa. ix. 3. As men rejoice, when they divide the spoil. 2. The great number of captives, that our Lord, in his victory, and triumph, takes and brings off; that is, he gets a great booty, which is that spoken of in the words before, By his knowledge shall many be justified; and it is that which is expressed in that Psal. lxviii. 18. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; that is, these that were formerly captives thou hast redeemed from their captivity, and led them captive that carried others captive; as the people of God pray, Psal. cxviii. 4. Turn again our captivity. 3. It takes in the excellent victory, the great triumph and glory, that the Mediator should have by this means; He is exalted above every name that is named, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, of things in earth, and of things under the earth. For further clearing of it, we shall recommend to you

Verse 12. But, targeting the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, and contrary to us, taking it out of the way, and nailing it to his cross, tearing, as it were, the obligation that the law had over the elect, by his paying of their debt: And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Therefore, Rom. i. 41. he is said to raise himself: And in that it is said, I will divide, and he shall divide; it is to hold out the Mediator his attaining and possessing of what was promised, and to shew that there is nothing promised to the Mediation,
Serm. LXIV.

1

Isai. liii. Verse 11.

do nothing by it, thou shalt have a notable victory, and triumph, and a great spoil. In the words before, the Mediator having accepted the terms of the covenant, and performed them, though not actually at that time, but in the purpose and decree of God, which now are actually performed; therefore the promises are turned over in a concluded covenant, and in an absolute right to him.

What needs further explication, we shall endeavour to reach it, as we speak to the observations; and because the words for the most part yield the same doctrines that have been spoken to before, we shall not insist in them.

1st. Then, from the repetition, observe in general, That the nature and terms of the covenant of redemption, betwixt God and the Mediator, is a profitable doctrine, and useful to be understood, and believed by the people of God; therefore it is so clearly proposed, and again and again repeated, and laid before their eyes; and summed and repeated in this verse, to keep them in mind of it. These that know the covenant of redemption, as that which hath in it the sum of all the foundations of our faith, and the ground of our access to God, and of our peace with him; they will easily grant that, that it is very necessary to be studied, known and believed: for, First, By it we know what we may expect from God, because what we are to expect is promised to Christ in this covenant, as to our head; this portion with the great and this dividing of the spoil with the strong: He hath it as our head. 2. Because we know by this covenant, how we come by these things promised; and that is, by pouring out of his soul unto death, bearing of our sins, and interceding for us; which supposes, and includes our betaking of ourselves unto him by faith. 3. Because, by this covenant, the rich and free grace of God hath its due glory: for there is nothing considered here, as the reason of setting captives free, but Christ's paying of the price; it comes freely to us, as a gift bestowed.

2dly, And more particularly, observe; That though our Lord Jesus Christ, in the work of sinners redemption, had a fore combat and fight, yet he hath a glorious outgate, triumph and victory; it was the greatest, the most, and most furious battle, and assault that ever was heard of, that our Lord Jesus encountered with: As the remembrance and consideration of what hath been spoken, of his being in an agony, and sweating drops of blood of his praying, that if it were possible, that cup might
might depart from him; of his crying, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? &c. will most convincingly make out, the justice of God purifying him for all the guilt of the elect, principalities and powers being in his toils; the devil, the prince of this world, having all his instruments yoked, and at work, 'tome to nod the head, tome to mock and scourge him, &c. yet he did abide it all out; he gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that pulled off the hair, and bid not his face from shame and spitting; and had a most glorious victory, and triumph over all. What we said in expositing the words, clears it somewhat, and that word, John xii. 17. Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out; to point out his victory over the world, and the devil: and that word, Col. ii. 14, 15. He spoiled principalities and powers; he unclothed them, and left not (as we use to speak) a whole rag on them; he by a strong hand pulled all the elect from them, and left none of them in their possession; he brake open the prison doors, and set them all at liberty. This was indeed a great victory; he also hath a great spoil of many captives, and great glory, being exalted in our nature, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee might bow: and that passage, Eph. i. 20, 21. is to the same purpose, he hath put all things under his feet, &c. If we look to reason, it cannot be otherwise. 1. If we consider what our Lord Jesus was in his person, being the Son of God, he cannot but be glorious, John xvii. 5. he prays, Father, glorify me with that glory which I had with thee before the world was. Thou, being man, he became of no reputation, and a vail was drawn over the declarative glory of the God-head in his person for a time, yet he remained still the Son of God, and glorious in himself; and it cannot be but he, that is God, must be glorious in his exaltation, when that vail that obscured his glory is taken away. 2. His office, as Mediator, and Head of the elect, proves it. He, that was appointed Head over all things to the Church, could not but be great and glorious; and therefore, when that of Psal. x. 10. is cited by the apostle, Acts ii. 24. and iii. 35. it is said, that it was impossible that death could keep him. 3. It will be clear, if we consider the work itself wherewith he was intrusted; it being a work that was so well liked of, and approved by God, he could not but have a glorious victory and outgate; therefore says he, John x. My Father loveth me,
浃m. LXIV. 11

ISAIAH xliii. Verse 12.

earth still keep up against him, who will find the
smart of their opposition ere long; but of all that
contend with him in his ordinances, and who say,
by their practice at least, “Let us break his bands
asunder, and cast away his cords from us,” as it is,
Psal. ii. “And we will not have this Man
to reign over us,” as it is, Luke xix. He will
say, “Bring out these mine enemies, and lay
them before me!” Beloved hearers, this day is
coming, when all of us will stand before him, and
shall see him divide the spoil; and wo, wo will
be to that perfon that day, that would not submit
to his government: O what a dreadful thing will
it be to be slain before the Mediator, to have the
Prince of life taking holy pleasure in thy death,
because thou slied with the devil, and the lufts of
thine own heart, because thou refilled and quenched
his Spirit, and barracaded the way of his access
to thee, and would not let him in, to reign in thy
heart, nor yield thyself as a subject to him! But
it shall be well, unspacably well with Chrift, and
all that are his, in that day. He and they shall
triumph most gloriously; the splendor, spiritual
flate, and majesty of that triumph, shall infinitely
tranfend all that hath been looked at with wonder
in the most glorious triumphs of the greatest empe-
rors, kings, or captain generals in the world.

3dly, Consider what this spoil is, even to see his
seed, and to justify many, and to get them brought
in to him, and made partakers of his grace and
glory. Observe, “That it is a Part of Chrift’s
victory, triumph and glory, to get the devil de-
feit in, and dung out of souls, and to get them
converted, justified and faved through his blood.”
When he is triumphing over enemies, as it is, Col.
i. 14. 15. what is he doing? He is even tearing
the bond that was above the elects head, and blot-
ting out their debt; in that he triumphs most glo-
riously: fo, Psal. lxviii. “Thou haft ascended on
high, thou haft led captivity captive;” there is
his triumph and spoil, even a company of poor flaves
redeemed by him; The weapons, fays the Apostle,
of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and
mighty through God, to the bringing down of
strong holds, and leading every thought and i-
magination lifted up against God captive unto
the obedience of Chrift;” there is Chrift’s victo-
ry and triumph: What are the strong holds that
he batters, florms and takes in? He makes some
proud hearts to ftop and yield to him, and carries
fome, that were rebels to him, captive to his obe-
dience: O happy captivity! It is not meant in re-
spect of thralldom and bondage, but in respect of

Use 3d. This fays, that it is both hard and fad
to top with Chrift, and to be found in opposition
to him: I speak not fo much of publlick contrefl,
such as Pilate, Herod, the Scribes and Pharifees
had with him, and which many great ones of the

volute
The voluntary subjection to him. This is a most noble, notable, and lovely victory and triumph, and a glorious day indeed, which is ours, as well as his, it being the redeeming of poor captive sinners, and bringing in of many followers to the Lamb; and therefore, ver. 11, it is called “Satisfaction for the travel of his soul, and the justifying of many;” that is, the spoil and the prey. ver. 10. it is called, “The pleasure of the Lord;”” and, in this verse, His portion and spoil, What doth our blessed Lord Jesus take to himself? What doth this David claim or take to him as his spoil, who is alone the Monarch of this great universe? It is a number of poor sinners, Come to me, says he, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you: He hath no more, he seeth no more, but so many souls as he minded to do good to; When the Lord divided the nations, as it is, Psal. cxxxix. He chose Jacob for his portion. If we consider a little more particularly, we will find the justification and salvation of sinners to be our Lord Jesus his victory, triumph and spoil, because herein he is victorious, and triumphs, and gets the glory of his obedience, faithfulness, grace, power and love; the glory of the Mediator shines manifestly and conspicuously in all these here. 1. The glory of his obedience, when he hath it to say, as it is, John xviii. 9. Of all that thou hast given me, I have left none: He gets so many souls committed to him of the Father to redeem; and when he hath done, and performed the work, and brought them in, he hath the glory of his obedience to the Father, who faith to him, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 2. The glory of his faithfulness; according as he did engage and undertake to Jehovah, he hath kept his word: and there is a necessity lying on him, that it should be so, that of all committed to him, he should lose none, but present them without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; therefore he is called the faithful Shepherd, because he loses none of the sheep that are given him. 3. The glory of grace, and infinite love; the more that are saved, the more grace and love shines forth in paying their debt and ransom, and in bringing them in to be partakers of his love; therefore, John xvii. he says, That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them; he would have the love communicated by the Father to him, to be in them, that it may be known that he hath loved them, as the Father hath loved him: there cannot be such a proof and demonstration of love as this; it is evidenced in his exaltation as their Head, and in their being brought where he is. 4. The glory of power shines forth here; that tramples upon, and triumphs over all difficulties, that are in the way of saving elect sinners: And, O! what difficulties there are in the way of saving sinners! he having the devil and the world without, and a deceitful heart and a fickle humour within themselves to encounter with, so many sins to mortify, and snares to lead through; yet none plucks his sheep out of his hand: therefore, 1 Pet. i. they are said to be kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation. In a word, as it was the manner of old, for conquerors to ride in triumph, and all their prisoners led before or after them, at their back; so our Lord, for manifesting the glory of his grace, faithfulness and power, brings so many sinners through to glory, and hath a greater train than ever any conqueror had; and he counts it his glory and triumph to get many lost souls saved, John xvii. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and I am glorified in them; How is that? I have given them thy word, and they have received it; he counteth himself glorified in sinners submitting to him, in their believing on him, and in their taking pardon from him. Now, let me say, that if we were wailing and making choice of a Doctrine, to warm the heart of a sensible sinner, to shew unbelief out of the world, and to give impregnable ground to hazard on Christ, here it is, that our Lord Jesus placeth his victory, glory, triumph and spoil in this, even in doing good to sinners, and in having sinners getting good of him; it is his portion, when (to say so) the world is dealt, that he gets a number of lost sinners to save as his share; and though he be the Heir of all things, and the First-born, yet he loves that better than a thousand kingdoms; when he hath his spoil and prey at the taking, this is it, and he chooseth no other: O sinners! do ye think this little? or do ye think little of this? Had he placed his glory, in crushing under foot all the prisoners of the earth, or in bringing the world to nothing, who could have said, What doest thou? But when he placeth his glory and triumph in this, to overcome the devil, to cast him out of souls, to relieve poor sinners, and to bring them in to acknowledge him as the Author of eternal salvation, and as the Author and Finisher of their faith; if ye would have something to wonder at, is it not here? He will burn the world into ashes, and leave it, and will cast many kings and great men into hell; and yet he gathers poor elect sinners out of that burnt heap; as it were, as the thing he hath designed for his spoil: he hath no more, and he seeks no more,
S E R M O N  L X V .

"Isaiah liii. 12. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death. And he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

T H I S covenant of redemption is a great bargain, there was never such parties as the Lord Jehovah, and the Mediator; and we may say, there was never such conditions and articles in any bargain, as are in this. The verse now read

 Ủy 2d. There is here a sweet and solid ground for quieting and settling the faith of sensible sinners, who would have footing to their faith. Christ counts it his glory and triumph to save such as ye are, and if ye perish that would fain be at Christ, and his righteousness for life, Christ shall want his glory and triumph: And may not that serve and satisfy you, that your salvation is his glory and triumph, which he will not come short of? The Father hath here promised it, and he shall not, he cannot want it; sinners he must have, and shall have to be saved, because his victory, triumph and spoil depend on it: A wonderful condescension of grace (which is not easily believed) that all these are linked and coupled together, and through other, as it were, sinners salvation, Christ's victory, triumph and spoil, and God's glory in his grace, love, faithfulness and power! Ye reflect no doubt on God's faithfulness, who suspect and are jealous of your salvation, if indeed ye do, by faith, betake yourselves to Jesus Christ.

And therefore, as the first Use of it, Wonder at this. Will it not be a glorious day, when Christ is crowned, and hath all redeemed sinners at his back, with harps in their hands, singing, Salvation, glory and power to the Lamb? Or wonder, that there is not only a Saviour, and life and salvation to be had through him, but that it is such a salvation, as is wonderful in this respect, that he counts it his glory and triumph to have many sinners saved, when he might have glorified himself in sending us all to hell: May we not wonder at this? and yet we ought to believe it, and the little faith of it makes it to be so little wondered at. Ah! sinners for the most part believe not that Christ thinks so much of the saving of sinners; and therefore they wonder not at it, are not suitably affected and taken up with it.

Verse 12. If a'iah, it. Depart 391 happy And and even Xatisfy; ire, this. on, (as I said) and yet he gets no gain of these poor sinners for all this.

VERSE 12. If ye would do Christ service that is most acceptable to him, give him your souls to be saved by him, frustrate not his grace, lay your sins on him, and look for salvation through him in his own way: He came to fight with principalities and powers, and to vanquish them, and by the strong hand, to rescue souls from them; and step ye to at his back, for that is his satisfaction, his portion and spoil. We are not well there is here a strong and effectual motive to persuasion to faith in Christ, and a stronger and more effectual cannot be thought upon: It will be Christ's triumph to pull you out of the claws of the devil; and if he do it not, ye on the matter allow the devil some way to get the victory over Christ, which is yet impossible, but the devil will certainly have victory over you, to whom ye will be slaves and drudges for ever. There is also here ground of great terror and dreadful warning to such as yield not to Christ, because they do what they can to impede his victory, when he comes by his ordinances, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, they thwart with him; the day is coming, when this doctrine will be comfortable to some, and terrible to others, when there shall be none of us, but we shall see it confirmed with our eyes, when he (as a man fighting and sharing his spoil after the victory) shall say to these on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you; and to others; Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; even as if a conqueror should take some prisoners, and make them fons and heirs, and set them upon thrones, and should cast others into perpetual prison, who loved not liberty: And indeed it will be a fearful prison to be in hell, with the devil and his angels. Either we will be part of Christ's portion and spoil in that day, or he will refuse, difown and reject us, leaving us to be an everlasting prey to the devil; happy they whom he chooseth, and wo to them eternally whom he casts as refuse ware: God give us wisdom to lay these things to heart.
Verse 12.

1. There are two things promised to the Mediator, I will divide him a portion with the great; a fair and large victory, and a good and glorious out-gate; and he shall divide the spoil with the strong: As these that are conquerors and victors use to share most largely and deeply in the spoil, so our Lord Jesus shall have a rich spoil, a large booty, many redeemed souls, a bride whom he shall present blameless to the Father; these are the spoils, the jewels that he fights for, and the prey he chooseth: When the world is burnt, and the rest are sent to hell, he gathers out so many for himself.

2. The conditions on the Mediator’s side are four, he comes to this victory and triumph, because he hath poured out his soul unto death, because he was numbered with transgressors, because he bare the sins of many, and because he made intercession for transgressors, therefore shall he be sure of all this.

Although there be no express name of a covenant here, yet ye see the thing; because as in covenants amongst men there are two parties, and their engagements are mutual, and the performance of these engagements in the one depends on the performance of them in the other; so is it here.

1. The Parties are Jehovah, and the Mediator.
2. There are two things promised to the Mediator; a glorious victory, and a rich spoil, the justifying of many.
3. The conditions on the Mediator’s side, on which the performance of the promises depends; he condescends to die, and to die willingly, to be numbered with transgressors, to bear their sins, and to make intercession for them; this Jehovah condescends to accept of; and upon this, many, to wit, all elect sinners, are justified through faith on him, as it is verfe 11.

1. From the promise made to Christ, (where the person is changed) I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, I will grant him such a thing, and he shall obtain it, take this general observation, as the reason of it; “That all the promises made by Jehovah to the Mediator are certain, and shall actually be performed.” I will grant this to him, and he shall get it. The connexion doth also confirm it; Because he hath poured out his soul unto death; So, Psal. lxxxix. 34, 35. Once I swear by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David; my covenant will I not break, nor after the thing that is gone out of my lips: And indeed it cannot but be so, if we consider either the Person that makes the promise, he is God unchangeable in himself, absolutely faithful, and cannot deny himself; Once have I sworn, and will not lie unto David: or the Party to whom the promise is made, he is the Mediator God-man, in whom the Father is well pleased; and the Mediator having performed what he undertook for the elect, there is no ground to question the performance of the promises made him.

Use. And it is a very comfortable one; Look, whatever is promised to the Mediator, in reference to particular, private, or publick mercies, all shall be most certainly and insurmountably performed; Christ is the Party to whom the promises are made, and Jehovah cannot fail to perform what is promised to the Mediator, more than the Mediator hath failed in performing what he undertook: Now it is promised to the Mediator, Psal. cx. 3. “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, thou hast the dew of thy youth:” Where there are these things promised to Christ:

1. That his people shall be made willing in the day of his power, which is express in that, John vii. 44. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; God takes away the stubbornness, and frowardness that is in the elect, and makes them pliable to embrace, and receive, and give up themselves to Christ. 2. That his people shall be numerous, the youth of his womb shall be numerous, as the dew in the morning. 3. They shall be holy and shining in holiness, in the beauty of holiness; again it is promised to the Mediator, that all believers in him shall be justified, as it is verse 11. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; and this is according to that, John vi. 39, 40. This is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose none; and this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: The poor sinner that by itself betakes himself to God’s promise, the promise cannot fail him, because the Mediator is considered as the Party, to whom the promise is made: And the absolute salvation and redemption of believers is in the same place promised; though they be in hazard through many snares, in-dwelling lusts, temptations and snares, to be drawn away, yet they shall have eternal life, they shall never
never perish, none shall pluck his sheep out of his hand, he shall see his seed, of all that are given him, he shall lose none:’ This would commend believing to us, as a sure and ficker bargain, because the ground of our faith is articulated with God and the Mediator; and it is as impossible that it can fail, as it is impossible that God can be unfaithful, and that the Mediator can fail in that wherein he is engaged.” Again, if ye look to promises of publick mercies, as that he shall have a church in the world, and that she shall be continued and preserved, &c. These promises shall certainly be performed, as that, Psal. ii. 6. I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion; ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost ends of the earth for thy possession; a fruit of which promise is our preaching, and your hearing the gospel here this day: And the promises, Psal. Ixxxix. from verse 20. and forward, ‘With him my hand shall be established, and my arm shall strengthen him; the enemy shall not exact upon him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him; I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him; I will set his hand on the sea, and his right hand on the rivers; I will make him my first born, higher than all the kings of the earth; my mercy will I keep for him, his seed shall endure for ever; if his children forsake my law, then will I visit their transgression with the rod; nevertheless, my loving-kindness I will not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.” There is, Hof. iii. a promise of the ingathering of the Jews: and, Læ. ix. 6. it is said, that the government shall be upon his shoulders, and of the increase of his government there shall be no end; and, Rev. xi. 15. it is proclaimed, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ: All these, and many the like promises, shall be accomplished, though the world should be turned upside down every month once, let be every year: The ground of the church’s continuance, and preservation, is not, because such and such persons govern; otherwise, what would have become of the church, when Antichrist prevailed? but the promises made to the Mediator. Here lieth the Christian’s peace, when he hath to do with challenges; it is impossible that the believer in Christ can perish: And here is infused the church’s preservation, even by God’s promise to the Mediator, that he shall have a seed, and that many shall be justified, that he shall divide the spoil: And tho’ we see but very little appearance of the spreading of the gospel among the Jews and Pagans, verse 12. or where Antichrist reigns, the visible church being now for many years rather incroached upon, than extended; yet there is not one word here promised, but it shall be accomplished: And this is both a ground of our peace, and of our confidence in prayer, as it is, Psal. Ixxii., “Prayer also shall be made “for him continually, and daily shall he be praised “ed.” Two sweet exercises, daily to be praying “for that which is in the pattern of prayer, Let thy kingdom come, and daily to be praising him for the coming of his kingdom.

But, 2dly, What is spoken of Christ the Mediator’s part, we take it for granted, that there is nothing spoken of, but it is, or shall be performed; the Father engages to perform to him whatever promises are made to him, because he hath performed whatever he undertook: And although Isaiah, long ere the Messiah came in the flesh, spake of it, as a thing done in the preterit, or by past time, when as yet it was not actually done; yet he doth so, because it was as certain as if it had been already done. Observe hence, “That there is no part of Christ’s undertaking, as Mediator in the covenant of redemption, but it is, and shall be actually performed.” O but there are two resplend and faithful Parties in this covenant! It is not God, and Adam who brake the covenant, and played the traitor; but it is God upon the one side, and the Mediator, Emmanuel, God with us, on the other side: Therefore there is faithfulness in the Mediator’s performing according to his undertaking, as well as there is faithfulness in God’s performing whatever he hath spoken of him, or promised to him. Ye shall only take two or three testimonies for this: The 1st is, Mat. iii. 14. and xviii. 5. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; He undertook to pay the elect’s debt, and hath accordingly performed it, so that the Father is well pleased. A 2d is, John xvii. 4. where he appeareth before the Father, and useth it for an argument for his glorifying of him with the same glory, which he had with the Father before the world was: I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; I have gotten a task and piece of work committed to me, and now it is performed: And that other word, he hath on the cross, is remarkable to this purpose, It is finished; now the task and work is ended, and I have no more to do, but presently to pass to the victory, and to the dividing of the spoil. And a 3d testimony, is our Lord Jesus his ascension to heaven, and the glory that he will appear in, at the day of judgment, when his kingdom shall be
Isaiah liii.

verse 12. 

1. There is here ground to fix our faith upon; and indeed there is need to fix it rightly: The ground that our salvation, and perseverance in the faith is founded on, is not our continuing to pray, to believe, and to love God, but this engagement betwixt the Father and the Son; and it is the cause procuring the other, as a necessary and infallibly certain effect; it is mainly on this, that believers should rest quiet and confident. 2. It should make believers humble and cheerful, seeing, though they be weak in themselves, yet here they have a grip and hold for every hand, as it were; Jehovah’s word, and the Mediator’s word for their through-bearing. 3. It should much commend believing, and the state of a believer, who have such ground of assurance: The greatest monarch on earth hath not such ground of assurance for his dinner or supper, as the poor believer hath for eternal life; for, the word spoken by Jehovah to the Mediator, and the undertaking of the Mediator to Jehovah, cannot fail; and the believer hath that to rest upon, as the ground of his assurance.

More particularly, the articles on the Mediator’s side are (as I said) in these few expressions, [He hath poured out his soul unto death, he was numbered with the transgressors, he bare the sins of many; and made intercession for the transgressors.] 1st, He must die, expressed in these words, He hath poured out his soul unto death; which implies three things, 1. That it is an article of the covenant of redemption, and of the Mediator’s undertaking; that he should die for sinners; and so it is a needful, curious and unwarrantable dispute, Whether fallen man might have been redeemed any other way, or whether a drop of his blood was not enough to redeem man? because we see here it is determined and articled in the covenant of redemption, that he should die; Jehovah will have the Mediator dying; and be possible what may to God’s sovereignty, (which we would not make to clash with his justice, nor his justice with his sovereignty) this may bound and limit us, that it is concluded in this covenant of redemption, that the Mediator shall lay down his life; and it being concluded, it is certain, 1. That God hath given man a law, threatening him, that if he should break that law, he should die. 2. That all mankind, and so the elect, have broken that law, and so are liable to the threatening and curse. 3. That the Mediator became Cautioner, and undertook to satisfy for the elect’s debt; it was necessary that he should die, because he undertook to pay their debt, and to satisfy for their sin, which was death by the law to them:
Serm. LXV.

If any man of you, and yet he got not sin to put by: We may here allude to that, Eccl. viii. 8. There is no discharge in that war, neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it. Death, when it hath a commission, and God’s terror backing it, O how will it handle the secure stubborn sinner, when the hand of God shall pursue him eternally! Alas! what are many doing that never fear the wrath of God, that suspend, put off, and delay the closing of their accounts, and all endeavours to die to fin, and to live to righteousness, and either pass over their days as Atheists, or as formal hypocrites? and such are some of you that hear me this day, who never seek to be found in Christ, nor to improve his death to the mortifying of sin: What will ye do in the day when ye shall be called to a reckoning? Ye will curse the day that ever ye heard the gospel, and that this was concluded, that Christ should die; it will be the favour of death to you thro’ all eternity, and will be the most soul-searching and tormenting word that ever ye heard; and ye will with that the work of redemption had never been heard of, nor resolved upon.

Verse 12.

Use 4. It is a comfortable and encouraging word to sensible sinners; such, betaking themselves to Christ, may be sure to get good of him, for he hath paid the price already, and hath given his word for it, That such as believe in him, shall never perish, but that he will raise them up at the last day. Ye would not think, that it will be displeasing or dissatisfaction to the Father, or to the Son, that ye come to him, and take hold of him: for it was for that end, that God sent him, and that he laid down his life, and died; (but he dies no more) it will be no trouble to him, but satisfaction to his soul, for all the travail of it, to make application of his purchase to you: And seeing it will not displease, but be most acceptable to him, that ye believe on him, and be saved by him; and since not believing, rubs shame in a manner upon him, why do you not betake yourselves unto him by faith, for his satisfaction, and your own own salvation?

2dly, He not only died, but it is said, He poured out his soul unto death; which implies two things.
1. The intenseness of it, it was an uncouth and strange death; not only was his body afflicted, but his soul was poured out. 2. It looks to his good-will, readiness and cheerfulness in dying; Father, (as if he had said) must I die? and wilt thou have my soul sorrowful and heavy? I am content to be so; thou shalt have my life: He comes not grudgingly, but willing.
Verse 12.

Our Lord Jesus poured out his soul unto death for souls; he values souls so much, that he gave his precious life for them: Therefore it is said, 1 Pet. i. 19, We are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ: If he esteemed so much of souls, what will it be thought of, when ye waste your souls, and ye know not whereon. He bought souls dear, and ye fell them cheap, for a little silver and gold, or for that which is worfe, and far less worth: What an unsuitableness is here betwixt Christ's estimation of souls and yours, betwixt his buying them at so dear a rate, and your calling them away, for that which is very vanity? What do the most part of you yet for your souls? Some a bit of land, some a house, some aneckless pleasure, some a sport, some the satisfaction of their lusts, or a moment's sinful mirth; O pitifully poor bargain! what will become of the mirth, or lust, or pleasure, of this house, or of that land, when kings, and great men will ly-crawling, like so many worms before the Lamb? Ye will not get your houses or land with you, ye will not get leave to wear your brave clothes, ye will have no silver nor gold in your purse in that day; and suppose ye had it, the redemption of the soul is precious, and ceaseth for ever by any such price: 'Tis a wonderful thing, that when Christ esteems so much of souls, that sinners should esteem so little of them; is it not just that such souls go to hell, when they esteemed them so little worth?

Use 2. It should teach you to love, and heartily to welcome this Lord Jesus Christ; what argument of love and of trust, what motive to welcome him can there be, if this be not, that he spared not his life, but poured it out unto death for sinners? How long shall we halt betwixt Christ and Belial? We do not endure to mortify a lust, to want our sport and laughter, or a bit of our credit or honour, though it should cost us the want of Christ: But, O ingrate fools! is that a becoming requital to him that took his innocent soul in his hand, and poured it out for sinners, and when he was some way melted like lead in the fire of God's wrath, was content to yeit it forth abundantly, out of love to their salvation? Should it not rather call for love to him, for trusting and welcoming of him, and to suffering for his sake, if he call you to it? Will ye fkar to hazard your life for him, that poured out his soul for sinners! It would do a soul good to think how willingly and cheerfully he suffered; But, alas! how reluctantly, and unwillingly come we under suffering for him? However, let me
S E R M O N  L X V I .

Isaiah liii. 12. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: And he was numbered with the transgressors, and made intercession for the transgressors.

THERE was never bargain so seriously entered in as this betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator, never bargain was of such concernment and weight: It is therefore no marvel it be inscribed upon.

The prophet hath been holding forth the terms and conditions of it on both sides, and now he sums them up in the last verse, that the business may be left clear and distinct; setting forth what the Lord Jehovah engageth for to the Mediator, and what the Mediator engageth for to Jehovah; only with this difference, that in the former part of the chapter, the Mediator's engagement is first set down, and then what are the promises that the Lord Jehovah made to him; but in this verse, where the covenant is resumed, what the Lord engageth for to the Mediator is first set down, and then what the Mediator is to perform in the last place; so that (as I said) the mutualness of the covenant of redemption, and that it is but one bargain, one link whereof cannot be loosed on either side.

In the last part of the verse, what the Mediator is to perform, is set down in four expressions, as past and done, because of the certainty and efficacy of the Mediator's sufferings, and of his performing what he undertook, and of divine justice its acceptation thereof. The 1st is, because he hath poured out his soul unto death: It was proposed to the Mediator on this account, does my Father love me? That is, I am Mediator, the Father's Minifter, Steward, or Depute, in this work of redemption of sinners; and because I so willingly and cheerfully lay down my life for them, he hath given me this victory and glory. So well pleasing to God is the willing and cheerful death of the Mediator, that it should be admired by us, and should have this weight laid on it by us, that seeing cheerfulness in obedience is so acceptable to God, we should study it, for he loves a cheerful giver, and cheerfulness in any duty: It is much we have this word to speak of to you, many nations never heard of it, and ye would make some other use of it, than if ye had never heard of it; O but it will be dreadful to such as have heard it, and do slight it! their souls shall be poured out into hell, even squeezed, and wrung eternally by the wrath of God; therefore look not lightly on it, do not think all this transfiguration of grace to be for nought, if we were serious; we would wonder what it means. Alas! we think little or nothing to make our peace with God, and yet all this business is, ere the matter can be brought about, it is a great evidence of the stupidity, fainthlessnes and absurd unbelief of many, that they think nothing of sin and wrath, and of the hazard that their souls are in; and that they look at peace with God, as an easy business: But one day it will be found to be a great matter to be at peace with him, that sin is bitter, and wrath heavy; and that to be in good terms with God, is better than a thousand worlds: God himself make you wise to think seriously on it in time.

Verse 12.

Isaiah liii. 12. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: And he was numbered with the transgressors, and made intercession for the transgressors.
mediator to die, which he undertook; and in the execution, goes cheerfully about it: He poured his soul unto death, without any prigging; grace and love (to speak so with reverence) were so liberal and prodigal of the life of our Lord Jesus, for the salvation of lost sinners; that his blest Soul was separate from his Body, and he made obnoxious to the curse, which most willingly he under-went; his life or soul was poured out unto death. The 2d is, He was numbered with the transgressors; which implies three things, 1. It supposes that he was indeed no transgressor, there was no guile found in his mouth; yet he behaved to deep so low, as to be reckoned among, or numbered with transgressors. As the former expression holds out the painfulness of his death, so this holds out the ignominy of it: He not only died, and behoved to die, but he was looked upon as a despicable person, even so despicable, that Barabbas, a thief and robber, was preferred unto him: Of this we spake from verse 3. He was despised and rejected of men. 2. It implies men ingratitude, that when our blest Lord came to redeem them, they did not count him worthy to live, but looked upon him as a transgressor; this was also fulfilled in the history of the gospel, as John xviii. 30. they say unto Pilate, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him unto thee. 3. It implies the low condescendence, and depth of the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, which hath no bottom; he will not only die, but die a shameful and cursed death, and take on reproach and ignominy with the debt of sinners; when they are despising him; the Cautioner must not only die, but die a shameful death: Some deaths are creditable and honourable, and men will with a great vanity affect them; but it behoved not to be so with our Lord Jesus, when he entered himself sinners Cautioner; he must not only die; but be despised in his death, as it is, chap. 15. He gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, he hid not his face from shame and spitting: because it was so articled and agreed upon; When he was reviled, he reviled not again: O what condescending-love shines forth here, in the Mediator! It was much to pay the debt, and die, but more in his dying, to be counted the transgressor; much to be Cautioner, but more to be counted the dyvoir. As if some wicked and per- verse officer, seizing on the cautioner, should not only arrest him for the debt, and exact it off him, but account and call him the dyvoir debtor; yet he bears all patiently. It would learn us to bear reproach for him; he bare much more for us, than we can bear for him: He was railed on, reviled, buffeted, and spit upon; they in derision, said, Hail king of the Jews; they mocked him, nodded the head at him, hung him up between two thieves, as the most eminent malefactor of the three; and Mark faith, chap. xv. 28. That this scripture was fulfilled, which faith, And he was numbered with the transgressors: God had appointed it; and the Mediator had condescended to it; and therefore it behoved to be: We spake to the matter of this before, and will not now insist on it any further.

The 3d is, He bare the sins of many; which is also casual, as the former are: it is put in here, 1. To shew the end of his dying, and the nature of his death; his death was a cursed death, but not for his own sin; but for the sins of others, even to pay the debt that was owing by his elect: The many here, are the same many spoken of in the former verse, who by his knowledge are justified. It is not the sins of all that Christ bare, but the sins of many; and the many whose sins he bare, are the many that are justified; and all who are justified, their sins he bare, and of no more: so that as many as have their sins born by Christ, are justified; and whoever are justified, had their sins born by him. 2. It shews also, how the sins of these many are taken away, it was by Christs bearing the punishment due for their sins; this is that which we spake to, from verse 6. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all: In a word, it is this, the Mediator articeth, and agreeth to take on the guilt of the sins of the elect, the not their sins themselves, formally considered: he took the deferring, or burden of their debt: Of this we have also spoken before, and will not therefore insist any more particularly on it.

The 4th and last article, or part of the condition required of the Mediator, is, He made intercession for the transgressors. There was more required of him, than to die, and to die such a death for the elects sins; he must also make application of his death, and he will do that likewise; whereupon is founded his intercession, that the benefit of his death and satisfaction may be applied, and made forthcoming to them; which is set down in these words, He made intercession for the transgressors; wherein also we are to carry along the thoughts of his condescending love, who not only will satisfy for the elects debt, and procure to them righteousnes and eternal life, but when they continue in opposition to him, will make intercession for the application there- of to them; he having a number given to him, not only to pay their debt, by dying for them, but also actually to apply the benefits of his death and pur- chase to them, according to that, John vi. 39. This
For clearing whereof, when he prayed on the cross, Luke xxiii. 34. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do; this was in part fulfilled: But his praying, or making intercession for transgressors, is to be considered two ways, 1. As he was a Man under the law, and so he was to pray for other transgressors, than the elect only; as Stephen, following his example, did, Acts vii. 60. when he said, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. 2. As he is Mediator, and so he prays only for the elect; as is clear, John xvii. 9. And his intercession, thus considered, is always effectual, and runs in the channel of the covenant of redemption, and is commendable and of equal extent with his death. His intercession, in the first sense, is more largely extended; he might, considered as Man under the law, have interceded for his enemies, that were not elected: Therefore we take his intercession here in the second sense, as he is Mediator. And as Matthew, chap. viii. 17. applies his bearing of our griefs, and carrying of our forrows, spoken of, verfe 4. of this chap. to his carrying of our temporal bodily infirmities; So there may be an allusion to this, in the Lord's prayer on the cross. We mark this distinction, because Arminians, that pretend to an universal redemption, plead also for an universal intercession: And on this ground, they say, that Christ prayed for many that went to hell. But we anfwer, that our blessed Lord Jesus did not there, if he prayed for any such, interceded as Mediator properly, but as Man under the law; even as in his prayer in the garden, when his holy human nature finfettly feared at the bitter cup, he prayed, Father, if it be poffible, let this cup depart from me; and it was agreeable to the human nature, to f敲 innocently to efchew the drinking of fuch a cup; but when, in the fame prayer, he fpeaks as Mediator, he fays, " Not my will, but thine be done; and, for this caufe came I unto this hour." So when he preached as Man, and a Minifter of the circumcision, he fays, " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee, and thou wouldft not!" Whereas, if we consider him as Mediator, he doth what he will, and calleth none but they come, and will eth none to be gathered, but such as are gathered: The

Verse 12.

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We find, that when he prayed on the cross, Luke xxxix. 34. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do; this was in part fulfilled: But his praying, or making intercession for transgressors, is to be considered two ways, 1. As he was a Man under the law, and so he was to pray for other transgressors, than the elect only; as Stephen, following his example, did, Acts vii. 60. when he said, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. 2. As he is Mediator, and so he prays only for the elect; as is clear, John xvii. 9. And his intercession, thus considered, is always effectual, and runs in the channel of the covenant of redemption, and is commendable, and of equal extent with his death. His intercession, in the first sense, is more largely extended; he might, considered as Man under the law, have interceded for his enemies, that were not elected: Therefore we take his intercession here in the second sense, as he is Mediator. And as Matthew, chap. viii. 17. applies his bearing of our griefs, and carrying of our forrows, spoken of, verfe 4. of this chap. to his carrying of our temporal bodily infirmities; So there may be an allusion to this, in the Lord's prayer on the cross. We mark this distinction, because Arminians, that pretend to an universal redemption, plead also for an universal intercession: And on this ground, they say, that Christ prayed for many that went to hell. But we anfwer, that our blessed Lord Jesus did not there, if he prayed for any such, interceded as Mediator properly, but as Man under the law; even as in his prayer in the garden, when his holy human nature fincettly feared at the bitter cup, he prayed, Father, if it be poffible, let this cup depart from me; and it was agreeable to the human nature, to f敲 innocently to efchew the drinking of fuch a cup; but when, in the fame prayer, he fpeaks as Mediator, he fays, " Not my will, but thine be done; and, for this caufe came I unto this hour." So when he preached as Man, and a Minifter of the circumcision, he fays, " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee, and thou wouldft not!" Whereas, if we consider him as Mediator, he doth what he will, and calleth none but they come, and will eth none to be gathered, but such as are gathered: The

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Intercession here meant, is that which is an article of the covenant of redemption, and a piece of Christ's prieffly office, to which the promise in the firit part of the verfe is made; and therefore we have here clear access to speak of it, according as, the New Testament holds it out to us.

1. Then we observe this Doctrine from it, "That according to the covenant of redemption, our Lord must not only die, but also intercede for transgressors, or sinners; or, It is a part of our Lord's office, agreed upon in the covenant of re demption, that he should be Intercessor for transgressors." It is on this ground that it is faid, Pift. cx. 4. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Mel chisedek: He is a Priest after Melchisedek's order, and not after the order of Aaron; and, Rom. viii. 34. he is faid to be at the right hand of God, making intercession for us: It is faid likewise, Heb. vii. 25. that he is able to fave to the uttermoft, all that come to God by him; feeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. So, 1 John ii. 1. it is faid, If any man finf, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Chrift the righteous: And frequently else where, it is in Scripture attributed to him. If it be asked, Why behaved Jesus Chrift the Mediator, to be an Intercessor: We anfwer, For these three rea fons: 1. It was fuitable to the glory of God, that the great Lord-deputy, appointed for the ingathering of elect sinners, fould be furnished with this office; and his intercession is derived from it, Heb. vii. 35. He is able to fave to the uttermoft, feeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us: He cannot fit up, nor fail in proving himself to be an able Saviour, because he lives for ever to intercede, 2. It is fuitable and meet for the glory of the Mediator, and of his prieffhood, that he should not be a Priest for a time only, but for ever; therefore, when he is brought in as a Prieff, Pift. cx. compared with Heb. vii. he is preferred to the order of Aaron, and is faid to be a Prieff for ever, after the order of Melchisedek; by fo much as he is Surety of a better testament: They were many, because they were not fuffered to continue; but this Man, be cause he continueth for ever, hath an unchanged pri effhood. It was meet, in refpeét of the conflation that believers in him have from this his inter ceffion; there had been a defect in the conflation of believers, if he had not been Intercessor; but seeing, as it is, Heb. x. 19. We have fhuch an high Prieff over the house of God, we have boldness to enter into the holieft, by a new and living way; and may draw near with full assurance of faith. And

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that which gives us this boldness, is that, (as it is, Heb. iv. 15, 16.) "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:" Then follows, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

4. We may add, that it is suitable, for this reason, to see, if we consider, and compare the type with the antitype, Exod. xxx. 10. and, Lev. xvi., compared with Heb. ix. The high priest had sacrifices preferred to him for himself, and for the people, when he went once in the year, into the most holy, with the blood of the sacrifice; which signified, that Christ, after the laying down of his life, "was to enter into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us," Heb. ix. 24.

This is a point which may yield us many and great uses, as, 1. For information, to clear us about Christ's intercession. 2. For consolation, to shew us the advantages that flow to believers from it. 3. For direction in duty, to learn us what use we should make of it. And, 4. For reproof and conviction, for, and of the sin of our much sligthing and neglecting this part of Christ's priestly office.

As for the first, it serves, we say, for information; and to let us see that we have an excellent high Priest, who is not only answerable to the type, in dying, but also in interceding; who died, that he might make application of what he purchased by his death.

For further clearing and prosecuting of this use, we shall speak a little to some few questions; As, 1. What this intercession is? 2. Who intercedes? 3. For whom? 4. For what? 5. How this intercession is performed? 6. What are the grounds on which it is founded?

For the first, What this intercession is in general? And for clearing it, ye would consider, what it is not; and, 1. There is here no humbling of the Mediator in way of supplication, as he prayed when on earth, or as we pray, or as one man intreats or intercedes with another; that way of interceding is inconsistent with his exaltation, his humiliation being perfected, and he being now exalted at the right hand of God. 2. It is no verbal thing, no bringing forth or uttering of words; there is no such language in our Lord's intercession: and so we are not to conceive of his intercession, as if he had made a formal prayer; that manner of dealing, or proceeding, is not now betwixt God and the Mediator. 3. Neither doth this his intercession consist in any new particular act of his will; as if he did act of will something that he did not before; therefore he is said to live for ever, to make intercession, and to abide a Priest continually: His intercession is continual, as is clear, Heb. vii. 3, 25, his being in heaven, and appearing there in our name, is his intercession. And therefore, 2. Let us see, in the next place, what it is? And more generally, we may take it up in such expressions, as the scriptures make use of, to hold it out by; and in the similitude and analogy whence it is borrowed; for it is a borrowed thing, as the covenant of redemption is, from compacts among men, because we cannot take up divine and mysterious things, except they be express after the manner of men for our capacity; Such as this, as if a king's son were interposing for a person not in good terms with the king, or for whom he would have some benefit from the king his father: The similitude seems indeed to be drawn from this, yet it must not be a strict thereto; therefore, 1 John ii. 1, he is called an Advocate with the Father; and yet he doth not advocate our cause verbally, as we said before; And, 1 Tim. ii. 5. "There is one God, and one Mediator betwixt God and men;" where the apostle is speaking of praying: And here he is said to make intercession for us, as the high priest did in the name of the people. In a word, it is our Lord Jesus Christ his making of what he hath purchased, and hath engaged to him in the covenant of redemption, effectually forthcoming for the behalf of the people, as if he were agenting their cause, as an advocate in heaven; which is to held forth, for the help of our faith; that the Mediator having made his testament, and confirmed it by his death, is looking well that his death, and the benefits purchased to elect sinners thereby, may be made effectual; and is as it were lying as agent and advocate at court, to procure and bring about this business, according to that, John xvii. 19, 20, 24. "For their sakes I "sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified, "&c. Neither pray I for these alone, &c, and Fa- "ther, I will that these whom thou hast given me, "may be with me where I am:" It is even that all may be made good to them, for whom he sanctified himself; and the effectual making out of that which he hath purchased to them, that is called his intercession.

2dly, Who makes intercession? It is not enough that Christ, as man, makes intercession; but it is Christ Mediator, God and man in one Person; It being an error of the Papists, to make the inter- ception of Christ to be a thing performed by the human nature only, which lefeth the consolation of believers, and is inconsistent with the union of the
59. For whom does he intercede? There are here extremes on both hands to be eschewed. 1. Some make his intercession over broad, as if he interceded for all the world: this he expressly declines, John xvii. 9. I pray not for the world; and his intercession being grounded on his death and satisfaction, it must be of equal extent therewith, and must relate to the covenant of redemption, where- in so many were given him to be redeemed by his death. 2. Others make his intercession too narrow, in making it only for them that actually believe: He also refutes this opinion, John xvii. 20. by saying, Neither pray I for these alone, but for all that shall believe on me through their word: And it is always on this ground that he intercedes, to wit, because they are given; so that it is for the elect, converted or unconverted, that he intercedes. The reason why we mark this, is to overturn thereby many corrupt dispositions that are made use of, to bring in an universal intercession, as well as an universal redemption. (1.) Some make his intercession common to all; but we, according to the scripture, acknowledge no such intercession to belong to Christ, especially as Mediator: however, he might, as man, under the law, have prayed for some that shall not be actually saved, as he commands one man to pray for other men, yet not for all men simply. (2.) Others make a conditional intercession for all, as they make a conditional redemption of all, and make both absolute for believers only, which is also corrupt; for, considering the object of his intercession, as Mediator, to be only the elect, as indeed they are, it overtops both this, and the former opinion: if he prayed not for all, he died not for all; the one whereof is grounded on the other.

4thly, For what doth he intercede? In general, for all that is conditioned to him, in the covenant, for the behoof of his people; he prays for the fulfilling of all the articles of the covenant, as that all the elect, who are not regenerate, may be regenerate, and made believers; that many through his knowledge may be justified; that these that are regenerate, and believers, and by faith have betaken themselves to him, may be justified, pardoned, and received in favour, friendship, and fellowship with God; that believers may be kept from temptation; that temptations may be prevented, and they made to perish not; that Satan may not make their faith to fail them, as he designs; and the Lord gives account of his design, Luke xxii. 32. Satan hath sought to winnow you, but I have prayed that thy

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faith fail not; that they and their prayers and services may be accepted; that the suits and supplications that they present, and put up in his name, may get a hearing; that they may be carried on in the gradual advances of satisfaction, to the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls; that they may be glorified, and be where he is, to behold his glory: In a word, he intercedes for every thing needful, and for every thing promised to them, his intercession being as broad as his purchase.

5thly, How doth he perform this part of his priestly office for his people? It is performed by his entry into the most holy place, in our nature and name, as having satisfied justice, and vanquished death, where he appears before God for us; so that we are to look to Christ’s being in heaven, not simply as glorifying himself, or as glorified in himself, for himself, but as our Head and Forerunner, to answer all that can be said against his elect, for whom he suffered and satisfied, as it is, Heb. ix. 23, 24. It was therefore necessary, that the patterns of things in the heaven should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices: 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; so that our Lord Jesus, by his entry into heaven, doth declare (I mean materially) his victory in our name, and appears there, as a publick, and not as a private person: his entry into heaven is not to be looked on as the entry of Moses, or of Elias, but as the entry of him who is Head of the elect, whose entry there is a declaration of what he would be at: As by the power of his Godhead, he conveyed himself in thither; so he hath possession in our name, and according to the covenant declares, That these whose room he sustains, may and must be admitted to glory; and we must conceive a special efficacy in his being there; for procuring to them what he hath purchased. 2. His intercessi- on is performed through the efficacy of his blood and satisfaction, flowing from the nature of the covenant, which hath a moral real cry, for making effectual what he by his death hath procured; as the apostle, speaking of Abel’s blood, and of making application of Christ’s blood, Heb. xii. 24. faith, It speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; for Abel’s blood had a derisit in it to cry guilt, and could not but have a curse following it, because God had cursed the shedder of blood; but Christ’s blood, considered as the price of redemption for the elect, hath an invaluable and un-
conceivable merit and worth in it, and must have a cry for the blessings purchased to them by it. 3. He performs this his intercession by his constant care, and by his continual willingness, and actual willing, that what he hath purchased for his elect people may be applied to them, that such and such persons may be brought to believe, that upon their believing they may be pardoned, delivered from snares and temptations, kept in favour with God, may be accepted in their performances, &c. for he had that prayer, John xvii. 20, 24, and he continues to have that same sympathy; his way on earth was always fined, but now is glorious and majestic, suited to his glorified state; he continues to intercede according to his designed; and his actual willingness is a main part of his intercession, which is not in renewing of acts (to speak so) but in his continuing desire and willingness, that what good he hath purchased may be conferred, according to the covenant; for Christ in heaven is still a true Man, and hath a will, as he had on earth, continuing to seek that they may be glorified with him, for whom he satisfied; and this actual willing, directing and affecting, that such a thing should be, is called his intercession, because it cannot but be so esteemed, as to have the effect to follow, according to the covenant, as he says, John xi. 41, 42. I thank thee, Father, that thou hast heard me, and I know that thou bearest me always. This, as to his actual willing, cannot but be in heaven; however, we are sure that he is there, and in our name, and that his death and blood-shed hath an efficacy to bring about what he hath purchased; and that his will and affection are the same, and have an efficacy with them, and the effect certainly following, so as nothing can go wrong there, more than a man that hath a just caufe in a court of judicature, and an able advocate, with much moyen, to agent and plead it before a just judge, can be wronged, or lose his caufe.

6thly, The grounds of his intercession, are, 1. The excellency of his Person, who, though he be Man, yet he is God also, equal with the Father, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, as it is, Heb. i. 2. which cannot but add weight to his intercession, as well as to his satisfaction, the Person that intercedes being God. The 2d is his satisfaction, which is the ground of his intercession; for upon his satisfaction he maketh intercession, even as if a cautioner would say, I have paid such a man’s debt, and therefore he ought to be absolved: Therefore, 1 John ii. 1, 2. these two are joined, “We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins:” So Rom. viii. 34. they are joined, “It is Christ that died, who is at the right-hand of God, and maketh intercession for us.” 3. The covenant of redemption is the great ground on which his intercession is founded; such and such persons are given to Christ, and such privileges and benefits offered to be conferred upon them, on condition the Mediator would undertake, and satisfy for them; and he having undertaken, and paid the price, there is good ground for his interceding, for the making application of the purchase; therefore he says, John xvii. ‘Trine they were, and thou gavest them me, &c. This gives him right to plead and intercede for them, seeing he hath endured soul-travel for them, he ought to see his feed, and to have many justified, and freed from the curse and condemnation that they were obnoxious to, as the fruit of that soul travel.

And in and from the consideration of these, we may gather what is the nature of Christ’s intercession, and how we may make use of it, and how particularly we should beware of a carnal mistake in many about his intercession, as if he were praying in heaven, as a distinct Party from God. It is true, he is a distinct Person of the glorious Trinity, but not a distinct Party in interceding, as some ignorantly conceive of him; and therefore think him easier to have access to than the Father, and therefore will pray him to pray the Father for them, as if, when they prayed to him, they were not praying to the Father, or as if there were not one Object of worship. This flows from ignorance of the nature of Christ’s intercession, and is unbecoming a Christian; for, supposing a man to rest by faith on Christ, the Father is content and well pleased to pardon him, as well as the Son is, because he is engaged in the covenant of redemption to do so; and, if he be not a believer, neither the Father nor the Son will respect him: Our ufe-making of Christ’s intercession doth consist rather in the founding of our hope of preeding with God on it, as on his satisfaction, than in putting up words of prayer to him, to intercede for us, as if he were to pray in heaven, as he did on earth, or as one man intercedes for another. The point is sublimely spiritual, and somehow tickle; and I indeed fear to enter on more Ufe, at least for the time: Only remember, that he is an Intercessor; and learn to make right ufe of him as an Intercessor: And the Lord himself make the benefit of his intercession forthcoming to us.
SERMON LXVII.

Isaiah liii. 12.——And he made intercession for the transgressors.

If Christ were known in the greatnes s and vast extent of his worth, O how lovely would he be! How incomprehensibly full are his offices of ground s of consolatio n to his people! But the mean and low thoughts we have of him, and the poor consolation we feed on, do evidence much ignorance of him, and much unbelief of the solid worth and ful- nesses that is in him, and in his priestly Office in par- ticular; and yet, O how full of consolation is it! Such a high Priest became us, Heb. vii. 26. even such a high Priest as sinners had need of: There hath been much spoken of one part of his priest- hood, to wit, his sacrifice, and offering up of him- self, in the former verses of this chapter. Now, ere the prophet close, he gives a hint of the other part of his priestly Office, to wit, of his intercession, a main commendation of Christ's fulness; it is that which evidenceth him to be a Saviour, able to save to the uttermost such as come unto God through him, because he lives for ever to make intercession for them; as it is, Heb. vii. 25. And it is a piece of the consolation of God's people, that Jesus Christ hath this office by the Father's allowance, and that it is articled in the covenant of redemption betwixt the Father and him, that as he shall "pour out his soul unto death, be numbered with trans- gressors, bear the sins of many, so he shall make "intercession for the transgressors;" Therefore, Heb. vii. 21. he is said "to be made an high "Priest with an oath, by him that said unto him, "Psal. cx. 4. The Lord sware, and will not re- pent, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the or- der of Melchizedek." He was a Priest on earth, by offering himself in a sacrifice, and by interced- ing for elect sinners; and he is a Priest in heaven by his intercession, and therefore is preferred to all the priests on earth, "Who did not continue by reason of death, but he continues for ever;" and none can slay him wrong, to speak so with reverence of him.

We shew, in our entring on this verse, that this his intercession is not to be ascribed to his prayer on the cross, that was but one evidence or parti- cular instance of it; but it takes in his whole inter- ception, because the scope of the Prophet here is to hold out, as what God promised to him on the one hand in the covenant of redemption, so on the other what he interceded for; and so his intercessi- on, looked on in the covenant of redemption, takes in his whole intercession, especially as it is gone a-

bout in heaven, by virtue of his sacrifice once for all offered up when he was on earth.

We observed the last day, That according to the covenant of redemption, our Lord Jesus Christ be- haved not only to die, but to be an Intercessor; or, that it belongs to our Lord's priestly office, a- greed upon in the covenant of redemption, not only to offer up himself in a sacrifice, and to die, but to make intercession for his people; He made in- tercession for the transgressors; or as all the rest may read in the future time, so this, He shall make intercession for the transgressors; but for the cer- tainty of the thing, it is set down in the preterit, or by past time, the Father did take his word, and so it past as done in the court of heaven.

We cleared this point, and proposed four uses of it, the first whereof was to inform us about Christ's fulness, to discover his unsearchable riches, and to let us see what an excellent high Priest we have, that continues an Intercessor: Not only hath he once for all offered up his sacrifice, as the high-priest under the law did once a year, but hath entred within the vail, to intercede, and thereby to make the benefits of his purchase effectual and forthcoming to them for whom his sacrifice was offered; even as Lev. xvi. (where the rules for the high-priest's offering are given) after he had of- fered the sacrifice, he took the blood, and entred within the vail; and by the sacrifice, and his going in to pray, he made atonement for the people typi- cally: answerable to this, our Lord Jesus, by his once offering, hath perfected for ever those who are sancti- fied; and by his going within the vail, he exe- cutes this part of his priestly office, in interceding for transgressors.

In prosecuting this use, we answered some que- tions, which now we shall not insist to repeat; on- ly there is a short question or two, that further may be asked, which will clear the former, ere we go to the next use; and the first is, If our Lord, before he came in the flesh, discharged this part of his priestly office? The reason of the question or doubt is, because in the New Testament, his intercession is always, at least very ordinarily, sub- joined to his ascension. The second is, How his intercession now differs from his intercession before his incarnation, or in what respects the consolatio- n of believers, that flows from his intercession, is stronger now, than the consolation of believers
flowing there from, was before he was incarnate? As for the first, it cannot be denied, but Christ was Intercessor, since he had a church in the world; for it is a part of his priestly Office; and he was made a Priest, by the eternal oath, in the covenant of redemption, Psalm. xxii. 4. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever: And he is said to have an unchangeable Priesthood; and there being but one way of access for sinners to heaven by Christ, who is called the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, it must be held for a sure-conclusion, that his intercession is as old as his sacrifice: And he was Intercessor before his incarnation, in these three respects. 1. In respect of his office, being designed to be Intercessor; for (as we said) being designed to be Priest, and being Mediator before his incarnation, he behaved to be Intercessor also; for that way he did mediate; and the benefits that came to sinners from the beginning were the effects of his intercession; therefore, 1 Tim. ii. 5. it is said, There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus; and there was never another real Mediator, however Moses might be called a typical one. 2. He was Intercessor before his incarnation, in respect of the merit of his future sacrifice: He did not before his incarnation intercede by virtue of his sacrifice actually offered, as now he doth; yet there was virtue which flowed from his sacrifice to be offered, to the people of God, as well then as now, when it hath been long since offered: The sins of all that ever were pardoned, were pardoned on the account of his sacrifice, and so also the spiritual benefits that did redound to them, did redound to them through his intercession then, as now, by virtue of the same sacrifice, because of the nature of the covenant, wherein it was agreed, that his sacrifice should be of the same efficacy before his incarnation, as after: For the day and hour was agreed upon, when he should offer that sacrifice; therefore it is said, that in due time, and in the fulness of time, he came and died. 3. He was Intercessor before his incarnation, as after it, in respect of the effects that followed on it, to the people of God then and now. The people of God, before his incarnation, had communion with God, and access to him, though not generally, in that degree of boldness; they presented their prayers through, and were beholden to the same Christ for a hearing, as we are; and therefore his intercession before his incarnation extended to them, as to us; in these respects, but with this difference, that he procured these benefits to them by virtue of the covenant, and the efficacy of his blood to be offered; and now he procures them to his people, since his incarnation and ascension, by virtue of the same ascension, and by virtue of the efficacy of the blood offered.

As to the 24th, How his mediation and intercession now differs since his ascension, from his intercession before it, as to the strengthening of the consolation of the people of God? For answer, 1. We lay down this for a conclusion, That though our Lord Jesus was Mediator, both before his incarnation, and now; yet since his ascension, he hath a new way of mediation and intercession, that exceedingly abounds to the strengthening of the consolation of his people; therefore it is ordinarily subjoined to his ascension, because of his new manner of discharging that his Office. It is true, there is no addition to that grace which is infinite in him, as if he could be more gracious; or as if, in respect of the covenant, there could be larger promises, as to essential things contained therein; but by taking on our nature, he hath a new way of being affected, and a new way of venting his affection to us, and is capable of another manner of touch with the infirmities of his people now, that he hath human bowels, though glorified and glorious; and the faith of his people hath a ground superadded, whereupon to expect the communication of that grace, mercy and goodness that is in him, though all the effects that followed to his people, before his incarnation, had respect to his future incarnation; so these effects had respects to his future intercession, in our nature, as well as to his dying, and laying down of the price: for these that were admitted to heaven ere he came in the flesh, were admitted the same way that we are.

But 2. and more particularly, if it be asked, Wherein this addition to the consolation of God's people by his intercession, after his ascension, kynthia, or manifests itself? We may take it up in these six steps, which will also serve to illustrate the manner of his interceding. 1. It kynthia in this, that he appeareth in heaven in our nature; now the Man Christ is in heaven, interceding, and as Advocate answering for purified sinners, or as Ambassador and Legate, agitating the affairs of them that are given him of the Father, as it is, Hebrews vi. 24. He is not entered into the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself, to appear now in the presence of God for us; where the apostle having been speaking of the excellency of his priesthood before, and comparing him with the type, he tells, that he is not entered into the typical tabernacle, but
but into heaven itself, to appear there in the presence of God for us: And this is a solid ground of consolation to a poor believing sinner, that he hath Christ in his own nature in heaven interceding, that what he hath performed before, by virtue of his office, and of the efficacy of his sacrifice to be offered, when he should be incarnate; he now being incarnate, and ascended, performs it, we having God in our nature, become a Man like unto us, to care for the things of his people: and if any new question arise, or debate be started, to entertain the treaty, and to effectuate and make out their business, that nothing that concerns them misgive. 2. Their consolation is stronger in this respect, that he is in heaven, by virtue of the efficacy of his sacrifice already offered; as the high-priest, when he had offered the sacrifice, took the blood with him within the vail, and interceded for the people, so our Lord Jesus is not now interceding by virtue of his sacrifice to be offered, but by virtue of his sacrifice already offered, having entred into heaven, and taken the efficacy of his sacrifice with him, to enter it (to speak so) in the book of God, to stand on record: nay, he standeth there himself, to keep the memory of his blood fresh; and by each appearance of him there, who is never out of the sight of the majesty of God, there is still a representation of the worth and efficacy of his sacrifice, and for whom, and for what it was offered. 3. There is, by the Man Christ his being in heaven, this ground of consolation superadded, that he hath a sympathy with sinners otherwise than before, not as to the degree, nor as to the intenseness of his grace and mercy, (as I hinted before) but as to the manner how he is affected: so that he hath the true nature and final affection of a Man, and so hath bowels to be wrought upon, which kythed while he was on earth: Although we cannot take up the manner how he is touched, yet he is touched otherwise than God abstractly considered can be, and otherwise than an angel in heaven can be touched, as we may see, Heb. ii. 17, and iv. 15. We have not an high Priest, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all things tempted as we are, yet without sin: And it behoved him to be like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high Priest, and have compassion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way: He is sinners Friend, that is Intercessor, and such an Intercessor, that intercedes, from the impression that the holy and inconceivable sympathy, which he hath with his members, hath upon him, as his expression to Paul speaks forth, Acts ix. Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? counting himself a Sufferer with his people, which cannot but have its own influence on his intercession, and add to the consolation of his people, that what he intercedes for the procurement of to them, is some way on this ground, as being a favour to their glorified Head. 4. Befide this sympathy, he hath a longing (to speak so) to have all the wants and defects of his people supplied and made up, and to have all the promises made to him, in behalf of the elect, fulfilled: not any such longing, as may in the least incroach on, or be inconsequent with the glory, and glorified state of our blest Lord Jesus; but considering, that there is a near relation betwixt him and his followers, he being the Head, and they the members, and that he hath a sympathy and affection according to that relation, it is answerable and suitable, that he should desire, and some way long for the perfecting of his body the church, which, Eph. i. is called, The fulness of him who filleth all in all: And he hath, no quittance, though a most pure and regular, yet a most kindly and strong desire and longing to have his body perfected, to have the elect gathered and brought in, as he had on earth a longing to have the work finished, which was given him to do: And this cannot but be a weighty part of his intercession, and very comfortable to his people, his longing to have such and such a person converted, such and such a person more mortified and more perfected, and made more conform to him. There is a word, Heb. x. 13, that gives ground for this, From henceforth expecting till all his enemies be made his footstool: and what is spoken of this expecting of what is there mentioned, may be applied to other things: He is sure expecting, till all thef promifes, concerning his being a mediocr, and the justifying and glorifying of many, be fulfilled, because that was promised him in the former verse; and expecting till he divide the spoil with the strong, as is promised in the former part of this verse. Now, our Lord Jesus having laid down his life, what is he doing in heaven? Even longing till these promises be fulfilled; not that he hath any longing that implies a defect in him simply, for he is absolutely glorified and glorious: yet such longing as is consistent with his glorified state, as (if we may make the comparison, though in every thing it be not suitable) the souls in heaven are perfectly glorified, yet they have a longing for the union of their bodies, for the perfecting of Christ's Body mystical, and for the union of all the members in a soul and body with the Head: So Christ, considered as Mediator, God-man, in heaven, hath a longing and holy desire, which agrees with his office,
office, and is a qualification thereof, and doth nowise interrupt his happiness, that what concerns his effect may be perfected; therefore it is laid in the verse before, He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied, importing, that it is a kind of new satisfaction to him, to get a sinner brought in to believe in him, and that he was waiting and longing for it. 

And that he hath an actual waiting and continuing desire, that what he hath purchased to such and such persons may be applied; and this is not simply to will, for he had that on earth, but a declaring of it in heaven, that such and such things may be made forthcoming, and made effectual for the behalf of his members, that what he intended, in laying down his life, may be brought to pass: it is the Mediator God-man willing, whose will, as Man, being perfectly conform to the will of God, cannot be (to speak so) gainst in, in whatsoever he willeth for the persons given him; and this is answerable to that, John xvii. 24. Father, I will, that these whom thou hast given me may be with me where I am, &c. I will, that such and such things engaged to me for them may be made good; that such and such persons be pardoned and brought through; that they may be preferred from temptation, may have their prayers heard; that they may be made to persevere, and may be glorified: So that we cannot imagine a case wherein God's people have need, and a promise in the covenant, but there is an actual willingness in Christ to have the need supplied, and the promise applied, according to the terms of the covenant. 

6. We may take in here, not only Christ's willing that such a thing be done, but his effectual doing of it: And as this is a piece of his intercession, so it holds him forth to be a notable Intercessor; compare John xiv. 13, 16, 26, and xv. 26. and xvi. 7. In the xiv. chap. verse 13. he says, Whatever ye ask in my name, I will do: which we suppose respects Christ as Mediator, to be trusted as great Lord-deputy in our nature, to answer the prayers of his people, when put up according to the will of God. The xvi. chap. ver. 26. speaks of the Father's sending the comforter: and chap. xv. 26. of the Mediator sending the Comforter: So doth chap. xvi. 7. in one place it is, What ye ask, I will do; and in another place, it is, that the Father will do: it is all one; but it is to shew, that what the Father doth, he will do, it by the Son, the Mediator, and he will actually perform it: and these three expressions, I will pray the Father, and I will send, and the Father will send, hold out this, that as the Father doth by the Son, so this is a part of Christ's intercession, effectually to procure and send out to us what we have need of. 

7. In all this, there is in the Man Christ, an adoration of the Father, which, though it be not such as is unsuitable to his exalted and glorified state, yet is it becoming well him that is Man, and in that respect is at his right hand, to give to God. I shall only say further here, that tho' we cannot tell how he intercedes, to satisfy ourselves fully, yet this is clearly held forth to us, that whatsoever is needful, by his being in heaven, we may confidently expect it will be performed from the Man Christ, from him who is God-Man in one Person; and so his intercession, with the Father is his actual procuring and doing such a thing, and that not as God simply, but as Mediator: Therefore these two words are put in the forecited expressions, Whatever ye ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son, and whom the Father will send in my name; that is, by virtue of my procurement, by virtue of my sacrifice and intercession: and the sending of the Comforter shews, that it is performed by him that is God-Man, out of the respect he hath to his members, and on the account of his office, which he pursues for their edification: and so there is enough to answer the question, and abounding consolation to his people, which is the next Use.

Use 2. To shew the notable consolation that flows from this part of Christ's office. O what favourinets and unsearchable riches are in this part of his name, that our Lord Jesus, as Intercessor, appears in the presence of God-for us! We shall speak here of these five things; 1. Wherein this is comfortable? or to the extent of it. 2. To the advantages that follow on it. 3. To the grounds of this consolation, which are confirmations of it. 4. To this, at what times, and particular occasions the people of God may, and ought in a special manner to make use of, and comfort themselves in it. And, 5. On what terms this consolation is allowed, that they grow not vain and proud of it.

For the first, Our Lord's intercession gives a fourfold extent of consolation, that makes it wonderful, 1. In its universality, as to the persons to whom it is extended, not indeed to all men in the world, but to all that will make use of it; and tho' it were simply of universal extent to all men in the world, yet it would comfort none but such as made use of it. And that vanity of the Arminians, that extends Christ's death and intercession to all, can truly say no more for solid comfort; for they are forced to say, That Christ died, and intended his death for many that will never get good
of him: but we say, All that he intended should
get good of his death, do get the intended good of
it; yet, we say, that whoever will make use of
him, shall get good both of his death, and of his
intercession: So, Heb. vii. 25. He is able to save
to the uttermost, all that come unto God through
him. Though the cause seemed to be deprecate,
and the sentence pronounced, Curset is he that
continues not in all things written in the law,
yet he is able to save them; therefore, 1 John ii.
2. 'tis said, If any man sin, O strange words! We
have an Advocate; What! an Advocate for any
man? yea, for any man that will make use of him:
For, as we shall before, though 'tis true that his
intercession is bound to his elect, yet 'tis as true,
that he refuses no cause that is honestly given him
to plead; If any man sin, we have an Advocate:
He will not say to such poor souls, I will not be
for you, I have done all that I may, but it is gone a-
gainst me; neither will he prig (to say so) with you;
he will not say, I will have this or that, ere I under-
take your cause for you; but, if any man sin: If any
man sin his need, and will employ him, whether
he be a great man, or mean man, whether he be poor
or rich, bond or free; whether he be an old sinner
that has lived long in security, hypocrisy or pro-
phanity, or be a sitten up professor, whether he be
young or old; if any of you all that are here will
come to him, he will not refuse to be employed by
you: By him therefore (as the apostle exhorts, Heb.
xi. 15.) let us offer praise to God continually:
And as praise, so the sacrifices of other duties, and
they shall be accepted. As the offer of the Gospel
runs on an universality, and excludes none, but
these that by their unbelief exclude themselves; So
his intercession runs on an universality, If any man
sin, and will employ him, he is an Advocate at hand:
And seeing it is Christ, and Christ as Intercessor for
transgressors, that we are speaking of, as the ground
of sinners conflation, let me in passing desire you
to remember, that he is pointing at you, men and
women; and if there be any of you, that have a
broken cause to plead, any debt that ye would fain
be freed of, any sin to be pardoned, or your peace
to be made with God; here is an Advocate, and
the very best, offering himself to be employed. Such
an Advocate as said, John xi. I thank thee, Father,
for that I know thou hearest me always: This was
true while he was on earth, and will be true to the
end of the world. 2. The extent of this conflation
appears in respect of all cases: As his intercessi-
on excludes no person, that will make use of him;
so it excludes no cause, though it looked like a lost
cause, and though the conscience had pronounced
the sentence, God is greater than the conscience,
and who can loose from it; though the act were
paff in the law, he can cancel it; And here comes
in the triumph, Rom. viii. 33, 34. Who shall lay
any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God
that justifies. Will the devil, the law, the confci-
ence, or any thing, lay ought to the charge of the
man whom God justifies? No, why so? It is Christ
that died; But that is not all; Alas! may the soul
fay, how will I get good of Christ's death? I can-
not apply it, and make use of it: He answers, that
He is also risen again, and shut down at the right
hand of God, and there makest intercession for us;
to wit, that his purchase may be applied; and there
needs no more; ye will get no more, ye can seek
no more, and that closes the triumph. There is no
sin, before nor after conversion, no sin of ignorance,
no sin against light, no enemy, no temptation, what-
ever it be, but that word answers all, Who can lay
any thing to the charge of God's elect? Where
Christ takes the sinner's case in hand, who will stand
up against him? he is too strong a Party. If Satan
stand at the high priest's hand, it is the Lord that
rebukes him, Zech. iii. that as it were boils him
from the bar. 3. The extent of this conflation
appears, in respect of the degree and height of the
perfection of the salvation that comes by Christ's in-
tercession, to all that make use of him, in all cases,
Heb. vii. 25. He is able to save to the uttermost:
The word is very significant, he is able to save per-
fectly, to perfection, and to perfection at the height
of perfection; and what more would ye be at? He
can save from corruption, and put without the reach
of it; he can save from wrath, that it shall not come
near you; he can save from all the effects of
fin and wrath; he shall not leave a tear on the cheek
of any of his own, ere all be done; and that is the
ground of it, For he lives for ever and make inter-
cession for us. If any should say, He may save from
one sin, but not from another, or he may bring me
a piece of the way to heaven, and then leave me
there; 'tis folly, says the Apostle, to think so,
For he is able to save to the uttermost, because he
lives for ever to make intercession. Although his
death seem to be transient, once for all perfected,
yet that cannot mar the application of the benefits
purchased by it; for he is Intercessor, and he that
procured thy entering in the way, will carry thee
in it; he that procured a sanctified conviction to
come in, will through it; he that procured thy ju-
justification, and pardon of fin, will also apply it to
thy conscience, and bring forth an intimation of
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Isaiah lxi. 12.——And made intercession for the transgressors.

THAT sinners were seriously considering how much they are obliged to Christ! he is, in the former words, poured out his soul unto death for sinners, and was wounded for transgressors; and yet that was not all, though sin was our Lord's death, he hath not casten out with sinners, but having gotten the victory over all enemies, and sitten down at the right hand of God, he makes intercession; and to make it the more full, it is said, he makes intercession for transgressors: All his offices have an eye to sin and sinners, and this part of his office among others.

We began to speak of an use of comfort that flows from this; and truly, if any doctrine be comfortable, this is, that sinners have an Advocate with the Father: What would sinners do, when their peace is broken, and there is a door shut betwixt God and them, and his back is turned on them, and the conscience is wakened, and they cannot think on God but it is troublesome to them, if they had not a Friend in court, with whom the Father cannot but be well pleased?

This conflation being a main part of the use of this doctrine, and the ground of believers boldness with God, in the following of it forth, we proposed five things to be spoken to. 1. To shew the large-ness and extent of the conflation that flows from this ground, and of this we spake. 2. The particular advantages that the scripture attributes to Christ's intercession, and the conflation that is in them. 3. The particular times, when especially believers are called to make use of this conflation, 4. Some grounds warranting them to make use of it. And, 5. Some caveats, or advertisements to them that would warrantably comfort themselves from it.

To proceed now, and to speak to these last four things. 1. The particular advantages that the scriptures attribute to Christ's intercession; and if ye look through them, we will find that there is nothing that may be useful to a believer, either as to a particular or publick mercy, but it is knit to Christ's intercession.

16. For private mercies. 1. Look to the begin-
ing and growth of our spiritual life, and to the pouring out of the Spirit; it is made the fruit of Christ's intercession, John xiv. 16. I will pray the Father, and he shall send the Comforter; and, John xvi. If I go not away, the Comforter will not come. This
This is the conflation of a believer, labouring under deadness of spirit, barrenness and unfruitfulness, that the pouring out of the Spirit is a remedy of that, and the pouring out of the Spirit a fruit of Christ's intercession: it is this that procures the first conviction of the Spirit to an effect lying in nature; it is this that continues these convictions, and procures the Spirit's quickening of them, John xvi. 8. If it should then be asked, how a person, lying in black nature, gets any good? It is answered, that it is Christ's intercession, that does the turn. 2. It is from Christ's intercession, that we are kept from many temptations, or when they assail, that they prevail not utterly over us: the devil lies always at the wait, and we are often secure; but our Lord Jesus (to say so) watcheth the flock, or rebound of the temptation, and wardeth it off, as to the designed prejudice, Luke xxii. 32. Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired that he may have you, that he may winnow you; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: There are many temptations that he keeps off, that they be not on us, and when they assail us, he breaks the power of them, that the believer succumbs not under them: Hence it is, that we are kept on our feet, otherwise, what would become of us? When David fell in adultery, and Peter denied his Master, what would have become of them, had it not been for this? There would be no living for us, in the multitude of temptations, if he were not interceding for us. What could we foresee of Satan's snare? What strength have weak and wretches we, to resist temptations? What could we do with the spate of corruption, when it rises like a flood upon us, and Satan infor parasten his assaults upon us, as if he were speaking with man's voice, or mouth, bidding us do this and that? But there is an Intercessor, that pleads our cause.

3. We have, by this intercession, the preventing of many judgments temporal and spiritual: When the axe is laid to the root of the tree, and it is found barren, and justice cries, and the command comes out, Cut it down, why cumberst thou the ground? How comes it, that the axe strikes not? Why is it not hewed down? There is an efficacy in Christ's intercession for sparing of it a while longer, as it is, Luke xiii. 6. The dresser of the vineyard says, Spare it for this year, and it is granted. O but we would have a moli sinful and miserable life, if there were not an Intercessor at God's right hand! 4. Disposition for duty, and help in the performance of duty, flows from his intercession: it is this, that makes us pray, and that gives us boldness in prayer, and in other duties, that there is such an high Priest over
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Verse 12.

be put together, besides many more, that may be gathered from scripture, what wants a believer for his own private and particular consolation, which this one word, that Christ is an Intercessor, doth not answer?

But, 2dly, There is not only consolation for a believer's particular condition from this ground, but also in reference to the publick case of God's church. There are four things especially, that seem very heavy to the church, and publick work of God; in reference to all which, we will find consolation from this ground. The 1st is the fear of a scarcity, or weakness of the publick ministry; that being the great gift which he hath given, for the edifying of his body; and it being a prejudice to the church, when the hath not pastors according to God's own heart. But compare Pfal. lxviii. 18, with Eph. iv: 8, 12, 13, 14. and we will find that his intercession answers all that fear; in the Psalm, it is said, Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men; which procures his seeking of, or making suit for them; or, as the word is, Thou hast received gifts in the man, that is, being in our nature, he procured them: And, Eph. iv. it is said, He gave gifts to men; and compare these two places with a third, to wit, Acts i. 4, where he bids his apostles tarry at Jerusalem, till he send the promised Spirit; and immediately after his ascension, as it is, Acts ii. he poured it out, which abode on them, in the likeness of coven tongues of fire: It is likewise said, John xi. 39, that the Spirit was not given, for Jesus was not yet glorified: All which show an influence, that Christ's ascension hath on the pouring out of the Spirit, and on the gifts given to men, whether ministers or others. There is nothing amongst men readily less cared for, than a ministry; some would have none at all, others would have them of such a stamp, as would please and humour them; but our Lord hath received gifts to be given unto men; and he that poured out such gifts on the apostles and others, hath what gifts he pleaseth, and sees needful for his church's edification, yet to give: And that he gives such gifts to men, that his people are not praying much for; whence is it, but from his intercession? Therefore, Rev. i. we will find that he delights in this property, as a piece of his spiritual state and grandeur, That he holds the stars in his right hand; such is his respect to them, and his it is to dispose of them. 2. It is a greatly exercising difficulty to the church of God, to think of the mighty opposition that is made by enemies; Mahomet, Heathens, Antichrist, false Brethren, threat-
Ifalah.

Hence but there the He according when and may And, Serm.

not as that tichriil's in till vhen fhew againft of Zech. 13.

confqmed he he made footflood; that Antichickl's kingdom is tottering; and it is on this ground, that his bearing-down, and utter-breaking will be accomplished: Hence it is most emphatically said, 1 Cor. xv. 24. that he must reign till he bath put all enemies under his feet; according to the promise made by Jehovah to him, Psal. cx. 1. The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footflood. He cannot be an Interceflor, but his enemies must down; For who, I pray, will be able to stand, when he gives in his complaint against them? Who will plead Antichickl's and other persecutors caufe, when he appears against them? And he is fo certain of his enemies being made his footflood, that he is waiting till he fee it done; he must reign till then, magure all the malice and might of devils and men.

3. It is a difficulty to the church and people of God, to think on such great confusions as are in the world; there are but a few judicatories that are for Christ; but few governors, higher or lower, that do consult his honour, or regard him; it is others that have the throne and court, and the guiding of things, than friends and favourers of his interest, for molt part: but here the consolation lics, that there is a court in heaven, that gives out orders, where the church hath an Agent constantly lying, where the devil and the world hath none; Jefus Chrift is the church's Agent and Interceflor there: Daniel, chap. x. 13. hath a word to this purpole, The prince of the kingdom of Persia withflood me one and twenty days, but Michael the chief Prince came to help me: And, verse 21. There is none in all the court of Persia that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your Prince. The great Interceflor was at court, looking that nothing went wrong, feeing that no decree were past to the prejudice of the people of God, and his work. In the time when they were building the temple, He (Zech. xvi. 13.) is faid to build the temple of the Lord, to bear the glory, and to be a Priest, fitting and ruling on his throne, having the government committed to him. What hazard then is there here, when heaven guides all, when the church hath an

Verse 12.

Agent at the court, to fee (as I faid) that nothing go wrong, when Michael the Prince is there, and fees all the acts and decrees of the court, and readeth them, yea, draweth them, and look well that there be nothing in them hurtful to his church: And O! may we not, and should we not thank God for this? 4. A fourth thing that troubles the church of God, is the abounding of offences in herself, and the spreading of error, which, like a flood, threateneth to drown the church; and great stormy winds come, that are like to blow down the house of God; offences and ftumbilings abound, and error, which (I just now faid) as a flood is like to drown all:

When the devil is put from the throne, and gets not violence asked, he turns about, and falleth on another way, and fpeas out his flood of error, to devout the woman and her child; but our Lord hath a vote here alfo. After the perfecution of the Heathens is over, Rev. vii. 1, 2. John sees an angel ascending from the east, the great Lord-keeper, or Chancellor of the Father's council, the supreme Deuty over all under-officers, that hath the keeping of the great feal of the living God, and there is nothing relevant or valid till it be fead by him: And mark the time when he appears; it is when the winds are holden, and ready to blow, as verse 1. but he cries with a loud voice, "Hurt not the earth, nor the fea, nor the trees, till we have fead the fervants of God in their foreheads." Stay, faith he, a little; ere these winds blow that will take the molt part off their feet, ere that delufion go forward. there are some fervants of God that must be marked, and put without the reach of the hazard, and the winds shall get leave to blow; What raéon then of anxiety is there, or could be here, if the fold and lively faith of this Interceflor, and Advocate, his being in heaven, and thus intercefling, were in our hearts?

20th As to the particular times and occasions when the people of God fhould more efpecially make ufe of this ground of consolation, and comfort themselves in it. (I feak not of Chrift's interceflion simply, but of the consolation that flows from it) 1. In their languid and lifelefs conditions, when the body of death comes in on them, like the waves of the fea, and is ready as it were to drown them; they ought to comfort themselves in this, that they have an Interceflor, that can rebuke that: when temptation is violent, and a person fears he be undone, he hath a grip here to hold himself by: Jefus Chrift is Interceflor; he prays, that my graces fall not, that my faith and patience be not undone, that the devil get not his will of me: the man would be.
Isaiah liii. Verse 12. 

be desperate, if he were not in heaven, and interceding; but he gathers confidence from this ground, and says, "I shall not die, but live, and see the salvation of God; for he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him," seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

And therefore, altho' I cannot win out of the grips of this temptation, yet he can rebuke it, and break the force of it; and hence is that comfortable word, Heb. ii. 1. For that he himself suffered, and was tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Sometimes it will not meet with believers condition, that Christ suffered; but this doth, when he comes on, and finds that he was tempted: It is true, there was no corruption in him, and temptations had no sinful influence on him; and the more contemptuous to us, he is the stronger to overcome us: yet he was set on, and assaulted by the temptation, he was tempted; and this is a consolation. When Joshua the high priest is in his duty, Zech. iii. and the devil is at his right hand, to resist him, and mar him in it, and he can do or say little himself, he boaits him with authority from marring his servant in his work. A great consolation it is, when the temptation is strong, and we weak, when the devil is violent, and we are despairing to resist him, that there is a high Priest at hand, whose office is to do it. A strength to us, when challenges are very fresh, when the charge of one's debt given in, is long and large, and the law is severe in exacting, and justice in prefilling, and prefilling hard, and the conscience cannot deny, nor resist, and the man hath nothing to pay his debt, and he is like to be dragged to the prison, and there is none to undertake for him; there comes in that word, 1 John ii. 1, 2. "I write these things to you, that ye sin not," I give none a dispensation to sin; but, "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

And this is the ground of Paul's triumph, so often mentioned, Rom. viii. 34. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies," &c. Tho' the charge should be given in, what is the matter? There is a way to be freed of it, there is an Advocate at the right hand of God in heaven, who became Cautiour for, and paid the elect's debt, and is now interceding for them; and who can lose the cause, when he pleads it? And here he quiets and comforts himself, giving a defiance to challenges, and all that can be libelled against him. A strength to us, and occasion is, under a cross condition, when Christians have the world on their tops, and there is confusion in publick things, and there is darkness and indistinctness in our private condition; it ought to comfort us, that we have an Advocate in heaven, who pleads our cause, and will not despise the suit of the poor and needy. A strength to us, when we ourselves cannot intercede for ourselves; when we pray, but our prayers are much mangled, and little worth, and we think shame to look upon them; we would then look upon what account our prayers are put up: if on the account of Christ's intercession, a sigh, a groan, a broken word, nay, a breathing will be accepted; the Intercessor hath his own incense to perfume it with, and it is accepted on the weight that it hath from him: and tho' our prayer be but as the shadow of a prayer, if there be honestly in it, it is a comfort, it will be accepted on that account; Wherefore ye shall ask the Father in my name, I will do: And, Rev. viii. he accepts the prayers of all saints, the weakest as well as the best; for the best goes not up but by his cenfer and incense, and the weakest goes up the same way: And there is, in some respect, no distinction of believers, and of their fervent or not fervent prayers there, if honest; the fervour of Christ's intercession, and the favour of his incense, makes all go up, and be accepted, because the reason of God's hearing of our prayers is not in us, else he should hear none of them; but it is in his intercession, which is of equal worth and extent to all honest prayers of found believers; He is able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God through him, tho' there be no ability nor worth in themselves, because he lives forever to make intercession for them. But the two strengths will clear this yet more.

345. Tho' this may seem strange like, yet it is true, if we consider the grounds, warranting us to make use of his intercession, and to draw this consolation from it; and they are four. 1. That his intercession supposes a defect in us, a libel and charge given in against us, else, what needed we to have an Advocate and Intercessor? If our plea were just and good, as from ourselves, we needed not one to undertake for us, the Judge would absolve us; but the defects that are in us, give access to this part of his office, which supposes us to have infirmities, else we needed not an high Priest, if we were like Adam in his innocency, for he needed not an Intercessor; and therefore in the text, it is for the transgressors that he makes intercession: And, 1 John ii, 2. If any man sin, we have an Advocate, &c. 2. All the weight of Christ's intercession, and the grounds whereon he pleads, are in himself, and therefore none need stand a-back, because there is nothing in themselves; We have an Advocate.
Jeremiah LXVIII.

Isaiah liii.

with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation. Christ hath in him a fulness to pay the debt himself, and he pleads on that, and on nothing in the creature: He lays not, Let them be pardoned, because they have not sin, nor because they have such and such qualifications, but because I have been a propitiation for them, I have paid their debt; therefore he is called the Righteous, because he hath reason for that which he seeks; he hath paid for what he seeks, and therefore it cannot but be granted. 3. There is a freedom in the application of all the application is free grace every way, and that is clear from the parable of the barren fig-tree: What could the tree say, when justice pleaded it should be cut down? There is nothing in it to procure a delay, but the Gardener stands up, and bids spare it, and he will take pains on it, and apply what is needful: Causals are not here called back because the party is poor, nor because he hath much debt on his score; no, If any man sin, he hath an Advocate, the thing is obtained without money and without price: Would ye then have a Priest that suits you well? Ye shall have him, and have him freely; if ye employ him to undertake for you, he will do it freely, and it is his honour so to do. 4. It is free and effectual, it cannot misgive: For who pleads? Is it not the Son? Before whom pleads he? It is before his own Father, whoareth him always: For whom doth he plead? It is for them who are the Father’s own elect, and his also; Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine: It is for them whom the Father loves as well as he. What does he seek and plead for? For that which is covenanted; and he pleads for it, according to the terms of the covenant: Therefore it is sure, that thro’ heaven and earth may be mixed and overturned, yet none can loose a link here; it is impossible, but what he intercedes for, he must obtain; and for whom he intercedes, he prevails, and that is for all that employ him.

4thly, For Advertisement or Caveat. It may be asked here, May all comfort themselves in Christ’s intercession? Some will think, that were good; but in truth, it would make the consolation of all unfore: therefore, there are four qualifications of a person that may, and only may warrantably take the consolation whereof we have spoken. 1. It is a person that hath betaken himself to Christ’s satisfaction; for there are two parts of the priestly office, his satisfaction and his intercession; and there is no dividing of them, nor making use of them, but in the right order. First he satisfies, and then he intercedes; and he must be taken, and made use of in this order, first in his satisfaction to divine justice; and it is on this ground that we must found our righteousness, and plead for absolution: And whoever have made this use of his satisfaction, may, in the second place, comfort themselves in his intercession; because it is grounded on his satisfaction, 1 John ii. 2. For whom he intercedes, for these he is a propitiation, and he is a propitiation for all who by faith have betaken themselves to him: This is the very hinge of our consolation, even to take with our debt, and betake ourselves to him, according to the covenant, lifting for salvation on that ground. 2. It is these who are ex-faying and practising themselves in the duties of holiness, wrestling with a body of death, and exer-cising themselves to godliness, that may warrantably comfort themselves in Christ’s intercession; as Paul, who, Rom. vii. being put to it, in the conflict with his corruption, comforts himself thus, I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Tho’ they be sorely harassed with a corrupt nature, yet they may expect an outgate, through virtue of his intercession: Therefore, Rev. viii. Christ’s incence (as I have often, said) and the saints prayers, go, and go up together. Laziness and security hath not this consolation; but if a person be praying, and be serious, tho’ weak in it, he hath an Advocate, who, when it comes to be asked, What shall be thought of such an one’s sacrifice? pleads that it may be accepted. 3. It is the person that not only is aiming, and minting to do duty, but is denied to it, laying no weight on it, despairs ever to get victory over corruption in his own strength, or to come by the hearing of his prayers through any worth that is in them, and not daring to step forward his alone, but leaving all he does at Christ’s feet, to make it acceptable; which leads us to the fourth thing requisite, viz. When persons, whether their doing and duties be of worth or not, Jesus Christ is made by them the upholder of all; they lay weight on him to get them done, and to get them accepted when they are done, and without him all would be desperate in their esteem: This was typi-fied in the peoples giving the sacrifices to the priest to be offered; and tho’ it were but two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, they were brought to the priest, as well as other sacrifices. But such as con-sider not the enmity and sinfulness that is in themselves, and adventure to step in to God without him, cannot lay claim to this consolation, which runs al-ways on this ground, Heb. vii. 25. He is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God through
SERMON LXIX.

Isaiah liii. 12.------And made intercession for the transgressors.

It were a very great consolation, and a main
furtherance in all religion, to get this solidly
believed, that Christ Jesus, who is the expres
image of his Father's Person, and the brightness
of his glory, is now in heaven in our nature, and hath
it for his work, to be interceding, and interce-
ding for transgressors: We are every day reaping
the good of this intercession, in reference to many
evils that are kept off us, and in reference to
many mercies bestowed on us, that we pray not at
all, or but little for; and we come never to hear
a preaching, but we are beholden to it, it being a
peculiar fruit of his intercession, that gifts are given
to men, and that the gospel is sent through the
earth; and if ever any get good of a sermon, it is by
virtue of this intercession, seeing he hath said, that
he will pray the Father, and that he will send the
Comforter; and whenever we come to hear a preach-
ing, there would be (to say so) a reviving of the
thoughts of Christ's intercession, and a stirring up
of ourselves to get the faith of it lively in its exer-

That which we spake to the last day, was con-
cerning the comfort that flows from this; and in-
deed, if any doctrine be comfortable, this must be
comfortable, that we have such a Friend in the
court of heaven, invested in this office of an Advo-
cate and Intercessor for us.

Use 3d. Of exhortation. Seeing there is such an
office wherewith Jesus Christ is invested, and such
an Officer that bears this office, to be an Advocate
for sinners, then sinners would be exhorted to learn
to improve and to make use of this Advocate, and
of his office; since he hath this office of an Inter-
cessor. O do not despise such a mercy! neglect not
such an advantage, but learn to make use of him,
and in your worship-applications to God, to ap-
proach by, and through him. The ground of this
use of exhortation is clear in the words, and from
the nature of the thing: For, if Christ Jesus bear
these offices, and if he bear them for us, then sure
we should improve them. If he be a King, we
should make use of him, for subduing sin in us; if

a Prophet, we should improve that office, for at-
taining of light and saving knowledge from him;
and if he be a Priest, to satisfy divine justice, and
to make intercession, we should improve both parts
of that office. The necessity of our improving of
Chrift's intercession appears from this, if we con-
der in what terms we stand with God: Have we
any boldness or access of ourselves? Is not the door
shut on us? And is there not a slitted controversy
standing betwixt God and us? And have we any
access but by his moyen? The necessity of it is fur-
ther clear from the order that God hath laid down
in the way of his administration of grace: Why, I
pray, hath he appointed a Mediator and Interce-

for? Is it not for good reason? Even for the con-
folation and encouragement of sinners to draw near,
who, if they be in earnest, cannot but be affected
with fear to approach unto God; and is it possible
to come unto God, and not by this door? And were
it not ingratitude to neglect it, seeing he hath con-
trived this new and living way of access unto him?

But to descend to more particular discoursing of
this matter, which is as difficult a thing to speak
of right, and to practise suitably, as any part of re-
ligion, if especially he himself teach us not; for
sometimes we will make use of his sacrifice and sa-
fisfaction, when we know not how to make use of
his intercession; for either we do all our alone, and
mishken the Intercessor, or we will do nothing, and
give it over as desperate, as if our business were
quite broken and hopeless, and as if it were need-
less or useless to lay any weight on Chrift's inter-
cession: And thus, whether we apprehend ourselves
to be in a better, or in worse case, he is much mi-
kent and neglected. That therefore we may the
better know how to make use of Chrift's interce-
sion, we shall, 1. In the general, shew what it is
to improve it. 2. Speak to some particular cases,
wherein it in a special manner is to be improved.
3. Satisfy and remove some objections, or answer
some questions that may be moved about it. 4.
We shall give some characters of one that is fennis
and tender in improving of his intercession.
For the first, It is indeed a thing so difficult to improve Christ's intercession aright, that we cannot easily tell how to conceive of it, being a considerable part of the mystery of faith, to go to God by a Mediator and Intercessor. However, we shall, 1. Shew some mistakes that are to be eschewed. 2. We shall shew wherein it more properly consists, which is, in the exercise of faith in him, with respect to his intercession. 3. We shall illustrate it by some similitudes, for the further making out of it. 1/ Then, when we speak of improving Christ's intercession, and of going to God by him, we would have these mistakes eschewed. 1. Beware of thinking, that there is a going to the Mediator in a different, or different manner from what is in going to God, for he is God; or, that we may go to God at one time, and to the Mediator at another time, as if we would first speak a while to the Mediator, and then speak to God; or would first make our moan to the Mediator to pacify God, and when God were calmed, to speak to him; as if he were to make moan with God for us, as a courtier makes moan with the king, the offended party, for a rebel: We would beware of this, for it divides in our apprehension the Godhead, that is indivisible; for if we consider the Mediator as the Object of our worship, he is to be considered as God, tho' we may, and are also jointly to consider him as Mediator, and on that account to make use of him; and if we consider him as God, we must consider him as the same God with the Father, and the Holy Ghost: But to have this imagination of him, that we are to speak to him, as another Party, or not as God, is to make him another thing, which is unbecoming that apprehension and estimation that we ought to have of the Unity of the blessed Godhead. 2. Beware of thinking, that there is a greater facility or easiness to have access to the Mediator, than to have access to God; or that it is more easy to have access to the second Person of the Trinity, than to the first, or third Person. We are afraid that there be mistakes here also, as if the Mediator were more easy to be dealt with than the Majesty of God; or, as if there were more easy access unto him; whereas, he being the same God, and so considered, there are the same grounds, whereon sinners may have access to the Father as to the Son. For, if we look on a finner repenting, and believing, he is as welcome to the Father as to the Son; but if we consider the finner as not repenting and believing, he is so, neither welcome to the Father, nor to the Son. It is true, the Son being considered as man, there is a sympathy, that the second Person, united to our nature, hath, which is not in God absolutely considered; yet this is not to be understood, as if the mercy of the Mediator, having the two natures so united in his Person, were of larger extent than the mercy of God, or as if he could be merciful, when God is not. For there cannot be a greater mercy than that which is infinite, and that is the essential attribute of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; only this sympathy in the Mediator is to be considered, to strengthen and confirm our faith in our application to God, that we have him to approach to in our nature; but it is not to give us any new ground of having access easier to Christ than to God, but (as we said) only to confirm our faith, in having access to God: Hence it is, that Jesus Christ is always proposed as the means, whereby, and through whom, a sinner comes to God; so that we have access with boldness, not to the Mediator as a distinct Party, but to God through and by him. Therefore there is the same common way of application to God, and to Christ, the same covenant and promises, the same exercise of repentance, of faith and of prayer, which gives us access to God, and that gives us access to the Mediator. 3. Beware of placing this improving and use-making of the Mediator's intercession, in words or petitions directed to the Mediator; which, I apprehend, is the use that the most part make of his intercession; to put up such petitions, as I am afraid to speak of; as namely, O Mediator at the Father's right hand, plead for me! as if the Mediator were a distinct Party from the Judge, to whom we must speak for interceding with the Judge, which still leads us to look on the Mediator as another different Party, or as having other terms whereupon he dealeth with sinners, or as if there were another way of making use of him, and of application to him, and on other grounds, than of, and to God; the contrary whereof we have shewed: Whereas the use-making of his intercession confits rather (as after will appear) in faith's application to God in him, and laying weight on his intercession for access, and acceptance of our persons and services; when we make it the ground of our address to God, the ground on which we draw near; and this we may and should do, when we name Christ, or pray to him as God, with respect to his office of being Intercessor: even as we look to him by faith, to get sin pardoned; there is a looking to him as God, with respect to his offering and satisfaction to the justice of God, on which account we expect to be pardoned. But, 2dly, To explicate this a little more, we shall
shall shew wherein this exercise of faith, in making use of the Mediator's intercession, doth mainly consist, and, for the more clear following forth thereof, we shall speak to these two, 1. To some things presupposed. 2. To some things wherein more properly it consists. To both which we would premit this word, that when we speak of making use of Christ's intercession, there are two extremes to be avoided: One is, when persons go to God, mistaking Christ, and do all that they do, as if they were confantly friends with God, and in good terms with him, and had need of none to make their peace, or to keep up and maintain their peace with God; which is in effect the way laid down in the covenant of works, when Adam was a friend: Another extreme is in the defect; and that is, when persons go to God by Christ, yet do not lay weight on his intercession as becomes; when not only they want confidence, which the other hath, tho' on a wrong ground, but do not lay the burden on the right ground, but go to God faintly and discouragingly, as fearing to trust or lippen to Christ's intercession. There is necessity to guard against both these; for there must be such an use making of Christ's intercession, as we dare not go by him, and yet a concurring act of faith, putting us to go to God by him, and to lay the weight of what we seek and expect on him, and on his intercession. Now, the things that are presupposed to the use-making of Christ's intercession, guard against the first extreme; and these things wherein the use-making of it properly consists, guard against the other extreme.

First, Then these things presupposed, are, 1st. A conviction of our natural insufficiency, not only of the distance that is betwixt God and us, but of the quarrel and enmity, and that by our deserving we may justly have the door of access to God shut upon us; that is it that puts the sinner to ask for an Intercessor, and to make use of him, as these who have provoked a great person, fear to go their alone to him, but seek for the mediation of some special friend or favourite. 2dly, There is presupposed a confessing to, and acceptance of Christ's satisfaction, as the ground of our peace with God; for there is no access to his intercession till this ground be laid, because all the efficacy that is in Christ's intercession, results from, and is founded upon his satisfaction, 1 John ii. 2. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins. He procures nothing by his intercession, but thro' the virtue of that blood, which he offered in a sacrifice to satisfy justice: and therefore, in improving of his intercession, this method must be followed; There must first be a betaking of ourselves to his satisfaction, as the ground of our peace, and whereupon we plead for peace, and for any other thing we stand in need of: except this be, all the imaginations that we can have of Christ's intercession, (as if we would first prevail with Christ, conceiving that he will soon be engaged, and then have hopes of prevailing with God) if his satisfaction be milkent, will be to no purpose; for, as we shew in the first use of this point, he intercedes only for his own people, who are believers in him, and have closed with his satisfaction; and, as we shew from Rev. viii. it is only the prayers of all saints that are offered up by him: I mean, none can comfortably conclude that he intercedes for them, but believers and saints; and therefore, till his satisfaction be rested on, as the ground of our peace, we can look for no benefit by his intercession. 3dly, There is beyond this required, the conviction and impression of our own unfruitableness, to keep up friendship and fellowship with God, through our remaining corruption, and the prevailing of temptation, without a Mediator; and withal, an approbation of God's way, who hath appointed a Mediator for that end; and a loving to keep up communion with him by a Mediator: So that, supposing we were clear that our sins are pardoned, yet we would know, that this conviction and impression is necessary to put us to make daily use of this part of the Mediator's office: For we may have conviction of the first part, that is, that we cannot make our peace without Christ's satisfaction; and yet we may be defective as to our walking under due conviction of the second, that is, of a necessity of keeping up our communion with God, by virtue of his intercession: Which is, as if a rebel, being reconciled, and made a friend, by the procurement of some great person, yet having to do with the king, should not dare to go unto him, without the man that was instrumental in making his peace; or, we may allude to Aba-lom's coming home by Joab's procurement, who was three years thereafter at Jerusalem ere he saw his father's face, and had a new dealing with Joab for that end: So it is very suitable to the way of grace, and shews, that our being and standing in grace is free, not to dare to go in to God, even when our peace is made, without the Mediator.
there is reason enough in ourselves, why we should be kept at the door, and though we dare not go ourselves alone, yet to adventure to go through him to God. And though this be but the doctrinal faith of the thing in general, yet it is necessarily presupposed, as well as the rest, that when a challenge rises, and the conscience says, How dare thou go to God? Faith may answer, Because there is a Friend there in our nature. When the sinner is convinced of sin, the conscience challengeth, and the law condemns, and there is some sad expectation of the drawing forth of the sentence; there is an act of faith, that convinces of a Saviour, whose satisfaction, if it be made use of and improved, all will be well. This, we say, is necessarily presupposed to the use-making of Christ's intercession.

**2dly, These four being presupposed it follows, that we shew what properly it is, to make use of Christ's intercession or wherein it consists.** And,

1. When faith hath laid hold on Christ's satisfaction for peace with God; in the improving of his intercession, there is an act of faith, whereby we actually settir ourselves to approach unto God, upon the weight we lay on his intercession, that when the soul sees itself excluded, considered in itself, yet it will go forward, lippening to that; so that if a challenge come in its way, and say, What ground hath thou to look, that thou wilt be welcome to God? the soul says, None in myself, but there is a Friend before me, with whose satisfaction I have closed for my peace, and I lay this weight on his office, and on God's call to make use of him, that on the ground of his own with God, I dare hazard to go forward: Even as if a rebel, after his peace were made, had some buffs to do with the prince; and hearing that there is a friend at court, yea, the same friend that made his peace, he thinks that a good time, and fit season to go and present his suit, expecting to come speedily through his moyens: and this always keeps the weight and honour of our obtaining any thing we seek, as a prerogative to Christ, and shows the person's own mouth from looking to anything in itself to boast of; even as the rebel had no canfe to boast of his getting a hearing from the prince, but gives the thanks to him, who, as he made his peace, did also procure him a hearing; and it is according to that word, Heb. x. 21. _Having an high Priest over the house of God, let us draw near, with full assurance of faith, expecting a hearing;_ and that, Heb. iv. 15. 16. Seeing we have an high Priest, who was tempted in all things, like as we are, yet without sin,

let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need: This is the first step of improving Christ's intercession, when the justified sinner is at a stand, on some new challenge for guilt, and dare not go forward, nor adventure to approach unto God, on this account and ground, that there is a Mediator and Advocate at his right hand, to hazard (if we may speak so) or rather with confidence to go forward, and present his suit to God.

2. There is an act of faith, as in undertaking, so in expecting and on-waiting upon God, for obtaining a hearing of our suit, on this account, that Jesus Christ is an Intercessor in heaven for such as implore him; and this guards against both the failings before mentioned, to wit, against anxiety on the one hand, and presumption on the other; against anxiety and fainting, when, as there is not only a proposing of our desire, but an on-waiting for, and expectation of a hearing from God; against presumption, and turning carnal, when the expectation of a hearing is not founded on our own righteousnesses, but on the intercession of Christ: This is it which we have, Dan. ix. 17. compared with Jonah ii. 4. In the ii. of Jonah ver. 4. he says, Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight, yet will I look again toward thy holy temple; the which look was in effect a looking toward the intercession of Christ the Messiah, the temple with its sacrifices having been typical of him, and the mercy-seat that was there, being typical of his intercession: It is as if unbelief had suggested to Jonah, Now Jonah, what will became of thee? thou art a gone man, and needs not pray any more; Yet, says he, I will look again towards thy holy temple: and though he knew not well, yet being in the belly of the whale, where the temple stood; yet his faith having a suitable exercise on the Messiah signified by the temple, and his looking being an act of faith, carried in his suit to God, which was accepted: and indeed this is a main thing, by which a poor believer, cast down, wins to his feet again. The other place is, Dan. ix. 16, 17. where, when he is fervous, and doubting his petition, he hath these words, _Cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary, which is desolate for the Lord's sake; and to let it be known what he mean'd, by saying, for the Lord's sake, which looks to him who was to be Intercessor in our nature, he expostulates in the following words, O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, for we do not present our supplications before thee, for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies: This_
This is an improving aright of Christ's intercession, not to pray directly to him as a distinct Party, but to pray for mercy, upon the account of his intercession; for what is for mercies sake in the latter, is for the Lord's sake in the former, viz. because by him, and by virtue of his intercession, mercy comes out unto us: And this is a main use to be made of Christ's intercession, to wit, to have upon that ground an expectation of a hearing, or to found our expectation of a hearing on that account; and let it bear the weight of it, as well it can. 3. The right improvement of Christ's intercession hath this act of faith, that altho' there seem to be many difficulties and long off-puttions, yet faith, upon the account of his intercession, will continue its expectation of a hearing, and its looking for, of what the person hath sought, and stands in need of; whatever crosses dispositions thwart its expectation, and whatever signs of anger appear in the way of its obtaining, it waits on for all that. Tho' Jonah be in the belly of the whale, and the weeds wrapped about his head, yet will he look towards his holy temple: So, tho' a soul have no life, nor sense, no inward feeling, nor arguments in the mouth, yet acting on Christ's intercession by faith, it will not leave, nor give over its suit, considering, that tho' it hath no ground of expectation of good from itself, yet from Christ's intercession it hath, which is the improvement of that, Heb. vii. 25. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him, &c. If there were never so strong objections from unbelieving and carnal reason, and if it should be suggested ye have such and such difficulties, that cannot be overcome, lying in the way of your salvation, and there is nothing in you concerning to make out your salvation; yet faith says, He is able to save to the uttermost: or, as the word is, he can fave to the full, or to the yondermost, and what is the ground? Because he ever lives to make intercession. And this is the main thing to be taken notice of, in improving of his intercession, when the sinner hath presented his suit or request to God, through the Mediator, to get his mind quieted, on the account of Christ's intercession, that it shall be answered: Even as a man, who having a cause to plead, and getting an able advocate, who says to him, I will warrant your cause, quiets himself, because of his undertaking; so proportionably there is a weight laid on Christ's intercession by faith's lippening to him, which makes the soul to be without anxiety: And this continuance of faith doth not at all faller sin, but strengtheneth rather to oppose sin, quiets the mind, and makes more humble, and keeps a tranquility in the soul, in bands as well as in liberty, because it lays the weight of its coming speed with God, not on its own argumenting, but on the Mediator's intercession; for, as we shew, from Rev. viii. the prayers of all saints go up from his centre, the weakest as well as the strongest, because it is his incense that makes them favourly. 4. There is an improvement of Christ's intercession, when any thing is obtained, whether it be a mercy in preventing such and such a stroke, or the bestowing of such and such a favour; and that is, when faith derives not that mercy from, nor attributes it to, its own praying, tho' it did pray, and pray somewhat seriously, but derives it from, and attributes it to the virtue and efficacy of Christ's intercession, and counteth itself obliged to that, as the rise of all the person's good, and again by him returning thanks to God for it: And this is a little proof of improving Christ's intercession. Sometimes, when we want what we would have, and are restrained, we will improve all means to obtain, yet when we have obtained, there is but little acknowledgment of him therein; which acknowledgment is our duty, instituted, John xiv. 13, 14. Whatever ye ask in my name, I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. And in this sense we ought to walk in the use of every mercy, as bearing the acknowledgment of Christ's intercession, and to be affected with love to God, and should withal have a new impression of its obligation, to be forthcoming for God, upon the account of his intercession: Whereas the most part of folk take their mercies, and think not themselves to be in his common for them; neither do they own him with thankful acknowledgment of them, when they have gotten them; even as a man, who had gotten a favour through the mediation of another, and should forget him, would be very ungrate. The making use of Christ's intercession, in this respect, is the improving of it, for the awaking of our thankfulness, and the confirming of our obligation to him. If we look through our life, is there any day, or hour, but we stand in need of something, and be enjoying something? And the improving Christ's intercession thus, would make the thoughts of Christ always fresh and lovely to us; but we seek, and get, and enjoy, as if a Mediator were not in heaven: But as we acknowledge him in praying to him, when we have need; so, when any thing is gotten, we should acknowledge, that we have received it and do enjoy it, on the account of his intercession, who obtained it for us.
SERM. LXIX.

I saia liii. 3
dy. We said, that this might be illustrate by similitudes; and there are these three, whereby it may be illustrate. The first is (if we may call it a similitude) the comparing of the use-making of his intercession, with the use-making of his satisfaction (wherein there is a resemblance) we make use of his satisfaction, when we are convinced of our natural finfulness and enmity, and that we cannot make our own peace ourselves; yet hearing of his satisfaction, and having an offer of it, and believing that it is able to do our turn, we hazard on that ground to close with God in the covenant; and though the feme of peace come not for a long time, yet we with confidence wait for it, because the ground we lean on for it cannot fail. Proportional to this, we make use of Christ's intercession, when under a challenge, we are convinced of a quarrel, and dare not approach to God; yet hearing tell, that there is an Intercessor in heaven, who will undertake for them that employ him, we hazard confidently on that ground, to propone our suits unto God, and notwithstanding of difficulties, expect and wait for an answer. It may be objected here, that it seems there is no difference betwixt the improving of his satisfaction, and the improving of his intercession.

Answer. There is no difference, in respect of the things fought, nor in respect of the acts of faith, whereby we make use of the one, and of the other, nor in respect of the grounds whereupon; for Christ hath paid the debt of them for whom he intercedes, he hath purchased the same things for which he maketh intercession, they are the same acts of faith that make use of both: It is the same covenant and offer, that warrants us to come to his satisfaction for peace; that warrants us to make use of his intercession for the application of peace: There is only this difference, that by his satisfaction he procures us peace, and a right to it; and our peace is made, by his laying down before God the price, which we by faith take hold of; but when he intercedes, he hath nothing to pay, but intercedes for what he hath purchased: Therefore the scripture hangs the application of his purchase upon his intercession; He hath bought peace, and every good thing that we stand in need of, by his death; and, by his intercession, he procures and makes the application: Therefore, it is on this ground that the Spirit is poured out. As among men, it is one thing to make peace, and another thing to bring the offending person into familiarity with the offended party; so it is the same faith acting on Christ's satisfaction, for being brought

Verse 12. into covenant with God, as the meritorious cause, that acts on Christ's intercession, for application of that which he hath purchased, but under a different consideration, looking on his satisfaction as procuring, and on his intercession for application of the same things. A second similitude to clear it, is, the people under the law, their making use of the high priest; there were two parts of the high priest's office, or two things wherein the people made use of him, 1. For offering sacrifice, 2. For intercession; the high priest went into the most holy once a year, and sprinkled the blood, and prayed for the people; in which time they were standing without, praying, in the hope of having their prayers made the more acceptable. This was, by God's appointment, typically to prefigure our Lord's intercession in heaven: It is true the high priest's praying for them was nothing to the soul's advantage, of him or them, if Christ was not made use of, both by him, and by them; yet he was typical, and to shew this much, that they were to improve Christ's intercession, as well as his sacrifice and satisfaction: Therefore, Luke i. 10. when Zacharias went in to pray, the whole multitude of the people was without praying. A third similitude (which we have hinted at in our going along) is drawn from that way which is used among men, for bringing two parties that are at odds and variance to be reconciled, and at one; which, though we are not to conceive in that carnal manner, yet it holds as to the substance of the thing, as if the offending party durst not go his alone to the party offended, but should carry along with him a friend, that hath place and power to prevail with the other: When he undertakes to go along with him, contrary to his desiring, he will expect confidence, to get a good hearing; and if any should say to him, How dare you go to such an one, whom you have so provoked? he would answer, Because I have a friend before me, that will make moyen for me; and when by that friend's moyen he gets a favourable hearing, and his suit granted, he comes away rejoicing, professing his great obligation to that friend: So it is here, as to the thing; though, as was said, we would guard against carnal conceptions, or taking up God and the Mediator as distinct Parties, to be made application to. We shall insist no further for the time: O that there were seriousness to improve his blood and satisfaction, for washing us from the guilt of sin, and for making our peace with God; and his intercession, for upholding
SERMON LXX.

Isaiah liii. 12.—And made intercession for the transgressors.

Although this be a most necessary thing, and that whereof we have daily and hourly use, even to be improving Christ’s intercession; and altho’ it be one of the most excellent and most comfortable things that a Christian hath to look to in his walk, there being no condition, but there is a ready help for it here: Yet this is our sinful misery, that either through our blindness, or our indigendy, we are much out of capacity to improve aright so rare a privilege: For as much as we have heard of it, are there many of us that can tell how Christ’s intercession is to be improved? Sure we may know, that if ever we do it, there is no thanks to us for the doing of it; and indeed it is of such a nature, that we even cannot well tell, whether it be better to speak of it, or to be silent, being so little able to make any thing plain, of such a mysterious, yet very concerning thing.

Ye may remember the doctrine that we proposed to speak to was, “That our Jesus Lord Christ hath this for a part of his office, to make intercession for transgressors.” Being a real Priest, he not only offers a sacrifice, but goes in, and hath gone within the vail, with the vertue of his sacrifice, to appear before God in heaven for us: As all the offices of Christ are advantageous, and would be studied by us, and we would study them well; this hath many advantages with it, and we would improve it, lest we frustrate ourselves of the cluster of privileges that is in this one doctrine; that Jesus Christ makes intercession for transgressors, or sinners.

We shewed the last day, wherein the improving of Christ’s intercession doth consist: We shall now instance some cases, wherein believers, in a special manner, are to make use of it. 2. We shall give some directions for clearing some questions, or for answering some doubts about it. And, 3. We shall assign some characters of such as are rightly improving Christ’s intercession.

For the first, Christ’s intercession ought to be made use of, in as many cases as are possibly incident to a believer; and therefore we are not to restrict it to one case more than to another, altho’ indeed there be some, wherein more especi-

ally we are called to improve it. Now, to clear it, that there are some cases, wherein, in a special manner, the believer is to make use of this office, of Christ’s interceding for transgressors: It may be instanced in these, 1. A believer hath either liberty, or he is in bonds; and there is a special, watchfulness called for in both these cases, that the intercession of Christ be not slighted.

1st, When he hath liberty, and his spiritual condition thrives, he prays, and his heart melts in prayer; he hath what he would have, the exercises of religion become pleasant, and he hath no will to come from them. In this case the believer is to beware, lest he be flown off his feet, and mistaken Christ’s intercession; for then he is ready to think that he cannot but be well, and his prayers cannot but be heard, because he gets liberty to put them up; and it is then often, that there is hazard to lay least weight on Christ’s intercession. To improve Christ’s intercession aright in such cases, these two are to be adverted to, 1. That his intercession be acknowledged as the fountain and procuring cause of that liberty and liveliness; and so we are to carry a stopped mouth before God, and not to boast of it: For (as we shew) the pouring out of the Spirit is a special fruit of Christ’s intercession, it being by vertue thereof that gifts are given, and grace to worship God in a spiritual manner. 2. That we beware of thinking that our prayers are in a fitness, or that they put us in a fitness of access to God, because of that liberty, except by vertue of Christ’s intercession, more than if we had not a word to say: There is in our unbelief and presumption, a secret inclination to lay the weight of our acceptance on our own liberty; whereas, Rev. viii. the prayers of all saints must come up before God, having the smoke of his incense to make them acceptable; in which respect, in a case of liberty, Christ’s intercession is made use of and inproved, when we are denied to our own liberty, and it is not made the ground of our confident application to God, but Christ’s intercession only. Again, 2. When the believer is in bonds, in some eminent manner, so that he cannot pray, he fearce hath a word to speak to God; he goes, it
it is true, about the duty, but he comes not speed, his prayer relishes not to himself; he is like one speaking, but not praying, his heart is not warmed; neither is there, at least to his own apprehension, any connexion betwixt his words; whereupon he is ready to think, that his prayer is as good as no prayer, because of that inclination that is in all of us, to rest on our own praying, without making use of the intercession of Christ: The reasons why in this case we would prefer the use-making of his intercession, are these, 1/3. Left we faint and grow weary in prayer, which cannot but befall us, if his intercession be not made use of.

2dly, Left we lose the estimation of the excellent worth of Christ's intercession; which is exceeding derogatory to him that is mighty to save, and on whom help is laid; and it is especially for such a time and case, that he is holden forth for an Intercessor. Now, there is a twofold improvement of Christ's intercession called for in this case, when the believer is in bonds, and cannot so much as sigh, but it is called in question, whether it be accepted, tho' yet the man is serious. 

1. There is an improving of it, for obtaining of that which we have been aiming at, tho' we cannot tell our own tale (to speak so) nor open our caufe, nor make known our requests to God; yet, to expect what we have been aiming at, and seeking after, by virtue of Christ's intercession, for as ill let together as our prayer hath been, because it is founded upon the intercession of the Mediator, and we expect a hearing on that account alenearily; it being his intercession that makes our prayers acceptable, it can make such a poor prayer acceptable also: Whereupon the soul rests quiet, and expects a hearing on this ground, because, as we said, the prayers of all saints go up from his cenfer, and with his incence; and none are cast back, that are put up through him, and by virtue of his intercession: Hence sometimes looks, sometimes thoughts, sometimes broken words and groans come up before God, are acceptable, and get a return; the reason is, because, through the intercession of the Mediator, the prayers of all saints are acceptable. This is even as if a man should credit his able advocate with the managing of his caufe, altho' he cannot (to speak so) mouth-band his own tale, nor express himself satisfyingly to himself in it; hence we have these words often, John xiv. 16. Whatever ye ask in my name believing, ye shall receive; and, whatever ye ask in my name, I will do it; that is, when ye ground the expectation of your hearing, and speed-com-

Verse 12. 

ing in prayer, on me, and my mediation. When folks, because of their short-comings in prayer, give over the expectation of a hearing, and a return, they give over, in so far, the laying of due weight on his intercession: only ye would remember the terms, on which a person is warranted to make use of his intercession; for, when we follow not his way, in the improving of it, we cannot expect to come speed, or get good by it. 2. A believer in his bonds would expect a looking, through the virtue of his intercession: And this is another way, how we would improve it in this case, when we are bound up, and (to speak so) langed, that we cannot stir in prayer, then we would have an eye to the efficacy of Christ's intercession, (that is of continual vigour and efficacy, even when we are very dead, indisposed, and lifeless) for the attaining of liberty and liveliness: This is indeed to call a look to him, and singly to improve the efficacy of his mediation, when we cannot speak one word, to work up ourselves to a disposition for that work; and these two go well together, to be improving his intercession, for obtaining what we need for the time present, and for the time to come, and when we are in bonds, to be improving it for liberty and freedom.

2dly, There is an use-making of Christ's intercession called for, both when we aim to obtain any thing, and when we have obtained that which we would be at. 1. In our aiming to have or obtain, we would improve it, that our address to God may be in his name, and our faith of obtaining may be founded on Christ's intercession, and not on our own, and that our faith may be stayed and fixed in expectation of the thing: The improving of Christ's intercession in this respect leads us, 1/3, To the right way of prosecuting our suits to God. And, 2dly, Itquiet and fixes us in expecting of an answer; and, when this is wanting, Christians are either discouraged, and know not how to pursue their cause, or else they are carnally secure and presumptuous, which is very ordinary; for either, as I have said, we are under an anxious fear, so that we know not how to go about duty with any hope of succés; or else we grow secure and slack, and careless in duty.

3dly, There is an use-making of Christ's intercession, when we have obtained any benefit, which keeps the soul in his common and debt, and in acknowledging itself to be his debtor. This makes Christians, when they have gotten any thing, to
be humble, and helps them to a sanctified use of the thing received; whereas, when this is forgotten, though persons may be seemingly humble, when they are praying for a thing in his name; yet, when they have gotten it, they grow carnal, and some way wanton; and he is forgotten, as if the benefit had never come from him: But on the other hand, when there is an acknowledgment of Christ's intercession, when any thing is obtained, it keeps, as I said, the person humble and holily afraid, when it hath gotten, as well as when it was seeking; and it makes way in using and fearful to abuse any benefit received, lest it be found a wrong and indignity done to Christ and his intercession.

4thly, We may inst ance the improving of Christ's intercession, both in a most sad, and in a most cheerful condition; in reference to both which, we should make use of Christ's intercession: and it being readily one of these conditions that we are in, either a more sad, or more cheerful one, we should think ourselves defective and faulty as to our duty, when we suit and conform not ourway to our condition.

1. If it be a more sad condition, whether we be spiritually sad, the soul being heavy, and refusing to be comforted, or whether we be under a temporal outward disconsolate condition, there is an use-making of Christ's intercession called for in both; for a believer cannot be in any so disconsolate a condition, but he may draw refreshing from this fountain, in reference thereto; and when we make not use of his intercession in each, as it occurs, either anxiety and discouragement grows, or we turn to some unwarrantable and crooked mean or way for an out-gate from such a disconsolate condition.

Now, to make use of, and to improve Christ's intercession aright, in such a disconsolate condition and cape, 1. The soul would gather, and compose itself, to search and see what is useful in Christ's intercession for its case, seeing that sad case cannot be imagined, but Christ's intercession is a cordial for it, upon which, as a solid ground, the soul may: be quiet,-that it cannot miscarry in that, for which it is now in so much bitterness, seeing Christ Jesus hath the management of its case and cause: Hence it may reason thus, Although I was unwatchful, and this condition came on me unawares, and I was surprized with it, yet it is not any surprise to him: He was not sleeping, though I was; he knew what was coming, tho' I knew not; therefore this will not hurt nor pre-

2. There is an improvement of his intercession in this case, when the out-gate, tho' desperate as to us, is yet hopeful, by virtue thereof; and when this is made the only or main ground of our hope, to wit, that there is a Friend at the court of heaven, who can order our cause, and make such a thing work for our good, it puts spirit in us to pray, and activity to go about the use of the means; whereas, when we use not the means, or use them without due respect to Christ's intercession, the business becomes heartless, hopeless, and desperate.

5thly, We may inst ance it in this case, when the believer is under challenges, it is then a special reason to make use of Christ's intercession, and to put the libel in his hand to answer it; which is done by faith's resting on him as a Priest, for the obtaining of an abolution from that charge, altho' we cannot answer it ourselves, yet expecting an answer through him, according to that famous place, Rom. viii. 34. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Who will libel them? Among other reasons of the interrogation, which hath the force of a negation, this is one; It is Christ who died, yea rather who is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, making intercession for us. This
The reasons why we have hinted at these things, are, 1. To hold out to you the concernment of Christ’s intercession; for we cannot be in that case, but the believer hath therein to do with it. 2. To shew our great obligation to God, who hath given us such an Intercessor for all these cases: In this one word there is stored up a treasure of consolation, for all cases that a Christian can be in. 3. That we may be helped to our duty of improving and making use of him, according to the several cases we are in, or may be in: For tho’ his intercession be mainly to be made use of, when we come to pray; yet not only then, but at other times, and in other cases, as when we fear any hazard, when we need any good thing, when we expect it, or would be cheerful on the receipt of it; and when we are in any difficulty, and know not what to do, we will find something called for from us, in reference to his offices, and to this in particular. 4. Because this use-making of Christ’s intercession, commends Christ, and makes him lovely to us: And indeed; that which makes believers think so little of him, is in part, at least, the little improving of his intercession, which should be made use of in the least things, if it were when we need any thing, in our thought to look up to God, through him, and to found the hope of getting it on this ground, because there is an Intercessor. If this were the practice of believers daily, they would see a necessity of thinking much of him; O when will we be serious and constant in the use-making of this part of his office! 5. Because it may serve also for ground of conviction to many that are called Christians, and who go through many cases and difficulties, and yet know not what it is to acknowledge him in his intercession. O it is a sad thing for folks to bear the name of Christians, and yet if they want any good thing, and can get it another way, they neglect and misk’en him; and if it be well with them, and if they obtain what they would have, they sacrifice to their own net, and he is slighted.

The next thing in order is, to remove some objections, and to answer some questions concerning this improvement of Christ’s intercession, in the manner that we have spoken of; and there will rea-

The firs ground I would lay down, is this, That ye would remember, that there is an unsearchable beneift in this mystery of the Godhead, in the mystery of God’s becoming Man, and in the mystery of the Mediator his taking on these offices, to exercise them in our nature; and, in speaking or thinking of them, there is a necessity to silence that our curiosity would propofe, for satisfaction about them: as, namely, How there are, or can be three Persons in the Godhead, and yet but one God? How one of these Persons can be Man? and how it is, that by him we have access to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? There is silence required in the bow of these things, which leads to the next direction.

2dly, We would study satisfaction in the matter of the truth itself, rather than to be poring into the manner or bow of profound mysteries, especially such as concern the blessed Godhead, which is higher than the heavens, broader than the earth, and deeper than the sea; That is, (as we hinted at before) we would study rather to know that there is such a thing, than how it is: As, in this particular, we know that the Son of God became Man, took on our nature, and in our nature died, rose again, and ascended to heaven, sat down on the right hand of God, and makes intercession for us; these are clear: But if we ask how these things can be, that God can be Man, and that two natures can he in one Person, and how God can intercede, they are things much above our reach, and not so properly the object of our faith, (I say, as to the bow of them) and our consolation lies not so much in knowing how such a thing is, as in knowing that it is: And I make no question, but there are many who pray in faith, because there is an Intercessor, who, if the question were asked, how he performs that work? they could not tell well, if at all; these that can tell most of it, are but very ignorant of it, and can tell but little: The Lord, in his goodness, hath so ordered the matter, that he hath given grounds for the faith of his people, to walk on in their duty, but will
not satisfy their curiosity. And truly, if we will
seriously reflect, we will find, that these things
which most readily vex us, are questions about the
manner, and not about the matter of things: we
do not doubt, that the Son of God is God; that
the holy Ghost is God, and that he proceeds from
the Father and the Son; that the second Person
of the Trinity became Man, &c. But the per-
plexing question is, How these things are, or can be?
The Lord hath made it necessary to be be-
thieved, that there is one God, and three Perfons
in the Godhead: But to be in reason satisfied, as
to the how, or manner of their subsistence and op-
erations, that is not required as necessarly; so it is
here, in this matter of Christ's intercession: And
therefore this second direction is, that ye would
study clearness in the grounds that ye are to go up-
on, in the use-making of his intercession; but ye
would not be curious in seeking satisfaction about the
how, or manner of it.

3. In our addresses to God, and in our im-
proving of Christ's intercession, we would beware of i-
imagining, or framing in our imagination, repre-
sentations to ourselves of him, who is the Object
of our worship; or of the manner of the Mediator's
intercession, as if we had seen him, or heard him
with our bodily eyes or ears; a thing that some-
times is fantastick and troublesome, as well as it is
sinfull, and which we are not called to; yea,
if it were possible to attain to any representation of
this kind, yet it is but a representation of our own
forming, and so a breach of the second command:
And therefore, in going to God through the Me-
diator, never represent to yourselves one Party
standing beside, or by another, for that is but a
diverting of the soul from the exercise of faith on
a purely spiritual and simple Object, and derogatory
to the Majesty of God; and whenever such
representations are made, or rife in the imagina-
tion, or in the mind, God would be looked to, for
cruishng of them. It is from this that many of our
doubts and questions arise; and there is no loosng
of them, but by the abandoning of them: If there
were a possibility to conceive something like God,
yet the Lord abhorreth that; and Deut. iv. 15.
and xii. 30. all similitudes and representations of
God are discharged.

4. In our addresses to God through the Mediator,
we would rest our faith on what is revealed in
the word, seeking rather to take up God and
Christ, as they are revealed in it, than, without
the word, to feck satisfaction to our curiosity: We
would, from the word, study to take up the at-
tributes of God, his omniscience, omnipotency,
onnipotence, wisdom, grace and mercy, purity
and holiness, sovereignty, and absolute dominion
in guiding all; and as being at such an infinite
distance from, and infinitely above all creatures,
that thereby a right impression of God may be wrought
in the heart: We would likewise study clearness
in the promises, both concerning Christ and his of-
fices; and, in applications to God, we would fix
our faith on these known grounds, believing we
shall be heard; and being quiet on that. Moses,
Exod. xxxiii, is under a vehement longing to see
God, I beseech thee; faith he, shew me thy glory;
the Lord tells him, that he cannot see it, and live,
but he will make his goodness pass before him, he
will let him see as much as is meet; and, chap. xxxiv.
when he gives him his answer, it is not any glorious
visible brightnesse he lets him see, but he proclaims
his name to him, The Lord, the Lord God, merci-
ful and gracious, &c. And comparing the words
with the scope, it says, that there can be no saving
uptaking of God, but as he is revealed in the word:
And that way we are to be fixed in the faith of
the excellency that is in him; and in going to him
by prayer, through the Mediator, we would guard
against any representation, and fix our faith on
clear promises and attributes, as scripture holds
him forth.

5. We would endeavour rather to have a com-
pofed frame of spirit, with holy reverence, in the
exercise of fear, faith and love, and of other spi-
ritual graces, than to fill our understanding with
things merely speculative, and les practical and
profitable; and supposing that we are in some mea-
ure clear in what is revealed of God, and of his
attributes and promises in the word, in as far as
may found our faith, and warrant us to put up fitch
and such suits to God through the Mediator;
and that we come to him in holy reverence, we are ra-
ther to exercise our graces, and have an eye down-
ward, in reflecting on ourselves, seeking to be clear
in what is called for in a worshipper of God, than
to be curiously poring and prying into the Object
of our worship himself: And therefore let this be
well studied, even to be up at that wherein we are
clear, and which we do not question, nor make
any doubt of, as, namely, that we should be in a
composed frame of spirit, in holy reverence, and
under the due impression of the Majesty of God,
and then there will be the les hazard, if any at all,
of going wrong; whereas, if we divert from this,
and seek to satisfy ourselves in the how, or manner
of up-taking of God, we will but mire ourselves,
It is a great mercy, that God hath bestowed such a Mediator on sinners, that he hath given such an High Priest, that can be touched with the feeling of sinners infirmities, so as to make intercession for them; and O but it is a great mercy to be helped to make right use of him! When these two go together, to wit, a Saviour offered, furnished with all these offices of King, Priest and Prophet; and a soul sanctified and guided by the Spirit of God, in making use of him, according to these offices; it is a wonderfully and unconceivably gracious dispensation: And it is no doubt, a very valuable mercy to be helped to make use of this part of Christ's office, to wit, his intercession; this is that, whereof we have begun some few days since to speak to you: And, for the better clearing of it, we endeavoured to answer some doubts, or questions, that, it may be, have arisen, and been tossed in the minds of some, while we have been discoursing of, and opening up this matter. That which we would now speak a little to, is a subject of that nature, that, considering our shallowness in up-taking of these things, we cannot easily tell, whether it be better to speak of, or to forbear the speaking of any doubt or question, left one occasion another; and therefore, most certainly, there would be much sobriety here, and an abandoning of all sinful curiosity, left unseasonable and inconstant desires to know, either what is not to be known, or what we cannot know, mar and obstruct our improvement of what we do, or may know. Several things doubted of may be moved and objected here; but we shall only speak a word to the clearing of these four, 1. Something concerning the Object of worship, and particularly of prayer in general. 2. We shall consider how the Mediator is the Object of our prayer, or how he may be prayed unto. 3. A word more particularly, in reference to the form of some particular petitions, and to what seems most warrantable from the word in these. 4. We shall answer some practical doubts that have, or may have some puzzling influence on the consciences of some Christians: But, as I said, we had need, in speaking and hearing of these things, to be awed with some deep impression of the Majesty of God on our hearts, left we meddle carnally with matters of a most sublimely spiritual and holy nature. For clearing of the firft then, we lay down these assertions: The 1st whereof is, That as there is one worship, so there is no formal Object of worship but God; this is clear, because the worshipping of any with divine worship, as namely, with believing in them, or praying to them, supposes them to have such attributes of Omniscience, Omnipotency, Supremacy, &c., as are only agreeable to the Majesty of God; for we cannot pray to One, but we must believe that he hears us, and so that he is Omniscient; that he is able to help us, and so Omnipotent; that he is above all, and so Supreme; as it is, Rom. x. 14. How shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? There can be no divine Object of worship to settle the soul upon, but where the essential attributes of the Godhead are; and it is on this ground, that we reject invocation of saints and angels: Adorability being the essential property of the Majesty of God, as well as eternity and immutability are; there can be no adoring or worshipping of any, but where there is adorability in the Object that is worshipped by that worship; and there is none capable of worship but God, Supremacy being due and essential to him only. 2. That tho' there be three Persons in the glorious and blessed Godhead, distinct, yet there are not three distinct Objects of worship, but one Object of worship only: The Father is not one Object of worship,
worship, the Son another, and the Holy Ghost a third; but the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are that same one Object of worship; and when we pray to one, we pray to all. The reason is clear, 

*Because, tho' there be three Persons in the Godhead, yet there is but one essence of the Godhead: and the divine essentail properties (which are the
grounds on which we adore God) are essentail, and agree to all the Persons of the Godhead; the Father hath not one Omnipotency, and the Son another, neither are there two Omnipotents, but one omnipotent God; and so in other attributes they are the same essential properties of the Godhead, and incommunicable: And therefore, tho' the Father be another Person, and (as they use to speak) *alia*, yet he is not another thing, or *aliud*, but the same God, with the Son, and Holy Ghost: And altho' the Persons have a real distinction amongst themselves, yet none of them are really distinct from the Godhead; and so there is but one Object of worship; and therefore, tho' sometimes all the Persons be named, yet it is not to shew a

any distinction in the Object of our worship, but to shew who is the Object of our worship, to wit, one God, yet three Persons, one in three. 3. That tho' in prayer to God, we may name either the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost; yet whatsoever we name, it is always the same God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that is worshipped; and this followeth well on the former, and may be the use of it: For, if the Father be God, and if we worship him as God, we cannot worship him, but we must worship the Son and Holy Ghost with him, because they are the same God, having the same essential attributes: And therefore, 4. Whensoever we pray to, and name one of the Persons, we would not conceive that he is less worshipped, that is not named, or that we pray less to him that is not named; as it may be in the same prayer, when a person begins at first, he names the Father, and when he has proceeded a little, he names the Son: Men would then beware of thinking that there is a difference in the Object they are praying to; or, as if they began to pray to one of the Persons, and now they are praying to another, as a distinct Party; for it is still the same God, who is the Object of worship. We observe it, to teach you

you calmness, sobriety, and composure of frame, in approaching to God; wherein folks would beware of curious rolling in their mind, and imagination, what may be the Object of their worship, and of suffering it to run in an itchingly curious way on the distinction of the Persons; but would stay their mind upon one God in three Per-

Verse 12.

The 2d is, How the Mediator is the Object of our prayers, or may be prayed unto? And for clearing of this, we would propose these considerations, 1. That it is a certain truth, that the Person that is the Mediator, is the Object of our worship, and may be prayed unto, because he is God, the second Person of the Godhead; and therefore, Acts vii. at the close, a direct prayer is put up to him by Stephen, *Lord Jesus*, faith he, receive my prayer. 2. We say this, That the adoration and worship that is given to the Mediator, is not of any distinct kind from that adoration and worship that is given to the Father, and to the Holy Ghost, but the same supreme divine worship, for he is the same God with the Father and Holy Ghost; and altho' he be a Mediator, it derogates nothing from his Godhead: And the scripture speaking of no divine worship but one, we are therefore not to conceive him to be worshipped with less confidence, fear, or reverence, than the other Persons of the Trinity; for there is no such worship in scripture: and to give him less, would derogate from the Majesty of Jesus Christ, who is God equal with the Father, and the Spirit; for, altho', as Mediator, he be inferior to the Father, yet the Person whom we worship, is God equal with the Father, and the Holy Ghost. 3. The worshipping of Jesus Christ Mediator, and the giving of him divine worship, is not the worshipping of any other Object, but of the same, to wit, God, who is made flesh, and is manifested in our nature, by the union of the second Person of the Godhead, with the human nature which he has assumed and taken to him; upon which it follows, that Jesus Christ must be the same Object of worship, and that our worshipping of him, is the worshipping of God, and that our praying to him, is praying to God the Father, Son and Spirit: And there is reason to take heed to this, because, when we in prayer are speaking to the Mediator, thoughts may steal in, as if we were not so immediately and directly speaking to God, as when we name the Father. 4. Consider, that Christ Jesus being worshipped with this divine worship, as the one Object of worship, (for as we shew there cannot be two Objects of divine worship) it will follow, that Christ Jesus as God is worshipped; for tho' it be the Person that is Mediator and man, that is worshipped, yet it is not the Person as Man, but as God, that is worshipped: And the reason is clear, because it is not Christ Jesus as man, but as God, that hath these properties of God, to be omniscient,
And therefore, as, upon the one hand, we say, that Christ-God died, and suffered, because he being God and in one Person, the Person that was, and is God, died and suffered, tho’ the Godhead did not suffer, neither can suffer: So, upon the other hand, we say, that Christ-man is prayed unto as God; but tho’ there be an union of the two natures in the Mediator’s Person, and tho’ the properties of the one nature be sometimes attributed to the other, because of the flattenedness of the union, yet we must still keep the properties of each nature distinct; and in our worship-application to him, consider him accordingly: As to be finite, agrees to his human nature, and is to be attributed to that; and to be infinite, agrees to his divine nature, and is to be attributed to him in respect of that. To clear it a little, (if it be possible for us to clear it) we must-conceive, in our worshipping of God in the Person of a Mediato, a threefold Object of our worship: (for so divines use to distinguish, and we would hold us close by them) 1. The material Object, or the Object which we worship, that is the Per son we pray to. 2. The formal Object of our worship, or that which is the ground or account on which we worship that Person. 3. The Object of our consideration, in our worshipping of that Person, on that account. As for instance, (1.) The Man Christ Jesus, is the Person whom we worship, or pray unto. But, (2.) The formal Object of our worship is Christ’s Godhead, and we pray to him on that account, because he is the Eternal, Infinite, Omnipotent, Supreme, &c. in respect of his divine nature. (3.) In our worshipping of this Mediator, on this account, or ground, the mind may be swayed to it, on consideration, that the Person whom we worship as God, is also Mediator and man; and this proposes no new Object of worship, but gives a motive to induce us to worship him, and warms the heart with love to him: As, when we go to pray to him, the mind may consider him as One that died; now, so considered, he is not the Object of our worship, because it holds him out as humbled, and suffering, yet our so considering him, strengthens faith to expect what we need from him; and it induces to pray to him, and engages to love him: Even as the people of Israel, in praying to God, sometimes used that title, Our Redeemer that brought us out of Egypt; yet the ground, and account on which they worshipped him, was his being the eternal, infinite, and omnipotent God; and the consideration of his works were but motives to induce them to worship him, and to strengthen their faith, in expecting what they stood in need of from him: So is it here; for if it were possible to conceive, that the Mediator that died, were not God, we would not pray to him, for God is the alone Object of divine worship; yet to consider, that he is God, and yet died, is an inducement to us to pray to him, and it strengthens our faith, to consider, that as he is God, so also man, One that died, and hath also entered himself in this near relation to us.

For the 3d, (which will help to clear the former) that is, the forms of such petitions as may be used in petitioning the Mediator; we need the less to stand on it, if (as hath been said) we hold us by these grounds, 1. That there is but one Object of worship. 2. That this one Object of worship, is God. 3. That in worshipping the Mediator, we do not divide that Object of our worship. Yet we shall speak a word for clearing, 1. What form seems most allowable here; 2. For clearing of somewhat, which we hinted at the other day, anent one particular form of petition.

1. Then, this is clear, that we may pray directly to the Mediator, by naming him, as Stephen does, Acts vii. at the close. 2. That the Mediator, when prayed to, may be considered as such by us; for there is a difference betwixt that, which is considered by us, in the act of our worship, and that which is the Object of that act; and (as we said) the motive that induces us to that act, is the up-taking of him as Mediator. 3. That he may be designed Mediato and Redeemer, and may get these names and titles, because they serve to strengthen our faith, and to warm our affections to him; even as when the people of Israel prayed to God, they remembered, that he was their Redeemer and Deliverer, and had wrought so and so for them; and these were motives to induce them to pray, and served to strengthen their faith in praying to him; yet the ground and account on which they worshipped him, was his own infinite glorious Majesty. 4. It is clear, that when the Mediator is prayed unto, something may be sought from him, that agrees to the office of the Mediator: For instance, he may be prayed unto, to take to him his government, and to exercise it, to give gifts unto men, to gather his own elect, to make his will effectual for the ingathering of them, &c. yet even then a difference would be put betwixt the Object of our suit, and the matter we suit for, which belongs to him as Mediator; yet as God, he is the Object of our suit and prayer. This seems
seems to be hinted at, Psal. xlv. when the Psalmist, speaking to the Son the Mediator, saith, 
"Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, ride prosperously: let 
the King's arrows be sharp in the hearts of his 
enemies;" Which upon the matter seems clearly to 
relate to Christ's executing his office as Mediator: 
Yet look to the title he gives him, and the ground 
or account on which he puts up his prayer, it is the 
consideration of him as God; therefore, he saith, 
"O thou most mighty! a divine attribute, pointing 
out to be God: And, Thy throne, O God, 
(faith he) is from everlasting, &c."

Now, as for the 2d thing, If all this be grant-
ed, it may then be asked why we seem not to be 
satisfied with that manner of expression, or form of 
petition, which we hinted at the other day, Lord 
Jesus, make intercession for me, plead for me, 
with, or before the Father; seeing we allow such 
a petition as this, Lord Jesus, make me partaker 
of thy intercession, and the like, as warrantably, 
when put up with reverence and faith, the fame 
object of worship being invoked with them both?

Answer 1. We say, that the use-making, and im-
proving of Christ's intercession, is not to be restric-
ted to this manner of expression, or form of peti-
tion; and it was for this end that we observed it: 
For it cannot be said, that only we make use of 
Christ's intercession, when we use this form, and 
so it is not essential, nor necessary to the use-making 
of Christ's intercession: This is the fault that 
is in it, as if there were no use-making of his in-
tercession, but when this form of petition is used; 
whereas, we shew, that it is mainly the exercise of 
faith, resting on his intercession, whereby it is im-
proved; and one may be using this form of words, 
and yet not be improving his intercession; and an-
other may not use this form of words, and yet be 
improving it, when faith is exercised on it: And 
therefore, to improve his intercession, is rather by 
the exercise of faith to rest on it, than in any such 
form of words to pray to him; and we would not 
think, that Christ's intercession is made use of, when 
the Father is prayed unto, or when such a form of 
words is used, but place it in the exercise of faith 
alone. 2. We say, if such a petition be well un-
derstood and qualified, it is not simply sinful or evil; 
if so be our meaning amount to this much, Lord Je-
sus, let me be partaker of the benefits of thy in-
tercession; even as we may pray, Lord Jesus, let 
one be partaker of the benefits of thy satisfaction: 
Yet we say, it would be well understood and qua-
lified; and a person, in putting up such a petition, 
would advert well, that he be not praying to any 
other object of worship, but God, and that his 
meaning be the same, as if he were praying to the 
Father, and said, Father, let me be accepted 
through the intercession of the Son: And thus the 
one is an improving of Christ's intercession, as well 
as the other; for altho' the altering of the nomi-
nation of the Person may strengthen faith, yet it is 
ever to be so understood, as if there were a dif-
ferent Object of worship, or, as if there were less 
access to Christ's intercession, or to the benefits 
thereof, in the one form than in the other. Yet, 
3. We say, there is often a readiness to mis-
carry in this form of petition; for ye would consider and 
examine, (1.) If it doth not often flow from a 
mis-informed judgment within, and if it had not a 
tendency in it to obscure the nature of the unity 
of the Object of our worship, and readily dispos-
ing to, or flowing from this opinion, that praying to 
the Mediator is not the same that praying to God 
is, as if there were two distinct Objects of wor-
ship. Or, (2.) If there be not a readiness to con-
der the Person that is Mediator, to be of less 
glory and majesty than the Father, and to consider 
the Father to be of less loving-kindness and tender-
ness to sinners than the Son, and other things of 
that kind, which move people to put up a suit, in 
such a form, which makes it more difficult to keep 
the thoughts of one Object of worship under such 
a form, than otherwise. Yet, (4.) We say, it 
may be used by, and accepted of God, from many 
that have not that distinctness and clearness in the 
redning of their thoughts in this mystery, that is 
prequisite, because there may be real faith under 
such a form of words, (tho' infirmity in the use-
making of Christ's intercession) and God respects 
that wherever it is: And under such a form, there 
may be those two, 1. A foul-sensibleness, that the 
person hath no access to God, but through a Me-
diator. 2. A restful on the Mediator for accep-
tance; and where these two are, tho' the form be 
used, it may be accepted; although if faith 
be, though this form be not, it mars not the 
person's acceptation: For no question, many 
of the people of God, both before Christ 
came, and some time after, had not that dis-
distinctness in use-making of the intercession of 
Christ, as now is holden forth, as Christ says to 
his disciples, John xvi. 24. Ἐνδικα χεῖρι; for ake-
ed nothing in my name; and Cornelius, men-
tioned, Acts x. and others, their prayers were accep-
ted of God, tho' they rested by faith on the Me-
diator, in a more confused dark way, and had not 
that distinctness in them, of use-making of him, 
which
ing any ground in themselves to lean to, or to put
up their suit on, and make use of Christ for the
ground of their acceptance with God; and if it
were asked them, What gives you ground to ex-
pect a hearing of your prayers? they would an-
swer, Even the same that gives us ground to ex-
pect pardon of sin, and we would never expect to
win to either without a Mediator; they are am-
ongst them who are improving Christ's interce-
sion, and such would silence and thrust other ques-
tions, if they be clear in this. 2dly, We answer,
That there may be a real use-making of Christ's
intercession, and it may be accounted so, where
there is much indistinctness in the up-taking of it;
as these instances clear, of Cornelius, Acts x. and
of the disciples, John xvi. who prayed not on the
account of their own righteousness, or of the co-
venant of works; (for they made confession of
their sins) yet the Mediator, and his intercession,
was not so distinctly, as such, considered by them;
in their so doing, for they did not distinctly take
up him, as Christ says, Hitherto ye have asked
nothing in my name; yet there was an actual re-
ning on him by faith; and their prayers were no
doubt accepted of God, he not being so distinctly
known to be the Intercessor, as now he is: and
therefore there is required a more distinct use-
making of him now, and not a relying on him in-
definitely, but particularly and distinctly, he being
clearly revealed now to be the Mediator. 3dly,
We answer, That believers may sometimes be
making use of Christ's intercession, in approaching
to God by him, and yet they themselves not know
distinctly that they are doing so, as we see in the
disciples, John xiv. 4. Christ says, Whither I go
ye know; and the way ye know; and, verfe 6.
Speaking of coming to the Father by him, he says,
I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and yet,
verfe 5. Thomas says, Lord, we know not whi-
ther thou goest, and how can we know the way?
and the Lord turns it over to him, and says, that
they have both known him and the way. As also,
believers may sometimes, through want of clear-
ness and distinctness in this, what it is to make use
of Christ's intercession, or because they want that
measure of distinctness they would be at, think
that they are doing nothing, as to the use-making
of his intercession; and yet the work of God's
Spirit, though they know it not well, may be
leading them: for it is in this, as it is in the use-
making of his satisfaction; a believer may be mak-
ing use of Christ's satisfaction, and be justified by
it, when he knows not that it is so, or possibly can-
SERMON LXXII.

Isaiah liii, 12.——And made intercession for the transgressors.

The greatest privileges that we have by the gospel, do often hold forth the greatest aggravations of our sin, as being against so great and excellent privileges. Now, that the Lord hath given us a Mediator, and that this one part of his mediation, to wit, to make intercession for transgressors, or sinners, is one of the great privileges of the gospel, is beyond all doubt; and therefore we had need to fear, left by our abusing, and not improving aright of this privilege, it prove an aggravation of our guilt: And this is the last thing that we would speak a word to, from these words, That seeing our Lord Jesus is invested with this office, to be an Intercessor, then it must be a ground of expostulation with, and reproof of these, who shall be found fighters of his intercession; for, if it be a duty to improve his intercession, and if it be a mercy that we have it, and if many advantages be gotten by it, then it must be a grievous sin, a matter of just challenge, and great shame, that sinners should have such an Advocate and Intercessor provided for them, to take and plead their cause so freely, and to manage it to dexterously as he doth, and not to slight him, and not to put that trust in him, as to commit their caufe to him.

In prosecuting of this use, we shall, 1st, Shew that there is such a sin, as not improving of Christ's intercession, and how it is fallen into. 2dly, The causes of it, or whence it comes, that folks so much milken this part of Christ's office. 3dly, The great inconveniences that follow on it, and the great prejudices that are sustained by it. 4thly, We shall hint at some symptoms and evidences where this sin is. And, 5thly, Speak a word to the remedies in opposition thereunto.

For the 1st, That there is such a sin, it may be clear, from a few considerations, that may be obvious to every one of us. 1. It may be clear, from the effect; what is the cause that so many come so little speed in prayer, that they pray, and yet get not a hearing; so that, in the day of judgment, it will be found, that many prayed, and that their prayers were cast back as dung upon their faces? They sought to enter, and were not able, as it is, Luke xiii. And this will be found to be the reason of it, that they went to God, but milken'd,
SECONDLY, The Causes of this Sin, and whence it comes to pass, that folks so slight the use-making of Christ's intercession, 1. There is a great difficulty in the thing, it is tickle. 2. There is a natural aversion from, and enmity at that thing in us. 3. There is a readiness to pitch on some other thing, and to miskenn and overlook this. Now, let all these three be put together, and we will see the reason and way how fakk slide and fall into this fault.

1/β, I fay, there is a difficulty in the thing, it being one of the most purely spiritual, sublime and denied things in all the gospel, one of the greatest exercises of faith; and we know, that all such things have to our nature a great difficulty. 1. It is a difficulty to bring a man to be but formal in religion. 2. There is a difficulty, when he is made formal, to make him ferious, even in a legal manner, and to be any thing affected in the exercise of repentance, and of other duties, fo that he be not grosly dissembling. 3. When he is made thus ferious, it is a difficulty to bring him over that serioyness, and to draw him from refenting on these duties, which he hath been drawn to: I fay,
it is a great and difficult work to get a man brought to the performance of holy duties, and as great a work to get him brought over them, and from resting on them, to rest on Christ's righteousness for his justification, and on Christ's intercession for the acceptance of his prayers: And therefore, when the Lord hath once gotten his disciples to pray, and honestly yoked and engaged therein, he trains them on to pray in his name, and so to get their prayers rightly qualified. 2dly, If we consider our nature, we will find, that there is an avaricious and backwardness therein to it, as there is an avariciousness in us to all things that tend to the making us deny ourselves, and lay the weight of every thing on Christ; that which swounds with our pride, stands and sticks at our stomachs, (to speak so) and goes not well down with us: Of such nature is this, for our use-making of Christ's intercession implies, that we of ourselves are at a distance with God, that we have broken covenant, and are not to be trusted without a Mediator; and there is in our nature a secret sort of disdain at this, we cannot naturally endure it: Hence, Rom. x. it is said of the Jews, that being ignorant of God's righteousness, they did not submit nor floop to the fame, but fought to establish their own righteousness. 3dly, There is a readiness to pitch and condone almost on any other sin, rather than on this; and therefore folks may be longer under it than under many, and yet not be challenged for it: They will readily be challenged for lying, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and the like; but they lean more securely in this sin, than in most others: It is a sin easily fallen into, and a sin not easily recovered from, or win out of, because it is a gospel-sin, that the light of nature reacheth not, and that the conscience hath not such an awe in convincing of. It is against nature's light to neglect prayer, or to take God's name in vain: But this runs in the channel of the gospel, to pray in the name of Christ, and to make all our addresses to God through him; the fruitful neglect whereof, cannot be discovered, but by gospel-light: and we find by experience, that many will be convinced of, and have challenges for out-breaking sins, who yet will have no challenges for the neglect of this duty; even as it is easier to convince folks of a breach of the law, than of not believing in Christ: many will grant, that ignorance of God is a sin, and that irreverence and wandering in prayer are sins, who yet will stand and stick at this, and cannot be gotten convinced, but that they still believe

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in Christ, and make use of his intercession.

For the third, to wit, the inconveniences and prejudices of this evil, they are very many; we shall only hint at them, for they are directly opposite to the good that comes by the improving of Christ's intercession. 1. It makes many prayers to be fruitless and fruitless: Tho' folks should weary themselves in prayer, yet it is all but loth labour; and the Lord will say, as it is, Isa. i. Though ye make many prayers, yet I will not hear them, if Christ's intercession be neglected; but one word put up in Christ's name hath a gracious hearing. 2. It makes many prayers and other duties also to be lifeless; no duty goes with folks, neither can it go with them, when Christ is sighted, seeing it is by faith in him, that we have life derived to us, whereby we are made lively in every thing. 3. It hath much anxiety following on it, to be praying, and to have no expectation, nor ground of expectation of a hearing; for if we look no further than to something in ourselves, it is but a poor foundation of quietness and peace. 4. It hath this prejudice, that it inures, habituates and accustoms us to a low esteem of Christ, and makes us want many sweet experiences that we might have of his usefulness and worth; and it fosters a disrespect of Christ: whereas the use-making of his intercession keeps always up an esteem of him, and makes the thoughts of him fresh; and it is ever well with the soul, while he is esteemed of; and it is impossible it can be well, when he is not in request.

Now, ye may easily gather what all this aims at, even that ye may not satisfy yourselves with the form of duty, but that ye may look that it be rightly discharged, so as Christ in his offices, and particularly in his priestly office, and more particularly in his part of it, be made use of: It may be, there are some here that have been called Chriftians, these twenty, thirty, or forty years; but I would enquire at you, What use have ye made all the while of Christ's intercession? The neglect of this is a sin against mercy, a sin against your own souls and the cause of many other sins: Therefore take it among your other reproofs, that not only ye have neglected prayer, lived in ignorance, and taken his name in vain, but that ye have also long professed faith in Christ, and yet have not made use of Christ's intercession. This will be amongst your faddled challenges, when ye come to sickness, and to your death-beds, and ye will have it heavily charged on you, that there hath been great flying and milkening of Christ, even
even when ye thought that ye were praying to him.

In the 4th place, To clear it yet further, we shall, 1. Hint at some symptoms or evidences of neglection of Christ’s intercession. 2. At some characters of a person that is making use of Christ’s intercession aight. 3. At some directions that may help to the suitable performance of this duty. And 4. At some motives and encouragements to it. 433. For the symptoms or evidences of miskenning, and flighting of Christ’s intercession. 1. This is one, when there is little walking under the impression of the need of his sacrifice, when folks walk whole-heartedly (to speak so) and without due conviction of the distance that is betwixt God and them; for Christ’s intercession flows from his satisfaction, and the improving of his satisfaction flows from the conviction of our natural distance from God: When folks are not sensible of their enmity, and of their vilenes, and see not their need of washing, when they have a heat heart, few challenges, little exercise of repentance, and of self-loathing, it is a great evidence that there is little or no use made of Christ’s intercession. The 2d symptom is deep security, and much self-confidence; where these are, Christ’s intercession is little or not at all made use of; When a soul makes no question of, nor hath any doubt about its own peace, or about its praying, or getting a hearing, this is indeed self-confidence, and does flow from the former, to wit, ignorance of our distance from God, which is clear both from experience, and from scripture; they that make least use of Christ’s intercession, and have most carnal confidence, have readily fewest challenges: Thus the Pharisee stands, Luke xviii. and prays, laying, Lord, I thank thee, &c. The greatest part of such folks prayers is thanksgiving on carnal grounds; whereas the poor Publican dare not come near; but when the Pharisee comes boldly forward, he stands afar off, and says, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner, who (as if he had said) have a respect to the covenant of grace, and so to the improving of Christ’s intercession; it is certainly an ill token when folks fit down with confidence to their prayers, and rife up from them, without all fear of being denied, and said nay. A 3d symptom of not making use of Christ’s intercession, is, when folks have too much anxiety, which is a fault that a believer may easily fall in, when he hath no ground from himself to propose to God for a hearing, and when he cannot answer his own challenges, and is therefore discouraged; which says, that he lippens not much to Christ, and to his intercession. A 4th symptom is, when duties of worship become burdened, when it wearieath folk to pray, to sanctify the Lord’s day, &c. when these are fainious and cumberfom to them; the reason whereof is, because they take the burden wholly or mostly on themselves, and lay it not over on Christ; whereas, were he right-ly made use of, it would be found to be a truth, that his yoke is easy, and his burden is light, as himself faith, Matth. xi. 30. A 5th symptom is, when folks are not thankful for any mercy they receive, and are not wondering how it comes, that they get such mercies as they have,when they think little of their daily bread, of ordinances, of accesse to pray, &c. Souls that are improving Christ’s intercession, think much of any mercy, because the least mercy is quite without the reach of the merit of ought they can do, and must content to them by the mediation of Another: Thus every mercy becomes a double mercy, as it is considered in itself, and as it comes to them by virtue of Christ’s intercession; therefore the believer, improving Christ’s intercession, wonders at every thing he meets with from God; that he is admitted to pray, or to praise; for he knows, that it is from free grace, thus admitting sinners through and by a Mediator.

As to the 2d, to wit, the characters, or evidences of a person’s making use of Christ’s intercession; the 1st may be this, A confiant ufe-making of Christ’s satisfaction, when the foul is never quiet, but when it hath a respect to that; and this ufe-making of Christ’s satisfaction hath in it always, either more implicitly, or more expressly, an ufe-making of his intercession, and leaves the weight of duties and mercies upon him: Hence a foul will be under thorow conviction of its enmi-ty, and very much edged and eager in its defires after peace, and will have expectation of obtaining it through him. A 2d evidence is, When folk in their approaches to God, have faith and fear going together: anxiety and fear, without faith, are not good, and self-confidence without fear is as ill; but when faith and fear go together, it is good; fear, arising from the impression of our own unworthines, and discovered distance; and faith, from the discovery of Christ’s fulness, keep-ing the mind quiet, looking over its own unwor-thines, to his worthines, like that spoken of No-
Isaiah lxi.

ab, Heb. xi. By faith Noah, moved with fear, prepared an ark. Presumption will not hold up with fear; and therefore, when the hypocrite, is staggered, he turns anxious, because the ground that he leans to is shaken: Neither is that which is supposed to be faith good without fear, for it turns to security; but fear is good, having confidence mixed with it; for it says, that there is a thinning to somewhat else than any thing in the soul itself. 3. They that make use aright of Chrift's intercession, betake themselves to it, when in a manner they have given over, and been formerly hopeless, like these spoken of, Psal. cxi. Then they cry in their distress, &c. Many have a confidence, because they were never brangled nor shaken, and have won to quietness this way; even as it is in the matter of making peace with God, many will profess that they always had it, even from their youth up, they never doubted of it, which speaks its unboundedness: but it is a solid evidence of faith, when the soul hath once been brangled and shaken; and this gives it confidence, that Chrift hath satisfied, and makes intercession, and they betake themselves to that. 4. Where Chrift's intercession is improven and made use of, it will be ground of rejoicing and comfort to think on it, when souls themselves can do but little, being bound up, and under bonds, yet they cheer themselves, and bless God, that they know they have an Advocate: I apprehend, there are many to whom it was never refreshful, nor matter of gladness, that he is an Advocate, or that he stands in such relation to plead for sinners; surely such have not made use of him. A 5th evidence is this, When any thing is attained, the improving of Chrift's intercession makes thankful and humble: if the soul have liberty, it is not puffed up with it, because it considers, that it is a mercy come through Chrift's intercession; it hath receiv'd it, and therefore should not boast; it is not of its own procurement, but it is obliged to free grace for it. 6. The soul that is improving Chrift's intercession, when it obtains not, it gives not over, but continues adhering and waiting for attaining of that which it is seeking; the cause of such a person is never quite desperate: If it be a thing conditional, it is submissive; if it be simply necessary, it is dependent, and will not quit, nor give over, because, tho' it obtain not to day, it knows it is possible to attain it, and that it will in due time be attained; it lays not the weight of its obtaining on its own prayers, but on Chrift's purchase and intercession: and tho' the believer may be some-

Verse 12.

times affaulted and set upon, to quit his suit, and then his faith is brangled, yet he leaves it not fo. 7. It is a difficulty to the believer, to get Chrift's intercession rightly depended on, and made use of, when he prays; this is as great a difficulty to him, as to get words, and greater: As it is one piece of his exercife in prayer, to get words, affection and reverence; so it is another piece of his exercise, to get his prayer accepted through Chrift's intercession. It is here as in justification, it is one part of his exercife to do duty, and another part of his exercife to be denied to it, and made to be take himself to Chrift's righteousness abominably for his acceptance; but other persons that make no use of Chrift's intercession, if they get words, and any a bit of tendernefs, they think all is well enough; but it is a believer's exercife, to fee that his mind miscarry not in the use-making of Chrift. 8. Souls that are improving Chrift's intercession, their confidence is not up or down, according to their liberty, words or reasons they win to make use of in prayer; but they are up or down, according as they win to get the thing they seek, committed to Chrift. Hence, a word or look will sometimes quiet the soul, when at another time, many hours prayer will not do it: For this is sure, so long as the thing rests on ourselves, the soul gets never a kindly lair; and that which puts it off ourselves, over on Chrift, is the exercife of faith, and not liberty, nor the multitude of words. At another time, a believer will rife from prayer, and not seriously look, whether Chrift have been depended on, or not, but is quiet, because he hath prayed; whereas, when Chrift's intercession is improven, he is quiet on that ground, that it is God that is prayed to, through Chrift; it is that which gives him ground of confidence to expect a hearing, and on that his soul rests, when he hath done praying. And therefore we would commend this to you, in place of many questions that might be moved on what ye have heard, even to carry a distinct answer in your bosom to these two, whether when ye are going to pray, or when ye have done with prayer, 1. To whom are ye to pray, or have ye been praying? That it is the great God, that one God, the Maker of all things, who ought alone to be worshipped, that being properly and formally the Object of your worship, and particularly of this your prayer. 2. Upon what ground do ye hazard to put a suit to this great God, and what is it that gives you confidence to expect an answer? It is that, not for any righteousness or worth in yourselves, or in your prayers, but
but for Jesus Christ, for his satisfaction and intercession's sake: When ye can give a distinct answer from the conscience, in reference to these two, tho' there be not such distinctness in other things, to wit, that it is God ye pray to, and that ye expect a hearing on Christ's account, it is right.

For the third thing, What is it, that will help us to make use of Christ's intercession? (1.) Consider that it is our duty. Souls often mind not, that God hath not simply bidden them pray, but commanded them to pray in the name of Christ; he hath not bidden you simply approach to him, but to approach to him, in and by Christ; this would be remembred, else we forget the half of our duty, to wit, the manner how we should come to God, which is a main, if not the main part of it. (2.) We would remember, and think upon our condition by nature, that upon the one side, God is a consuming fire, and we on the other, like dry stubble; and that there is no approaching to him, without a Mediator: There were the lefs hazard of going wrong, if folk were walking under the suitable impression of their sinfulness and misery by nature; the want whereof, makes too much forwardness, in stepping to God without Christ. Therefore we commend to you all, and especially when ye go to prayer, to endeavour to be under deep impressions of your own sinfulness and baseness; as we see it was with Abraham, Gen. xviii. Behold, now I have taken on me to speak to the Lord, who am but dust and ashes. (1.) Mind the promise of God's hearing you through Christ, and his promise of leading you in all necessary truth, and to perform duty in this manner: Mind, I say, 1st, The promise of hearing, that it is not a promise to hear us simply in what we pray for, but in what we pray for with other requisite qualifications of prayer, and with this in particular, that it be in Christ's name: Hence is asking in his Name, so often mentioned, John xiv. ver. 13, 14. and xvi. ver. 23, 24, 26. To mind, that there is a promise of hearing, draws a foul to pray to God; and to mind that the promise is made to praying thus qualified, to wit, that it be in Christ's name, binds the soul to this way, because otherwise it forfeits the promise, if it observe not the due qualification; I fear, there are too many, who look on the promise, as absolute: It is true, tho' there are absolute promises in the covenant, yet there are other promises that have qualifications and conditions, whereof this, anent hearing of prayer, is one; and we are to ex-

Verse 12.pect the performance of the promise, when we seek after the qualification and condition. 2dly, Mind Christ's promise, whereby he hath engaged, as to lead us in all necessary truth; so in this part of it, to put up our prayers in his Name, John xvi. 24. In that day ye shall ask in my Name. To consider aright of this promise, gives some ground of confidence to win at the performance of it, and holds the soul in dependence on him, and makes it to be quiet in the duty of improving Christ's intercession; and indeed this is a main part of religion: Learn therefore, to put these things together, 1. Think it a mercy, that ye have a warrant and access to pray. 2. That ye have a promise to be heard. 3. That ye have a Mediator to intercede for you. 4. That a promise is given you to learn how to make use of him; and that the use-making of his intercession aright be difficult, and many do mifken and mistake it, yet that by the eying of the promise, ye may win to the right use-making of it; ye would by any means eye the promise, that ye be not mistaken: It may be there is a look now and then to liberty, and it is good in itself; but there may be a defect here, that ye look not to Christ to be helped to pray with liberty, and to be guided to pray in his Name, so as to lay the weight of your being heard, on Christ's intercession.

4thly, When there hath been an eying of the promise, not only for the thing we seek, but also to be guided in the seeking of it, ye would be often taking a review of yourselves in, and after prayer, whether ye be indeed praying, and have prayed in Christ's name, that when the soul looks back, and sees that it hath much mifken and neglected Christ, it may take itself in this evil, and disclaim it, and settle itself on a right ground. In a word, there would be looking well on the one side, that Jesus Christ be the ground we build on; and on the other side, that when we eye Christ, and build on him, we be not afraid to hazard on him: for into one of these extremes we readily run, either to lippen and lean to some other thing than Christ; or, if we see no other thing to lean and lippen to, and be necessitate to eye him, we distrust him, and are both to hazard on him.

5thly, And lastly, If we consider well, we will see good ground, 1. To precefs, 2. To encourage us to this way, not to be doing duty only, as men under the law, but as Christian men under the gospel, with respect to Christ's satisfaction and intercession. And, 1/3, For pressing it, consider that there
there is a necessity of it in reference to as many prayers as are accepted of God: if it be necessary to get a hearing, it is necessary to pray in Christ's name. It may be, many think it to be but an indifferent thing, that we have been pressing, all the while that we have been speaking of Christ's intercession; but indeed it is of more moment than our pressing you to any external duty, for the external duty of prayer, tho' it must needs be gone about, is yet but the carcase, this is the soul and life of prayer: And therefore let me exhort and entreat you, never to satisfy yourselves with a legal performance of the most spiritual duties in themselves, except ye win to a Christian way of performing them, that is, that they be done in Christ's strength, and that ye rest on him for the acceptance of them; it is as necessary to worship God in and by a Mediator, as it is to worship the only true God, and not to worship a false or strange God. I make no question, but the inmost part of the hearers of the gospel do destroy themselves here, by resting on their legal performances, and not making use of Christ. 2 doth, For your encouragement consider, that it is most advantageous and profitable; these words in the promise are broad and full, Whatsoever ye ask in my Name, I will do it; and the promise is frequently repeated, in these forecited chapters of John. O what calmness, tranquillity, peace, victory over anxiety, what patience in waiting, whether when in bonds or liberty, do flow from the exercising of faith on this ground, to wit, that we have an Advocate in heaven with the Father! Further, consider the great ground of confidence that hath been given us, that we shall come speed

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in this way, which should stir us up, hearten and encourage us to it; which will manifestly appear, if we join these two together, 1. That this blessed Advocate is our Brother; that he was made like unto us in all things, except sin; that he is a fellow-feeling high Priest, that is touched with our infirmities; that he refuseth to grant no suits of his people, that are for his glory, and their good; that he faves all to the uttermost that come unto God by him: None could ever say, that he refuseth to take their cause in hand, when they indeed committed it to him. 2. That when a cause is committed to him, it cannot but carry, and be successful; for as he is Man, so he is God, and he is heard always: This blessed Mediator (as I said just now) refuseth the suit of none, and no suit is refused him. And now, what can we say more to you, for your up-flirring and encouragement to make use of him? It is no stranger that we have to go to, and there is good ground of confidence, that when we go, we shall come speed: Therefore, let him ever be gone unto more and more; and blest God heartily, that he hath given such an high Priest unto sinners, who is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him. Now, to this God, who can effectually teach us to make use of the Mediator every way, and particularly in his intercession, suitably and successfully; and who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask, or think, according to the power that worketh in us, be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end, Amen.

FINIS.