

SERMON 20

JOB'S EPITAPH EXPLAINED A SERMON OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH
OF MRS. *ELIZABETH TURNER*, WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE, OCTOBER 14,
1755

JOB 19:25, 26, 27

“For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth. And though after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another; though my Reins be consumed within me.”

GOD, who is the sovereign Disposer of all Things, hath been pleased to remove by Death, a very worthy Person, which mournful Dispensation, I am desired to improve, by explaining these Words, amongst you, at this Time. Every attentive Reader will readily observe that these are the Words of *Job*. Concerning whom a most honorable Testimony is given by God himself, *viz.* That he had not his Equal in Holiness, on the Earth. Satan dared to accuse him with a Want of Integrity; and desired Leave to afflict him. The Lord complied with his Desire, to try the Faith and exercise the Patience of this most excellent Person. His Children, who were the Delight of his Eyes, and his growing Hopes, were taken from him, in a very affecting and awful Manner.

He was stripped of all his Substance, which was great. At once deprived of all his Descendants, and reduced to Penury, from affluent Circumstances. In there melancholy Changes he behaved himself, in a becoming Manner; with great Patience and Resignation, saying, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord.* Satan, notwithstanding, renews his Charge against him, and impudently tells God, that if he should afflict his Person, he would *curse him to his Face*. God gives Permission to Satan to do this. He goes forth, and *smites Job with sore Boils, from the Sole of his Foot unto his Crown*. So that, as he expresses it, he *escaped with the Skin of his Teeth*. That is to say, his *Gums only* were free from those noisome and painful Ulcers, wherewithal he was smitten. In this *sad* Condition, for some Time, he conducted himself, in a patient and submissive Manner. But at length, thro' Weakness, he became impatient, and uttered rash and unbecoming Speeches, *cursed the Day of his Birth*, Those who are most eminent in Holiness, without continual Supplies of Grace, will not be able to bear patiently, long and heavy Afflictions. His Friends, 89who came to visit and comfort him, were filled with Astonishment at his deplorable Case, and entertained a mistaken Opinion

concerning him; they thought he was a Hypocrite, which must add much Weight to his Affliction. In his Debates with them, he asserted and bravely defended his Integrity, against their false Charge of Hypocrisy.

After representing, in this Chapter, the Greatness of his Affliction, and the Neglect and Unkindness of his Relations, Friends, Acquaintance, and even of his Servants, under it, in very strong and striking Language, he fixes his Thoughts upon his Dissolution. He wishes not for a *pompous* Funeral; but for a Monument to be erected to his Memory, and desires that the Words of the Text should be the Inscription on it, that so the Remembrance of his Faith might be perpetuated to all succeeding Generations. *O that my Words were now written. O that they were printed in a Book: That they were graven with an Iron Pen, and Lead, in the Rock forever.* This important and earnest Wish of his is granted, and the Memory of his Faith will not be lost, while the Earth endures. ***In this Inscription, or Epitaph, the following Things are observable:***

- I. He asserts his Interest in a living Redeemer. *I know that my Redeemer liveth.*
- II. That he should stand at the latter Day upon the Earth.
- III. He expresses the Consumption of his mortal Frame.
- IV. That in his Flesh he should see God.
- V. Describes the Advantage and Nature of that happy Vision.
- VI. Suggests, that the entire Consumption of his Body in the Grave was no Objection to it, nor should prevent it.

I. The holy Man asserts his Interest in a living Redeemer.

1. Some understand this of God the Father, who delivers his Church and People out of Affliction and Trouble. But it best agrees to Christ, who stood at the latter Day upon the Earth, and obtained eternal Redemption for us by his Sufferings and Death. And, in the most proper Sense, he is our (רואל) Redeemer; for he is that unto us, and hath done that for us, which the Name imports.

(1.) He is our *near Kinsman*, or is nearly allied unto us; as the Person was to be, who acted the Part of a Redeemer under the Levitical Dispensation. *A Brother, an Uncle, or an Uncle's Son* had the Right of Redemption. Christ was of the same Nature with us: *Forasmuch then as the Children are Partakers of Flesh and Blood, Christ also himself likewise took Part of the same. He that sanctifeth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one.* They are of one Nature: And they are not only of the same Nature, but are also of one sovereign and gracious Decree. For, I apprehend, that it is not merely Identity, or Sameness of Nature, that is designed; but near Alliance and Union is intended. Christ the Head, and his People the Members, were included in the same sovereign Purpose. He was *fore-ordained*, as the *First-born*, and they were predestinated to be his *Junior Brethren*. This Divine Decree gave Subsistence unto that near Union and Relation, which there is between him and them. And, therefore,

he is not ashamed to call them Brethren. He being our *near Kinsman*, the Right of Redemption was his.

(2.) He is our *Revenger*. The Person, under the Law, who endeavored to avenge the Death of a Man slain, on him that flew him, is called the Revenger, as we translate it, or, as some render it, the Redeemer of Blood. (Numbers 35:19, 21.) Our Blessed Lord is our Redeemer in this Strife. For, according unto the first Promise, he hath broke the Head of the grand Adversary of our Souls, Satan, by whom we were involved in Ruin. *I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, between thy Seed and her Seed; it shall break thine Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel* Our glorious Revenger hath destroyed him, that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil. And hath *spoiled Principalities and Powers, and made a Shew of them openly*. Hath *triumphed* over all the *infernal* Spirits, as a complete Victor. He *led Captivity Captive*, and, in Consequence of that, the *Prey is taken from the Mighty, and the lawful Captives are delivered*.

(3.) Christ hath redeemed our Persons from justly deserved Destruction. Our Apostasy from God, the Depravity of our Nature, and the Guilt which we have contracted, expose us to the Curse of the Law, and the vindictive Displeasure of God. Our Saviour, in the Fulness of Time, was made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law: And, by being made a Curse for us, he redeemed us from the Law's Curse. *In him we have Redemption through his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins*. In Virtue of his Death, which was the Price of our Redemption, we are delivered from that Obnoxiousness, which we were under, to suffer Divine Wrath and Vengeance.

(4.) He obtained for us a Right to the heavenly Inheritance. We have forfeited a Title to Life, and cannot claim the Enjoyment of future Blessedness, as our Due, because of our Guilt. That is an Obstacle and Bar to our Happiness. The Blessed Redeemer, by his Sacrifice, removed the Impediments to our Felicity; and by his Subjection to the Law, and Obedience unto all its Precepts, as our Surety, he hath acquired for us a *legal* Title unto eternal Life. The immortal Crown of Glory, is a *Crown of Righteousness*: And God, in the Character of a *righteous Judge*, will place it on the Heads of the Saints. *Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge will give me at that Day; and not to me only, but unto all them also Who love his Appearing*. Grace reigns gloriously unto eternal Life; but its Reign is *through Righteousness, by Jesus Christ our Lord*. For, *being justified freely, we are made Heirs, according to the Hope of eternal Life*. And, therefore, there is an inseparable Connection between Justification and Glorification. *Whom he justified, them he also glorified*.

2. He lives, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. Job doth not say, He shall live, or he hath lived; but in the present Tense, *Liveth*.

(1.) We may observe he existed then. His human Nature at that Time had not Subsistence. He did not exist as Man: But he always existed in his Divine Nature. He was *before the Mountains were settled, etc.* Then was he by the Father, *as one brought up with him.* Christ: *The Word was in the Beginning, i.e. in the Commencement of Time;* and, therefore, his Existence must be prior to Time, and was eternal, or without Beginning. For, if he was when measurable Duration began, his Existence must have been of earlier Date than that Duration, and, consequently, eternal. Because it is absurd to suppose that there is a limited Date, which is not included in measurable Duration. This glorious Person is *the same Yesterday, and To-day, and forever.*

(2.) He lives. *In him is Life, and the Life was the Light of Men. Life he hath in himself.* And he is *the Life*, as he is *the Way and the Truth.*

With him is the Fountain of Life. And natural, spiritual, and eternal Life, is derived from him. We live, as Men, by Virtue of his Almighty Will. He communicates to us, as Christians, a Principle of heavenly Life, and by his gracious Influences, he preserves, and maintains it. And our blissful Life, in the future State, will spring from him.

(3.) Christ lives, and ever will live, as Man: As our Surety he submitted unto Death, in order to redeem and save us. But, being raised from the Dead, he dieth no more, Death hath no more Dominion Over him. For in that he died, he died unto Sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Hence he says of himself, *I am he that liveth, and was dead: And behold, I am alive for evermore. And because he lives, we shall live also.*

3. Job knew him to be his living Redeemer. *I know that my Redeemer liveth.* He had an Assurance of an Interest in him. As the Church had, who said, *My beloved is mine, and I am his.* Likewise, the Apostle, whose Language is this: *He loved me, and gave himself for me.* Some seem to think, that this Assurance is essential to every Act of Faith: Or, that Faith is never acted without it. I confess, I can't but be of Opinion, that this is a very great Mistake, and that there may be many precious Acts of Faith put forth, wherein this Persuasion of an Interest in him is not enjoyed. This I will say, that every Person who is the happy subject of the Grace of Faith, hath proper Foundation of such a firm Persuasion of a personal Interest in a dear Redeemer, But I cannot be prevailed with to think, that Faith is at no Time acted on Christ, as a Redeemer, with but this Assurance, of an Interest in him, and in There are two Ways whereby this Assurance may be ingenerated in holy Souls.

(1.) By the Witness of the Spirit. *He beareth Witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God.* This, I apprehend, is an immediate and positive Act of his upon our Minds, powerfully applying some particular Promise, or Promises to us, which are suitable to our Case and present Frame; by which powerful Application, Unbelief is subdued, and we are encouraged to embrace the Promise, and to conclude upon

our own Interest, in those precious Benefits, which are therein exhibited to our Faith. (2.) By a Discernment of that in us, which is the Effect of Divine Favor, and of an Interest in, this living Redeemer. Spiritual Knowledge, holy Desires, and heavenly Affections are *sure* Evidences of an Interest in the Love of God, and in Christ. He, who is the Subject of Sanctification, may safely conclude, that he is the Object of a Divine Choice to Salvation; *God hath from the Beginning chosen us to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit.* Those whose Minds are, in any Measure, *spiritualized*, are Members of Christ, as a Head of Life and Influence, and interested in him, as a living Redeemer, though they may often be afraid, they are not; because of the Presence and Power of that contrary Principle of Sin, which they feel very active in them. If we are *called with an holy Calling*, or if Christ is made unto us *Sanctification*, he is also made unto us *Redemption*. Job knew that *the Root of the Matter was in him*, and, therefore, was sensible of his Interest in a Redeemer. Hence we may observe, that Faith is not Conjecture, or merely Opinion, it is *Knowledge*. *He hath given us an Understanding, that we might know him that is true.* And this is most excellent Knowledge, nothing is comparable to it. All Things are to be accounted Loss for the *Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.*

II. *The holy Man knew, that his Redeemer would stand at the latter Day upon the Earth.*

This Phrase, the *latter Day*, may be understood of the near closing of the Legal Dispensation, or *Jewish Oeconomy*, and the Introduction of the Evangelical State. The original Word (קם) *stand*, hath various Significations. To rise: To be stable and firm: To rise again: To stand against. I shall consider it in each of these Senses. 1. The Sense may be, he shall rise out of (the Particle *l* often expresses *out of*) the Dust, or Earth. So the learned *Noldius* renders this Phrase. The Incarnation of Christ, or his Assumption of our Nature, is the Matter expressed; if taken in this View. We are called Dust, because that is the Original of our mortal Frame: *Dust thou art, and unto Dust thou shalt return. He knoweth our Frame, and remembereth that we are Dust.* Our Redeemer is the Seed of the Woman, for he was *made of a Woman*. Conceived and Born. Thus He, who is the Truth, sprung out of the Earth, according to that Prediction and Promise: *Truth shall spring out of the Earth.* This supernatural Production of the human Nature of our Lord fitted it for its Union with his Divine Person, and unto that blessed Work, which was therein to be accomplished. He being, in a proper Sense, the Seed of the Woman, his Nature is the same with ours; but absolutely free from that Defilement, which attends us. And, therefore, he is *an High Priest, which becomes us. Holy, harmless, and undefiled.*

2. He stood, and stood firm upon the Earth. Christ *dwelt*, or tabernacle among Men. And was firm, steady, and stable, in the midst of all the Temptations, Oppositions, and cruel Persecutions, which he met with. Hell, and Earth, Men and Devils combined against him, and he suffered grievously from both. Under all his

Sufferings, he behaved with *amazing* Firmness of Mind. He did *not fail, nor was discouraged. He set his Face like a Flint, and was not at all ashamed.* When he was apprehended, with what Majesty did he conduct himself, laying to the Multitude, who came to take him, *Whom seek ye?* They answer, *Jesus of Nazareth.* He replies, *I am he. If ye seek me, let these go their way.* And, voluntarily surrenders himself. When he was before the High Priest, what Fortitude and Intrepidity did he discover, though insulted and blasphemed by the insolent and rude Crowd that were about him. *He gave his Back to the Smithers, his Cheeks to them that plucked off the Hair, and hid not his Face from Shame and Spitting.* And when he was in the Presence of *Pilate*, he was no less courageous. Not the least Sign of Fear discovered itself in his Countenance, Language, or Conduct. When he was mocked, derided, and most cruelly treated by the *merciless* Soldiers, he behaved with the same Greatness of Mind. The Ignominy and all the Tortures of the Cross he bore in an undaunted Manner. Presented himself to Divine Justice a *willing* Victim for our Sins, and endured the terrible Shock of the Wrath of God, without sinking, or fainting under it. At once he shewed himself to be *the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and the Lamb of God.*

The *Courage* of the Lion, and the *Meekness* of the Lamb were united in him, under his most dolorous and unparalleled Sufferings. *He was led as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearer is dumb, so he opened not his Mouth.* *Magnanimity* without *Haughtiness*, *Meekness* without *Meanness* and *Demission of Spirit*, our Saviour discovered throughout the *astonishing* Tragedy of his Death. *Thus the God shone through the Man:* Or, in other Words, the Divine Powers of the blessed Jesus displayed themselves in supporting his human Nature under all suffered.

3. Our Lord rose again. In this Sense is the Word to be understood sometimes. *Thy dead Men shall live, my dead Body shall they arise, or rise again* (יקומו): *Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust, for thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs, and the Earth shall cast out the Dead.* (Isaiah 26:19.) The blessed Jesus *made his Grave with the Wicked, and with the Rich in his Death.* But it was *impossible that he should be held of the Bands of Death.* The Divine Father, in the Character of a Judge, inflicted Punishment on him, and in that Character he dispatched from Heaven, a Messenger of Justice, to roll away the Stone from the Door of the Sepulcher, wherein the Lord lay, honorably to set free his imprisoned Body. Thus, he was *raised from the Dead by the Glory of the Father.* Which is a full Evidence of his Approbation, of what Christ had done and suffered for us.

4. He will stand against the Earth, when he shall appear, the second Time, without Sin unto Salvation. This is his unalterable Resolution. *I will ransom them from the Power of the Grave, I will redeem them from Death. O Death, I will be thy Plagues; O Grave, I will be thy, Destruction, Repentance shall be hid from mine Eyes.* Then,

Death will be swallowed up in Victory. Which holy *Job* had in View, as his following Words evince. Before I enter upon the Explanation of them, it will be proper to answer some Objections, which are raised against their literal Sense.

Which is *Job's* Belief of the Resurrection of his Body, notwithstanding its Consumption in the Grave. *Socinus* denies this Sense, and some who follow him herein object thus:

(1.) *Jewish* Writers, who labor to prove the Resurrection, never produce these Words to confirm it, and, therefore, it seems to them not likely to be the true Sense. I answer, the Sun certainly shines at Noon, though blind Men see it not. This Objection deserves no other Answer. We know that *Jewish* Guides, in the Time of our Lord's being on the Earth, were *blind*, Leaders of the *Blind*. And I know no Reason we have to think they see, since their Rejection, and *Wrath is come upon that People to the uttermost*.

(2.) How could *Job* know the sublime Mysteries of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the happy Resurrection of the Just? I answer, 1. By a Revelation before given, that *the Seed of the Woman should break the Serpent's Head, or destroy the Works of the Devil*. If this Answer satisfies not, I add, 2. He might know these Mysteries by Inspiration. Let me, in my Turn, ask these Objectors, how *Job* could know, that he should be freed from his present Affliction? *His Flesh become fresh as a Child's? The Vigor of his emaciated Body be renewed? His Life prolonged? And his Substance vastly increased?* How could he then know either of these Things? If it is answered by Inspiration, or immediate Revelation. Then I say, might he not become acquainted with the sublime Mysteries mentioned, in the same Manner? Was not he inspired? Surely, he was. He was *one of those holy Men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*. Why, therefore, should it be thought he knew nothing of Evangelical Mysteries, but what was revealed before his own Time?

(3.) It is said that a metaphorical Interpretation of the following Phrases agrees with the Context, and Sequel. I answer, it is true, that *Job* did, after this, see the Goodness of the Lord in the Land of the Living, in that wonderful Change, which took place in his Circumstances. But there is not the least Evidence given by him, either before or after the Text, that he had then the Knowledge of that Change, or the least Hope and Expectation of it. Which is the Point to be proved. It is not the Fact, which can support the Objection; but *Job's* Knowledge of that future Fact, only can countenance it. And such Knowledge he had not. Having removed these Objections, I proceed to observe,

III. *Holy Job expresses the Consumption of his mortal Frame.*

After, or beside, my Skin; that is to say, this beautiful Covering, which encloses all the Parts and Members of my Body, is to be consumed, and not only so; but after, or

beside that, they *destroy this*. The Verb is impersonal, and Destroyers are understood. Our Translation well supplies *Worms*. Concerning which *Job* had before spoke thus: *I will say unto Corruption, Thou art my Father; and to the Worm, Thou art my Mother, and my Sister*. They destroy This. It is an elegant Conciseness in Speech, much like that which the Apostle uses: “*This Corruptible, and This Mortal; that is, this*

corruptible, and this mortal Body. It is a demonstrative Mode of speaking. He named, not his Body, scarcely knowing what to call it, by reason it was so grievously emaciated: But pointing with his Finger to it, and uttering this Phrase, he very emphatically expresses the Consumption of it, when it should be covered, and fed upon by Worms. The original Word signifies to destroy, as Beasts were destroyed in Sacrifice, and as Trees are destroyed by being cut down. And, therefore, holy *Job* speaks not of the present Wasting of his Body, by those noisome Ulcers, wherewith it was then all over covered. But he intends the entire Consumption of his mortal Frame, when committed to the Ground, or lodged in the silent Grave. And it is to me astonishing, that any should raise a Scruple concerning a Point, which is so clearly expressed. Obscurity in the Phrase is pretended as the Reason, but that is not the Cause. Indeed, the Phrase is concise, but it is not obscure. The true Reason is, it is a strong Proof, that *Job* must, be acquainted with the happy Resurrection of the Just, which the *Socinians*, and Persons *Socinianized*, say was then unknown. This is the true Cause or their disallowing the literal Sense, and contending for a metaphorical one.

Not the Obscurity of the Text. As *Noldius* well argues: *It is a destructive Excision, that is designed, like that of felling Trees, and slaying Beasts. The Socinians, therefore, act vainly, and those who with them, pretend, that this Place does not treat of the Resurrection from the Dead, but only of a temporal Restoration. For, that, after a total Consumption by no means could be expected. Job speaks of Things that he knew: I know, says he. But such was not a temporal Restoration, whereas that is a Benefit of this Life, (which depended on the Condition and Free-will of God) Job could not know, or promise it to himself. Then he had no temporal Hope. Which is what he publishes often. Besides, the Words foregoing, (which intimate this Confession and Triumph of Faith) Signify something greater and more important, than a Hope of a Restoration to the Benefits of this Life*. Reason there is none to think, that *Job*, in these Phrases, designs the Wasting of his Flesh by Affliction, while he was living; but there are solid Reasons, for, interpreting them, of an entire Consumption of his mortal Frame upon his Decease. The Thoughts of which were not terrifying to him, because he had in View a happy Resurrection, as the following Phrase evinces.

IV. *He declares his Faith, that in his Flesh he should see God.*

1. Some understand it, of seeing Christ as clothed with Flesh, or in human Nature. *The Word was made Flesh*. And, the Divine Glories, of the blessed Jesus will eternally be viewed by the Saints, shining in and through his human Nature, which Prospect will fill them with the highest Delight. And, his Will it is, that *those whom the Father hath given him may be with him where he is, that they may behold his Glory*. But this is not what *Job* intends by this Phrase, *in my Flesh*. For,

2. He designs Flesh which was *properly his own*, and a constituent Part of himself. His Sense is evidently this: Though, or notwithstanding, the entire Consumption of my mortal Frame by destroying Worms, yet in my Flesh, raised to a *new, immortal, and happy* Life, in a Reunion with my Soul, I shall enjoy a blissful sight of God. *This Corruptible shall put on Incorruption, and this Mortal shall put on Immortality*. He speaks of that, in this Phrase, which he speaks of in the preceding Phrases; in them, he expresses the destructive Excision of his Body; in this, he declares his Belief of its Restoration to a blessed Life after: Or, notwithstanding that Excision,

3. *Job* knew that he should *see God*.

(1.) Enjoy a Prospect of the Divine Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, in that gracious and kind Part each acted in his Favor.

[1.] The Father, who, from everlasting, infinitely loved his People, chose them to Salvation, and fixed upon the wise and gracious

Method of their Recovery, *Blessed them with all spiritual Blessings*

in Christ. Gave his Son to them, and for them, at the Time appointed. On the Foundation of his Fulfillment of the Law for them, he justifies their Persons. Thro' his Death and Sacrifice he pardons their Sins, and delivers them from justly deserved Punishment. He sends his Spirit into their Hearts to regenerate, sanctify, comfort, and preserve them safely to that eternal Glory, unto which he calls them. And all this he doth for them, as the Effect of the Riches of his Kindness, thro' Jesus Christ, without the least Motive and Inducement in them. The View whereof, wilt forever possess their Souls with Joy inconceivable, and holy Adoration.

[2.] Christ will also be beheld by the Saints; in the Freeness and Intenseness of his Love. Who became a Subject of the Law for their sakes? Fully obeyed it, as their Surety, and thereby *brought in everlasting Righteousness* for them. Laid down his Life, rumored Death in their stead, that he might redeem them to God, and deliver them from Curse, Wrath and Vengeance, in such a Way as comports with Divine Justice, as well as magnifies the Riches of Divine Grace. How great must that Pleasure be, which will arise from a View of the Love, Compassion, and Kindness of a dear Redeemer, and of all the *numerous* Ways wherein he hath made a Discovery thereof?

[3.] The blessed Spirit, in the important Part which he acts in the stupendous Design of our Salvation. He *comes* into the Hearts of God's People. Quickens them when dead in Sin. Makes them *meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in*

Light. Guides them, comforts, revives, seals and establishes them. Dwells in them, and will *abide with them forever*, though they often *grieve* him by their provoking Carriage. He maintains the good Work begun in them, and will perfect it. Oh, what Delight will spring from a Prospect of the gracious Acting's of Father, Son, and Spirit, in our Favor! No Tongue can express it.

(2.) The Divine Perfections will also be clearly seen by the Saints, as they are displayed, in their Recovery from Ruin, and Advancement to Happiness and Glory. Sovereignty is the Basis whereon it rests, and the absolute Cause into which it must be resolved. For, if any Thing is the mere Effect of the Free-will of God, the Salvation of Sinners most certainly is. The Reason why God saves guilty Creatures is not because it is *fit* they should be saved. If it was so, their Salvation would not be the Effect of his good Pleasure, nor would it be *free* with him to save, or not save them. Because, God is not at Liberty to act, or not act, what it is *fit* for him to act. True it is, he saves us in a Way that is *fit, condecant, and becoming himself*; nor could he do otherwise: But it is not because it is *fit* that we should be saved, that God resolved upon our Salvation. This Design is the Result of his sovereign Will, no Perfection of his Nature requiring it. And, therefore, *hath he Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth*, or leaves in a State of Impenitence. Again, infinite Wisdom abundantly shines in this Affair; The Means fixed upon to bring about our Salvation are sufficient and effectual, so that the *grand* Design cannot fail of being accomplished. And every noble End respecting God himself, and the Subjects of this Redemption, was had in View, and fully secured. The highest Glory redounds to all the Perfections of the Deity in this Business. Full Provision is made for advancing the Honor of every Divine Attribute. As the Riches of Grace, Kindness and Mercy are gloriously displayed herein; so the Holiness and inflexible Justice of God is vindicated, and illustriously shines through the Whole of this amazing Design. Sinners are freely pardoned, and eternally saved, *to the Praise of the Glory of Divine Grace*. And, infinite Indignation against Sin is manifested, in the Infliction of Punishment on our Redeemer, with Relation unto our Guilt, which was made his by imputation, on the Part of God the Father, and by a voluntary Subsection of it on his Part. Mercy and Grace, Holiness and Justice, harmonize, and equally triumph, in our Remission. Eternal Life is a *free Gift of God* to us; but we are furnished with a *legal* Right unto it, through the Obedience of Christ. And, the Evangelical Scheme advances the Honor of the Law infinitely above the Glory, which it could have had by our perfect Obedience to all its holy Precepts, even unto Eternity. That is *magnified and made honorable* in our overlaying Salvation, through the Righteousness, and Sacrifice of our dear Redeemer. Besides, a *Meetness* is imparted to us, in order to our Enjoyment of future Bliss. None are brought to Heaven without Holiness, to prepare and *fit* them for that State of Blessedness. And *Pride is hid from Man. All Boasting is excluded* in those, who are

saved. Shame and Confusion for their Iniquities, they are obliged to acknowledge is only their Due, in that wise and holy Method, which God hath fixed upon, to bring them unto the Fruition of himself. Farther, all our Enemies are conquered, vanquished, and utterly destroyed, Sin, Satan, Hell, and Death. And, this Victory was obtained for us in our Nature, as taken into Union with the Son of God, whereby it was *fitted* to accomplish all the grand and noble Views, which were intended, and resolved upon in the Divine Counsels, relating to our Redemption. Therein, therefore, *God hath abounded towards us, in all Wisdom and Prudence*. And every other Perfection of the Deity hath an equal Shine in this adorable Design.

Truth, Faithfulness, Immutability, and infinite Power. Who, that duly considers these Things, can forbear to express his Wonder, in the admiring Language of the Apostle: *O the Depth of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God: How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!* These Things the Saints will forever be conversant about, and have in full Prospect, when raised from the State of the Dead. O happy Vision! O transporting View! And the Prospect of them hereafter will be *immediate, clear, permanent, uninterrupted, and endless*. This the Faith of holy *Job* was now fixed upon, and, therefore, it is no Wonder, that he was, at this Time, so much elevated, and so earnestly desired, that the Words he expressed might be preferred till Time should be no more. They are truly worthy of perpetual Remembrance, nor shall they be forgot to Eternity.

V. *The holy Man describes the Advantage and Nature of this Vision. Wherein several Particulars are to be observed. He says,*

1. *Whom I shall see for myself.* The Particle (כִּי) *for myself*, sometimes denotes personal Benefit and Advantage. The Happiness of the Saints will very much consist in this Vision of God. Hence, our Lord says: *This is Life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* An immediate, clear, and constant View of the Divine Perfections, as exercised and displayed in our Salvation, will certainly produce, and maintain the highest Satisfaction and Delight, in our Minds for evermore. A Sight of infinite Goodness, Grace, Kindness, and Mercy, as acting in perfect Agreement with infinite Holiness and Justice, under the Direction of infinite Wisdom, in the Affair of our Recovery, and Salvation, must raise in our Souls the greater Pleasure, and a holy Adoration. For, everything that is *grand, noble, good, and wise*, is therein contained. And, therefore, complete Felicity: Or, all that our *ennobled and enlarged* Minds can wish for, is comprised in this *beatific* Vision.

(1.) Sometimes this Particle expresses the Presence and Nearness of an Object to a Person. The holy Man knew that he should see God *near* him. Behold him not as an Object at a Distance, which is the Case with the Saints now; but as *present* with him, or *near* to him. And, therefore, this Sight of God will be *clear and full*. There will

be no Need of a Medium, in the future State, to present to our View the Object of our chief Joy. For, there we shall *be with him, and see him, as he is*.

(2.) In some Instances, the Particle seems to have the sense of *before*. And it may well be thought to mean this here: *Whom I shall see before me*. The future View of God, in the heavenly State, as it will be *near*, so it will be *direct*. Christ is represented, as fitting in the Midst of the Throne, and the Church, as standing round about it. Which is a more advantageous Situation, for all the adoring Spectators to enjoy a *direct* Sight of him. And their Views of him, as he is *crowned with Glory and Honor*, will possess them with Joy inconceivable. Their *grateful* Minds will certainly be filled with exquisite Pleasure, at seeing him advanced to such Dignity, who bore the Shame, and endured the Torture, of the Cross, for their sakes.

2. *Mine Eyes shall behold.*

(1.) The Saints will see God with the Eye of their Mind. Their Understanding shall then be wholly freed from Darkness, which now attends it. And they will be rendered capable of seeing, in a perfect Manner, the Glory of God in the Person of Christ. Their Conceptions of heavenly Mysteries will not be *imperfect*, as now they are; but *absolutely* without Defect, and Mixture of Error. Nor, will they be interrupted by any Cause whatever, in their Contemplations on the Display of the Perfections of the Deity, in the stupendous Design of their eternal Redemption. Their Prospects of the *sublime* and *deep* Things of God will be then most extensive. For, they shall *see, as they are seen, and know, as they are known*. They will clearly discern the Love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Their Ideas of the Divine Counsels relating to their Salvation, will then be *perfectly just*. And their Apprehensions of the Wisdom and Condecency of the Way of their Recovery, will be *exact, and full*. Then they shall behold, with delightful Amazement, how *Grace reigns through Righteousness unto eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord*. That Divine Justice equally triumphs, with Divine Grace, in their Pardon, Acceptance, and Glorification, on the Foundation of the Obedience and Sacrifice of the Son of God. Who can determine which they will most admire, when they are brought to Glory, the Grace of God, which is the Cause and Origin of it, or his Wisdom and Justice, which are so illustriously displayed, in their Recovery from Ruin, and Advancement to that State of Dignity, and immortal Bliss? I am persuaded, that no one can.

(2.) They will behold Christ, who is their *Lord, and their God*, with their bodily Eyes. And, there is Reason to think, that holy *Job* designed this, by the Phrase. The Eyes of my Body, which are much impaired, and almost ready to sink in my Head, and are likely to be soon closed, shall hereafter see God, who is my living Redeemer, in that Glory, which he will forever possess. The bodily Eyes of the Saints, when raised from the Dead, will be rendered capable of steadily looking upon the glorified Body of Christ, *whose Face shines like the Sun in its full Strength*. The dazzling Glories of his human Nature will not then offend, or be too much for their Sight.

That will be fitted for beholding those glorious Rays of Light, which, in this mortal State, it can by no means bear. And, in this Vision of the Blessed Jesus, no small Part of our Happiness will consist.

3. Holy *Job* says, *and not another*, or a Stranger, as the Word (רַ) signifies.

(1.) Some understand it of a Hypocrite, who is a Stranger to the Grace of God. And, most certain it is, that *without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*. This *beatifical* Vision would not be agreeable to an unsanctified Mind, because it is destitute of a Disposition, which is suitable to the Nature of it. The Enjoyment of the heavenly Inheritance is impossible, without a *Meetness* for it. But,

(2.) I think it is best to understand the Phrase of *another* or *strange* Body. The holy Man was persuaded, that the Body, wherein he should see God, would be his *own*, and not *another*. This Sense well agrees with what he has before expressed, and, therefore, it is much preferable to the former. That very same Body, which is now in Union with the Soul, and which, after Death, will be reduced to Dust, shall rise again, and be reunited to the Mind. How great so ever, the Difficulties may be, which attend the Resurrection of the same Body, they are not *insuperable*, to infinite Wisdom, and Almighty Power, whereby it is to be affected. *Job* had a firm Persuasion hereof. And, therefore,

VI. *He suggests, that his Consumption, in the Grave, was no Objection to it, nor should prevent it: Though my Reins be consumed within me.* Notwithstanding, the mortal Frame of the Saints shall be consumed, or resolved into Dust, in the silent Grave, it shall be raised again, into an *immortal, spiritual*, and glorious Life, be reunited to their perfected Souls, and they shall in their *entire* Persons, forever, enjoy a blissful Vision of God; and a dear Redeemer. Some read the Phrase without the Supplement, *though*. And consider it, as a concise, abrupt, and elegant Speech, wherein *Job* expresses his earnest Desire of enjoying the Resurrection State. The Reins, they think, may be understood of the Affections, which is not infrequent, and by the Consumption of them, they apprehend, that *Job* expresses the Ardency of his Desires after that happy State, which he now had in Prospect, and whereof he so clearly before speaks. If this is the Sense of the Phrase, then *Job's* Design is to acquaint his Friends, that his Desires were *vehement* after the Enjoyment of that consummate Bliss, which would succeed his happy Resurrection from the Dead, This was the Matter of the most earnest Wish of the Apostle *Paul*, who speaks thus: *If by any means I might attain to the Resurrection of the Dead; not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect*. He had in View that Perfection, whereof he knew his Soul would be possessed after Death, before the Resurrection, but his Wishes were extended farther, even unto that Glory, which will succeed the happy Resurrection of the Just. And certain it is, that the Views of *Job*, at this Time, were of the same Extent. This Prospect by Faith of future Blessedness supported him under his extraordinary Afflictions, and was the Foundation of his Triumph, in his

present View and Expectation of Death, and of the entire Consumption of his mortal Frame, in the Grave. Thus, I have endeavored to explain these copious Words, as briefly as I could. *The principal Design of Funeral Sermons is not to bestow Encomiums on the Dead. And I confess, that I have not much Inclination to it, nor Satisfaction in it.* But, with respect to the Worthy Person, on Account of whole Decease, I was at this Time desired to treat on this Subject, I think I may say, without Imputation of flattering her Memory, that *she was prudent, humble, and modest; of a tender and sympathizing Disposition. In Friendship sincere and steady. — That she filled up every Relation, in which Providence placed her, in a becoming Manner. As a Child she was obedient and dutiful: As a Spouse very affectionate, and truly faithful. As a Child she was obedient and dutiful: As a Spouse very affectionate, and truly faithful. As a Mother extremely tender, and solicitously concerned, for the Good of her Children, especially for the Welfare of their Souls. And, therefore, she did not fail of giving them pious Instructions, from Time to Time. O that those Instructions may never be forgot by you; but be deeply impressed upon your Hearts, and be productive of those good Effects, which she intended, and so earnestly desired. In her Youth, she was called by Divine Grace, and made a Profession of her Faith in Christ, and gave up herself, first to the Lord, and then unto his People, according to the Will of God.*

And walked regularly, in Fellowship, with a Church of Christ. Through bodily Weakness, occasioned, as I suppose, by a nervous Disorder, she was prevented attending on public Worship, for some Years. In her last Affliction, which was exceedingly great, I am informed, that she was very comfortable, and, as the Time of her Dissolution grew nigh, the Strength of her Faith increased, in Covenant-love, and, therefore, Death was not a Terror to her. Which she expressed in Words to this Purpose: Though this frail Body shudders, through Pain, I am not afraid to die; for I am sure, the Covenant of Grace is sealed to me, and is a sure one. Tho' my Flesh and my Heart fail, God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion forever. This View of her Interest in the Covenant of Grace, kept her Mind composed, resigned, and even cheerful, in the Prospect of approaching Death. Various important Inferences may be drawn from what hath been delivered, on this noble subject. Since we are sinful, mortal, and dying Creatures, surely, we ought to be humble.

Art thou a mortal Creature, which must soon turn to Corruption, and mingle with the Dust, and art thou proud? Then I say, thou art *a Fool*. Thou *Beauty*, who admires thyself, on Account of the *nice* Proportion of thy Parts, the *Comeliness* of thy Features, and because of thy *fine Complexion*: Think, O think with thyself, what an *horrible Spectacle* thou wilt quickly be, when thy *Countenance shall be changed, and thou shalt be sent away*. Consider, that thou art now the Subject of Lusts, which are infinitely more *hateful*, than the *loathsome* Worms, which will prey upon, and consume thy Flesh, in the Grave. Due Thoughts of our Original, Tendency, and End,

will pull down our Pride, and abase our haughty Minds. Swelling Looks, proud Language, and a disdainful Behavior, extremely ill become Creatures, who are destined to Putrefaction, and Rottenness, which is our Case. Again, Christ alone is the Author of our Redemption. He only was equal to it. He freely undertook it, and he hath obtained eternal Redemption for us, by his Sufferings, and Death. And, therefore, our Hope of Pardon, and Deliverance from the Curse of the Law, and the Wrath of God, ought to be fixed on him, and him alone. For, nothing which we can do, nor any Thing which we have, to offer unto God, will ever compensate for our Crimes, expiate our Guilt, and free us from that Condemnation, unto which we are so justly obnoxious, in Consequence of Sin. Farther, only Views by Faith of the Redemption of Christ, can furnish our Minds with solid Peace, Joy, and Triumph, in the Prospect of approaching Death. For, upon no other Foundation, will sinful Man be able to stand, before God, in Judgment. All other Ways of Relief will certainly fail us. But on this Ground, our most important Interest is secure. Once more, the Saints will eternally admire, and celebrate the Praises of redeeming Love, in Language like this: *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood. And hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father; to him be Glory and Dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.*