

THE ETERNAL MANHOOD OF JESUS IN HEAVEN*

IN RESPECT OF HIS PRIESTHOOD, AND BEING THE
FORERUNNER OF HIS PEOPLE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Evening, December 1st, 1867.

“ But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”—HEB. VII. 24, 25.

“ Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”—HEB. VI. 19, 20.

SOME of my hearers are, no doubt, aware that I have at different times preached a series of discourses on the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ on earth. Through the whole of that series I have pursued but one line of thought, keeping in view my one design—namely, to exhibit the indications of the genuineness and real human nature which the history of our Lord affords. In carrying out this design I have felt it necessary to lay as much stress upon his true humanity as, upon other occasions, his true divinity. Now, in order to complete my design, I feel it needful to go beyond the limit of an ordinary biography, the limit of death and the grave; and having considered the forty days of the Redeemer's resurrection glories, we would now contemplate his eternal manhood—that is, his abiding even in heaven in his human nature. Of course our contemplations place us

* The term, *eternal manhood*, as I use it, is not to be understood in relation to the pre-existence of Christ's human soul whatever; nor yet in respect of his appearance in human form before his incarnation, but only as to the *perpetuity* of that identical body in which he was born of the Virgin, and, as this perpetuity is to be viewed in relation to the present needs and future happiness of the church of God. I make this explanation here in order to prevent misapprehension on first reading the title of this discourse. Most of my readers are, no doubt, aware that I am an avowed antagonist to, what I consider, those absurd myths which some men, who are wise above what is written, affect to believe and teach.

in a region beyond and distinct from the narratives which the historical gospels contain; we are at once taken into the region of faith. The truths themselves are of a different class, being expressly matters of divine revelation.

The doctrine of the eternal manhood of Jesus Christ in heaven, is one so full of heavenly consolation to the tried believer that he ought to give the more earnest heed to that which is revealed; and it is as full of heavenly instruction as any truth revealed to our understandings, and so well calculated to build up believers in their most holy faith that we shall find a little patient attention to the two or three truths asserted in Scripture will well repay whatever amount of consideration we may bestow upon so important a topic.

In the first place, we are to consider the Sonship of Christ as eternal. His eternal generation is coeval with that of the Father's eternity. Here is our starting point. He is one with the Father in all that can be said of the Father. It is the Son of God, the eternal Father, who took our nature into personal union with himself of whom we are speaking; his Sonship is his distinct divine personality. And of himself he not only said, "Before Abraham was I Am," but also, "The Son abideth ever." He ever was the Son of God, and ever will be so. In whatever character and form he is exhibited to us, whether as a servant, mediator, priest, or sacrifice, he is the eternal Son of God.

Our text confirms this grand truth. In speaking of Christ as the Son of Man, the apostle says, "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood" (Heb. vii. 24), his argument being, that Jesus being the Son of God eternally with the Father, was by the appointment of the Father constituted the apostle and high priest of our profession, and is said to be a Son over his own house—"Whose house are we." (Heb. iii. 6.) Moses was faithful as a servant, but the servant abideth not, as Jesus himself said. This point the apostle takes up, "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." (Heb. iv. 14.) And the apostle lays great stress, not merely on the divine power of his priesthood, but also and more emphatically upon the fact that we have an high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, *because he was*

in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Verse 15.) "Who in the days of his flesh offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being (in his manhood) made perfect, he (the *Son* of God) became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Heb. v. 7-9.) "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God and his people."

Now in these and other similar passages we have before us the truth of which the ascension of our Lord was the pledge and confirmation—namely, that in some unspeakable manner, human feelings still exist in the heart of Christ now seated in glory as they did in the days of his humiliation; that *human nature* has in a real, however inexpressible sense, a representative before the throne of God; that he who was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem lived in Nazareth, journeyed from place to place in Galilee and Judea, endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, who offered up himself in his true human body as a sacrifice for sins, is ever present to plead the merits of that sacrifice. As a faithful and merciful high priest he appears there to represent before the eternal throne of God the Father, the true cases and conditions of his people exactly as we feel them, and more correctly than we could do if we were present. In Jesus Christ we have an advocate with the Father; he ever liveth to make intercession for all who come unto God the Father by him. His advocacy is perpetual; so that as long as sin shall last, so shall his intercession; and, therefore, he is able to save to the uttermost, not only to the last sinful act or thought, but also to the last shade of guilt that shall cloud the conscience of the last sinner who shall come unto the Father by him.

The eternal manhood of our Lord Jesus Christ we find spoken of in 1 Cor. xv. It is the same truth, but a different application of it. The resurrection of Christ is there set forth as the pledge of the resurrection of his church. Christ is not merely a *risen man*, but *risen humanity*, the first fruits of those who slept, and of all who in like manner shall awake, being raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. *He dieth no more*; in other words, as in our text, *he ever liveth*. Death hath no more dominion over him, therefore its dominion over the

church is broken. Thus it is manifest that the truth of all such assertions and the contemplation of the mortality of our race and of the havoc made by death in the dearest of human bonds, depend upon the fact, upon which also depends the perpetual priesthood and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ—namely, his eternal manhood.

Do not let us suppose we are speaking of things taken for granted. I rather think we are too prone to think and believe in this matter something short of this great truth—expecting to see the Son of God in heaven *instead* of *him* whom Stephen saw, even the Son of Man—to regard the life of our Lord after his ascension as merged in the unity of the Godhead, instead of considering it as in some way *the continuation* of that human life which he lived here upon earth for us men and for our salvation. Against such imperfect belief, which robs us of much of the source of spiritual peace and comfort, we may in this subject find solid ground for adoring gratitude and praise. It was, indeed, granted to Stephen to see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God, and also, after the others had ceased to see him, to the apostle Paul as one born out of due time. But how and in what form did these favoured ones see him? Was it not in that same veritable body which was pierced with nails and the spear, and which after his resurrection the disciples saw and handled, and beheld him leave the earth and ascend into heaven? Doubtless in each instance it was a reality in itself and a supernatural revelation to both Stephen and Paul. It could not be an imagined person, nor would it be a representation of something which did not actually exist. Hallucinations of the brain may exist, but they are not of this character; they centre in self. Spiritual revelations of Christ lead us more into the knowledge of his person and work, to feel the power of his resurrection accomplished in our hearts and consciences, filling our souls with holy longings, praise, and adoration.

We need not say much concerning the manner in which the glory of Christ's manhood in heaven is seen by those who have gone before us. They see him as he is, and they are like him. They see him in the glory which he had before the world was, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, the personal embodiment of grace and truth. He is, in his person as the Son of God, as much the impersonation of all the divine attributes as the

Father and the Spirit; for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

In contemplating the Saviour upon earth, in all his weakness and depth of self-abasement for our sakes, the chief matter is to observe how the divine glory made itself visible to those with whom he was associated; for John expressly states, "And we saw his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." So contrariwise, in contemplating the Saviour in heaven, the chief thing to be done is to grasp the conception of his *continual* possession of that nature which he had when on earth. Unquestionably a glorified body, that is not at all disputed, but his being in the possession of those faculties which distinguish his nature from that of angels, that nature being essentially human, in every sense of the word, in a glorified state. For instance, all that we understand by the word "heart," comprising human affection, sympathy, and all that measure of understanding which enters into what the feelings of others are, I mean of those who are yet in an unglorified state, those of the mystical members of his body, the church of God on earth. His being touched with the feeling of our infirmities; the remembrance of his own temptation when on earth—that condition of his human nature which caused him to feel the various woes and sorrows which exist by reason of sin; in other words, his human experience, which he derived by reason of his humiliation when on earth. This he still retains, and will never lose. His human experience, though he is the highly exalted Lamb of God on the throne of his Father, is the ground of his being such a merciful High Priest for us in things pertaining to God, because *he can have and has* compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way, and who are compassed with infirmity. I am aware that in the matter of purging sin and guilt from the conscience, believers have not the difficulty to grasp the great truth of sin being forgiven by virtue of his propitiatory sacrifice; for the Holy Ghost, when he enlightens a sinner to seek salvation in the Son of God, leads him to the blood of sprinkling, and assures him of divine forgiveness. It is, if I may so say, an easier truth to grasp; we lay hold of it sooner, I say, sooner than we can lay hold of the equally blessed truth, the heart of a glorified Christ sympathising with his suffering saints on earth. But when by faith we can believe it, and say, with Mr. Hart,

“ That human heart he still retains,
 Though throned in highest bliss;
 And feels each tempted member's pains,
 For our affliction's his,”

what joy and pleasure we experience! Dr. Watts, too, the prince of poets, expresses the same thought; and many of the Lord's dear people have been comforted by it when singing:

“ He, in the days of feeble flesh,
 Pour'd out his cries and tears;
 And, in his measure, feels afresh
 What every member bears.”

O, this is a precious truth to realise when in sorrow, when passing through deep waters, when called to walk through fire! to feel we have the human sympathies and divine presence of a glorious Christ! This is true experimental religion; this is what I want you, dear friends, to know something of; faith in his name, faith in the perpetuity of his human nature, a realisation of his sympathy when we are placed in circumstances to need what he only can impart. If the Lord Jesus Christ be really ascended into heaven, and is set down on the right hand of God, doubtless his session is glorious and his person is divine. His sympathy for us on earth cannot mar his glory or blessedness. His pity and compassion originates no painful emotions in his loving breast, as in ours; that is impossible. *We*, on earth, have painful emotions, in sympathising with our suffering fellow-creatures, by reason of our weakness and infirmities, occasioned by sin; but nothing of this sort can be felt in a glorified and triumphant state. It is true we cannot at present see or imagine what that glory is in which Jesus is enthroned, yet we have no difficulty in believing it. We believe in his kingdom, power, and glory; but do we as fully believe that he is the High Priest and Apostle of our profession, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities? I say, do we believe in his human sympathy and divine intercession?

Here, then, you see is a practical, experimental use we make of the doctrine of Christ's manhood being eternal. We are upon earth, and he in heaven. What is the medium of communication? What is the channel through which the human sympathies of a glorified Jesus flow to his suffering saints on earth? The Holy Ghost the Comforter. He takes of the things of Christ, and reveals them unto us. By faith, which is his own gift,

and the life of which he carries on with power, the soul is enabled to lay hold of the great truth and to realise its blessedness. First we see, "To as many as believe in his name, he giveth power to become the sons of God." If we are the children of God, that is, *manifested* to be the children of God, *by faith in Christ Jesus*, we have been made partakers of the divine nature; for, being born of God, we are made like him, being born of the Spirit; and this the apostle Peter himself asserts. (2 Pet. i. 4.) That divine nature brings us into relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, even as the assumption of our nature brought him into relationship with us. His union with our human nature, and our union with his divine nature not only forms a bond of relationship and of union between him and us, but it also constitutes a channel of heavenly communication from God to us. Jesus is our elder brother; he is gone before us, he is gone to prepare a place for us, that where he is there we shall be also. According to his own gracious word, he has prayed the Father that, in his personal absence, we may have another Comforter, who is permanently to abide with each member of his mystic body whilst on earth. This is the Spirit of truth, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father sends in the name of Christ, to teach us all things, and to bring to our remembrance his divine teachings. He it is who sends the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, to us from the Father. He, the Holy Spirit, takes of the things of Christ, and testifies of him. There was an expediency in the economy of salvation that the Lord Jesus should go away, and until that condition of the covenant was fulfilled, it was impossible for the Comforter to come unto us. Well, we are assured that Jesus hath departed; we have all the evidence that true believers need, that Jesus hath ascended up on high, far above all principality and power, and is sat down on the throne of the Majesty on high; and we have, we humbly hope, some precious proofs that he hath given us of his Spirit. In whatever degree these proofs may exist in us they are tokens of his work in our hearts, and of his indwelling within us. The channel of divine communication through which flows the human sympathies of a glorified Christ to his suffering saints on earth is the permanent indwelling of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter in the heart of every regenerated child of God. As *whatever we know* of divine things is revealed unto us by his

Spirit, so whatever *we feel* is applied unto us by the same Spirit. FAITH is a matter of *personal experience* in the believer. It is not a principle of *thinking*, but of *believing*, and of *trusting*. It is the gift of the Spirit; for he is the Spirit of faith. HOPE is also a matter of personal experience. The believer has no sure hope but what he has some ground for; little or much, it is through the power of the Holy Ghost. LOVE is pre-eminently a matter of personal experience; it is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.* LIFE is another matter of personal experience, and of feeling too; for as there is no life without feeling, so there is no true religion without life—divine life; life in the soul manifested by acts of faith, hope, and love, each of which are the gifts of the Spirit, and are exercised, known, and felt in the heart and conscience of every regenerated child of God according to the good pleasure of the heavenly Father's will. The life of God in the soul, you see, is manifested by the gifts of the Spirit—faith, hope, and love. These gifts become, in the personal experience, the *receiving graces* which enable the exercised believer to lay hold of, to apprehend, the things of Christ which the Holy Ghost reveals and testifies. To testify, is to apply and bring home to the soul, with an indubitable witness, the truth, power, comfort, peace, and any other blessing which Jesus, by his Spirit, shall impart in seasons of darkness, desertion, distress, grief, or tribulation of any kind. I have not time to quote Scripture confirmatory of every sentence I have uttered, but you will find them founded on the Lord's own words, especially in his valedictory discourse. As a disciple and a servant of the Lord, I feel that that discourse is addressed to me, upon which I am to find, first, for myself, and next, as a teacher, matter for heavenly food to be communicated to the living soul. Thus, you see, the Church of God is a gainer by Christ's ascension to heaven. We have thereby gained his intercession, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the preparation of a place for each individual member; and not only so, he has also made it the condition of his coming again to receive us unto himself, that where he is, there we may be also. If any man serve the Lord Christ, and follow him, where he is there also his servant be. If any man serve

* Life, in its essence, unquestionably exists before its manifestations; but it is here spoken of *last*, because its individual acts are *first* perceived as indications of its existence.

him, that man will the Father honour. (John xii. 26.) What food for hope is here! What a promise! What food for faith! Are we his servants? and are we following him? and are we living upon him? You know what Paul said: "The life I now live I live by faith on the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.) This statement of the apostle includes all the circle of truths contained in the incarnation of God's eternal Son—his love, pity, grace manifested in his taking our nature, redeeming us from all iniquity, his life, death, and resurrection, precisely answer to and satisfy all those spiritual needs of which we, as spiritual beings, have been made sensible. For instance, the consciousness of sin, the guilt that presses like a heavy load, the fear of God's wrath against us, the terrors of his law, knowing that it is holy, just, and good; the feeling of our weakness, the knowledge of our helplessness and destitution, yet our hopes fixed in the love of Christ, the desire of union with God, the hope of immortality; indeed, all the thoughts, feelings, and conclusions which a mind renewed by the Spirit of God possesses and enjoys, are all made bright and hopeful from the facts of the personal history of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He was manifested to take away our sin; to destroy the works of the devil. In him was manifested the love of God, that we might live through him. We live upon the Son of God in proportion as we realise these facts in our own experience; by *believing*, not by *thinking*; having a *feeling* sense that we do know these things for ourselves, and have some enjoyment of their preciousness.

O that is a poor, wretched religion that consists only of notions and fancies. I know there are many persons who say "that if we believe what God has said in his word, we are to take the comfort of it, and that is all we are to do; and that if we are looking for what we call experience, we are deceiving ourselves with imaginary frames and feelings, and are living upon them." Now, my dear friends, do not be satisfied with merely a notional belief. You will find no comfort in that. Be not contented with anything less than an experimental acquaintance of everthing that Christ has done; and as for living upon frames and feelings, why, you know you cannot live *without them*; but that is a very different thing from living *upon them*. That would be living upon your experience—living upon yourself. No, you are to live upon what Christ has done for

you, so far as Christ has revealed himself to you, and what the Spirit has applied of the work of Jesus to your soul. His doing, his dying, his rising, his sitting at his Father's right hand, is food for your faith, your hope, and your love, his perpetual priesthood, and sacrifice ever availing, because of *the perpetuity of his manhood*, which is the ground into which faith casts the anchor of the soul; it is both sure and stedfast, and entereth into that within the veil. Now, the perpetuity of his manhood is constituted by the eternity of his personality as the Son of God. He ever was the Son of God before he became incarnate. He ever will be the incarnate Son of God. He is the author of eternal redemption for all who are seeking life and salvation in his name. He saves to the uttermost, the boundary of which no human thought can define or conceive. God himself has set none. Shall doubt, unbelief, or sin dare venture to set a limit to a seeking sinner's hope in Christ? It is the work of the devil; his object is to cause despair, but he is a liar, and there is no truth in him. He will harass and hunt the soul to death if he can, but God's eye is upon him; he can go no further than his chain will permit. "For the oppression of the poor, and for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord, and set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." Jesus still lives. He sits upon the throne of the eternal Father. Every foe, every enemy, shall be made his footstool. Tried soul, look up. Jesus, in his eternal manhood, is interceding for thee. His advocacy will prevail; thy foes shall be smitten upon the cheekbone; thy fears shall be checked, and thy soul shall be comforted with the revelation of the fact that thy sins are all forgiven, and thou shalt stand before the throne of God in heaven, clothed with the spotless righteousness of the Lamb of God.

What an ocean of love, grace, and mercy there is in the eternal manhood of Christ to every timid, timid believer on earth! He sees before him consolation without a bottom or a shore; it is infinite! What an ocean of heavenly anticipation there is also to the believer just treading upon the verge of the mystic river; while to the sainted, the glorified believer, this boundless ocean will never be comprehended, for throughout eternity he will never get beyond its margin. In a word, the eternal manhood of Christ will be an ocean of pleasure to all the redeemed family of heaven; eternity will be but a per-

petual unfolding of the glories of the Lamb exalted on his Father's throne.

Such are some of the contemplations which we may fairly indulge upon such a glorious theme. We might enlarge, but we must bear in mind the other portion of Holy Writ which we have taken into connection with the text just considered. We are led, by a sort of natural transition, to reflect upon the strong consolation which believers have in the immutability of God's promise, and the hope that is set before us in the Gospel; the words are—"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

We have in this passage an assemblage of images, figures, and illusions, which the more we look upon them, the more we are astonished at the vast and comprehensive mind of the apostle. An uninspired man could not write like this, it would be impossible; and ordinary readers could only be bewildered with the multitude of ideas compressed into so small a compass of words.

There are certain great truths set before us, which to the believer in Jesus becomes the sure foundation of his faith, hope, and love. As Christ is the object of faith, the object we love, so is he also the object of our hope, which hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

Hope is here compared to an *anchor*: the ship is supposed to be in sight of the harbour, but owing to either the lowness of the tide, or a strong wind, it cannot sail into it; but the anchor is *carried within* the harbour, and is secured safely. Whatever storms are without, however much the ship may be tossed, it is safely moored.

The *hope* set before us alludes to the method provided for the temporary safety of the Jewish manslayer when flying to the city of refuge. All along the roads leading thereto, were placed sign-posts, with the significant and encouraging words plainly inscribed, "Refuge," so that he that reads might run, when in danger of being overtaken by the avenger of blood. Here we have in the words before us, the state of the exercised soul provided for in the glorious Gospel of the grace of God. The self-convicted criminal fleeing for refuge to lay hold upon the

hope set before him. This laying hold of the hope set before us, has an allusion also to the horns of the altar, those branches or hooks set at each corner of the brazen altar upon which the offerings of burnt sacrifices were made; if a criminal, hotly pursued, were to get once within the sacred precincts of the temple and lay hold of these horns, justice must hold back the sword of vengeance; mercy secures the life of the refugee, for the time being, until inquisition shall be made.

Then, again, here is introduced an allusion to a Fore-runner; one, who in olden times, more especially in the East, was employed to run before, clear the way, and announce the approach of some dignified personage, so that he might be received with all due honours. It will be easily supposed, that the Forerunner, however great his ability for his work, was never superior to those whom he served; his skill, and not his dignity or title, was what fitted him for the office, he would, therefore, be considered less in dignity than the person he was employed to announce. "The servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him."

Then, again, to crown all, the person of Jesus is mentioned, "made an high priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec, as having entered"—Where? within the vail, the vail of the holy of holies, in the temple. Here is hope as an anchor cast within the vail, and Jesus the Fore-runner has entered into it for us. May the Holy Spirit lead our minds to see the great truth set forth in the complex figures used by the apostle.

What we now wish to consider more particularly is, the character of our most glorious Lord in the inferior position of a Forerunner. Where shall we find a parallel in the word of God? I know only of one; I refer to the prophet Elijah; who, though superior (by his office) in dignity to the king, nevertheless undertook of his own accord to run before Ahab and announce his approach. This was doing him great honour, while at the same time his so doing was, under the painfully irritated state of the nation, at least to be considered conciliatory; he does Ahab honour, he brings good tidings of rain, the people are appeased, and their present wants are provided for.

So here, in our text, we see Jesus, our great high priest, entered within the vail, the holy of holies, before the mercy seat, with his own blood for us, in the presence of God. This great personage, the exalted Lord, in his

eternal manhood, has gone before us into the heavenly glory, not only to do us honour, but also essential service, both *for us* where he is gone, but *in us* while we are following after. Surely with such a grand announcement and preparation, we shall have an entrance ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We consider, then, the character of Jesus as our forerunner loses none of its dignity; but, in fact, raises him more in our estimation. What condescension is thereby manifested. "You know," says the apostle, "the grace of our Lord Jesus, who though he was rich, yet he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name." And in order to be the Forerunner, to save his church, and bring many sons unto glory, it was necessary, as they were flesh and blood, he should take part of the same, and it was necessary that, as the captain of their salvation, he should be made perfect through suffering.

Now Jesus may be considered as our Forerunner, inasmuch as he is the *first fruits of mankind glorified*. He is the first man who died, rose again, and entered into glory. *He was born*; and he is the first born man *without sin*. He was *made* of a woman, made under the law, but *not born of women*—that is, of successive generations of sinful man, (as is said of John the Baptist, and is true of all mankind.)* He was in his human nature, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. *He led a life of manual labour*, yet was always about his Father's business. *He had experience of human sufferings*, of humanity in its lowest state and condition; he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself; he pleased not himself; he bore the anguish of unmerited wicked reproach and the burden of others' sins. He was removed from the world by a violent death. He died, but saw no corruption. He died for us. He was buried for us. *He rose again from the dead*.

* This is a most important distinction; it is an irrefragible argument against those who aver that the human nature of Jesus was liable to sin or was capable of sinning.

He rose for our justification. He is our Forerunner to eternal life and the heavenly glory; to put on incorruption, immortality, and a glorified manhood. *He ascended to heaven.* He opened the way; he is gone to prepare a place for us. We follow after; our hope, as sinners, is excited and encouraged by seeing the way made clear; "refuge, refuge," is set before us in the hope of the gospel. As Jesus is as the great High Priest of our profession, he has entered within the vail for us as our Forerunner; we follow after as priests; the Church of God is a nation of priests, and shall take part in the solemn service of everlasting love and thanksgiving. Every true believer shall enter the vail, the holy of holies; they shall enter into the deeper mysteries of redeeming love and grace. They do not enter in with their own blood, but by virtue of his; it is sprinkled over the mercy-seat, the cherubim of glory overshadow it, the perfections of Jehovah harmoniously meet in the propitiation of the blood of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." As our Jesus has rose again, we stand for ever justified and cannot be condemned; therefore "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Happy thought! Jesus our glorious Forerunner has entered into the heaven of heavens; He will come again and receive us to himself, that where he is we shall be also.

Now, dear friends, what can be said by way of improvement upon these great truths which we have tried to point out? I confess, in attempting such a task, I feel myself unequal to the occasion; I see a sublimity and grandeur beyond my power fully to describe. Such themes as these demand the tongue of an angel, or at least the tongue of the eloquent; there is such an overpowering sense of one's own unfitness when we speak of such glorious realities; and instead of one's tongue being as the pen of a ready writer, our utterances seem more like the chattering of a sparrow. Yet, I must say, however, that when the Spirit of Truth takes of the things of Christ and reveals them unto us, we soon find the glorious Lord becomes to us a place of broad rivers and streams, and we are wafted along by the sweet and loving influences of his Spirit into the haven of delight, and find

celestial pleasure in contemplating the great mystery of godliness : " God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

If, then, I might add a word or two in order to close this discourse, I would select three thoughts, which I think are fairly inferred from what has been advanced. 1. The exaltation of Christ, the God-man Mediator. 2. The counteraction of the opposition made by the enemies of the Church of God ; and 3. The needy circumstances of the Church militant are fully met, spiritually and providentially.

1. *The exaltation of Christ, the God-man Mediator.*—When we speak of Christ's exaltation to the throne of the majesty on high, it is in reference to his mediatorial character exclusively. In his personality as the Son of God he is essentially co-equal with the Father in grace, power, and glory ; and, consequently, could admit of no exaltation. When, therefore, the Son of God undertook the salvation of the Church, he " made himself of no reputation, but took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name ; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 7-11.) Here we see the humiliation and the exaltation of the Mediator are essentially connected. His glory is the reward of his sufferings. By virtue of his mediatorial capacity he sustained the threefold offices of prophet, priest, and king. These offices are inseparably connected in the great work of salvation ; they are alike essential and indispensable. His prophetic office taught men the nature of his person, his priestly office the nature of his work, and his kingly office the nature of the glory he now possesses. A name above every name, as a title of dignity amongst men, a king. Jesus is King of kings, King of saints, King of glory. " To this end," he said, " was I born, and for this cause came I into the world." His kingly dignity is the perfection of his work, and a crowning with honour his obedience unto the death. When we contemplate the end

for which Christ came into the world—the salvation of sinners, the execution of his Father's will, the voluntariness and the triumphant success of his undertaking, we cannot but take up his own words and say, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?"

2. *The counteraction of the opposition made by the enemies of the Church of God.*—The coronation of a king is a confirmation of his authority to rule and to command obedience. The dominion of Christ is universal, being King of kings and Lord of lords; he rules over angels, men, death, and hell. "The LORD said unto my Lord, *sit thou* at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. These enemies of the Lord Christ are also the enemies of the Church in its militant state. The work of grace in the heart has many enemies; enemies to its internal operations, enemies to its external influences; those arising from those indwelling corruptions which wage incessant warfare against the quickening, sanctifying, and comforting work of the Spirit. The law, as a covenant of works, is an adversary to the work of grace; it demands the death of the sinner, slays the peace of the soul, and holds its victim in its own right and possession. Satan and his emissaries are numerous, subtle, powerful enemies; they assail by their temptations, accusations, and persecutions. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." The world, with its enticements and terrors, its smiles and frowns, are ever attempting to sap and undermine the principles of our stability and peace. Besides all these, we have the declared and avowed enemies who oppose the dominion of the Lord Christ. "We will not have this man to rule over us." Popery, Mohammedanism, Heathenism, and every other sort of infidelity, stand forth with unblushing effrontery to withstand HIM who goes forth conquering and to conquer; these, with Satan at their head, wage war with the Lamb." Death, the last of foes, by threatening to execute the curse of the broken covenant, awakens slavish fears, and holds in bondage, by pointing to the grave as its interminable stronghold. But all these enemies,

spiritual, carnal, infernal, internal, and external, numerous and powerful as they all are, are under the dominion of **HIM** who sitteth on the throne for ever and ever. Their final overthrow is demanded by the honour of the Saviour himself, as well as declared by the word of Jehovah himself. Jesus who is the Saviour of his people is the conqueror over all their foes. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

Shout, ye little flock, and blessed,
 You on Jesus' throne shall rest;
 There your seat is now prepared,
 There *your kingdom and reward.*

3. *The needy circumstances of the Church Militant are fully met, spiritually and providentially.* In the accomplishment of the work of salvation, the mediatorial character of Christ is complete. Though he is enthroned in highest bliss, his combined offices of prophet, priest, and king are ever available to every saint on earth. Daily we lack wisdom and need his teaching, both as to the way of salvation and the way of his providence; daily we need pardon and peace, and deliverance from a sense of condemnation; daily do we need deliverance from Satanic temptations and all the evil workings of our depraved nature. And herein we do rejoice, our Jesus ever lives, he sits a priest upon his throne; he is our Intercessor, our advocate, and our king. He is a merciful and sympathising High Priest, he is our glorious Intercessor, ever interceding for all his saints, the weakest as well as the strong; he perfumes all our sighs, tears, cries, and groans with his prevailing merits, his immaculate person, as God-man mediator, his complete atonement and his perfect righteousness. Here is strong consolation for all who are looking to him as their prophet, priest, and king. In this three-fold capacity he sympathises with all our needs in those external circumstances which make us feel weakness, poverty, and wretchedness. He is ever with his church in the wilderness; with them as they are passing through the waters, with them when they are called to walk through the fire; he manifests his divine power in restraining the rushing flood and the kindling heat of the flame; his human heart is manifested by the comforting assurance that he knows and feels that which afflicts them; he supplies their daily wants, and controls the evil of every day as it

comes on ; he supplies strength, energy, patience, faith, hope for every time of trial, long or short. He not only upholds all things by the word of his power, but he watches with deepest interest and unbounded sympathy every circumstance into which his people are brought. Each individual believer's state and wants has his constant eye and care; nothing escapes his notice. The secret of all things working together for good is because he is the king of glory. Everything is timed and measured by his infinite wisdom and goodness. He hath an unchangeable priesthood, he is able to save to the uttermost, he ever liveth to make intercession. Here is our ground for hope. Can you and I venture to say, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

"O for a sight, a pleasing sight,
Of our almighty Father's throne;
There sits our Saviour crown'd with light,
Clothed in a body like our own.

"Adoring saints around him stand,
And thrones and powers before him fall;
The God shines gracious through the Man,
And sheds sweet glories on them all.

"Oh, what amazing joys they feel,
While to their golden harps they sing,
And sit on every heavenly hill,
And spread the triumphs of their king!

"When shall the day, dear Lord, appear,
That I shall mount to dwell above,
And stand and bow amongst them there,
And view thy face, and sing thy love?"

WATTS.

THE
PRESENCE & SYMPATHY OF JESUS
WITH HIS PEOPLE
WHEN PASSING THROUGH THE WATERS
AND WALKING THROUGH THE FIRE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,
On Lord's Day Morning, March 3rd, 1861.

REVISED.

“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”—ISA. XLIII. 2.

Few portions of God's word are more often quoted as suiting believers in circumstantial troubles than the one now read. The promise of the Lord's presence when applied to the soul in a time of deep affliction and in fiery trials is most supporting and encouraging. Faith views the promise as coming from him who is faithful that has promised, and it leans upon his word; and though surrounded with sorrows even to the very neck, the believer feels that sinking in them is altogether out of the question. God's “I wills” and “shall nots,” bear his head above water, even in the deepest part of the stream, and they preserve him from the raging flame of the fiercest fire through which he has to walk.

So far as the preacher is concerned, this is what he wants to realise for himself; his coming here has reminded him of a deep family sorrow he endured in connection with this place some years since; and the position he now occupies for the first time in this pulpit, adds an intensity to the pungency of his present feelings.

Looking at the words of the text now read, we shall find that its primary or historical meaning is supplied to us in the context. The people of Judah had before them

the prospect of the Assyrian armies coming to Jerusalem and carrying them away captives into the land of Assyria. First, let me refer you to the 8th chapter, and read from the 5th verse to the 8th, "Jehovah spake also unto me again, saying, Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son; now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: and he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel."

Now, let us read the two last verses of the 42nd chapter, and the verse preceding our text: "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not Jehovah; he against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law. Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle; and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart. But now thus saith Jehovah that created thee, O Jacob; and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."

Here, then, you see, in the first portion is the declaration of Jehovah as to the King of Assyria coming upon the land as *waters* with the strength of a sweeping flood; and in the second portion we have pointed out the hand of *him* who had done it. In the verse preceding our text, lest those who were to be banished far away should imagine that the Lord had utterly forsaken them, he assures them most positively he still owned them as his people, and he graciously calls upon them to "fear not;" and in the words of our text he makes this most assuring and comforting promise of his presence and of his power through all the sweeping desolations through which they have to pass. Indeed, the whole chapter is filled with gracious promises and assurances, and predictions of future blessedness. The design of Jehovah was evidently to make his people feel that while he chastised them for their national sins, he would correct them for their departures from him, and whilst under his Fatherly rod he

would still preserve them as a nation, through all the vicissitudes of invasions, banishments, and poverty; and we cannot but remark that to this day the Jews are still preserved as a people distinct and not reckoned among the nations wheresoever they are scattered. The Assyrian and Roman invasions made vast devastations, but have failed to exterminate this remarkable race. God's purposes of love and mercy towards his people have yet farther to be revealed ere the seed of Abraham, the friend of God, shall be permitted to be extinct.

We will now endeavour to consider the subject before us as applicable to ourselves. It is a promise of comfort in tribulation; the promise of the presence and sympathy of Jesus with his people when passing through the waters and walking through the fire. This precious portion of God's word is as equally true and as merciful to God's spiritual Israel now as ever it was to his ancient people the Jews. In doing this, we will notice, 1, The circumstances stated; 2, the promise made under such circumstances; and 3, some particular instances of its truth.

But before I enter into the first particular, we must ascertain who the persons are referred to by the pronoun used in the text—*thou*. For if we omit this important point, we may possibly run ourselves into an egregious error, and so mislead those to whom the text does not apply; for it must not be for a moment supposed that the promise is made to all persons who are in tribulation. Our own observation makes us familiar with the sad fact that there are many thousands of persons whose circumstances may be aptly described as passing through the waters, and as walking through fire, but to whom, alas! not a word of comfort is promised. Not a ray of hope beams upon them; for all their days they eat in darkness, and have much sorrow and wrath with their sickness.

I have already said that the text contains a promise of the presence and sympathy of Jesus with his people in tribulation. The people thus known as his people are distinguished from all others. They are followers of Jesus. They follow him in the way of his commandments, in the ordinances of his house. They love his person, his house, his word. They love one another, and by this they are known to be his disciples. They have faith in his name; they trust the whole matter of their salvation to him alone. They live by faith on him as the Son

of God, who gave himself for them, who died for them, and who rose again for their justification. They have been renewed in the spirit of their minds, being begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. They are called out of darkness into marvellous light, translated from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son; completely separated from the world in its spirit, pursuits, and pleasures. They are pilgrims in a desert land, journeying onwards and homewards, but the way throughout is inhospitable and cheerless, for the world to them is directly opposed. They are hated by it, and none of the things in it afford them the least satisfaction. Besides all this, their own evil and corrupt nature withstands them in the way. Satan confronts them with his subtle and fiery darts:

"Temptations everywhere annoy,
And sins and snares their peace destroy;
Their earthly joys are from them torn,
And often absent God they mourn."

These are some of the principal characteristics of the people here spoken of in our text, and to whom the promise is made. We now proceed to consider:

I. The circumstances stated: *Passing through the waters, Walking through the Fire*. Water and Fire are natural elements, without which we could not live, and when employed by us in the proportions we need, we find them the source of much comfort and are our servants for good; but when they come upon us beyond the power of our control they not only become our masters, but prove the source of much danger, disaster and evil. In neither the one nor the other can the human body feel any appropriate element, except as we can command and regulate their natural forces. Water and fire are not like the air we breathe or the earth on which we stand; for if they get beyond their boundary and become of sufficient volume their power is irresistible and bids defiance to all human agency; a power only that is beyond nature can withstand the sweeping nature of the one or the consuming nature of the other.

1. *Waters* set forth troubles, because of their cheerlessness and the coldness of their nature. They comprise

afflictions in body, bereaving providences, losses, crosses, failures, want of employment, poverty in all its endless ramifications, sudden calamities, overwhelming calamities, and whatever else comes in the nature of disappointments, creating sorrow of heart and grief of mind. *Passing through*, implies not only the course through which we have to go, but it implies danger and overwhelming force, as waters in an accumulated body and force threaten danger and destruction to anything that stands in its way as an obstruction; so to human beings their coming upon them, or their having to go through them, implies not only danger, but threatens destruction. Drowning is inevitable where the irresistibility of waters are felt and help is not at hand. This is felt to be the more hazardous and dangerous when we consider what is to be understood and intended by the term waters; it means a confluence of streams and floods from various parts meeting together in one place, creating a kind of whirling force that bids defiance to anything like a passage being forced through them.

2. *Rivers* set forth and imply one continued stream defined by its banks, bounded on either side, by which a course of water is hemmed in and narrowed within a given compass. A long continued course of afflictive events may be likened to a river; it may be deep, or wide; so sometimes the circumstances in which men are placed may be fitly compared to rivers. Rivers are often used as a similitude of long continued blessings, referring sometimes to the love or goodness of God, the blessings of God's word and other characteristics of a gospel state, but evidently, in the text, it means that long course of providential dispensation which brings a trial in its endurance and passing through as contrary to comfort.

3. *Floods* set forth a wide spread of overflowing water or a breaking forth of pent-up waters, bursting forth from its bounds, sweeping all before it, rolling on until all its volume is completely spent. Thus overwhelming and sudden calamities are likened, desolating in their nature, leaving nothing behind, not even a wreck to mark the spot where once peace, plenty, and prosperity had its standing. Soul troubles are well compared to waters—so is temptation—burden of guilt. We need only refer to the 69th Psalm, where David thus indicates his danger and his terror of the waters which he uses

as a figure of his distress: "Save me, O God, for the waters have come into my soul." He might, perchance, refer to what we have been told of the dropsy, if the complaint is within the chest, the water rises to the heart: life is at once extinguished. How often God's people feel that immediate death is threatened, unless God interposes his delivering hand.

4. *Fire* is the contrary element to water, equally destructive and equally unmanageable when its power has accumulated; its nature is to burn up, consume, and to destroy the identity of the substance wherever its power has the mastery. On sensitive objects, such as possess animal life, a flame of fire is felt to burn and to create an intensity of pain. The skin cannot endure it one moment of time—unlike water, the skin is waterproof so long as the strength of the body can withstand it, but fire kindles, scorches, burns and torments beyond the power of endurance. Thus the figure of fire is employed to signify oppression, tyranny, rage, fury, malice, and persecutions of our enemies. Sharp trials, sharp afflictions, whatsoever tries our faith and feelings, or consumes our hopes, destroys our prospects, and leaves nothing but the *ashes* of former comforts to tell the tale.

II. We come now to consider *the promise that is here made to the Lord's people under the deep sorrows and fiery trials through which they are called to pass*. "I will be with thee"—the rivers shall not overflow, the fire shall not burn.

Under such circumstances, how suitable, how supporting, and how comforting such a promise! Without it what insupportable misery! He who has made the promise knows all the afflictions and sorrow through which his people have to pass. He who has made the promise knows all the sufferings they have to endure. He who has made the promise knows what they need; he knows how weak and faint they are; he knows how to strengthen and to cheer them; he knows how subject they are to fears, despondency, and unbelief; he knows how to remove their fears; he knows how to assure their hearts and to carry on the work of faith with power. Hence he calls upon them to "Fear not." He gives them the most solid ground why they should not fear—his redeeming love and mercy—"I have redeemed thee." This is just exactly what the soul needs when in trouble

and in distress: "Say unto my soul I am thy salvation." And do look again at what Jehovah has condescended to say for their further consolation: "I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Here is personal calling emanating from personal, unconditional election and choice, irrespective of what his people were or what they are, as is evidently implied by the two names of Jacob and of Israel, which I regard as taking in the two conditions in which they may be viewed—1, as they stand in and of themselves, and 2, as they stand in Christ, united to him in covenant love, and experimentally manifested by faith in him. Do they look upon themselves as standing in their Jacob state, weak, sinful, and helpless, unassured of Jehovah's covenant love, the promise is made to them? Do they look upon themselves in their covenanted state as revealed to them by faith and experimentally known to them in the exercises of faith, hope, and love? Still the promise is made to them. The trial of their faith in either case is precious. Hope must be tried, and so must love too; indeed every gift and grace of the Spirit must be tried—tried in order that they may be proved to be the gifts and graces of the Spirit—tried in order that they may be strengthened, and tried that *the very trial itself* shall be found unto praise and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Now the promise made to them is *one*, whether it be spoken to them under the name of Jacob or of Israel; but experimentally, in its application to the heart, the promise has *two* aspects, according to the condition in which it finds them. Are they in the exercises of fears and unbelief surrounded with terror and dismayed with dark forebodings of the future? The promise is expressly made to them in that character and under such circumstances: "But now, thus saith Jehovah that created thee, O Jacob, Fear not." "When thou passeth through the waters I will be with thee." What more can the tried soul want? Here Jacob is assured of covenant love in the redemption of his person from all evil, and of his eternal union with the Lord God Almighty—"Thou art mine." And now here is the absolute promise of an immutable Jehovah: "I will be with thee." But suppose it be the case of one who has had some sweet proofs of Jehovah's love and power in his own experience, placed in the midst of deep sorrow, care, anxiety, and the direst woe that can befall poor humanity, how

adapted, how suitable is this promise found! for how well we know that however much we may have realised our union with Christ, we want the same strength to endure, the same comfort to cheer, for the knowledge of our standing in Christ does not lessen the force of the waters through which we have to pass, nor lessen the heat of the fire through which we have to walk. No, it is God's grace alone, his goodness, his power, that can prevent the force of the one or abate the heat of the other. New circumstances require new grace to meet them. The believer feels he requires grace for every need. His strength and comfort does not flow from his belief that he is saved in the Lord, but from the grace that the Lord gives for the time being, whatever the condition may be. Jacob and Israel have each the same promise of grace from a covenant Jehovah; but their individual enjoyment of that promise may be in some respects modified by the condition and experience which may characterise them as Jacob or Israel. The promise is made to and adapted to, in each case, these two characteristics of the Lord's people.

Now, you tried believers, whether you are Jacobs or Israels, this promise is to show you that under whatever calamities, distresses, or afflictions that may come upon you, they shall not destroy you; they shall not consume you. Jehovah's promise is, I will be with thee. Fear not; thou art not alone. The waters may come; they will come; they must come; but remember Christ is with you. He is with you whilst passing through the waters; he is as much in them as yourself. There can be no condition in which you can be brought but your Lord and Saviour is with you in it. The circumstance may be new to you, but it is not new to him. He has been in it before; he knows all the way; hence, as a guide, how skilful to conduct his people in safety, and bring them through; for we must bear in mind that a passage through waters, that is, floods, and also even in rivers, can only be ventured upon with a skilful pilot, or guide, one who has knowledge of the path, and has had personal experience, all which Jesus possesses—personal knowledge, human experience. In his Person he is divine and almighty—his knowledge is divine, his power is almighty. He maketh a path in the mighty waters, he is mightier than many waters; therefore you are quite safe. No trial too difficult for him to manage, no trouble too overwhelming

for him to overcome; for "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." What if, as Job said, "Terrors take hold on you as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night," yet Jesus is with you. You feel the waters take hold of you, yet you are in his hand. Nothing shall force you from his hold; he withstands the flood. The waters shall not overflow thee; his presence and power is all-sufficient. Mr. Horne, in one of his excellent hymns, has said:

"Or if through fierce, consuming fire
The way to endless rest shall lie;
This miracle shalt thou admire—
Before my power the flames shall die !
Nor even kindle on thee once,
Though seven times hotter than before;
I'm there, my glory to advance,
And thou to wonder and adore."

Now, see here a proof of our union to Christ. He is with his people in their afflictions by virtue of his promise, and that promise originating from his taking us into union with himself. This union is founded in everlasting, immutable love, therefore the application of the promise to the heart, in circumstances of woe and sorrow, affords not only a proof of his sympathy with us in our afflictions, but is a powerful proof of our standing in him—our union to him in love. We commonly say, "A friend in need is a friend indeed." Now Jesus is a friend in need; a friend that loveth at all times; a friend that sticketh closer than a brother: "For in all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." How truly we can say with the psalmist: "If it had not the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up alive when their wrath was kindled against us. Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." (Ps. cxxiv.)

"Sons of God, in tribulation,
Let your eyes your Saviour view;
He's the Rock of your salvation;
He was tried and tempted too,
All to succour
Every tried and tempted, burdened soul."

And what a proof of his sympathy, his presence, and his power we have from the fact that his promise does really sustain the spirit while passing through deep waters! Have we not known what it is to be upheld and strengthened by his omnipotent hand? We look back sometimes upon the trials through which we have been brought, and wondered how we endured them. The only explanation that we can give is, Jesus was with us, the God-man, by his power and by his sympathy, kept off the force of the stream, and sustained us in it. This is the perfection of his mediatorial work. His Godhead and his manhood are brought to bear in the experience of every tried believer. "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him." (Ps. xxxii. 6.) The Lord trieth the righteous, but their trials are of his appointment. "It needs be that we are in heaviness through manifold temptations, floods of great waters, sorrows upon sorrows, yet the sweeping force of these great waters have not come nigh unto us to sweep us away; they have not come nigh unto us by reason of the standard being lifted up against the enemy." Have we not known something of the floods of Satan's temptations; fiery temptations, flood and fire together, now hot, now cold; floods of opposition and persecution from the world and from the professing church; floods and fire from the evil of our own evil hearts, unbelief, murmurings, rebellions, the desperate wickedness of which cannot be known only by him who is taught and instructed by God's Spirit? I say, have we not known something of these things? And how is it that we have not been carried away as with a flood? The only way we can account for it is, the realisation of the promise contained in our text. We have not been borne *above* our trials, but we have been sustained *in* them. We have not been carried *out* of our trials, but we have been brought safe *through* them. The divine power exercised in withholding the force of temptations, afflictions, and sorrows is the proof of Christ's presence. That we have been withheld from resorting to any of those expedients which the men of this world fly to when in trouble and distress is another proof of his presence being with us. The very fact of our troubles leading us to a throne of grace, seeking his help and mercy, is another proof that

he has been with us; and also the fact of our looking to him, resting upon his word, resting on his name, is another indubitable proof that he has been with us. "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee." "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe." The promise of Christ being with his people when passing through the waters, and walking through the fire, is divinely needed and divinely made. As there is a divine needs-be for every trial, so there is divine needs-be for the decree that appoints the means of support under it. Divine wisdom and divine goodness harmonise in all the appointments of those floods and fires into which the Lord brings his people, and this is felt and proved in their passing through them. The very fact of their *passing through them* is the realisation of the promise. What further evidence can we need that Jesus is with us—we have been *divinely sustained*? The floods have *not* drowned us; the fire has *not* consumed us.

But before we leave this part of our subject there is one very important fact should be borne in mind, it will help us to realize the true nature of the promise which the Lord has here made to his people; it is this,—troubles of whatever kind, real or imaginary, must always be met with a greater force than they bring; if they are not, they will, like a flood, sweep us away from our present standing and hope. You know that a flood will soon acquire sufficient strength so as to carry away trees, houses, bridges, and whatever else opposes a resistance. If its foundation is not stronger than the flood, there is the danger and the ground of fear. But if it be a rock, for instance, there it stands immovable; the flood may roll on and dash its furious billows against its opponent, but there it remains. Now, so it is with the believer in the floods of tribulation, circumstantial or spiritual, divine strength enables him to feel as a rock, immovable; he is not carried away, the promise spoken to his heart gives him strength in his soul, he has a power given him greater than the force of all his troubles, he is enabled to meet them, to resist them, and to get through them, in fact, he overcomes them, for it is evident they do not overcome him. Then it is that such trials become occasions of victory, strength for the day has been given, and grace sufficient for the need is proved; this is how it was that the apostle Paul gloried in tribulation; he had patience given

him to bear, his experience strengthened his hope, and hence he was not ashamed, because the love of God was shed abroad in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. This, you see, is the secret of that power which holds up the believer in the wildest flood or the raging storm. Where the love of God is in the heart, that soul possesses a power that bids defiance to all the powers of earth or hell, because the power of the Holy Ghost is greater than all the forces that they can bring against it.

The same truth holds still more important with relation to such trials that are *as fires* to the soul. With regard to *water*, the oily element of our nature, to a certain extent, renders us impervious to it. Our skin, if I might so say, is waterproof; it resists the penetration which water will unquestionably make wherever it finds an inlet, and it is only when its power is above human strength that the body sinks, or is carried away. But with regard to *fire* it is altogether different; the oily element of our nature that *resists* the entrance of water by the skin is that which *feeds* a flame of fire. There is nothing in the human body that can by nature resist fire or counteract its force. Water or fire are equally destructive to life, but with this difference,—water, in the one case, may destroy life, but it does not destroy the body, the form remains, and it can be identified. Not so with fire. The body, when attacked by the kindling flame, is at once destroyed, consumed, and reduced to ashes, so that identification is impossible. Now see here how suitable the promise: "The flame shall not kindle upon thee." The Lord knows the element of which our nature is composed, he knows all our weaknesses, he will restrain the consuming rage of the flame, his divine power shall be put forth, so that the flame shall not come nigh so combustible and weak a creature as we by nature are. The Lord knowing our weakness exerts his divine power over such circumstances, which otherwise would consume us so completely as to leave nothing but the ashes of our utter ruin and disaster. Here is, then, a promise that the flame shall not kindle upon us; no, not when we are called to walk through it; that is, our circumstances of affliction, trial, and sorrow are made to be the path in which we have to tread, not this side of it, or that side of it, but in the very midst—our own feet must tread every step of the way. Now, when it is the Lord's will to bring us into

these cutting sorrows, these grievous trials, these fiery temptations that try our spirits, our faith, our hope, or our love, and we find that our faith does not fail, our hope does not waver, our love still abides—what else can it be but divine faithfulness, divine power, divine love that we realize when passing through and walking in the fire, in the midst of the devouring flame, despairing, it may be, almost of life, and yet brought off more than conquerors through him that hath loved us? You see, dear friends, the metaphors of water and fire, when employed by the Spirit of truth, represent to us great and glorious truths, which make the promise we have before us exceeding great and precious in its application to the believer's circumstances and experience.

III. In the third place, let us *consider some particular instances of the truth in which this exceeding great and precious promise has been demonstrated.*

The case of Jacob, when about to meet his brother Esau, wrestling with a man is too well known to require a minute relation of the circumstances. He had hoped that time had somewhat mellowed down his brother's rage, which he by deception had provoked; but in order to conciliate him and to meet him in peace, he prudently prepares a present, a present fit for a king. A messenger is sent, and he returns with heavy tidings. Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. He finds that a brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city. He arranges his people and property with all the care that prudence can suggest, and now he retires to pour out his soul unto God. What more can he do? How can he, a mere grazier, with only a staff of drovers, defend themselves against a body of 400 armed men, with an angry man to head them. His danger is like an overwhelming flood, and his fear is like a furnace of fire. Did you mark his prayer? What a model for troubled souls! He refers to the divine leadings, he acknowledges past mercies, his prayer is, "Deliver me from my brother Esau, for I fear him," and he reminds the Lord of the good word on which he hoped, "and thou saidst, I will surely do thee good." His faith kept hold of it, it was the anchor of his soul. If God did not then appear, what was to become of the promise of his faithfulness? We are told, there wrestled a man with him. Who was this man? no mere man, I can assure you. It was the Son of God, the Lord from

heaven, though Jacob was ignorant of his name, yet not of his person, for his faith helps him to take hold of him bodily, and to say to him, with a holy boldness that bid defiance to anything like denial, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me," and the blessing he sought he obtained; what that blessing was is seen in the fact that Esau's heart was turned towards his brother, he meets him with a kiss of peace, instead of a sword. The mother with the children were preserved alive; blessings positive and blessings negative are given in answer to prevailing prayer. Jacob gives a name to the place where the circumstance occurred, as a *memorial* of Jehovah's wonderful interposition: "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." We do well in marking the places where God appears for us in times of trial and distress. God himself takes a note of it, for all through the Scripture, wheresoever we find the phrase, "the God of Jacob," particularly in the Psalms, it points to this extraordinary deliverance. We are thus reminded that under similar dangers, trials, fears, and distresses the same grace and mercy is still to be found, for the same Lord is rich unto all that call upon him.

"Wrestling prayer can wonders do,
Bring relief in greatest straits."

Nor must we forget the history of Joseph. See how this exceeding great and precious promise was realized for *many years*—all through the eventful period from his being sold by his brethren until his release from prison. What floods, what fires, that young man was called to pass through! He *did* pass through; yes, he passed through them all. How was it that he passed through them all? God was with him; "the word of the Lord tried him until the time that his word came." To be sold for a slave by his own brethren was hard to bear, but to be falsely accused and wrongfully imprisoned, to be laid in irons, to have his feet hurt with fetters, year after year, without the slightest hope, humanly speaking, of deliverance, was most trying to faith as well as to flesh and blood. Yet see how his faith stood the test of all those severe trials. That one sentence of his, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" reveals the whole secret of it all. The God of Jacob was his help. He was with

him in the pit, he was with him in Potiphar's house, he was with him in the prison, for see, he had the same faith in the interpretation of a dream belonging to God when he spoke to the butler as when he told his dream to his brethren. He rested in the promise, not the providence; the providence seemed to cross the promise, but Joseph's faith trusted the promise. That faith was God's gift, as was the promise itself. The word of the Lord tried him, but it did not disappoint him; that was impossible. It would be unlike God to raise his people's hopes and disappoint their expectations. Our trials are designed, doubtless, to wean us from all fleshly thoughts and creature dependences. It is sense and sin that creates our pain and disturbs our peace, when clouds come and hide the promise from our view. God's word, however, is immutable, and that faith which he gives his people remains unshaken, notwithstanding the floods and the fires through which they are called to pass. Here, then, is the proof. That our trials, be they ever so long, as was Joseph's, our endurance or patience, as the apostle Paul calls it, arises from the fact that Jehovah is with us. He sustains the faith he gives; faith cannot sustain itself. He preserves the soul from fainting, keeps off the sweeping force of the one and restrains the raging flame of the other.

Now, what we have just remarked is most strikingly seen in the circumstance of the people of Israel passing through the Red Sea. The relation of it in the book of Exodus is somewhat bare of those various incidents spoken of in several other parts of the inspired writings. In the 77th Psalm, from the 16th verse to the end, which is alluded to by the apostle Paul (1 Cor. x. 1), and from the 66th Psalm, verses 6 and 12, it would appear that the passage through the Red Sea was in a terrific thunderstorm, with much lightning and rain. Yet in the very heart of the sea, that is, on the very bed of it, the earth itself, the sea being held back, *there* they praised the Lord, *there* they had a song in the night, *there* did they rejoice in him. The 12th verse has a distinct reference to the manner and the kind of that great deliverance; it was a thunderstorm of no ordinary magnitude. They went through fire and through water, sheets of lightning played round them, the clouds poured out rain, the thunder rolled out God's mighty voice in the skies, and

the forked lightning, like arrows, went abroad, striking terror and death in the hearts of their enemies. These fell by thousands, but it came not nigh them. God was mindful of his covenant with Abraham. All nature was laid under tribute to work out deliverances for the seed of Jacob his chosen. "The sea saw it and fled; Jordan was driven back." What! the river Jordan, which is ever rolling its mighty torrent into the Red Sea, though many miles distant, was that held back? Did it cease to flow on that wondrous night? Yes, all nature trembled at the presence of the God of Jacob; but O, how graciously he was with his people throughout that memorable passage of sea and fire. He who was with the church in the wilderness was with them there in the waters and in the fire. Jehovah was there, the rock of Israel. He it was who held the waters back on both sides as walls to make room for them; he it was who gladdened their hearts. They praised his name, they rejoiced in him. Here they realised his presence for themselves. It was the promise made to Joseph: "God shall surely visit you, and ye shall bring up my bones with you." Thus their faith in God was strengthened. They believed his words, they sang his praise. Now, all this is literal truth and figurative of spiritual truth; the letter and spirit of Scripture give but one testimony to the experience of God's people in all ages. The waters shall not overflow, the flame shall not kindle upon one of the saints of God's elect. His presence with them shall be known, not so much by the comfort that we expect as by *the power* that he executeth. The promise of Christ being with his people in fire and in water has reference to *the power* that he displays for their deliverance. He does not help them, so that they do not feel the heat of fire, but then it shall not kindle upon them; no, not even scorch their skin or singe their hair. They feel the strength of the flood is *above their power* to resist; but it is marvellously held back, for they are not carried away. He who has passed through sorrows, griefs, fires, and floods knows all the weight of every affliction with which his people are visited, and he is able to succour them that are tried, be it circumstantial or spiritual.

I might easily refer you to other instances in God's word, such as David's many and various troubles—"the times that went over him;" Jehoshaphat in danger by

joining with Ahab in battle to recover Ramoth Gilead; Hezekiah in distress with Sennacherib's threat of invasion and captivity; Daniel against the jealousies and crafty designs of his fellow-courtiers, but it would take up too much of your time. You have a clue by which you can trace out the truth of the promise for yourself when reading over these portions of God's word. Yet there is one instance of the literal fulfilment of the promise which must not be passed over; it is that of the three Hebrews thrown into the fiery furnace. Here we have two testimonies to the fact of Christ's presence being with them. The King, Darius, knew they were cast in the furnace bound. He expected to see them instantly consumed to ashes; but no, he sees them still living, loose, walking in the midst of the furnace. Mark you, a clear white heat. He could clearly see their form and their visage. He saw a fourth person, the majesty of whose countenance appears to have struck him with the thought that it was like the Son of God. Yes, it was the Son of God; the same who wrestled with Jacob; the same who was with his people in the midst of the sea, and he was with these three faithful men in the fire. He restrained the heat of the fire to them: "The three, when Jesus made the fourth, found fire as soft as air." The other testimony was that when they came out the smell of fire had not passed upon them. Though this is a literal fact, yet how true it is of the spiritual. I doubt not but that some of you can give a testimony sealing the promise true.

But I must draw to a close. In passing through the wilderness of this life to the land of promise, we shall find at times rivers lie between the path before us. These have to be crossed through; bridges are not provided. But, mark you, it is as the river crosses, *the breadth, not its length*. That has never happened to any of God's children yet, nor ever will. The shortest path only is what they have to tread—that is, from one margin on the one side to the other, so that deliverance is near. It may be by terrible things in righteousness the Lord answers our prayers—through the fire or through the flood; but the deliverance is as sure as the promise. He that hath delivered doth deliver and will yet deliver. The Lord delivers his people from all apprehended evil, from natural evils, and from other evils to which they are liable.

Bear in mind, tried believers, the promise is for your support; be assured the Lord reigneth. He controls all floods, he restrains the fiercest heat. If the earth itself were to be melted with fervent heat, you will be preserved. Frost shall be fire, and fire shall be frost when he commands the hour. It is God's covenant and oath: "I will be with thee," the rivers shall not overflow thee, the fire shall not burn thee, nor even kindle upon thee. He brings against every element that you fear will be your destruction a greater force than they can ever bring, because his power is almighty, infinite, and divine, and nothing can harm you while Jesus lives. May the Lord give us the assurance of this precious promise, and enable us to take the comfort of it whenever we are called to pass through seasons of trial, sorrow, and distress, and his name shall have all the praise. Amen.

NOTE.—It may be stated that this was the author's first sermon at Hephzibah Chapel, and though it is now eight years since it was preached, the reader is assured that it is, with few exceptions, verbally and substantially the same as was then spoken, ample notes having been taken at the time, and afterwards written out fully. The same remark applies to the five following sermons, which were preached at that period. The reason of their being selected for this volume is on account of the importance of the subjects which they embrace.

* The event alluded to in the second paragraph of this sermon was the sudden bereavement of the Author's wife in that chapel, during the singing of the closing hymn, on Lord's day evening, August 18, 1848. The last words she sung were:

" Though in a foreign land,
We are not far from home;
And nearer to our house above
We every moment come."

THE SON OF GOD'S REQUEST AND GIFT OF HEAVENLY GLORY ON BEHALF OF THE CHURCH.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,
On Lord's Day Evening, March 10th, 1861.

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—JOHN XVII. 24.

THE last year of our Lord's life on earth was emphatically the year of his redeemed, the acceptable year of the Lord, the jubilee year of the whole church of God. It was the period which had been looked forward to for ages by the patriarchs and prophets of old. Their faith was in him who was for to come—it rested on the promise couched in the prophetic threatening which the Lord God had made to the great enemy of mankind, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. To us, at this distance of six thousand years, it would appear as if the Light of truth was then feeble and partly obscured, the mere dawning of the day upon the world, then darkened by the sin and sorrow of our first parents, at least, it is commonly so considered; but I confess I do not lean to that opinion; I am inclined to believe that the revelations of grace, mercy, and peace, made to our first parents after their fall, were even clearer and fuller than we ourselves possess with the whole volume of inspired writings; be that as it may, it is beyond all conjecture that the Messiah's incarnation, life, and sacrifice, were made known, declared and believed, expected and looked for by the saints of God in the earliest of the patriarchal times. The record *to us* is obscure, undoubtedly, but that is to be imputed to our present standpoint of observation.

We speak of the last year of our Lord's life as eventful, and truly so; but what shall we say of *the last week!* What a crowd of incidents rush upon us! We are lost in astonishment! Never was there written such a biography, never were such scenes witnessed, never were such deeds enacted, never were such words recorded as we find written for our learning in the inspired Word of God. But we get more intensely interested when we begin to reflect upon *the last day* of Christ's life in Jerusalem; I mean the day preceding his crucifixion. What a busy and stirring day was that! There was his triumphal entry from Bethany to Jerusalem, meek and lowly, as he was; seen riding on the colt the foal of an ass. Yet he was the born king, and the acknowledged king, the son of David, in whom was united the person of Christ the Messiah, the Son of God, and hence the ascriptions of praise, "Hosanna in the highest!" His entrance in the temple was marked by the glory which the prophets had declared should be. That temple he called his Father's house; he owned it as such; he revered it as such; and therefore drove out the buyers and sellers as profane persons. Yet anon we see him going forth as a private individual with his disciples to the large upper room made ready for them, that they might keep the passover. This was early in the afternoon, the evening sacrifice being offered at three o'clock. At this paschal feast, in the same room, was then instituted what we emphatically call the Lord's Supper. We need not refer to all the various points of his discourse recorded in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of John's gospel; but the various incidents are striking. Here was the treachery of Judas exposed. Here Peter made his boasting. Here he received a warning and a revelation of the danger in which he stood. We are also told how they sang a hymn, the "Great Hallel," the 118th Ps. They leave the house, proceed to the temple, they pass through Solomon's Porch, then the "Beautiful Gate," and now they approach the Vine Gate, so called from the large carved vine with golden grapes. Then we have the discourse thereon. Jesus speaks of his disciples' union to him by covenant love, faith in his person and doctrine, and their continuance in him by virtue of his eternal and covenant love to them. He explains more fully to them as to his leaving them, and the object to be accomplished; and parti-

cularly does he explain to them the benefits that they would receive by his removal.

We must just notice *the last words* which Jesus spoke to his disciples in their collective capacity, before his crucifixion. He designed that they should understand wherein their source of true peace was to be found—IN HIM. In the world they would be sure to have tribulation, but notwithstanding all that, it would not hurt them. They were to be of good cheer, for he had already overcome the world. "I have overcome the world;" these were the last words of Jesus to them on that memorable occasion.

Our Lord remained still in the inner court of the temple; probably in that called the priest's. Now, Jesus prays *with* them, but more particularly *for* them. It was not an unusual thing for Jews to pray in the temple. The temple was designed to be a house of prayer for all nations. It was the time of prayer, because it was the time of incense being burnt in the temple. In the court of the men, and in that of the women, were to be seen the whole multitude of the people praying without. (Luke i. 10.) Now, the prayer of our Lord with his disciples on this occasion was most remarkable. It is one by itself. It may be called emphatically *the Lord's Prayer*. It was his own aspirations towards heaven; his own heart's desires breathed forth to his Father on behalf of those disciples who were then with him, and who in their persons and presence also represented the whole church of God. At this precise moment Jesus, the Son of God, stood in the temple as THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST, offering to God, his Father, *his intercessory prayer for all his people*. It was the antitypical incense which rose before his Father with divine acceptance, and which guaranteed and secured the eternity of that life and bliss given to the chosen inheritance, and by virtue of which they dwell for ever in the presence of God and his holy angels. The subject matter of his prayer you will perceive is founded on the divine and eternal union which subsists between them and him as their ever-living and covenant head, and the gift of the Father when he blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he chose them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.

In this prayer of our Lord we have opened unto us, that is, we who are believers in him, the nature of that compact which was entered into between the Father and the Son—the council of peace, or, as we more commonly call it, the covenant of grace. Here we see the conditions on which Jesus grounds his claim, that all his people should be with him eternally in glory. He first claims that he himself shall be glorified: “Glorify thy Son.” Why, because he had finished the work which his Father had given him to do, the Mediatorial work of fulfilling the law, of making atonement, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness—the perfection of his prophetic and priestly offices is thus fully declared: Out of this twofold character which our Lord sustains arises the prayer in which he more particularly intercedes for his disciples and all believers who should hereafter be manifested as the children of God by faith in him. This prayer, as I have just said, *is based* on the divine union that has eternally existed between the Father and the Son, and not only so, but *its object* is that each individual member of this family of grace should know it for themselves, realize it in their own experience, and that the proofs of this union shall be so manifested before the world, that he should be known as the gift of the Father for the redemption of a chosen race, and that they were eternally beloved of the Father—loved with the same love as the Father loved the Son.

The prophetic and priestly office which our Lord sustains by virtue of his mediatorial character, and which by his life and work on earth is fully completed, opened up another office which he sustains to the church of God. This is his kingship. His kingly office immediately commenced on the completion of his work *as the servant* of the Father; it constitutes the perfection of his mediatorial character. The Son of God claims, and is invested with, by the Father, kingly power, kingly authority, kingly glory. As the Son of God, the divinely constituted king of the kingdom of God, king of the kingdom of heaven, he, independently of his mediatorial character, claims and demands of God the Father his divine and indisputable right, that all his people, those whom the Father had given him, should participate in all the blessedness which would be comprehended in beholding his primeval glory, and being eternally in his presence.

I have been a long while coming to the point of the text, but I felt we could not enter into the majesty and fulness of blessing which these words contain by hastily slipping through the context. I will now read the text again: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

My object in this discourse is to show that the Lord's people are raised to heaven, where Christ sitteth in all his primeval glory, by virtue of his own will and gift, apart from his atoning merits, and apart from his imputed righteousness. That is, the saints in heaven are not there as the mere consequence of Christ's death, or from their renewed nature; they are there by Christ's own authority as the Son of God, being co-equal with his Father—distinct and separate from all the other blessings of redemption. I know I am taking high ground, but you will not find that I shall propound any new doctrine, nor yet present a new view of an old truth, but shall endeavour to draw especial attention to that one great thought which I have put before you, so that it may stand more prominently, and be seen to fuller advantage than we, perhaps, have been accustomed hitherto to look.

In the FIRST place, I shall endeavour to show, *That the covenant of life made with Adam was forfeited by him, and that he, as the head of the human posterity, ruined both its nature, its happiness, and its hopes.*

The Scriptures reveal to us that the first man, Adam, was created in the image of God; a being pure in his understanding, affections, dispositions, and emotions, capable of serving, pleasing, and delighting in God while he thus stood; God having breathed into him the breath of life, he became a living soul—mark, this soul is immaterial as to its substance; it was holy and pure as to its essence, and is immortal as to its existence, its consciousness, and its individuality, either in union with the body or without it, constituting its personality and identity. The Scriptures farther reveal to us that the man Adam was placed where there was everything good to look at, everything good to eat; everything that was right and proper for his condition. In this place, the garden of Eden, there stood two trees—the tree of life and the tree of knowledge. The divine law was: "Of every tree of the gar-

den thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat." Now, this law was written in the heart of Adam. His reason, conscience, and will were so far enlightened by the law, that by nature his love would prompt his obedience. We learn, also, that beside the prohibition as to the tree of knowledge, there was a penalty declared on its disobedience, "for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." We know the sequel. Adam, by his own free will, did disobey the divine command. He became a transgressor, the covenant of life was broken. A moral death, commonly called spiritual, immediately ensued. His circumstances and condition were reversed, his position in the garden of Eden, where was the tree of life, was forfeited, and he was driven out, no longer to partake thereof, and ultimately his body became subject to corporeal death. His disobedience shut him out of God's favour. It rendered him what he was not before. It rendered him what he never could be again—perfect and pure in himself, and, instead of being pure and innocent, he became a sinner. All his moral perfections, involving his understanding, conscience, and will, became depraved. He was now unlike his Creator, and consequently there was an inevitable separation of man from God, of spirit with spirit, of intercourse, and of fellowship. As a creature, therefore, now a sinner by his own actual transgression, he is for ever debarred from regaining the original state of innocency, happiness, and favour in which he at first stood. Some persons have unwisely reasoned upon the fall of Adam and its attendant evils, and have impiously demanded, Could not God have prevented all this? To this we can only reply, that the perfection of divine wisdom, goodness, and justice dwell in God alone: the immutability of his nature is peculiar to himself. Infallibility is God's grand prerogative alone. Mutability necessarily belongs to every person and every thing that is *created*. "Behold, his angels he charged with folly; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight." Let sinful imaginations be, therefore, suppressed and silenced.

The Scriptures again enlighten us as to the universality of man's depravity: "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek after God. They are all gone aside. They are altogether become filthy. There

is none that doeth good; no, not one." (Ps. xiv. 2, 3.) "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 2, 3.) This is the testimony to the universal depravity of mankind. Man is depraved, not by the growth of habit, or want of culture, but by nature; the stock-root was depraved, and has infected us all. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. v. 12.)

But now let us come nearer home. How stands Scripture truth with regard to ourselves? If we have in any degree been enlightened by the Spirit of truth, we shall be enabled, perhaps, to say something from our own observation and experience that will correspond with God's word. In the first place, did we not discover that being made light in the Lord, once we were darkness? Not only so, but that we were dead in trespasses and in sins? That we were under the dominion and power of Satan, our will inclined to evil, and that in every stage of life sin discovered itself to be the ruling power over us? Do we not remember what ignorance and darkness overspread our minds? Our understandings were incapable of knowing divine truth. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Thus it was with us whilst in nature's grave. The ruin of our happiness is well described by the psalmist: "Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. iii. 16-18.) The apostle, in another place (Eph. ii. 12), also very strikingly expresses our condition by nature: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Can any statement more truly depict the ruin of our nature by sin, the ruin of all our happiness in this life, and the groundlessness of all our hopes of ever being able to acquire the favour of God? Merit being altogether out of the question, we are reduced to an absolute impossibility of ever hoping, by nature, to be in a condition of improvement, or of any expectation to be derived from the fact of the mere misery to which we are reduced as would excite the pity and compassion of

the Creator to recover us. The divine decree is absolute: "The soul that sinneth shall die." The covenant of life was—Do this and live. The covenant was broken, and death immediately followed. Death has passed upon all men: "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." All men by nature are dead to God, dead in sin. This death appertains to all those powers of the soul and spirit that we term moral or spiritual; that which originally was the likeness of the image of God. It is not an annihilation of the soul, but is a depravity of its nature, intellectual and moral, affecting the judgment, conscience, and will. In other words, the heart is depraved and the mind darkened. This death is also the separation of the soul from the presence of God as to his favour and enjoyment, but not his government as the Creator. You will thus be prepared to admit that if there were any possibility of man's salvation, it must be by a scheme arising out of some circumstances or by some plan wholly apart and distinct from his condition of ruin and degradation. As I have just said, it was not our misery that excited the compassion of God; for if it were, his justice might be impugned with some degree of plausibility; but God has put it totally out of the power of men or devils to find fault with the method of salvation which he has set forth in the gospel of his grace. His righteousness is therein declared, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. We are now prepared to proceed to the second step, by which we hope to reach at the great subject couched in our text.

Consider, in the SECOND place, *That the Covenant of life being broken, God has provided a better Covenant—a Covenant of Grace.*

We are accustomed to speak of God's mercy, the grace of God, and I glory in the thought there is such a thing as the mercy of God, the grace of God. But, my friends, let us endeavour to have right thoughts about these great matters. In the Scriptures of truth there is undoubtedly revealed the mercy of God to fallen man, there is forgiveness with God that he may be feared; thus there is hope for the wretched, mercy for the miserable, and salvation for the lost. God in his infinite mercy has provided a scheme of salvation; it originated in his pure, free, and

sovereign rich grace alone; it is founded in his own everlasting love towards those whom he sovereignly elected to be heirs of salvation. This is where all salvation begins, the sovereign love of God; this sovereign love of God is not that arbitrary, capricious thing which carnal reasoners assert, but is founded in infinite goodness, wisdom, and truth—just and right is he. David speaks of an everlasting covenant made with him, this was a covenant of grace; it could not possibly be any other—a covenant ordered in all things and sure. The covenant of grace is a covenant made between God the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit; it originated in the love of God the Father, it was undertaken by God the Son, and is applied to the persons of the redeemed by God the Spirit. Before all time was this covenant formed and entered into by the glorious Trinity; Jehovah the Father of his sovereign will and good pleasure chose the persons to be saved, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and gave him to be their Covenant head; the Lord Jesus undertook their redemption by rendering a perfect obedience to God's law, which by imputation was to be to all and is upon all who believe in him for righteousness. But stay! more was wanted. God's law had been dishonoured. How was it to be made honourable? How was Justice to be satisfied? A penalty was threatened, a penalty was incurred, and the penalty must be paid. How can it be done? By the shedding of blood. Who could make an atonement? Not all the angels in heaven, not all the race of man, the Son of God could alone make such an atonement as would be accepted by Divine Justice; it was done, it was accepted, it was a substitutionary work on behalf of the chosen whom God had loved before the foundation of the world; Divine Law was thus magnified, the believer was saved, and God was glorified. How sweet when this truth is applied to the soul, and we can say with the poet,

"My sins were his, upon him laid,
He all their weight sustained;
My debt how vast, which yet he paid,
And my deliverance gained."

We have seen thus far the way made clear for the believer being brought nigh to God. There was also a provision in this covenant for a renewal of his nature; he that was before dead in trespasses and in sins is now

made by the eternal Spirit alive again, quickened by him, and by him this life is carried on; the believer now lives unto God, walks in his ways, being found in the way of truth and righteousness. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold, all things have become new:" so far, then, the man's standing in Christ is manifested before men. As it regards his standing in Christ before God, it is owing to his being clothed in the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus, a complete atonement having been made for all his sins by the death of Christ, and who has risen again for his justification; and since by the operation of the Holy Ghost upon his heart in regeneration he has become a sanctified man, he is now qualified for the enjoyment of God's presence; being made a partaker of the divine nature, and brought nigh to God, he can have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ; he is made meet for the heavenly inheritance.

Yet it is not the possession of these blessings that gives the believer his title to be where Christ is, and to behold the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. As a creature he is simply placed where he was before, though of course, in some respects superior, but I mean, as a creature upon this earth renewed in the spirit of his mind, whatever he has derived by the substitutionary work of Christ, in itself considered, it gives him no authority to claim heaven as his portion. He is indeed truly blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ by the gift of the Father, but all this arises simply from its being according as the Father hath chosen his person in Christ, and made his person standing in him perfectly secure. Our title to heaven as our eternal inheritance is over and above and beyond all the blessings that arise out of the soul's redemption from sin, death, and hell; it is a distinct gift in itself, arising out of the love of God in Christ, and based on Christ's own authority, by his own will and pleasure. By virtue of his equality with the Father, the Son of God claims with authority that those whom the Father had given him should be (now that his mediatorial work was accomplished) with him to behold that glory which he had before the world was—the primeval glory which he possessed before sin lighted upon this earth, or entered the heart of Satan in heaven.

If Christ had not by his own will given us heaven, how could we get there? Would a sanctified nature necessarily procure it for us? By no means. We are fitted for the enjoyment of heaven by a sanctified nature, it is true, but it gives us no title; our being made meet for the heavenly inheritance arises out of the great and glorious fact that our title for heaven is over and above and beyond what has been done *in* us. But further, all the people of God are accepted in Christ, are viewed as clothed in his perfect righteousness, and which is an everlasting righteousness, which is unto all and upon all who truly believe in him. But does even this procure our title to heavenly bliss? No; we should have lived on this earth for ever and ever, and never one moment higher. We might have had communion with God, as Adam did before he sinned, but, being a creature fitted only for the enjoyment and happiness which this earth was designed to impart, he could rise no higher. Sin, however, coming in spoilt all, and God has defeated Satan by destroying his works, in sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. Now, though all this has been done for the salvation of God's elect, and they are brought into the blessedness of knowing that they are saved from the curse of God's wrath against sin, and have the hope of eternal blessedness, yet it is not the present participation of spiritual blessings on which we rest our assurance of being with Christ and for ever beholding his glory. It is *the earnest* of our future inheritance, I grant, but it is not the title itself. You see, I repeat the same thing as to the *participation* of spiritual blessings, as was just said, as to the actual *possession* of them: the distinction is obvious, participation has reference to one's experience or enjoyment; possession, as to the fact itself, whether we are assured of it or not.

But again. God's eternal and everlasting love to man might have exerted and made known to him, and he made to feel his love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, and still there would be no title or merit thereby. Friendship gives no title to possession, no not even a bare promise; there must be a properly constituted title from the owner in order to make over to another property available for his use and enjoyment; without it, there can be no authority for claiming possession. It is not, therefore, the indubitable proofs that we may have of the love,

favour, and friendship of God in our souls that gives us a title to the heavenly inheritance, though they are certainly blessed *indications* that heaven is our home, and that we are being brought on our way thither. Our title is over and above and beyond the exercise of God's loving-kindnesses of which we may have the experience.

Thus I have endeavoured, in various ways, to cut away the ground from under any who may be resting their title to the heavenly state merely upon that which is done for the church of God by virtue of the mediatorial work of Christ, or what has been known and felt in the heart experimentally by the Spirit's gracious operations. My design has been all along to lead you to see that the gift of eternal glory to the saints arises out of, and is based upon, the gracious compact provided for in the covenant of grace, irrespective of those transactions which were undertaken as the result of that covenant. If I have succeeded in making my point clear to you, it will enable you to place the crown upon *the person* of the Son of God instead of upon *his mediatorial work*. Let us now attempt briefly to—

III. *Consider the reason and ground of the request which our Lord made to his Father that his people should be with him where he was.*

The reason and ground of the request is clearly stated in the text, and may be easily understood. The *reason* is, that they may behold the glory of the Son of God. The *ground* is, that the Son of God was loved of the Father before the foundation of the world. In speaking a few thoughts upon these two points, I hope I shall be preserved from darkening counsel by words without knowledge. We will first look at what I call the *ground* of the request. This is the Father's eternal love. God is love. Essentially so and eternally the same by reason of his own self-existence and immutableness. He can be no other than what he is in himself, *love*. In the unity of the Godhead we have revealed to us a Trinity of Persons, —the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; consequently, as the Godhead is eternal, the Persons are eternal, and the relationships are also eternal; hence the union is also eternal as well as divine. The Father loved the Son eternally; he is the Son of God in truth and love. The union between the Father and the Son is thus stated:—
“As thou, Father, art in me and I in thee.” The union

is therefore perfect, complete, and indissoluble, founded in love, and that love being the nature of the Godhead itself.

We have referred to the covenant of grace between the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead. The *immediate* purpose of that covenant was the salvation of the church of God; *the ultimate purpose was their glorification*. We have stated that it originated in the love of God the Father; that the Son of God undertook the work of redemption by becoming the Mediator between God and man, and by taking the sinner's place. To accomplish the salvation of the church the Son of God, though co-equal with his Father in nature, power, and glory, must become the servant of the Father in order to fulfil his will and the work he had undertaken. To save his church the Father gave his Son, that they might live through him, and also gave him to be the Head over his body the church; and by virtue of the Father's union to the Son and the union of the church to the Son there is a complete oneness with the Father—"a mutual inbeing in each other." Now, on this foundation—this divine and eternal union between Christ and his church and also to his Father—the Son of God founds his claim and right. The Mediatorial work, so far as suretyship and substitution are concerned, is now fulfilled. Founded on right, a perfect union and a perfect equality, the Son of God, therefore, claims and demands that the *ultimate* purpose for which he undertook the Mediatorship should be henceforth consummated—the glorification of the whole election of grace—"TO BRING MANY SOULS UNTO GLORY." The perfection of "the Captain of their salvation" was constituted by the sufferings he undertook in their stead and for their sake; and now he is himself, as their Mediator, to be crowned with glory and honour; honour and majesty is to be laid upon him as the God-man Christ Jesus. As the Son of God he now claims with delight the recompense, reward, and fruit of all his degradation and pains—the *eternal salvation and glorification of all his people*. He in himself is the head, root, and foundation of the entire election of grace. He has finished the work which his Father gave him to do. He is now no more in the world, and he comes to his Father. What for? To claim and request that part of the divine compact which was the Son's right to demand. "Father, I will that

they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." By no means are we to understand that this claim is made and demanded, as though there was an unyielding on the part of the Father; but the divine authority and title by which the church of God is glorified is here seen with greater beauty in the fact that every redeemed child of fallen Adam is raised to heavenly places by reason of a divine and holy compact with the Eternal Three, originating in the love of God and Father, and which he is as willing to concede to his Son as the Son is prompt to assert his own right on behalf of his body the church. So far, then, we consider the request is based on the love of God and the mutual union subsisting betwixt Christ and his Father.

We have now to glance at *the reason* why Christ makes the request. It is "that they may behold my glory." This glory is that which he possessed with the Father before he laid it aside in order to become the Mediator. This primeval glory, the original native glory which the Son of God had co-essentially and coeval with the Father, is that to which the church has hitherto been necessarily strangers; but the request is that they may behold it, hitherto unknown to the human race. But now that salvation is accomplished, the wonders of redeeming love are to be unfolded to the church's view in the person of the Saviour. His glorious person is then to be more fully revealed. Now we see through a glass darkly—then, face to face. He by his own will, in union with the Father, claims and demands with authority that his people shall be with him where he is, that they may behold his glory—the glory which he had before the world was. What we know *now* is very imperfect; what we shall know *then* will increasingly astonish us. Ages upon ages throughout eternity will be occupied in beholding the inexhaustible glory and fulness of the Son of God. This will constitute the eternal happiness of the redeemed family of heaven—beholding the glories of the Lamb amidst his Father's throne. There is also a glory which Jesus possesses by the gift of the Father—that which he possesses as the God-man: this he also claims, Glorify thou me, me in my human nature, which I assumed and in which my mediatorial and substitutionary work was accomplished: this seems to be the uttermost of Christ's will and pleasure concerning us. He discovers and un-

folds his boundless love to us, that we, who are loved by the Father, chosen in Christ, should be where he is, to behold his glory. Eternal union with Christ is to be the basis of everlasting communion with God. Believers will be eternally and completely happy in beholding the glory of Christ, crowned with glory and honour. He will be eternally glorified and admired in all his saints. The root of all which is to be traced to the eternal and everlasting love of God.

I will now conclude with a few general and practical observations.

Obs. 1. *We see the perfect equality of the Lord Jesus Christ with his Father.* Here is couched in the Saviour's demand that his people shall be with him to behold his glory—his Godhead, his Sonship, his Mediatorial power, his authority, and his universal dominion. These are alike eternal, being constituted by the nature of his Person as the Second Person in the divine and glorious Trinity. This gives us a most exalted view of his Person. His Godhead, Sonship, power, and glory, being alike eternal and coeval with the Father. The language of the text implies all that. See here on what the faith of God's elect is fed and nourished: To live by faith on the Son of God is to have a believing view of what he is in his own Person. How could faith trust the salvation of the soul nakedly and unreservedly but in such a Saviour as the Son of God is—one who is God, and who, though the Mediator between God and the church, claims equality with God? Here is the rock of our salvation: He that believeth on the Son of God hath life, and shall never be ashamed.

Obs. 2. *See the glorious nature of Christ's work—his priesthood and his intercession.* The glory of his Person gives a glory to his work. Every character he sustains with a dignity that adds a refulgence to every action that he performed. His priesthood is eternal. He is the great High Priest—a perfect one, without sin. His sacrifice was perfect, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. The immaculateness of his Person as the God-man was the fragrant incense which God accepted. His complete atonement made an end of sin, and his perfect obedience brought in an everlasting righteousness. The High Priest, his offering and the incense, have become a propitiation between God and the sinner. Every sinner.

coming to the mercy seat, pleading the name, blood, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ as the ground of his hope for pardon and full and free redemption, presents merits which cannot possibly be rejected. God cannot deny himself; he gave his Son that we might live through him.

"No sinner shall ever be empty sent back
Who comes seeking mercy for Jesus' sake."

Obs. 3. *The glorious destiny of the people of God.* It is to be where Christ sitteth, to be for ever with the Lord, to behold his glory—the glory that he had with the Father before the world was. What glorious hopes are raised for each believer to indulge in! Have any of you such exalted hopes? I do humbly hope, from the fact of my mind being led to this subject to-night, that there are some souls who can find food, rich food, on such sublime truths as I have attempted to declare. When our souls are brought home to glory, re-united to that body which is to be made incorruptible, oh, with what joy we shall sing the song of redeeming love! Songs of everlasting joy upon our heads; all tears wiped away; sorrow and sighing for ever fled away. But, oh, that blessed thought! no sin to mar our peace, nothing to interrupt our joy, nothing to tempt our eyes from off the dear Redeemer, no doubt to cross our minds, but sweet, blessed assurance, Christ is mine, glory is mine, for ever and ever.

"For ever to behold him shine,
For evermore to call him mine,
And see him still before me;
For ever on his face to gaze,
And meet his full assembled rays,
While all the Father he displays
To all the saints in glory."

Obs. 4. *The Lord's people are now in a better position than before they fell in Adam.* By the covenant of grace a union is constituted between Christ and his Church with his Father which is unconditional and immutable. Beside, in the first covenant there was no relationship, no adoption, no law of love; the mutableness of a conditional covenant was soon apparent, and the ruin of the whole race of mankind was complete. Here in this covenant of grace glory is so linked that nothing in time or nature can sever it, Christ having executed his Father's will as the Mediator of the covenant, authoritatively demands that all his

people, every one, the weakest, the feeblest lamb in his flock, shall be with him to participate in that glory which he had with his Father before the foundation of the world. So that with the poet we may say,

"He raised me from the depths of sin,
The gates of gaping hell;
And fixed my standing more secure
Than 'twas before I fell."

Obs. 5. *The foundation of the believer's hopes.* It is God's everlasting love. This is the origin of all the blessings that the church of God can ever hope or expect. Never let us forget, "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vi. 23.) The gift is through him, that is, his own gift, by his own authority, and not simply for his sake. Let every one see and examine upon what his hope is founded, upon what he expects; can you say in the words of that choice hymn,

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name;
On Christ the solid rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

We are living too low, if we are living below this mark; we have not sufficiently high thoughts of Christ, they are all too poor. Christ wills and demands eternal life and everlasting salvation and glory for all his elect people. Survey this sweet truth, ask the Spirit of truth to lead you into it. Here you will find the joy of your salvation; it involves more than at first appears. You will see the spring from whence all your hopes of happiness flow; and this will not only raise your hopes, but it will increase your joy, strengthen your faith, warm your love, and you will, like the eunuch, the more you know and understand of Christ's love, the more you will go on your way rejoicing.

Strangers to Christ! strangers to truth! What think you of these things? Perhaps you think it is all unintelligible jargon. But what think you of this simple truth: "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." If you have any concern for your immortal soul, I say, "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, he will have mercy upon him, and he will abundantly pardon." Amen.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST, AND THE GLORY THAT FOLLOWED.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Evening, March 31st, 1861. (Easter Sunday.)

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"—LUKE XXIV. 26.

THE two great leading subjects of Christian doctrine are—the sufferings of Christ and his glory; his mediatorial work, and his kingly dignity and honour. This, too, is the order in which the church of Christ is placed—first, temporary sufferings; second, eternal glory.

The worldling has reversed the order of this—good things now, evil things some other time. The reason of this is, sin has turned the world upside down; and this is how it is that we account for the marked difference between the world and the church. They are at opposite points; their aims are at the antipodes of each other. The masters whom they serve are as distinct, and as easily distinguished, as the light is from the darkness; and the service which their servants render characterises them either as the servants of God, or as the servants of sin.

But Christ, as said the woman of Samaria, came to restore all things; and so thought the two disciples as they were journeying to Emmaus. This thought, however, was but a dim view of the truth. They showed to this, apparently, an inquisitive stranger, what imperfect, low views they entertained of Christ's work; what carnal notions of his object in coming to this earth, and also of the work which he was to accomplish. They thought some great change, some mysterious alteration, was to take place in their national position and circumstances. They thought that the Christ was to come a conqueror at the first starting. So thought the Jews, generally; and

so thought the Herod who sought to slay the born king of the Jews in his infancy, for he thought that his own throne would be endangered thereby.

Two things in the Person of Jesus, doubtless, must have occasioned a mysteriousness, and a degree of perplexity, in the minds of these two disciples, and, indeed, it confounded them. These were his occasional rays of divinity that he shot through both his words and his actions, and his perpetual suffering throughout his public life. They had not forgotten what they had seen and heard; but having no distinct views of either the prophecies concerning him, nor of the spiritual nature of his kingdom, they failed to perceive the wonderful constitution of his Person, and when he was removed from them by violent hands, they could not account for it, but merely express their disappointment by stating, "but we trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel." Yet these men were unlike the Jews in general. The Jews went about their usual avocations as though nothing had happened; but these two men were very sad, uneasy, restless. They were for leaving the rest of their companions, and on a short journey they proceed; but our Lord Jesus Christ has his heart set upon them, and is bent secretly on bringing them back. Pity it is, when Christians are for a time disappointed in their expectations, that they should separate from each other, and thereby weaken every part. What a mercy it is that Christ does not permit us to forsake him quite, though we may attempt to forsake the assembling of ourselves together! He knows our ramblings; he knows the best methods of making us more acquainted with himself.

Christ made himself known to these two disciples, and as their object in going to Emmaus was for no particular object, they came back sooner than they intended. Their hearts were warmed with his love, and back they hasted to the other disciples, to tell what a blessed time of communion they had had with their dear Lord, and how he was made known to them in the breaking of bread. What a commentary, on the prophecies, and on the Psalms! One could fain wish their memories had been inspired, and that they had written this commentary of commentaries. Matthew Henry, Dr. Gill, and Dr. Barnes, might have spared their labour.

These two disciples did, however, treasure up the sub-

stance of what Christ had taught them. He opened up their understandings. Their hearts burned, their hearts were warmed, their affections were all alive. They were enthusiastic when they told the others how that Christ had made himself known, and yet suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. When their understandings were opened, then they understood how it was that Jesus made himself of no reputation. They then understood why he took upon him the form of a servant, and why he was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and how it was that being found in the fashion of a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. They then understood why it was that God had therefore highly exalted him, and had given him a name above every name, and that there was no other name under heaven by which men could be saved—the man Christ Jesus.

Such, indeed, is the tenor of the prophecies concerning Christ. The cross and the crown will be found in reading Isa. liii., Dan. ix., Zech. xii. 10, Ps. xxii., lxix.—lxxxviii., &c. So, indeed, is the doctrine of the apostles Paul, Peter, and others. They learned at the same school, of the same master, and hence their doctrine is the same. See what Peter has said upon it: “Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.” (1 Pet. i. 10, 11.)

What an unparalleled teacher was the Lord Jesus Christ! How he reasoned with these two disciples! How he showed the fitness of things!—the necessity for Christ’s death; the necessity for his state of poverty; the necessity of understanding the work which the salvation of his church involved! What a body of divinity is comprehended in the words of our text: “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?” We will endeavour to consider more particularly the words before us:

I. The sufferings of Christ.

II. Why he suffered them.

III. His exaltation.

I. *The sufferings of Christ.*—The history of Jesus

Christ's earthly life is one of the most wonderful, mysterious productions that was ever presented to the world. The more we contemplate it, bearing in mind his heavenly origin, the more we are amazed at the sufferings he endured. When we consider the purity of his life, his unparalleled poverty, and the implacability of his enemies, we are astonished beyond measure. The sufferings of Christ may be seen in three points of view—corporeal, mental, and judicial. Corporeal, those which affected his bodily state; mental, those pertaining to the mind and heart; judicial, such as were endured from God his Father in respect of the more immediate pain and sorrow as the result of his taking the sinner's place.

1. *Corporeal*. First, we see his sufferings were bodily, in the fact that he was without a home of his own. When the lawyer, who evidently had been much struck with our Lord's teaching and clear expositions of Moses and the prophets said, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest;" the reply was, "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Again, his poverty of circumstances was such, he was dependent on the bounty of others for his daily support: though his wants were supplied by the women who followed him, yet at times, he hungered. Of his poverty we often read, but of his being able from his own personal resources, as a man, to supply his own daily necessities we nowhere read. The fact is significant, for doubtless it is from his experience of human poverty on earth, we, by his perfect sympathy for us, are made rich in grace to bear it for ourselves.

(2.) The sufferings of his *social* life were unquestionably keen and cutting. He had not the sympathies of his own family, he was often reproached by them, and *his friends*, on one occasion, sent for to take him, for they said he was beside himself. What home or family enjoyment could our Lord ever possess with such persons, who considered him an object only for safe custody? As he had no honour in his own country, it is evident there could be neither profit nor pleasure in doing good where his ministry was exercised; and it is added he could do no mighty work there because of their unbelief. Indeed, in Capernaum itself, his life was at one time imminently in danger, "but he *escaped* out of their hands."

(3.) In his *public* life what sufferings must he have en-

dured from the constant opposition of the Jews! The Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, lawyers, all conspired to provoke him, lying in wait to catch him in his words, to entangle him, so that they might have some occasion to accuse him, to injure his reputation, and to prevent his usefulness. By the treachery of a false disciple, he was betrayed into violent hands, underwent a mock trial, rudely insulted and abused to an insufferable extent, unrighteously convicted upon a false charge, and through popular clamour, urged by the unbelieving Jews, his body was shamefully subject to the cruelest treatment it could receive from human hands—the execrable death of the cross.

2. We see the sufferings of our Lord were also *mental*. From the fact that his soul, as well as his body, was pure and sinless, we conclude that his sufferings were more severe and intense than we, who are fallen creatures, can imagine. We know what it is to suffer reproach wrongfully. Now, Jesus was reproached continually. In one of the Psalms he said, “Reproach hath broken my heart.” What unparalleled sufferings must they have been which he endured in the wilderness, from the temptations of Satan; tempted to doubt his own Sonship; to tempt God’s providence; to tempt God’s care and safety of his person; tempted to pride and false honour. Now, his sufferings from these temptations are beyond our imagination; we, by reason of sin, have an element within us upon which the tempter can work, and to his temptations our depraved nature is inclined, and therefore there is a degree of obtuseness which renders us incapable of *feeling* how great is the evil of those temptations by which he was assailed. This the Saviour did feel, and thus his acquaintance with temptations in all points rendered him perfect and faithful as our high priest, being thereby capable of succouring those who are tempted.

To enter minutely into the mental sufferings of our Lord would be to enter upon an inexhaustible subject; we read of his fears, of his offering up supplications with strong crying and tears, and was heard in that which he feared. What details of his agonies of soul we find depicted and spoken of in the 22nd and 69th Psalms, and also the 53rd of Isaiah. We read of his being troubled in spirit, of being grieved for the hardness of heart which he witnessed, of the tears he shed, of the lamentations he

uttered, of the threatenings he denounced, his anger and his rebukes—all which bespeak an amount of suffering which his holy soul endured, of which we have but little conception. We venture to approach the margin of this great ocean, to embark upon it we are unable; our wisdom will be to be silent, whilst we stand on the shore and wonder.

3. There is, however, in our next point, the *judicial* sufferings of our Lord, more revealed. Here our contemplations are assisted, and it is intended that thereby we shall find food for our souls. The judicial sufferings of our Lord I have explained, as referring to what the Son of God endured in respect of his mediatorial character and work which he undertook. His mediatorial life on earth was wholly on behalf of the church of God, it was not for himself. His perfect sinlessness throughout his life, rendered him capable of working out and bringing in an everlasting righteousness; this is the more apparent when we consider what contradictions he endured from sinners against himself—his authority in teaching was often questioned; his miracles were blasphemed and his testimony was disbelieved and rejected; he came unto his own, but his own received him not. He challenged his opposers to convince him of sin; he could be accused of no wrong action, of no bad spirit, no hate, no bad motive, no offensive speaking, no moral law broken, but, in fact, zealous of the law and of the temple worship; looking, then, at all the facts connected with the mediatorial life, in which Jesus personally suffered, we see it was the result of the divine appointment; there was a necessity for these sufferings, as we hope shortly to show. These sufferings were, what I call, judicial, not simply from the circumstances in which he was placed, but by virtue of that everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; every pain, sorrow, and grief were, by a divine necessity, a part of that covenant which it was his part to fulfil, and was undertaken on behalf of those whose interests he represented. This is finely expressed by one of our poets:

“In all that Jesus did on earth
His church an interest have;
Go trace him from his humble birth,
Down to the silent grave.”

That the sufferings of our Lord in his mediatorial work were peculiar and most intense will be seen by looking at that Scripture, John xii. 27: “The Greeks who

came to Jerusalem desired to see Jesus." Observe the answer that followed: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour." Again, when speaking of Judas being a traitor (John xiii. 21): "When Jesus had thus said, *he was troubled in spirit*, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, one of you shall betray me." The great work of pouring out his soul to death being in immediate prospect, though in full health and vigour of body, yet at the same time knowing all things that should come upon him, and that his betrayal into the hands of sinful men was a part of the instrumentality which God had designed by which the great work of salvation was to be accomplished. Again our poet Kent shall help us:—

"Great was the mystery, truly great,
That hell's designs should hell defeat;
But here eternal wisdom shined,
For Satan wrought what God designed."

Follow now the Saviour into the garden of Gethsemane. There we see his soul in agony, sorrowful, shrinking from the cup his Father gave him to drink—his earnest prayer. Here we see the Father has left him to his own human weakness. And on the cross he asks why his Father had forsaken him? What a piercing cry must that have been which shook the very heavens, rent the earth, and shot like flaming thunderbolts through every part of hell's dark domain! Devils were baffled and confounded, for at that moment of his weakness, Satan, the enemy of God and man, the prince and power of the air, was dethroned, and his works for ever destroyed. The keys of death, hell, and the grave were wrested from his infernal grasp, and given in possession to him whose right it is—the Captain of our salvation. Redemption's price is fully paid, it is eternally complete, and the church of God is eternally saved by a power which declares him to be the Son of God.

II. We come now to consider, *why Jesus suffered these things*. We read in the first part of the service the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. How blessedly it speaks of Christ's substitutionary work, and of those sufferings he endured, to accomplish the salvation of his elect people! That chapter has been called the tree of life, and truly it is so to the believer in Jesus; indeed, to him it is a spiritual

Gethsemane, a spiritual Mount Calvary. He looks at the sufferings and the death of Christ with other eyes than the mock professor and the ordinary bystanders. Here he beholds Christ crucified most evidently set forth. Here he perceives the greatest subject contained in all the word of God. Here he sees Christ in his person and offices, in his love and grace, most gloriously revealed. We see, when under the teachings of the divine Spirit, the undertaking of the Redeemer on behalf of his people; he, as their surety, is set forth in his sufferings, sorrows, and death, and then we have his triumphant victory and conquests over all his enemies as the fruit and effect of his wonderful death. The sixth verse speaks of Christ as the substitute of his people. Jehovah hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all. In the covenant of grace Jesus became their surety, and in taking their low place, he became responsible; he took, by imputation, their sinnership. Christ was treated as the sinner in the court of divine justice. He became incarnate, for the purpose of being treated as a sinner in his people's stead, and, though he was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, yet he suffered for sin, being, by imputation and substitution, *guilty*. And as there can be no suffering where there is no sin, so Christ being considered guilty was oppressed, afflicted, and opened not his mouth. He had nothing to urge against it, he made no complaint of the position he took in behalf of his people. He took the entire weight of all the sins of his people, he was oppressed with it, he felt it; he was afflicted, he suffered pain, anguish, guilt; his oppression and affliction consisted in the immeasurable amount of sin resting on him.

It is also said, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter." Here his perfect innocency is set forth by the figure of a lamb, also to set forth a *sacrifice* for sin. A sacrifice for sin is constituted by the innocent suffering for the guilty. The sinner suffering for his own sin is not a sacrifice, but simply paying the just penalty for his own crime. Christ is brought as a lamb into the court of divine law, and is laid on the altar of Infinite Justice. He has *given himself* willingly, without resistance, without a murmuring word, to be a sacrifice for sin, "so he opened not his mouth," for, like a guilty man, he had nothing to say. But while he gave himself to be a sacrifice for sin, there was an infinite merit and worth in his sacrifice as

such. It was the person of the Son of God who suffered, and hence he became thereby a PROPITIATION for sin. Mere human nature, however innocent and sinless in itself, would have been no propitiation. If it could have been so, verily, the Father would have spared his own Son. But it is clearly evident that the reason why Jesus the Son of God suffered, the just for the unjust, was because there was no other way by which sinners could be saved; therefore there was *an absolute necessity* for his death, seeing that God the Father, in his infinite and eternal love, had purposed the salvation of his elect. It was not the mere fact of the innocent suffering for the guilty that constituted the Atonement, nor was it the mere fact of an imputed righteousness being reckoned to the believer's account that could obtain for him an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified. The foundation of an all-sufficient Atonement, and the real value of an imputed righteousness, is constituted by the personal merit alone of HIM whose substitutionary death should *in itself* become an atonement, and whose personal obedience to divine law *could* be imputed as an everlasting righteousness to all to whom the Lord should impute no iniquity, and whose transgressions should be forgiven. Now, in all God's created universe could no such person be found. "I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me." In another place it is recorded, "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." Again: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened; burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. 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; yea, thy law is within my heart." These passages of God's word are glimpses of those eternal transactions between the eternal Three-One Jehovah in covenant. Here it is, we see, that the Son of God was the only person who could undertake the work of men's salvation. Here also we see not only his fitness and ability for accomplishing his Father's will, but we see also his willingness. His personal ability, his voluntary willingness to undertake the work of redemption, gives a meritorious worth to all he did; his sacrifice was a sacri-

fice well-pleasing unto God. The Lord is well-pleased for his righteousness' sake, for he magnified the law and made it honourable. So great and glorious a personage as the Son of God fulfilling his Father's will and pleasure made the work of salvation glorious in all its parts, from the moment of its being undertaken in covenant until it was fully accomplished by the death on the cross. Thus we see, from the incompetency and the absence of any created being who could come forward in behalf of the fallen race of man, there was but one resource—the Son of God, in union with the Father and the Spirit, at once appears and undertakes the work of salvation—because none but the Son of God could accomplish so stupendous and glorious a work; and as this work involved his incarnation on earth, there was therefore an absolute necessity for his suffering.

Again: The reason why he should suffer appears from the covenant engagements made with the Father. The council of peace was between them both. For this purpose Christ undertook to become incarnate, and in the fulness of time he was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem those who were under the law. In that nature which he took he fulfilled the law that had been broken. The fulfilling of that law by so honourable and divine a personage as the Son of God, was the bringing in of an everlasting righteousness, which is unto all and is upon all them that believe. Adam, as the head of the human race, by his transgression, brought all his posterity into ruin and degradation—lower than the beasts that perish. But Christ coming has restored the ruin in which the church of God was involved, and its hopes of happiness are placed on a better foundation; not on creature innocence, nor yet on a renewed nature, for no creature righteousness, however constituted, could avail before God. Christ alone, being the Son of God, wrought out a righteousness which is available before God by its being imputed without the works of the believer.

There was, therefore, a necessity that Christ should suffer, because he became a surety for his people. This involved a substitution. What he suffered was on their account. In themselves they were helpless, utterly incompetent; they must have perished if Christ had not undertaken their cause. There was also a necessity that

Jesus should obey the law. The law of God required to be vindicated and honoured; it had been dishonoured and would have remained so had not Jesus fulfilled it. But then his fulfilling the law for himself could not thereby prevent the penalty of a broken law falling upon them who had broken it. It behoved Jesus, who had undertaken the work of redemption, to do both—fulfil the law and pay its penalty too, and both on behalf of the redeemed. Here we see the necessity for that wonderful constitution of his person in the union of his two natures, the Godhead and manhood, which so eminently appears in him as the Redeemer. By his complete obedience the law was perfectly fulfilled, and by his death a complete satisfaction was made for sin in the penalty being fully paid. Justice can ask for nothing more at the sinner's hands, nor yet at the Surety's; it is completely satisfied. Jesus made a complete atonement for sin by his death; brought in an everlasting righteousness by his life. His sacrifice was accepted; his resurrection proved it, for it was impossible that the grave could detain him a prisoner, seeing the price was paid, and he was thus declared the Son of God with power.

Another reason why Christ suffered these things was in order that he might sympathize with his people under their sufferings. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." "For it became him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." (Isa. lxiii. 9; Heb. ii. 10-14, 17, 18.)

So far we have seen the reason why there was a necessity for Christ's sufferings, because there was an absolute necessity in the fact that HE ONLY could take the sin-

ner's place and render a satisfaction for sin. He could give the price and he could display the power which the work of redemption required to be accomplished. His obedience and his death have become available for the eternal salvation of the whole of God's elect people. We see also a reason why he should suffer from what the prophet has so minutely declared: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." Here Jehovah, or rather God the Father, is said to bruise Christ, *to crush him, to pound him*, as in a mortar. The sufferings of Christ are set forth by his being bruised. The allusion is to spices being bruised in a mortar to extract their essence, or to corn being bruised or ground between mill-stones; the bruising of Christ as in a mortar, to extract his healing virtue, to make him the sinner's health and cure. It was by the determinate will and counsel of God that Christ suffered the just for the unjust, not by permission, but by complacency—a result of God's love to his church. God, if I might so say, took a pleasure in Christ's sufferings, because by it all his councils were fulfilled, his perfections glorified, his holiness vindicated, his law magnified, his covenant sealed, Satan conquered, sin subdued, and his people righteously and everlastingly saved.

III. We are to consider thirdly and lastly, *Christ's exaltation*.

The question was asked of the two disciples by our Lord himself: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." As if he should say, it was most fitting and proper in itself, it was an inevitable necessity that he should suffer all the condition of life which his incarnation necessarily imposed upon him. Without his being made manifest in the flesh he could not have taken the sins of his people, nor could he without their nature have presented a sacrifice for us. By his taking our nature and our place, "he who knew no sin was made to be sin, for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The prophet Isaiah furnished the apostle Paul with this truth: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." The Hebrew word, as we are told, imports that by the Father's acts of imputation Christ was made guiltiness—

that is, all the guiltiness that is in sin, or all the sins of his people, in thought, word, or deed, past, present, and to come, were all transferred to him, and that his soul was made the sin-offering, the **ASHAM**, or offering for guiltiness in their souls' stead. Christ is therefore made sin by God the Father's will, for Jehovah hath made to meet upon him the iniquity of us all. Christ is treated as the guilty sinner. Sin is charged to his account, and his death is the penalty of it. Having paid the penalty of sin, death can no longer hold him. The glory upon which he immediately enters is—

1. *His resurrection from the dead.* It was impossible he could be holden of it. Justice that once demanded him for its victim now demands his release and waits to do him honour. "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Rising from the dead he entered into his glory—the glory of accomplishing salvation, the glory of being victorious over sin, the glory of being victorious over death, the glory of being victorious over the grave, the glory of being victorious over the devil and all the pains of hell. "When he had overcome the sharpness of death he opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." By his knowledge shall he justify many. He rose for his people's justification. As the fruit of his life, death, and resurrection, he will demand that the gates of eternal glory shall be lift up that the chosen seed may be admitted to a full participation of those blessings provided for them in covenant. "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Founded on eternal love and union, the glorious covenant of grace is manifested, displaying the unsearchable riches of Christ, the eternal love of the Father, and the irresistibleness of the Spirit's power in bringing the renewed soul into the realization of the blessings treasured in the person of Christ their covenant head. Thus we see the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. The glorious designs of Jehovah's love, the fulfilment of all his purposes of grace, shall be seen in the establishment of his kingdom. His kingdom must stand; every other must fall; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

2. The glory of Christ arises also from *his ascension*.

When he ascended up on high, he entered the heavenly glory, and has sat down at his Father's right hand. That human nature which he took into personal union with himself is now for ever glorified. His manhood is eternal. And because he is the Son of Man, that is, because he has the nature of man, the Father hath committed unto him all power, authority, and judgment over men's affairs both in this life and at the great judgment day. His mediatorial kingdom which he has thus derived by his incarnation, has qualified him to possess and exercise power both in heaven and in earth, and all power hath been given him of God his Father; he hath given all things into his hand; that at his name every knee should bow; for he hath made him both Lord and Christ.

3. God hath glorified his Son Jesus Christ *in his human nature*. The nature of man was not glorified until the ascension of Jesus. As the Son of God in his divine nature only he could not be glorified, for he was equal with the Father in nature, power, and eternity, and, therefore, essentially he could not be otherwise than his Father; but, as that sinless nature which he took, subjected him, for a time, to all the degradation, inconveniencies, and sorrows of earthly life, yet he is now for ever exalted by the right hand of God his Father.

“Adoring saints around him stand,
And thrones and powers before him fall;
The God shines gracious through the man,
And sheds sweet glories on them all.”

4. *Christ is exalted on his throne in heaven*, as is evidenced in the triumph and spread of the truth as it is in him. Wherever the gospel comes, it finds man in bondage to sin, but under the Spirit's invincible power, it frees the soul. Our souls rejoice when we hear of idolatry crumbling, of Hindooism and Buddhism falling and tottering. Wheresoever Christ's gospel comes, it will, wheresoever the Spirit exerts his power, overturn every system that leads man to seek salvation in any other way than that of Christ's death for sin; his blood alone is the sinner's hope.

6. Christ is exalted *in the experience of all believers*. Man though born a rebel, is subdued by the truth as it is in Christ. Wheresoever Christ is received, he is glorified, he is the believers' hope of glory. Christ in their hearts, Christ in their bodies, Christ in their lives, is glorified in them and by them. Christ glorifies them;

they have to suffer for him, not for sin, but for his sake.

6. Christ is glorified in all the full manifestation of his own divine wisdom, love, and grace *in the work of his mediation and the redemption of his church*. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." "With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." "He shall be exalted, and be very high." He is exalted far above all principalities and powers in heavenly places. He must reign. He is King of kings, King of saints, Lord of angels, and of the whole universe of creation. Jesus, the God-man, glorified in his manhood, now receives the fruit of all his pains, the recompense and reward of his sufferings,—eternal glory, blessing, and honour from all his saints and all angelic intelligences. The new song of the redeemed will be, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us by thy blood. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Angelic spirits will unite in the grand chorus, saying, "Blessing, and honour, and glory be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen."

I cannot, however, leave this great subject without reminding you of some two or three important points by way of conclusion.

1. *We see the glorious dignity of Christ's person.* He is the Son of God incarnate, co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal with the Father. This doctrine of Christ's godhead is of the greatest importance with respect to our salvation. For if Christ is only the Son of God by virtue of his incarnation, as many do blindly say, then he has a name which has no reality in it, nor is it expressive of his nature at all—he is but a creature at the very best. However great he may be exalted by such persons, they do but depreciate his glorious dignity, and hazard most rashly their salvation in a creature of their own fancy. Unless Jesus is truly the Son of God in his own person, we have no sure foundation for our faith and hope. It would be impossible to confide in him unless we believed that he is "the true God and eternal life." "This is the record that God hath given to us, eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." He is, therefore, in his own nature and person, self-existent, he

is the fountain of life, *originally* in himself, and hence the streams flow to us *meritoriously* and *efficiently*, because *he is* the Son of God.

2. *We see also the glorious dignity of his mediatorial work.* His work is honourable and glorious. "His glory is great in thy salvation." It was the glory and dignity of what Christ is in his own person essentially that made his work so honourable and glorious, "inasmuch as he who builded the house hath more honour than the house." How could an exalted creature—that imaginary thing which some men call the Son of God, have honour and dignity, however great and glorious his work might be, if it were not derived from the glorious dignity of his person? How could Christ's sufferings be meritorious but for the fact that he is the divine and eternal Son of God? If his person is not of infinite worth and dignity, his temporary sufferings could by no possibility procure eternal salvation. Men who assert that Christ in his own person is less in dignity and nature than the essential deity, impugn his work as being not infinite in dignity, nor infinitely worthy, because his sufferings are thereby lessened in value and efficiency; and if that were so, infinite satisfaction for sin has not been rendered, or else sin is not that infinite evil that the word of God has represented. Dear friends, if we once get off the foundation we shall wander into all manner of conceits and heresies derogatory to the doctrine of the person of the Son of God. It is what Christ is in his own divine and glorious personality which has given a divine and infinite satisfaction for sin, it has rendered his obedience infinite and glorious and everlasting, it has given an infinitely glorious character to all his sufferings, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, and his intercession. The safety of the church of God rests wholly upon this foundation, because he is the Son of God.

3. From the two former considerations, we perceive what *an infinite and awful demerit there must be in the nature of sin.* The turpitude of sin can only be seen in the stupendous undertaking by which it has been removed. It is light that manifests darkness. If satisfaction for sin could only be rendered by the divine and eternal Son of God, how awfully great must be the exceeding sinfulness of sin! and we cannot give it a viler name than its own character gives it. Therefore, how useless to look

for pardon and peace in anything short of that atonement which has been made by the Son of God in the sacrifice of himself! Dear friends, look to the foundation; the rock of your salvation consists in what Christ *is* as well also as what he has done. Infinite pardon is what you want. An infinite atonement has been made by the infinitely glorious Son of God. If you are looking to anything short of this, neither peace nor salvation will you find in this world. Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Salvation. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, because he is the Son of God.

4. Lastly. What a glorious foundation there is *for all gospel holiness and obedience to the law of Christ!* Since Christ has entered into his glory, having suffered for sins, how can those who are truly united to him, and are manifested to be the children of God by faith in him, live in the practice of any known sin? Impossible! such characters whose lives are not according to godliness do but deceive themselves and others. They give the lie to their profession, and the truth is not in them. The tree is known by its fruit. But if we are in union with Christ, we shall abide in him and walk in him. We shall walk in the light, as he is in the light. The love of Christ constrains us. I commend these things to your prayerful and serious attention; praying that you may receive the truth in the love of it. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."*

* These four concluding paragraphs have been added by the Author since the Sermon was preached, in order to give it more definiteness as to the Person of Christ, and also to give a proper practical bearing.

THE SON OF GOD KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHIZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,
On Lord's Day Evening, May 5th, 1861.

"And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written,
KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."—REV. XIX. 16.

THERE is no need to lose our time in arguing that the Person of Christ the Son of God is here intended. In the 11th verse, he is designated the "faithful and true;" in the 13th verse, "His name is called the Word of God;" and in Deuteronomy x. 17 we have a parallel scripture, he is there called Lord of lords—"For Jehovah your God is God of gods and Lord of lords." Similar to this, we find an expression in Daniel's address to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. It is a Hebrew superlative, and denotes the most high God. We rejoice in this truth, because it is a most glorious truth; for let the fumes of scepticism steam up ever so high from the dunghill of Unitarianism, or from any other form of infidelity, or let the foaming waves of rebellion dash against the footsteps of our Immanuel's throne, yet he still sitteth King upon the floods, the Lord reigneth for ever; he not only reigneth King in Jerusalem, but he ever has been, and ever will be, "King of kings and Lord of lords," God over all, for ever blessed.

"Give to the Lord of lords renown,
The King of kings with glory crown."

The chapter from whence our text is taken contains a grand prophetic description of the administration and glory of the Redeemer's Mediatorial kingdom in defiance of all opposition from the rulers of darkness, the spiritual wickedness in high places, or the ungodliness of the men of this world who have set themselves together against the Lord and his Christ. The language is evidently taken from the prophecies of Isaiah, where the Lord is said to be about

taking vengeance on the Idumeans, the adversaries of the church, and where the metaphor is employed setting forth Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, as returning from Bozrah triumphantly glorious, having slain his enemies, and having his garments dipped in blood; that prophecy is to be understood of Christ, who alone in his own person, assuming our flesh, did tread the winepress of his Father's wrath, by his sufferings and death for our sakes. Then it was he triumphed over all his enemies and those of the church of God. The glory that is to follow arising out of his victory over death, hell, and sin, is set forth by the words of our text—the name of King of kings and Lord of lords being written on his vesture and on his thigh, and having respect to the destruction of all his adversaries, which he will execute on them in his final coming upon this earth, by the power of his truth and by his Spirit. The blood, therefore, with which his vesture is dipped is not his own, but of his adversaries; not indeed as yet, but in vision as revealed to John, as already done, because of the certainty of the victory. The metaphor of treading the winepress is referred to in the 14th chapter, and the crushing so tremendously terrific, that it is said, "and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, even by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." What an awful punishment is reserved for all rebellious and impenitent sinners, especially those who have persecuted the church of God; blood for blood, overwhelming desolation and destruction without mercy; consummate iniquity and consummate punishment. Even the title itself, the great Captain of our salvation, is sufficiently terrifying to all his adversaries, and the more so as time rolls on, each moment brings it nearer and nearer; the King of kings and Lord of lords, day by day, hour by hour, is advancing on the rear of his enemies, he goes forth conquering and to conquer, for that is his object and purpose. He is the invincible and irresistible conqueror. He is the omnipotent Lord God, faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

We also read, "and on his head were many crowns," (Verse 12.) He on his throne has displayed, within the canopy, over his head the many trophies of his brilliant victories which he has obtained over the rulers of the earth, who through all time have conspired together and set themselves against his government, and also over the

principalities, and powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places.

But now let us attempt more particularly to consider the words of our text. **FIRST**, The Person who is here designated the King of kings and Lord of lords. **SECOND**, The authority under which he is constituted a King of kings and Lord of lords. **THIRD**, The manner in which he displays his name as King of kings and Lord of lords; and **FOURTH**, What is comprehended in this super-excellent name by which he is thus known.

FIRST, *The Person who is here designated the King of kings and Lord of lords.*—In the thirteenth verse, it is expressly said, “And his name is called the Word of God.” By this expression, we understand from another part of John’s writings, that he is one of the three that bear record in heaven: “For there are three that bear record in heaven,—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.” This is usually understood, being as plain as words can make it, of the personalities of the divine and glorious Trinity in the unity of the Godhead. The expression, The Word of God, is identically the same in its denomination and signification, as is elsewhere expressed, the Son of God. In Wickliffe’s translation, our text is rendered, “His name is called the Son of God.” In our modern translation it is rendered, “His name is called the Word of God;” because it is more in accordance with the original Greek and the context. For it is as The Word of God that Jesus is revealed and known amongst men as the way and power of God’s truth. His *Person* as the Son of God is that which no man can know or understand, and it is what I understand by the words in the 12th verse: “And he had a name written that no man knew but he himself.” That is how he, the Son, subsists essentially. The divine generation of the Son is a doctrine not explained in the Scriptures, though it is plainly revealed. “And no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.” (Matt. xi. 27.) This is more strongly expressed in John v. 26: “For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” So that it is plain the Person of Christ is a mystery in itself, yet a mystery that is to be believed and acknowledged; and when by faith in the Person of

Christ, the Son of God, we are brought to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, we shall be blessedly led to perceive that in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. It is not my design to enter into any argument as to the constitution of Christ's Person, or to bring before you the evidence of his true and proper Godhead, but simply to assert and declare his glorious dignity as the Son of God, co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal with the Father in nature, power, and glory. That he is truly man, as well as truly God, is sufficiently proved by many Scriptures. The union of his complex natures is as great a mystery as is his essential being. It is impossible to comprehend it, but it is the most delightful truth on which the believing soul can rest. The incarnate mystery, God in our nature, is the lifeboat for the sinner when shipwrecked in himself, and all hope of being saved by his own doings is taken away.

In looking upon the Person of Christ in the matter of our salvation, there is everything of encouragement, everything to exalt our hopes and to cause us to rest in him for security and felicity. He is God, truly God; he is man, truly man. He is the God-man Christ Jesus, who by his mediatorial character and offices becomes the medium of divine communication of all those blessings which the Father hath treasured up in him for the enriching and enjoyment of the Church of Christ. Our Lord Jesus in his divine nature is a Spirit, a divine and spiritual being. He is infinite in his being; he is eternal in his being; he is unchangeable in his being; he is infinite in his wisdom, knowledge, and understanding; he is infinite in power; he is infinite in holiness; he is infinite in justice; he is infinite in goodness; he is infinite in truth; the faithful witness and true. Such is the Person of the Son of God, the Word of God, Jesus Christ the Lord from heaven, who was seen by the apostle John in the opened heaven, sitting upon a white horse, whose eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; who was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and out of whose mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword; treading the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, and who had on his vesture and on his thigh a name written—KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Consider, SECOND, *The authority under which the Son of God is constituted King of kings and Lord of lords.*

To speak of Christ as being constituted with authority, implies inferiority both of nature, dignity, and character; but this respects his Mediatorship, not his Sonship. As the Son of God, he is essentially the same with his Father in all that the divine nature can be; but as the Mediator of the new covenant transactions he is as the Son of man inferior to the Father, as the human nature necessarily must be. In his mediatorial capacity, he is the servant of the Father to do his will; and having taken our nature in order to accomplish the Father's designs of love, grace, and mercy to fallen man, God hath, therefore, highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at his name every knee should bow, and every tongue confess. This name, which is above every name, is that of a KING, which is, as you know, the title given to a man who is the hereditary or constituted supreme head of a nation. The title of a king is the highest style a man can possibly have upon earth, and from that source of power proceed all other titles, dignities, and powers. To be a king, is for a man to have the title, dignity, and authority by which he rules over men. If we speak of Christ as a king, he is the King eternal, immortal, invisible, because he is the Son of God. In himself, as God, he is eternally the great King. Honour and majesty are with him essentially. He could not possibly be otherwise than what he is, the King eternal. As the Son of God, he is to be honoured as the Father, who is the fountain of all honour. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father; therefore, there must be an equality of honour given to the Person of Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

But in speaking of Christ as Mediator, being constituted King by his Father's authority, we at once come into another class of subjects. Jesus as Mediator is King of Zion by the authority of God his Father: "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion;" that is, declared and manifested my Son to be King in Zion. Thus constituted, he declares, "By me kings reign and princes decree justice," for he is wisdom essentially in himself and mediatorially to men. Having finished the work which his Father gave him to do, he claims the reward and fruit of all his degradation, sufferings, and

death, therefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name above every name. He has sat down on the throne of his Father, he is made both Lord and Christ, and now he must reign until all his enemies are subdued beneath his feet. "The LORD said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." (Ps. cx. 1, 2, and 5.) In the 24th Psalm Jesus is there declared to be the King of glory: "Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, the Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." The kingdom and government of our Lord, as God-man, must, however, be distinguished from his own government which he possesses in his divine nature and the essence of the Godhead, he being in his own personality as the Son of God, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God.* The dominion which our Redeemer has received in his mediatorial character is "over all flesh," "all power in heaven and in earth." His kingdom was the purchase of his blood, "for the suffering of death he was crowned with glory and honour." His throne is also the fruit of his conquest: "He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." He hath ascended on high, led captivity captive. Now raised from the dead, he is set at his Father's right hand in heavenly places, far above all principalities 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; with all things put under his feet, and as the head over all things to his body the church: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endureth throughout all generations. His exaltation to the throne as the God-man Mediator is constituted by the covenant engagement and promise of Jehovah the Father. In the counsels of eternity, when the Son engaged to become the surety of the covenant for his people, he undertook to subdue their enemies, and that when he had completed that work, that *human nature* in which he suffered for that purpose, should be exalted to the throne of universal government

* See this point more enlarged in the author's Sermon No. 27, "The Grand Consummation of the Redeemer's Kingdom."

of his redeemed church. This glory he claimed when he said to his Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine ownse with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (Jno. xvii. 5.)

We come now to consider in the **THIRD** place, *the manner in which the Son of God displays his name as King of kings and Lord of lords.*

He is set before us as *wearing his title*, the King of kings, in full uniform, wearing his royal robes of state, and exhibiting his full titles and glorious honours. This I regard as a grand display of the eternal majesty of heaven: "Whose going forth is prepared as the morning." The manifestation of himself to his people is well compared to the light of the morning: "And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain." (2 Sam. xxiii. 4.) "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." (Micah v. 8.) "Thy throne is established of old; thou art from everlasting." (Ps. xciii. 2.)

"The Lord Jehovah reigns, and royal state maintains,
His head with awful glories crowned;
Arrayed in robes of light, begirt with sovereign might,
And rays of majesty around."

He is going forth in royal state—on a white horse; this white horse is the same as described in the sixth chapter. *Emblematically* it denotes distinction, dignity, victory, and peace; *prophetically* it denotes the instrumentality of the gospel dispensation from the time of the ascension of Jesus to the throne of his father. The *horse* is renowned for nobleness of figure, swiftness of movement, strength of execution, and fearlessness of opposition and war: such is the nature of gospel truth upon which Jesus Christ does sit as upon a horse to guide and govern according to his divine decrees and infinite wisdom. In righteousness doth he judge and make war. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." The horse being *white* denotes the purity of gospel truths: "every word of God is pure." The gospel sets forth peace through our Lord Jesus Christ; it brings glad tidings of peace. There is no true peace where the white

horse of the gospel is unknown; there is no peace, no joy, no victory, no triumph, but where Christ comes on the white horse of his gospel in royal robes of state. He goes forth conquering and to conquer. His object, aim, and purpose is to vanquish his enemies, and vanquish them he will. He is the Lord God Omnipotent, and who shall resist his will? Jesus the captain of our salvation rides forth majestically and triumphantly, crowned with glory and honour, as the Son of man because he is the Son of God; hence his majesty, power, and authority by which he puts down all opposition that the kings of the earth have imagined, and have set themselves at defiance against the Lord and his Christ. "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness, and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things." Such is the prophetic and spiritual nature of Christ's rule and authority over men's hearts and designs by the omnipotency of his truth as set forth by the symbolical figure of his riding upon a white horse. Victories, triumphs, honours, and majesty belong to him who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

But our text speaks of his vesture. The 13th verse speaks of his vesture being dipped in blood; wet, soaked, plunged, immersed, baptized in blood; showing the fierceness, the bloody nature of the warfare; "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save;" the King of kings and Lord of lords. Now mark this, believer, for your special comfort. Read with me the 13th to 15th verses of this Revelation xix. "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth out the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." Now compare this passage with that

of Isaiah lxiii. verses 2 and 3. "Wherefore art thou *red* in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there were none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." Rejoice, believer, that so it was, or there never would have been the armies to have followed on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. By the almightiness of his valour and prowess, he slew all our enemies single handed, his right hand hath gotten him the victory; by the bloodiness of his vesture, we are arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; we have naught to do in this battle, but to follow him, the battle is his, the victory is his, and the glory shall be his;

"Immortal crowns of majesty,
And everlasting songs."

We are next to observe, "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written." His name is written upon his vesture, his name is his title by which he is distinguished and known. By this we are to understand, from the emblem employed, that the name was written, indicated, *on the collar of his toga*, or cloak, the outer garment worn in state, and upon all state occasions; the collar of state cloaks will indicate the honours, titles, and persons of those who wear them; persons who are familiar with seeing state dresses, will easily understand this method of distinction; even our police are distinguished in their rank by their collars; soldiers, and sailors in the navy the same. This distinction makes the person conspicuous, and sets forth his authority, power, and place. Our English nobility have each their cloak, which set forth their rank. Those who have the dignity of certain orders of knighthood, such as the order of St. George, of the Garter, &c., wear a collar that indicates the title and rank of the person who wears it; this title and rank whatever it might be, would, of course, be common to all the persons who belonged to that particular order. The collar is embroidered and interwoven with gold, and whether the precise rank and condition is understood by strangers or not, they would at once perceive it indicated a person of note and eminence; and just let me say, the Roman toga, a large loose flowing garment, was only worn by persons of quality, no mean person was allowed to

wear it, because it implied dignity; that of the king or emperor, would undoubtedly be distinguished from all other dignitaries, it would be unique, hence the person of the sovereign would be indicated by the collar of his vesture. Now, apply this ancient custom, for it is very ancient, perhaps as old as Esau's dukes, I say, apply this explanation to the vesture of which our text speaks, how grandly it describes and sets forth the royal dignity of the person of the Son of God, in going forth conquering and to conquer in gospel grace, truth, and power. His vesture denotes *the ground and manifestation* of his dignity and authority. He only wears such a name, and he is known by that name. The Lord is known by the judgment he executeth; on his vesture is inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords, this is the collar of his order, the only one of his order, for he is "THE ONLY POTENTATE," the only wise God. All who follow him know him by his vesture, and the collar which bears his name.

Observe, too, this vesture, though indicating the highest title and dignity, is bloody, stained with blood, dipped in blood, saturated; yes, gloriously bloody; it is with the blood of his enemies, and it intimates that the nature of his government is the source of the complete success of his undertaking, "In righteousness doth he make war," he has *conquered* our mightiest foes, sin, death, hell, and the grave; he has destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; these are all vanquished and for ever fallen, to rise no more; their blood has stained all his raiment. But more than this, it is also stained with his own blood, he poured out his own blood, his own heart's blood, he poured it out as a sacrifice for us, he poured it out to God; hence it is the blood of the eternal covenant, the ransom price by which we prisoners were sent out of the pit redeemed captives. O what a price, O what a power, to procure our redemption. O the preciousness of the blood of our Redeemer God, how glorious is he in his apparel. His death was the death of death, his resurrection was his triumph over the grave, and his ascension was the assumption of his authority and power, as King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Our text farther states, "and on his thigh a name written." He wears his title on his thigh, that is, his name is also inscribed on a band and worn as a *garter*, above the knee. This is another indication of honour

and dignity. This dignity is familiar to us: the Order of the Garter, as it is called, is taken from old customs of princes and kings, to distinguish the wearer. Such a garter, with such a name, has never another, king of kings and lord of lords. Honour and majesty are laid upon him, both upon his vesture and upon his thigh. The person of our Immanuel is dignified above every name that can be named. Hence it is that to this name every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord of all. The thigh is also an emblem of power. "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, and ride prosperously, because of thine enemies." (Ps. xlv. 3.)

But now let us pause here, and ask ourselves a few important and solemn questions. "Shall I be one of those who shall wear the fine linen, clean and white? Do I expect to ride upon one of those white horses of peace and victory? Have sin, guilt, death, hell, and the grave been conquered for me?" I cannot answer any of these grave questions for any of you; I say to myself:

"How stands the case my soul with thee;
For heaven are thy credentials clear?"

O, my friends, it is very easy and pleasant to hear or to talk about these great truths, as set forth to us in such sublime symbolical figures as our text contains; but don't let us be deceiving ourselves in having our ears tickled with glowing thoughts, while the heart has never been broken for sin. Let me ask, are you one of his enemies? Are you in opposition to the "Word of God?"—for that is his name—are you opposed to his truth? Are you opposed to his people? Or are you cherishing sin in your heart, or secretly in any way under a cloak of religion? If so, your case will be hopeless, dying in this state, where God is, you never can come. Hear what his word declares, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." (Ps. ii. 12.)

We will now, in the FOURTH place, inquire, *What is here comprehended in this super-excellent name by which the Son of God is thus known as King of kings, and Lord of lords.*

It is declared of him, Rev. i. 5, "He is the prince of the kings of the earth." "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." (Prov. viii. 15, 16.) Their power, their wisdom and understanding, by which they rule over

men, are all derived from him, for he saith, "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength." (v. 14.) "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, the anointed of the God of Jacob, said this under the inspiration of the spirit of the Lord (2 Sam. xxiii. 3), and in the strictest sense it could only apply to the Lord Jesus Christ. The best of kings who have ever lived, have been sinners, and therefore could not be just, ruling in the fear of God, except in the limited sense as regarded by men. At the coronation of George the 4th, a flattering courtier, having the title of bishop, preached from these words, as also the fourth verse, and applied them to his majesty. Surely there never was a viler prostitution of sacred scripture and the preacher's office. May the Lord ever preserve his own sent servants from such awful conduct! Of the Lord Jesus Christ it may well be said, "He is the Prince of the kings of the earth." "And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain."

Yet, though the Son of God is Prince of the kings of the earth, how few there are who own his sway! The general conduct of men declares "We will not have this man to reign over us." "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against Jehovah, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." What rage they exhibit, what vain things they imagine against the King of kings! But their resistance cannot weaken his power; he will, in spite of all their combined opposition, overturn, overturn, until he, with the brightness of his coming, shall destroy them with the spirit of his mouth. Where is king Pharaoh? where is the great Sennacherib? where is the great Nebuchadnezzar? where is Herod the Great, and the Roman Emperor? those two kings of the earth who gathered themselves together and conspired against the infant Jesus. But he that sat in the heavens did but laugh, and mocked when their fear came. All these kings were under his control, they could only carry out his designs, for the hearts of all kings are in his hand.

God in Christ is King of kings and Governor among

the nations. This is most evident from *the preservation of his truth*; what attempts have been made to crush it or to subvert it—scoffers, atheists, secularists, Socinians, Unitarians, refined spiritualists, all combine to oppose the truth as it is in Jesus. Even the attempts to stamp out the evangelic spirit in the Church of England are naught else but heathenish rage against the truth. The names of Cecil and Newton will live when the names of Arnold, Maurice, and Stanley will be forgotten. Their opposition is futile, and will be of no ultimate avail. Truth, the cause of truth, will go on; it will go on onwardly and prosperously, because it is truth; and eventually it will overturn every system and speculation that men devise for placing their hopes of heaven upon any other basis than that which is founded upon the work of God the Holy Ghost. “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth;” “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” (James i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23.)

Christ is King of kings, as is most manifest *in the care and protection by which his people are preserved*. Notwithstanding the fires of persecution, the insidious opposition of pretending professors of religion, and the open haters of God’s people, still they live; nothing yet has either stamped out the truth or crushed out the spiritual life of the feeblest lamb of Christ’s flock. The enemies of truth and righteousness oppress the true church of God. Papists and furious high church bigots oppress with equal malignancy, for they are both of the same stock and lineage of Antichrist; but the Lord reigneth. “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?” because the light of divine truth is displayed, and makes manifest their hatred to it, and their hidden deeds of darkness. This their way is their folly. The King of kings shall have them in derision. His throne is for ever and ever. The sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre. His enemies shall all be found liars, and he will tread upon their high places; they shall all be clothed with shame; but upon himself shall his crown flourish. His throne is above every throne. And why? The answer is, “Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” The King of kings and Lord of lords rides prosperously on his white horse of vic-

tory, clothed with bloody vesture, because of truth and righteousness. This is the secret of victory. Truth, truth alone can conquer; meekness conquers; righteousness conquers. "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty; and in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre." (Ps. xlv. 3-6.) Jesus the Son of God is King of kings and Lord of lords.

My hearers! If Christ is our righteousness, our truth, our meekness, we shall conquer every enemy, we shall override all opposition; not without. But let me ask you, are you the followers of the Lord Jesus on his white horse? following him as he leads on? espousing the same cause in which he is engaged? These are vital questions, heart-searching questions. Examine yourselves, and ascertain what evidence you have that you are united to Christ by a true and living faith, and that these things of which we are now speaking are the realities on which your souls do live. If so, ride on, keep Christ in view; you will know him by his vesture dipped in blood, his royal robe of state; none like it; no, nor none like him; he only hath such a vesture, he only hath such a name, he only hath accomplished your salvation. He goes forth conquering and to conquer. Every movement, every step is almighty and divine progress; every movement, every step marks the defeat of error, of sin, and of Satan. Even in our own experience we realize it by faith; for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed. By keeping Christ in view, by keeping your eye on his blood-stained vesture, you have before you a continual evidence of your complete and eternal salvation; for the blood by which his raiment is stained is the blood of your hellish foes, and you are but following him on to victory and everlasting joy and praise.

Again, Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords in that *he is Lord of all power and might*, over every dominion that can be named, far above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. He hath put all things under his feet, and he is the Head over all

things to the church, to the glory of God the Father. He is Lord of all, he is over all the enemies of God's eternal truth, he is Lord over all the enemies of his people, he is Lord over sin in all the world, he is Lord over all the effects of sin: "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." By Satan sin came into the world; by sin came death. Death is the last enemy that man has to fear. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death; and, until death is destroyed, Jesus must reign. He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet; and it is important to observe that, though it is declared that the works of the devil will be destroyed, and that all our enemies will be destroyed, and that all the enemies of God and of his Christ, these will all be destroyed, yet not Satan himself; he will be subdued, and he himself, and all his angels, will be cast into the bottomless pit of eternal damnation, horror, anguish, and pain. For them the pit of hell was prepared. In that pit there will be everlasting misery, everlasting punishment, but *no destruction*. Death itself shall be destroyed, it shall be destroyed *for ever*, and that shall be a ground for rejoicing to God's people; but O, to the wicked, and all who forget God, and who shall be cast into the lake of fire with Satan, that awful fact becomes the ground of their everlasting torment. Death is for ever destroyed. No death to the wicked, no death to their misery, no death to their pains, no death to their damnation. The keys of hell and of death are in the possession of him who is Lord over death, hell, and the grave. All who are there are there by his appointment, are under his dominion, and will be kept everlastingly there by his almighty power. He has conquered the devil, and when time shall be no longer, all flesh shall see the salvation of our God. Hell itself shall tremble at that dread moment, its inhabitants shall then know the wrath of the Lamb to the very uttermost.

If, then, the Son of God is Lord over all, and is manifested to destroy the works of the devil—sin and death, and the effects of sin—then we are sure he is *Lord over sin within*. What a source of comfort this must be to those who lament the power of indwelling sin! it shall not rule in the hearts of his people, it does not rule in the hearts of God's people. "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Jesus is Lord *over all sinful men*. He will destroy all their projects, all their resistance; he will destroy their works with the brightness of his coming. His sword is upon his thigh; he is ready to execute vengeance upon all who oppose his truth and his people. He rides forth conquering and to conquer; he is sure to conquer, it is his eternal purpose. His goings forth have been of old, from everlasting. Sinner! be afraid.

“The stoutest rebel must resign at his commanding word.”

If Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords, O what ground for rejoicing has the believer in Jesus. What a solid basis for his happiness, both in this life and the next! If God be for us, who can be against us? If we are united to Christ by a true and living faith, he is for us, nothing can hurt us, for Christ is Lord over sin, Lord over the damning power of sin, Lord over sinful men, Lord over all the effects of sin, being Lord over death, hell, and the grave. Well may we shout, “O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

How great is the dignity and privilege of true believers! How we may congratulate each other! The King of kings is our friend. The pleasures and honours of the world are nothing to us; all things are ours. Soon we shall join in the rapturous chorus, “Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us in his blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God.” Soon we shall join in the song of Moses and the Lamb, saying, “Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.” He is King of kings and Lord of lords. On his head were many crowns; for we shall crown him “Lord of All.” Amen.

CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILK END,

On Lord's Day Evening, June 23rd, 1861.

REVISED.

“Christ is All, and in all.”—COL. III. 11.

THE epistle to the Colossians appears to have been written by the apostle at the same time as that to the Ephesians, and both sent by messengers, Tychicus and Onesimus. The two epistles should be read together. Each is, as it were, a commentary on the other. This is in two parts—doctrinal and practical. In the two former chapters the apostle exhorts the Colossian churches to constancy in the faith. In this chapter he stirs them up to the more diligent study of heavenly things by forcible arguments (see verses 1 to 4), and then in the verses preceding my text, he further exhorts them to mortify their members in the body, urged in several particulars, and pressed by several arguments (see verses 5 to 10). Amongst other arguments this is one,—the putting off the old man, and putting on the new man (verses 9 and 10), which he particularly describes. This argument, says an old author, is put in two ways—“By removing the false opinion of those who confided in their external privileges, and contemned all such as were without them.” National distinctions and prejudices are nothing. Whatever prerogatives, rights, or privileges a man may naturally possess, they are nothing; nor doth it matter what is the external state. None of these differences are looked at or considered, but Christ is All, and in all; not what the man in himself is or was, but what he is now, as a believer in Christ.

The apostle, by propounding the true opinion—which is the other way referred to—that “Christ is All, and in all,” shows that all those external things which are accounted so honourable, without this new man avail no-

thing to salvation; nor will the want of any of these hinder a person of salvation and acceptance with God, if the great work of regeneration be wrought, for Christ is All, and in all. In fact, the apostle makes the same importance attach to the doctrine of the new creature as Christ himself did with Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again," and at this point we must begin, before we can find Christ to be our All, and in all.

The doctrine of the text is, the Lord Jesus Christ is in all things, and to all persons that have a true saving interest in him, ALL, and in all. It doth not exclude the Father and the Holy Ghost, for the whole Godhead is all in all to believers, as well as Jesus Christ. But because the Lord Jesus Christ is the head of his mystical body, the church, therefore this is principally appropriated to him, to be All in all to all those who are united to him by saving faith; for he is also the head of communication, from the union by which true believers are made one mystical body with Christ. It is from the divine nature in Christ that he is All in all to his people. Faith in Christ removes all national, external, and circumstantial distinctions. All in Christ Jesus are one in state, one in nature, one in character, one in relation, and one in resemblance to Christ, after whose image they are created.

The words of our text are often used as a comprehensive and convenient sentence to express the oneness and fulness of Christ in his person, name, and office, as the great head of authority, influence, and union, in contradistinction to the many sects and parties, differences and divisions, that are found in the visible church. Sometimes Christ is set forth as the All, and in all of the Gospel; its design being to set forth the glory of his person, his mediatorial work, and all those office characters which he bears in relation to the covenant of grace. This is the spiritual meat and drink of the church of God; they live by faith upon the Son of God, and have an experimental proof of the all-sufficiency of Christ for all their needs, hopes, and desires; and thus the words themselves, few, short, and simple as they are, become a concise epitome of all that the believer can express of the person, work, and character of Jesus.

"He's all that's good and great,
All that I can admire,
All that's endearing to my soul,
And all my heart's desire."

But now let us endeavour to proceed with the great subject before us. Here is a mighty ocean opening upon our view; to scan its length or breadth is impossible, its infinity bids defiance to our sketch—it passeth knowledge. What Christ is in himself no mortal can understand or comprehend; what Christ is to his church will never be fully known; “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” We can only gather a few pebbles here and there, as we go along the shore, and still feel how poor and insignificant are all human thoughts and words, upon so sublime and magnificent a theme as we now venture to discuss. Christ is All, and in all. The truths contained in these words are more precious than all the gold and precious gems that earth can yield; and in attempting to deliver my thoughts, I will aim to cast them in the following order: 1st, In respect of what Christ *is* in his own Person as declared and revealed in the scriptures of truth. 2nd, In respect of what he is *to* the Church of God in the economy of Redemption. 3rd, In respect of what he is as the spring-head of all the blessings which believers *have in* him; and 4th, In respect of of what is known, felt, and enjoyed *experimentally* in the hearts of believers that Christ is their All, and in all.

I. I am to speak of what Christ is, as being ALL, AND IN ALL, *in respect of what he is in his own Person, as declared and revealed in the scriptures of truth.*

The gospel, in its broadest sense, is a revelation of God the Father in the Person of Christ, by the teachings of the Holy Spirit. He takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to the renewed soul. There is no other way of having a true and saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. By no efforts of the human will or intellect can it be acquired; it is a divine revelation made to the soul personally; and the soul is brought experimentally to feel that Christ is all that it can require. To a believer who is living upon Christ, Christ is everything, and Christ is in everything: Christ is in him the hope of glory, his Alpha and his Omega, the first and the last; and being thus brought to know Christ for himself, what Christ is to him, and what he has in Christ; and to be assured of his completeness in Christ, his one desire and aim is to know what Christ is in himself. As the believer grows in grace, so he becomes desirous of growing in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

(1.) The Scriptures most emphatically declare to us *the Godhead* of the Lord Jesus Christ: "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the WORD was God." (Jno. i. 1.) His divinity is also proved from his being the creator of the universe: "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." (Jno. i. 3.) Paul, in writing to the Hebrews, speaks of Christ as having "made the worlds," and "upholding all things by the word of his power." (Heb. i. 2, 3.) Many places in Scripture, indeed, plainly assert the real and proper Godhead of Christ by giving him the same distinguishing Names and Titles as are peculiar to the only true God; but for our present purpose one shall suffice. The apostle John, First Epistle, v. 20, says, "We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." The scriptures also describe the Lord Jesus Christ by the true Nature and essential Properties of the only true God. In him dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily. The Godhead, that is, the Nature or Essence of God, even all its fulness, its essential perfections, glory, and blessedness. I might speak also of his Person as being essentially a Divine Spirit, and as comprehending Infinity, Eternity, and Unchangeableness; but as this is not a point in dispute, I shall waive bringing forth proofs. Another indication of his true and proper divinity are the numerous miracles he performed when on earth. His works of grace, mercy, and peace all denote his eternal power and Godhead, such as forgiveness of sins and many of those gracious operations wrought in the heart which God only can effect.

(2.) The Scriptures also declare the true and proper *Sonship* of the Lord Jesus Christ. God the Father has given most unequivocal testimony to his Son. "And lo! a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. iii. 17.) The testimony of John the Baptist is, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He (the Father) hath declared him." (Jno. i. 18.) When Paul began his ministry, it is said, "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues that he is the Son of God." (Acts ix. 20.) The real knowledge and experimental belief of this truth is made by the apostle John, a fruit and evidence of the soul being

born again. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God." (1 Jno. iv. 15.) Jesus, in discoursing with Nicodemus, speaking of himself as the Son of Man, states as a reason why believers in him should not perish: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (Jno. iii. 16.) And in verse 18, "He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." In these few passages of Scripture thus recited we have the *relationship* fully declared. This relationship is one of Nature and not of Office. I am aware this is not admitted by many who profess to admit his Deity as the Word; but all such persons may justly be suspected of cherishing the heresies of Arius and of Sabellius, to a more or less degree. Those who desire to know the truth as it is in Christ, by searching the Scriptures will, under the teachings of the Spirit, plainly perceive that the true and proper Sonship of Christ is divine and eternal, and that the relationship being thus constituted is the only basis on which the church of God rests secure for salvation and eternal life.

(3.) The *Mediatorial* character of the Son of God forms a large portion of Scripture truth. The Person of Christ is complex. He is truly man as well as he is truly God. He became Incarnate that he might become our salvation. "The Word was made flesh." "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh"—"of the seed of Abraham;" "of whom concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." Here is a clear attestation both to his true and proper Manhood, and his true and proper Godhead. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the apostle expressly lays it down that the Godhead and Sonship of Christ is the sole foundation of that which fitted him for his Mediatorial work and office, and from whence it derives all its fitness, merit, and dignity. The perfection of his Manhood and the perfection of his Godhead, and the perfection of the personal union of both natures, constitutes him a most glorious Saviour, by whom the church of God is completely saved from all sin, and by which, as our Mediator, we have access unto God the Father. "There is one

God, one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. ii. 5.) In him, as our Head, we are eternally blessed with all spiritual blessings, according as we are chosen in him before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 1, 2.) It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and of his fulness believers are constantly partaking, for his mediatorial capacity becomes a channel of communication of every grace to every mystical member of his body. In the complexity of his Person, Jesus the God-man, there is a sufficiency and a suitableness which ransomed sinners find to meet every want and necessity that their condition on earth has brought upon them. In a word, CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL.

II. I come now to speak, in the second place, *in respect of what Christ is to the church of God in the economy of redemption.*

We have laid the foundation of our discourse by stating what Christ is in himself as being All, and in all. Our next business is to build upon this foundation: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Like as from the garden of Eden there ran four great rivers which watered extensive tracts of the surrounding country, so there are from the Person of Christ these four streams of salvation's blessings flowing to every member of the living family of God. The fulness of the Godhead dwelling in Christ is the source from whence we derive all our salvation. It is from his fulness that the saints on earth have every grace on earth and all their blessedness in heaven.

1. He became their Surety in the covenant of grace. Before the fall of Adam their persons were secured in Christ their covenant head. God the Father having loved the church with an everlasting love, irrespective of any condition or circumstances on their part, chose their persons in Christ, gave him to be their head, and in him their persons were made secure. He undertook to redeem his people from the curse of the law by being made a curse for them. In his suretyship engagements he took their nature into personal union with himself, and by becoming incarnate became also their substitute, for he perfectly fulfilled the law which they in Adam had broken. He gave himself a sacrifice for sin, the just for

the unjust, that he might bring them nigh to God. His obedience is imputed to them as their righteousness; his sufferings and death is accepted as an atonement to God on their behalf. Here is seen the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. He for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. His suretyship was the virtual and actual undertaking of our redemption. He hath redeemed us by his blood. We are made nigh by the blood of Christ. He rose again for our justification; hence all our blessings are secured and ratified to us in him. God the Father's election of us was *in* Christ; the death of Christ is *all* our ransom, both in its price and by his power. We are by his Spirit made new creatures in him, so that from his suretyship flows all our redemption and all our blessedness; the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Christ as our Surety is our All, and in all.

2. The Perfection of his Mediatorship. This is the ground of whatever we are, or have, or can expect as redeemed sinners. The mediatorial capacity of our Lord Jesus Christ is most gloriously constituted by the union of his divine nature with the human. The fulness of his Godhead, and the immaculateness of his Manhood, constitute the perfection of his Mediatorship. His person and his work possess a perfection which gives a meritoriousness to everything by which our salvation is effected and secured. In the fulness of his Godhead there is a fulness of merit; for all the divine perfections centre in him personally as the Son of God, being co-essential, co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit. By virtue of his perfect manhood, perfect and sinless in its nature, there is a fulness of merit which he possesses as man which belongs only to Christ, the Mediator; and though he was made sin for us, yet "he knew no sin," neither in his nature nor in any action; "he did no sin," neither was guile found in his mouth. By virtue of his merit, the sacrifice of himself made his atonement perfect and complete. By virtue of his merit, the obedience he wrought out in his life, he has thereby brought in an everlasting righteousness, which is to all, and is upon all who are united to him by a true and living faith. Salvation is, therefore, perfect and complete. A full satisfaction has been made for sin. The law of God has been magnified and made honourable.

The Father is well pleased with his Son for his righteousness' sake. Justice is satisfied. All the divine perfections harmoniously meet and concur in the salvation of every redeemed sinner. "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." The justice and mercy of God go hand in hand to display the grace which is in Christ Jesus. His blood and righteousness is all our hope, all our plea, all our merit. Our only footing on which we expect acceptance with God is upon the ground of his mediatorial work being perfect and complete,—a complete satisfaction for sin by complete atonement; a perfect righteousness by a perfect obedience. All that was essential to make salvation effectual to the end designed in covenant by Jehovah, namely, "*to bring many sons to glory*," is accomplished by the Son of God in his mediatorial capacity. Christ is All, and in all, as the mediator of the new covenant; for his work is perfect, honourable, and glorious.

3. The Bond of Union in the Covenant of Grace. Our Lord Jesus, by various apt and striking similitudes, has presented to our view the divine and eternal union that subsists between his people and himself with his Father. There is a perfect oneness and a relationship that subsists between the Father and the Son. This oneness and relationship is revealed and declared to us by the fact of their mutual love to each other. This is a personal and a relative love. Out of this personal and relative love arises also a covenant union, which relates to all the redeemed family of heaven being loved with an everlasting love by the Father, and their everlasting felicity being secured by covenant union. By this covenant union Jesus is made the head of his body, the Church. She is the Lamb's wife; he is the heavenly Bridegroom. The union subsisting betwixt Christ and his Church is perfect and complete. It is divine, eternal, mutual, and indissoluble. Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it. He speaks of them as the Father's gift to him from the love he had to him and them, and this union for ever abides; "Them which thou hast given me, for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." He prays for their safe keeping: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which

thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." The manifestation of the Father's name by Jesus to his church, is the declaration of this love and relationship, and which is the bond of union in the covenant of grace; and the object of Jesus in thus making known the name of the Father, is that his church shall have an experimental proof of this union. He says, "that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." There is something more sublime and glorious in this divine union than any words of mine can represent. The name of the Father is expressive of his nature in that relationship. The relationship of a Father to a Son is love, union, and indissolubleness. The Lord's family, by adopting grace, are all sons—sons of the Lord God Almighty. Made partakers of the divine nature by regenerating grace. They receive the spirit of adoption, and realise their union with Christ and the Father by the Spirit bearing witness in their hearts that they are "the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." This union is, therefore, divine, eternal, and immutable; for Christ is the immutable God, the divine and eternal Son, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." The covenant of grace is an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, both as it respects the honour of God and the safety of his church. The bond of this covenant is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Surety of it; the perfection of his Mediatorship is the glory of it, and the joint union of the Father and the Son is the security of it. Thus Christ is ALL and in all to the Church of God in the economy of redemption.

III. I am now to speak, in the third place, of *what Christ is as the Spring Head of all those blessings which the Church of God possesses in him.*

Our text, short as it is, is a compound sentence. It plainly consists of two members, distinct and distinguished from each other. As they stand together in a certain order, they form a *connected* and comprehensive whole, which Christ is, first, *objectively*, to all his people; secondly, *subjectively* in all his people; and thirdly, *both together*, as all things to them, and *in* all them. This is how the

Holy Ghost has joined the two great truths by combining them in one sentence. It is a golden sentence, the richness and fulness of which can only be seen, known, and felt by those whose mercy and blessedness it is to experience, under the Spirit's teaching, what Christ *is in himself*, what Christ *is to them*, and what *they have in Christ*, being All to them and in all of them. This seems to me clear from the preceding context and connection of the words. The sense, therefore, may be put thus: Christ is All,—the all things to believers; Christ is in all believers; and Christ is all things to them, *and* in all of them, individually and collectively. He is not one of these things merely, but both these together, in their order and connection. Now what God hath thus “joined together, let no man put asunder.”

We come now to the point in hand—Christ as the spring head of all those blessings which believers have in him, is their All, and in all. This brings us at once in full front of that precious portion of God's word in Paul's epistle to the Ephesians i. 3: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” Every spiritual blessing which the gospel reveals as belonging to the church of God, is in Christ as their covenant Head and Mediator. Not in themselves, as individual members, but in Christ alone, federally and mediatorially. He is made the grand storehouse, the spring head and fountain of all grace. This is their glorious security. “It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; a fulness of blessing, a sufficiency and efficiency. He is the fountain of all new covenant blessings. They flow to us in streams by virtue of his mediatorial office. He is the fountain of all life, grace, mercy, and peace. He is the hand of God by which we receive blessings from the heavenly throne. He is the door by which we enter into a participation and enjoyment of these precious realities contained in the vast fulness, contained in his glorious person, work, and character. The fulness of his godhead is a fulness of merit for us in all that relates to his mediatorial capacity. Whatever we are in him, or have in him, or expect from him, is only on the footing of his merit as God-man, Mediator, Christ Jesus. Without him we can do nothing. Our sufficiency is of God in him. Were we possessors of

all things, they would be nothing without him, he is All in all. Everything enjoyed by us is in Christ; the more we live to him, the more we realize it. It is from him alone that any good becomes a blessing; he makes every thing effectual for which it is appointed. No good thing in itself, without his blessing, would be good for us; it would become a curse to us the moment he withdrew himself. He it is that makes all things blessings. He is our All, and in all in the way of blessings, their efficiency and their sufficiency.

Our necessities are such as ever to be requiring a supply of grace from his fulness; and this fulness is inexhaustible. Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. In every time of need, this spring of grace flows most graciously, freely, and fully, to every needy sinking sinner, and here is the blessedness. Jesus the Son of God having taken our nature into union with himself, having dwelt among men, has become, in his own humanity, fully acquainted with every condition of life which his incarnate state on earth necessarily imposed. He is the life of life, the light of light, the spring head of all fountains and streams in the desert. On him, as our Mediator, the Spirit of God was poured without measure. His humanity was perfect, being sinless; his sympathy for his suffering members is perfect, for all that he is as man is perfect. Every gift, every grace, all goodness, wisdom, and power he possesses in rich abundance. The glories of his godhead have enriched his manhood, so that he is to the church of God the sum of all the good it can ever need or hope for. Every blessing is so vested in him that a never-failing fulness exists essentially and mediatorially, being the incarnate Son of God. Christ is All, and in all.

Christ is our all in *spiritual life*. He is life in himself: from him we derive our life; he is the All, and in all of our hope, our knowledge, peace, and joy. He is our life, he is our glory; all we are, all we have, originated in him, is maintained by him, centres in him. "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever." He is the spring of all our spiritual *fruit*; every gift and grace of the Spirit is from him. When he ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men, even for the rebellious that the Lord God might dwell among them. He not only dwells with his people, but in their hearts, "made an habitation of God through the Spirit."

He is the spring of *their repentance*. He gives repentance; it is he alone that can turn the heart to God. No true repentance without Christ's gift, and where there is true repentance towards God, there will be true *penitence* for sin—godly sorrow for sin. Sin must be hated on account of its own sinfulness, not simply for the punishment it entails. The fear of God and the fear of wrath must be distinguished, for they are distinct things. One leads to God, the other leads from him. Christ is All, and in all of whatever arises out of true repentance towards God, for he is the spring head of it, he is all and in all. Christ is the spring head of *faith*. Faith in Christ comes from Christ. It is expressly said to be the gift of God. Unbelief is the sin of the world; the poison of all the world is in it. Faith, true belief in God, trusting to Christ alone for life and salvation, whilst feeling the sentence of death and viewing the curse hanging over sin, this is God's work alone. Whoever has a genuine sense of this, has a true and living faith. Its *operation* is also God's work, for it is "God who works both to will and to do of his good pleasure." As unbelief has the poison of all other sins in it, so, on the other hand, wheresoever true faith is found, there are found also the other gifts of the Spirit. Christ is the spring head of every stream of blessing flowing into and filling the heart of every believer united to him by a true and living faith.

Christ is the spring head of all our hope. Our hope is in God; built on the blood and righteousness of Christ. It is the anchor of the soul, and is cast within the veil; the covenant of grace is the sure ground which holds the soul sure and steadfast, in every time of storm and tempest. Jesus the God of hope fills the soul with all joy and peace in believing. Christ in the heart is the hope of glory. The foundation of hope is in the oaths and promises of God, the oaths and promises made to Christ. The stability of the covenant of grace rests upon the immutableness of Jesus Christ; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Christ is All, and in all. He is also the spring head of all our *love*. Love is of God. God is love. When the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, it is because we are Christ's; it came from him and leads to him; what comes from Christ, leads to Christ; the soul looking within, questions whether there is any love to Christ, doubts its interest in Christ, brings

itself into darkness and misery. But when a rill of love is felt in the soul, it is found to spring up from Christ the fountain head. Love, like faith and hope, cleaves close to Christ; rules and reigns in the heart, prompts to ready and cheerful obedience to all his commands. Its influence is constraining and is paramount in all privileges, exercises, and duties, because Christ is All, and in all.

Christ is All, and in all of those fruits of the Spirit by which the doctrine of God our Saviour is honoured by the walk and conversation of the believer. The Spirit of *holiness* has its spring head in Christ; we are made partakers of his holiness, the washing of regeneration, and by the discipline of his hand (Heb. xii. 10), the fruit of his work for us and in us is holiness, and the end everlasting life. *Humility* is another fruit which springs from Christ; we are to learn of him, for he is meek and lowly of heart. Our humbleness of mind, heart, and conduct in life is derived wholly and solely from Christ; for it is only as we walk in him, converse with him, and live upon him, that we are transformed into his image and likeness. *Patience* has its spring head in Christ, and when the tried and tempted soul is made sick of looking for patience in itself, then it has a sweet experimental proof that patience in tribulation, strength to bear, resignation to his will, are Christ's own gifts; we must look to him, the strong, for strength, for he it is that gives strength for the day. *Joy* is another of the streams of salvation which flow from Christ, the spring head. We "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ." If Christ had not died for us, we never should have had any joy in God. *Joy* and *peace*, arising from an assurance of pardon and of interest in Christ, alike flow from the same source. The precious blood of Christ is a fountain of bliss to all his saints. Their salvation flows from it. Their everlasting glory is secured by it. Time fails, memory fails, to enable us to enumerate a thousandth part of the blessings of which Christ is the spring head to his church. He is the centre and circumference of all the blessings which they possess in heaven and upon earth. Christ is All, and in all.

IV. In the fourth place, I have now to say a few things on what Christ is, *in respect of that which is known, felt, and enjoyed experimentally in the hearts of believers as their All, and in all.*

We here enter the garden of Eden. Here stands in the

midst, the tree of life, accessible to all believers. The fruits of this tree all may freely eat; no flaming cherubim guards the way; for they whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life have a right to the tree of life. It bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields its fruit every month; its variety and fulness is its pre-eminence. Christ is a tree of life to all his people. From him they derive spiritual and eternal life by virtue of his mediatorial fulness. Their union to him secures an interest in all that he is, in all that he has done, and also the enjoyment of all that he has promised. The fulness and variety of his blessings are just suited to the constant necessities of every sinner feeling his poverty, emptiness, and wretchedness. Christ is All, and in all to the believer, in all the exercises of his affections, his emotions, and his desires. He is All, and in all that is revealed of him in the scriptures of truth. He is All in all the ordinances of God's house. He is All in all the preaching of the gospel. He is All in all the events of providence. He is All in the relations of life. He is All in all those things by which man finds temporal support and comfort. Whatever the believer needs for the enjoyment and improvement of life, Christ is All and in all, whether it be in the way of safety, supply, service, or satisfaction. Christ is his life, his meat and drink. Christ is his comfort, his raiment, dwelling, light, and shade. Christ is his friend, guide, companion, brother, physician, prophet, priest, and king. Christ is the sufficiency and the perfection of his people; they are complete in him personally, their supplies are all complete in him. He is their everlasting portion; for their happiness, both for time and eternity, is bound up in him. Believers who are living daily on Christ's fulness, make him their All, and in all. Whatsoever they do in word or deed, they desire and aim to do it in his name, and as in his sight. If they ask a blessing on their ordinary food, or render thanks for mercies bestowed, it is in his name. In undertaking any important work, or following their daily calling in life, they seek to do it according to his will. In all that concerns their earthly concerns, position, and prospects, they desire to glorify God both in their bodies, souls, and spirits, which are the Lord's. He is their All, and in all.

In the experience which believers have of the love, grace, and goodness of God, Christ has the pre-eminence

in all things. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the Way to the Father. By him they have access to the Father at the throne of grace. In him they stand accepted by the Father; in him they stand complete. Complete in his righteousness, completely justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The feeling sense of this justification is peace in the conscience, arising from the assurance of pardon applied by the Spirit: "By faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." This grace of justification in which the believer stands is Christ in him the hope of glory. In proportion as he realizes his justification before God by the blood and obedience of Christ he realizes his hopes of eternal happiness and glorification.

Christ is All, in all the believer's experience of heavenly truth. He is the light of their understanding, as well as he is the life of their souls. All truth in *doctrine* has its origin in him. All truth in the *promises* has its centre in him. All truth in *precepts* have their bond in him. All *invitations* have their end in him. All scripture testify of him; it is the standard and the touchstone of the truth as it is in him. Whatever is known savingly of the truth as it is in Christ is an experimental knowledge, revealed in the heart and conscience; a revelation of Christ in the soul. (Gal. ii. 15.) Even in common things, we only know things by a kind of revelation or testimony. A child cannot know his A, B, C, until it is revealed or shown to him; so spiritual truth can only be spiritually known by a spiritual revelation. The natural man can neither receive nor know the things of the Spirit of God; but when he is renewed in the spirit of his mind, then Christ becomes his light; truth, as it is in Christ, is revealed to his understanding. His affections are set upon the truth, because they are set upon Christ himself. Paul's knowledge of the gospel was by the revelation of Jesus Christ. (Gal. i. 12.) Truth thus revealed in the believer becomes an experimental knowledge, not a form of sound words laid up in the memory, and stated with precision and appropriateness, but a demonstration of the Spirit and with power; it is a tasting that the Lord is gracious; a hear-

ing with the ear, a seeing with the eye, a looking upon, and a handling of the Word of life in the soul ; where this is understood, Christ is All, and in all.

Christ is All in all that the believer experiences of spiritual life. The understanding being spiritually enlightened is a proof of spiritual life. There can be no spiritual light without spiritual life, and there can be no spiritual life without Christ. Spiritual life is indicated by a life of faith upon the Son of God. Faith in Christ is a life in Christ and upon Christ: it is maintained by a knowledge of Christ, communion with Christ, and an enjoyment of all those truths that relate to Christ, his person, his work, and his characters, in all that belongs to the covenant of grace. Spiritual revelations of Christ give to the believer spiritual views of truths ; by this he obtains his knowledge, and this is his enjoyment of Christ. In this knowledge and this enjoyment consists the life of faith. The thoughts of the heart are employed upon heavenly realities, the soul is led out of self, away from sin, and is separated from the spirit of the world, and is in love only with the beauties discovered in the person of Immanuel. Many believers, it is true, do not appear to realize all that is here marked out as the life of faith ; this depends much upon the method of grace which the Holy Ghost employs in bringing a believer to know *himself*, or the spirituality of God's law ; the depths of iniquity, a long course of worldly pleasures, or an even course of moral consistency in life, all mark the unregenerated person with peculiar lines or features which, when the sinner is taken in hand, and is brought to know Christ for himself, his life in Christ is more or less vigorous and defined. Allowances must also be made for the various constitutional temperaments of different individuals ; but whatever differences there may be in the appearances of grace in some persons, spiritual life in the exercises of faith, love, and hope is essentially the same in all. A man must be brought to renounce himself wholly, before he can experience that Christ is his All, and in all. Sinful self, righteous self, must be laid low in the dust. Christ exalted must be the crown of the sinner's hope, glory, and salvation. Christ is the believer's All through life, and in the article of death, and he will be All in the heavenly glory, he will then be filled with all the fulness of God, for Christ will be All, and in all.

Now, in conclusion, let me make a few practical observations. If Christ be our All, and in all, 1. How vain and empty are all things here below without Christ. Everything else is nothing at all. All the world, with its riches, pleasures, and honours, are vanity without Christ.

2. How blessed is the inheritance of those who value Christ as All, and in all. They enjoy all things in Christ; having him, they possess all things, they want for nothing, for he is All to them. If a believer in Christ be ever so poor in this world, he is rich in Christ, for he is a joint heir with Christ. All things are his, Christ is his. On the other hand, how vain and empty are the highest and best of ordinances, unless Christ is seen and enjoyed in them. How insufficient are any of the Gospel doctrines without Christ being known and experienced, is their substance and reality!

3. How worthless are all those duties in which we may be engaged for God, unless Christ is in them. How useless are all head notions, gifts, talents, or knowledge, without Christ as the foundation and All, and in all of the soul.

4. If Christ has been our All, and in all, on this earth, then he will be our All, and in all, in the passage from this world to the next. What he was to us in life, he will be to us in death. At the very last moment of life we shall find him everything to us. As we leave the world, kindred, means of grace will all fade.

5. Christ will be our All, and in all in the heavenly state. The sum of all happiness will be in him, not in the place itself; heaven without his presence would not be heaven. "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth I desire beside thee." We shall live eternally on that fulness which is our All, and in all; for ever beholding his glory, for ever singing his praise, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us in his blood, to him be glory for ever and ever, Amen." Christ was our All before time, is our All in time, and will be our All throughout eternity.

6. But oh how terrible must be the death of those who die without Christ! To the believer in Christ, he is all their salvation and all their desire. Stranger to Christ! nominal professor! how is it with you? Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. Amen.

THE GOOD WILL OF CHRIST TOWARDS HIS PEOPLE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Evening, July 7th, 1861.

REVISED.

“And for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.”—
DEUT. XXXIII. 16.

THE words which I have announced for a text have dwelt upon my mind for some time past; indeed, it was the occasion of my taking the subject of the burning bush for this morning's discourse. The observations then made may be considered as introductory to what is now intended to be laid before you. The leading points were—1. That the Bush was symbolic of the church of Christ in the wilderness. 2. That the Fire was symbolic of the trials and afflictions wherewith God exercises his people. 3. That the burning of the bush, yet *Unconsumed*, was symbolic of Christ's presence with his people, and his preserving care over them. The point for us now to notice is, the Presence and Grace of Christ as dwelling with his church in the wilderness. This is the doctrine contained, and what is meant in the words, “The good will of him that dwelt in the bush.”

By a reference to the context you will perceive our text is part of the blessing which Moses pronounced upon the tribe of Joseph. It is so peculiarly striking that we shall do well to observe what is here said: “And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof,

and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren."

Joseph was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. The purest, most spotless and perfect of all the patriarchal types, and, therefore, the greatest and most illustrious things are said of him as such. The whole history of his sufferings, deliverance, and advancement are well calculated to be symbolical and figurative of the great anti-type, Jesus, the Son of God. *Personally*, Joseph is typical on account of his wisdom, meekness, chastity, charity and patience in suffering. *Providentially*, he is typical of his providing against the great famine of seven years, and therein feeding, not only his father and brethren, with their households, but the Egyptians and surrounding nations, in which he wonderfully represented our Lord in his *spiritually* providing for and feeding and saving his Father's brethren, according to the flesh, with all the Gentile nations who should believe on his name.

Then, again, we may consider the *circumstantial* trials and sufferings of Joseph well suited to represent the state of the church of God in their wilderness state of suffering, trials, and deliverances. What has befallen the church of God on earth is like unto what has befallen the great Head of the church in his incarnate state. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." (Isa. lxiii. 9.) "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was *in all points tempted* (tried) as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. iv. 15.)

Now, this sympathetic love of Christ was declared to Moses in the burning bush; for in Exodus iii. 7, we read, "And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people, which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows, and I am come down to deliver them." What a clear and full proof is here given of our Lord's constant care and attention to the concerns and interests of his church in affliction, distress, and sorrow! He stands to his covenant engagements; he is mindful of his covenant relationship to his saints. In their lowest estate he owns them, and

still calls them "My people." His eye is ever upon them, his ear is open to their cry; and when the cry of their sorrows reach his ear, he is ready to display his grace, and has a word of comfort for them. He knows ALL their sorrows, he takes a particular view of each, and, in his own appointed time and way, he will command deliverances for Jacob. He is the God of all comfort, and comforteth us in all our tribulation. Having passed through this vale of tears himself he knows every step of the way: "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Our Lord Jesus Christ, in his human nature, was a *tried man*, a deeply tried man, "A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." His trials, sorrows, and griefs "in all points" were of the same kind with ourselves; but his experience of them was peculiar to himself, "being without sin," so that there was a bitterness and a sharpness in his trials far beyond whatever we have known or ever shall know. I was thinking just now of those words, "in all points." How striking, to be sure. In all points of the compass, every part, every degree, Jesus the Son of God, our great High Priest, not only divinely knows, but *experimentally* knows every temptation, care, and sorrow that occurs in the whole circumference of earthly life. All the points of the compass in human suffering he has gone through in his own body, soul, and spirit. 'Tis true, he has passed into the heavens, but he is still with his church in the wilderness. He dwells with them; he is with them in the fire, he is with them in the rivers and in the floods; the fire cannot kindle upon them, nor the floods drown them, because he is present. What though the bush be all on fire, he is there; the bush remains unconsumed. His presence, grace, and power sustain his people in every trial, sharp or long. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all." He dwells in the bush, and his good will is seen in the happy issue of all the afflictions through which his people have to pass. And we know, "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

But without further detaining you with these prefatory remarks, let us

I. In the *first* place, say a few words upon the Person of whom it is said, he "dwelt in the bush."

By referring to the third chapter of Exodus, second verse, we read, the angel of the LORD appeared unto Moses.

The word LORD, you perceive, is printed in capitals, which, in our translation, always signifies JEHOVAH. Boothroyd translates it thus: "And the angel Jehovah appeared to Moses." The entire passage, as translated by the Rev. Julius Bate, reads thus: "And the angel of Jehovah appeared to him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a palm tree; and he looked, and behold, the palm-tree burnt with fire, and the palm-tree was not consumed. And Moses said, let me turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the tree is not burnt. And Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, and the Aleim called to him out of the midst of the tree, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here I am." By the word "Aleim," which is there used, the second person of the divine and glorious Trinity is always understood the Son of God, the Person of Jesus Christ, the Lord from heaven, the messenger of the covenant. He manifested himself to Moses in fire, the symbol of his glory, and declared himself to be the God of his father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And when Moses inquired how he should speak of Him that sent him to the people of Israel, God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM; or, as Boothroyd renders it: "I AM because I AM." Bate renders it: "I WILL BE WHAT I HAVE BEEN." The Septuagint reads, "THE BEING." Thus is plainly set forth by these various renderings an agreement in this great truth, THE ETERNITY, SELF-EXISTENCE, and IMMUTABLENESS OF CHRIST, as the ONE TRUE GOD. He who was with the church in the wilderness, the angel which spake to Moses. That spiritual Rock that followed the children of Israel; that spiritual Rock of which they drank, "And that Rock was Christ." This is the testimony of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments. And this is where true believers take their stand. It is true, the protomartyr Stephen, in relating the circumstance of the Lord appearing to Moses, calls him the voice of the Lord; this agrees with what the apostle John has said in his gospel, where Jesus is spoken of as the Word of God, "and the Word was God."

The next thing for us to notice is, the *manner of the appearance*, or manifestation of Jehovah to Moses, in a

bush burning with fire.* As the bush, a lowly shrub, or dwarfish tree, signified and symbolised the Church on earth, so it also symbolised *the humanity* of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was a type of his taking our nature. The fire was a type of his sufferings in his incarnate state. However dark and distant this allusion might appear to some, yet it is my firm belief that Jehovah intended thereby to manifest to Moses a revelation of Christ the Mediator, who should appear and suffer in our flesh. "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." Herein it was that God revealed his covenant to Moses. He revealed the glory of Christ's Person, and the glory of his grace. In this glorious manifestation of the Person and grace of Christ to Moses, what humbling and overpowering sense he had of his own insignificance and sinfulness! He was filled with fear, until God again made a further manifestation of his purposes of love towards his people and of his name. It is only in and through the Person of Christ that God deals with and speaks to man. It is only in and through the Person of Christ that we can venture to draw nigh unto God. We look at the fact of Christ revealed to Moses in the manner of a bush burning with fire, yet unconsumed. Here is something he did not at first understand. In his own way and method he approached the sacred precincts, but was forbidden. At length we see him beholding Him who was invisible, having fellowship with Jehovah in the Person of Christ. In the symbol of the bush and the fire, and in the divine communications, he beholds "the grace of the Lord Jesus, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." Here it is we see the love of God in Christ. What gracious designs are revealed; what promises of consolation and support are here given!—everlasting grace, unfailing consolation, immutable promises! What a divine preparation was here given to Moses to go forth to

* The Rev. Julius Bate, in Exod. iii. 2, translates the word "bush"—*palm-tree*. He thinks it is meant of the dwarf palm, which has a fine, large, beautiful head, and which abounded in the wilderness. I confess I rather like this rendering; but as we are accustomed to the word "bush" in our ordinary translation, I shall continue to use the word "bush."

his brethren, and proclaim that their deliverance was near! He whose goings forth were of old from everlasting, had seen the sorrows of his people, had heard their groanings, and now declares his good will towards his Church by announcing that he has come down to deliver them. Be his Church sunk ever so low, Christ is never so high but what he will come down to deliver them. He came down to take our nature. In taking our nature, he brought us nigh to God. Here was the good will of Christ. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through him."

II. We are now to inquire, in the *second* place, what is comprehended in the phrase, "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush."

It will be best to interpret scripture by scripture; it is the safest rule we can have—the mind of the Spirit is there. Turn with me to the second chapter of Exodus, 24th and 25th verses: "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them." Four things are here spoken of God—he heard, he remembered, he looked, he had respect. All this is spoken after the manner of men; God's mind and heart is revealed to us in the way of men's own method of understanding each other. By this we are to understand, that the great Jehovah was in every way acquainted with the condition and circumstances of his people; that though they were in a strange land, oppressed, afflicted, and down-trodden, yet all this was but a part of those purposes which Jehovah had designed, in which his grace and salvation should be more gloriously displayed. The afflictions of the Israelites in Egypt were like a dark cloud in the heavens of God's providence, but across the horizon was stretched the rainbow of his covenant, which he had made with their forefathers. Dark and gloomy as was the cloud in itself, yet how gloriously displayed was the brilliant colours of those precious words: "AND GOD HAD RESPECT UNTO THEM." God's respect consisted in this, a loving esteem of their persons, his kindly intentions towards them, a kind regard for them. In the midst of their afflictions and their sorrows, his love, esteem, regard, was still towards them; they were not unnoticed, they

still had his favour, his good will. I look upon the words, "and God had respect unto them," to be the same as if it had been said, "and God's good will was still towards them;" his hearing their groaning, looking upon their affliction, knowing their sorrows, all demonstrate that his divine presence was ever with them. Short as the phrase is, and peculiar as it is in itself, for there is not another like it in all the Scriptures, it comprehends all that can be said of the love, favour, grace, and blessing which God has towards his people, and has manifested in the person of Christ his Son.

But now, to be more particular. The good will of him that dwelt in the bush, is the covenant love of God in Christ to all his covenant people. Jehovah's covenant love. The love of the Father, the love of the Son, the love of the Spirit; the three divine persons in the unity of the Godhead, is here displayed to us in redeeming mercy, both in the method of his grace and of his providence. His acts of grace and his dealings in providence are so blended in the circumstances of his people, like as was the fire in the bush, yet the bush unconsumed. First, Here is a gracious acceptance of their persons, they stand before God, accepted in Christ, accepted in the beloved. Second, They are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Third, They are *preserved* in Christ Jesus, and called, being called out of the world and put amongst his people. Fourth, They are justified by the grace which is in Christ Jesus. This is the act of God in their own consciences, the Spirit bears testimony in their hearts that they are freely justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. Fifth, They are preserved to his heavenly kingdom and glory. The work of grace is maintained by the same power and grace by which it was begun. They were appointed to obtain salvation, by virtue of the covenant made with the eternal Three-One Jehovah. Salvation by grace is the good will of Jehovah manifested towards his people in the person and work of Christ. The good will of Christ, personally, is therefore seen, in his voluntarily undertaking the matter of our redemption. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." (Isa. lxiii. 9.) In the bonds

of the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, Jesus undertook to be their Surety and Mediator; he took their law-place, and stood in their stead; he suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring them near to God: "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of Christ in him." He put away their sin by the sacrifice of himself, and thereby redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them. Here then was seen the good will of Christ,—he died for them. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends.

The good will of him that dwelt in the bush is also seen in the bestowment of all things that pertain to life and godliness. The good will of God the Father is pre-eminently seen in the free gift of his own dear Son. Christ is this unspeakable gift. And in the possession of this gift we possess all things. "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." The good will of Christ is the greatest and best of all blessings. "In his favour is life." "In his presence there is fulness of joy." Without him nothing is good, nothing is holy, nothing is strong. His good will is the source of all blessings, our springs of comfort, hope, love, joy, are all in him. An experimental sense of this good will is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost; every gift and grace of the Holy Ghost wrought in our souls is from his good will, for when he ascended up on high "He gave gifts unto men, even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them." Manifest tokens of his presence enables us to glory in tribulations; patience in tribulation is a proof of divine power and care; the experience of patience develops and strengthens our hope, and this hope in Christ is grounded in his good will, a sense of his love and favour towards us. Thus all the dispensations of his providence are owned and acknowledged as from his good will towards us; dark, gloomy, rough and crooked, painful and adverse as the path may be in which we are called to walk, yet "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." His thoughts towards us are thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give us an expected end; that expected end is the everlasting happiness of all his people. "The ransomed

of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." All this, and much more is comprehended in what is to be understood by "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush." Every favour, every blessing, all the good we have had, or can have, or ever hope for, is from him whose love had no beginning, nor ever will have an end. The love of Christ is the greatest and best of all blessings that can be known by man, whether upon earth or in heaven, "in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

III. I proceed now in the *third* place to suggest some reasons why these blessings are called the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.

This will necessarily take us back to the historical record, where Moses had a manifestation of Jehovah in the appearance of a bush on fire, and yet the bush unconsumed. Moses was now eighty years old. When in his fortieth year he evidently had an impression he was to be the deliverer of his nation, for "it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel," and in his zeal, but without authority, he interfered in their individual and private strifes. "He supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them." (Acts vii. 25.) But so it was, that his visit, instead of then resulting in their deliverance, ended in his being exiled, both from his people and from his own place. Forty years rolled on, the sighing and the groaning of these people still kept on; Moses himself, as I believe, had neither forgotten the condition of his people, nor had ceased praying for their deliverance, but he is now no longer in a position to use the influence he once had. He is still a man of prayer, it is true, but he is now very poor, he is only a shepherd to his father-in-law. He was once a zealous, impetuous, headstrong man, but he is now very meek, and has an aversion to engage in public duties. He is now far away from his friends and his people, what can he do? Nothing. What is he in society? Nothing. I can imagine he had given up all hope of ever doing any thing of himself for his people. He has brought his flock once more to feed on the shady side of the desert, under Horeb, and what does he see? An alarming sight,—a fire in a bush, likely enough perhaps to destroy all his

flock, if it should spread; but no, though the fire continues, yet it is stationary—it does not spread. Wonderful! yet more wonderful still, the bush is not consumed! This was a sight, Moses called it a *great sight*—"I will leave my flock to see this great sight, and see why the bush is not burnt"—not a leaf singed—the bush is as green as ever. This was a mystery which Moses did not understand; he knew the mysteries of Egypt, but not those of God. God has a method of manifesting himself to his people as he does not unto the world. He reveals himself in a way and manner that seems, at first sight, destructive to their present interests and hopes of the future. This marvellous manifestation of Jehovah to Moses we are sure would never be forgotten by him. Here God declares his character, his faithfulness, and his purposes. Moses realised all that God had revealed to him in the bush during the people's forty years' sojourning in the wilderness. The smitten rock furnishing streams in the desert was a wonder, a never-ceasing miracle. The Apostle Paul is inspired to speak of that rock as setting forth the person, character, and blessings of the Lord Jesus Christ, but Moses retains the vivid impressions, and the heavenly teachings he had, by the burning bush being unconsumed, and now, in his declining days, he still prays that "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush" may rest upon the head of Joseph, and why?

1. Because the bush on fire was a type of Christ's human nature and his sufferings, as it was also of the church of God in its low estate. The bush would be symbolical to Moses of humanity, especially if, as some think, the tree was a dwarf palm. Christ incarnate is a wonderful mystery; it is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh. The cherubic mystery revealed as flaming fire doubtless was known to Moses, and now here is a special manifestation to him personally, and it would be by the same Spirit who teaches all his people to profit, received as a spiritual revelation of Christ and his work to the heart, a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ by a symbol that conveyed to the outward senses the reality and force of that stern truth, God out of Christ is a consuming fire, but in Christ full salvation. Christ incarnate is the sinner's hope.

"Till God in human flesh I see,
My thoughts no comfort find,

The holy just, and sacred three
Are terrors to my mind."

2. To see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This is discovered to the believer in the revelation of the covenant of peace. Here the soul has an assurance from God himself, a testimony sealed home to his conscience, that the whole plan of salvation was entered into and secured before time, before sin had its being. The loving-kindness of God is declared to have been eternal: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." God draws us to himself in the revelation of Jesus Christ. In him he makes known to us "all the good pleasure of his will." In Christ "dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." In the revelation of his covenant we discover his fiery law, by which sin is exhibited in its exceeding sinfulness. Then it is we feel our demerit and our danger. We discover that God will "by no means clear the guilty" without an atonement. We tremble and fear as we approach this holy ground; but see how God reveals to us his covenant in Christ. There is a fire, but it does not consume, for it is God that speaks. He reveals to us how he can be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. God's method of mercy, grace, and salvation for poor, lost, perishing sinners, as declared in the gospel, is the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.

3. 'This good will evidently deserves the name, because of the tenderness, the sympathy, and care which the Lord Jesus exhibits towards his people whilst in their state of affliction and sufferings. Christ's preservation and care is evidence of his presence. He is ever with his church in its darkest and lowest state. Let the fires of affliction or persecution be ever so raging, he is with them; he will not leave them; the flame shall not kindle upon them. He dwells with them. No fire shall consume whilst Jesus is near. He says:

"Nor even kindle on thee once,
Though seven times hotter than before;
I'm there, my glory to advance,
And thou, to wonder and adore!"

"Because I live, ye shall live also." Hence, then, his good will is assured to us upon his own life. Many and great have been our trials and sufferings, but the Lord has upheld us, preserved us in the greatest dangers, de-

livered us in our most difficult straits, and strengthened us in our utmost weakness. His love and grace, his mercy, wisdom, and power are all engaged on our behalf; "he will preserve us to his heavenly kingdom and glory."

4. What special seasons believers have of Christ's love and goodness in their times of distress, perplexity, sorrow, pains, griefs, and cares. How often the soul has realized sweet manifestations of his presence!—such manifestations as they never can forget—certain seasons when our souls were bowed down because of oppression, and when God appeared and delivered us. What joy, what a sensible experience of God's love, truth, and faithfulness! We cannot forget the time when God removed the burden of sin from the shoulder and took the yoke from off our neck, and destroyed it, because of the anointing. Jacob never forgot God's first manifestation to him in the dream, Joseph in his dream, nor Moses at the burning bush. When we have been kept long toiling and rowing, wind and tide against us, yet strengthened to endure, and at length to reach our point of rest, we have rejoiced in the truth and goodness of the Lord—strength for the day has been given. These instances of his love and good will warm and cheer our hearts; we look back upon them with delight, and consider them all as proofs of his good will, dearer to us than all the blessings which earth can afford. This good will is over and above and beyond them all. We trace it all to the love of God in Christ, and it well deserves the name, the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.

IV. Consider, in the *fourth* place, how these blessings are realised and participated in by believers.

1. In the renewal of their nature. When God takes the sinner in hand, he gives him a new nature, plants his fear in the heart, makes him a partaker of his holiness, and thereby gives him a spiritual capacity to experience and to enjoy the love, favour, and goodness of the Lord. The sight and sense that he has of himself as a sinner awakens him to a sense of his danger; his distress and fear lead him, under the teaching and leading of the Spirit, to the blood of sprinkling; the blood of atonement applied to his conscience frees him from a sense of his guilt, and fear, and unbelief; he rejoices in God his Saviour, the blood of Jesus becomes most precious to him; he has been brought nigh to God, and he has peace with

God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and thereby "good has come unto him."

2. He is brought into fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, and also the Holy Ghost. Each of the divine Persons in the glorious Trinity have taken a part in his salvation. The love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. Christ dwells in the heart by faith. The soul draws nigh to God by Jesus Christ; the Spirit helps our infirmities; gives us a spirit of grace and supplication. The experience of God's love in the soul is a firm persuasion of his covenant love, having joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Joy is a fruit that never grew upon any tree but the tree of life, and this is Christ himself. All true joy comes from him; the spring of it is in him; in him all fulness dwells; all covenant fulness—fulness of joy, fulness of good. Love is another fruit produced only by the tree of life. Love is of God. God is love. His loving kindness is made known to us in all those blessings which God has set forth in his word of truth. All the good that the church of God can have, know, or want, is from the love and good will of him who dwelt in the bush. The knowledge of this brings the soul nearer to God, humbles it; but it finds sweet fellowship with God the Father, his Son, and the Spirit. The soul has a believing view of what has been undertaken to rescue it from the damning power of sin, and every faculty is drawn out in holy gratitude, adoration, and praise. Holy fellowship with the Father, Son, and Spirit is that blessed communion which the believer has in meditating, surveying, and realising personal and distinct communications with the divine persons of the glorious and blessed Trinity. The soul grows in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it also finds his good will to be the best and greatest blessing that God can give.

3. The good will of Christ is realized by believers in those various characters he bears in his mediatorial capacity. How blessed to feel deliverance from those terrors of the law which bound the soul in the prison of death; to feel that the deliverance was gained by Christ its Surety—the ransom price being his precious blood! How precious to find him my friend and my advocate in the court of divine justice! He is my Brother, born for ad-

versity; my Shepherd, my Husband, my Lord, my Intercessor, my Prophet, my Priest, and my King. He is my wisdom, my righteousness, my sanctification, and my redemption. He is All, and in all. By faith I live upon him. By faith I walk with him. By faith in him, I realise and enjoy his peace, power, presence, and blessing in all I have and all I am. By faith I realize my union to him, and feel his good will towards me is based on his sovereign, electing love. This is the ground of my safety, the ground of my peace, and the ground of my hopes of eternal happiness.

4. The good will of Christ is realised also by believers in the various means of grace and gospel ordinances. The word of God, how precious to us when the Spirit of truth lights up the sacred page! What heavenly beams of light shine in upon the soul! In his light we see light. What comfort and joy enters the soul as the Person of Christ is there revealed! What blessedness there is in the worship of his holy name! How often has one's heart been warmed in taking his name upon our lips in praise; what life and power often in the ministry of the word; what sweetness and unction when the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to the soul! What pleasure and comfort have we found in meeting with the people of God! What love, unity, and fellowship with them in the things of God! What precious comfort in the pouring out of the heart before God in prayer, and in receiving gracious answers of peace.

5. The good will of Christ is also realized by his sending the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to abide with us. The Spirit dwelleth in us—makes our bodies his temples. It is a solemn thought, nevertheless a blessed one. We are conscious of much evil and sin within, and we are often shocked at the sight, and can hardly think that so holy a Being is there; yet it must be true. It is light that manifests darkness; it is purity that manifests sinfulness; it is life that distinguishes deadness; it is power that rises above weakness. Every grace of the Spirit is a proof of Christ's good will. Faith, love, hope, joy, peace, patience, meekness, and whatever else is manifested in us or experienced by us is the divine work in the soul, by the power, influences, and presence of God the Holy Ghost. He has taken possession of the soul. He has begun the work, and he will maintain it. He will complete it, and bring

forth the topstone, shouting, Grace, grace unto it. The soul thus under the Spirit's influence and teaching, is separated from the world in its spirit, pursuits, pleasures, maxims, and tendencies. Nothing but Jesus it esteems and counts all pleasures and riches of the world but as dung and dross, so that it may win Christ, and be found in him, not having on its own righteousness, but that which is by the faith of Christ, the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.

If these are some of the things which we designate the good will of Christ, and which arise out of his good will, what encouragements we have, if we are united to him by faith, to seek and to dwell more upon the things of Christ! "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth; set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." The best of us are living too low. We have need to seek higher manifestations of God's love and grace; to look beyond what we have yet known and experienced. The sense of our unworthiness is no bar to his communication, though it may be to our enjoyment. He knows all our faults, miseries, and weaknesses; as for our iniquities, he will purge them away. What if the manifestation of his love and grace be in the fire of affliction, the fire shall not consume us. God is faithful to his promises, to his Son and to his saints. Your trials are for your good, your profit. They may be sharp, but they must be short. God suffers you to be tried that you may try him; try him for his love, trust him for his grace. He is calling to you out of the bush, draw near to him. Fear not, the place where thou standest is holy ground. He will make gracious communications to you, and you shall prove, to your everlasting good and his glory, the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.

Is there an unbeliever or scoffer present in this assembly? Is there a carnal professor here—one who has a name to live, but is dead—dead to God, dead in himself. You have never yet prayed for this best of blessings, the good will of him that dwelt in the bush; you have had no experience of it. Miserable creature! what dangerous ground you are treading on; it is crumbling away from under your feet. Oh that God may give you grace to seek him while he is to be found, and to call upon him while he is near! Amen.