

Lecture IX.

What God Is To Us.

Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.—“The lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands.”

There is nothing can separate between God and a people but iniquity, and yet he is very loath to separate even for that. He makes many shows of departing, that so we may hold him fast, and indeed he is not difficult to be holden. He threatens often to remove his presence from a person or nation, and he threatens, that he may not indeed remove, but that they may entreat him to stay, and he is not hard to be entreated. Who is a God like unto him, slow to anger, and of great mercy? He is long of being provoked, and not long provoked, for it is like the anger of a parent's love. Love takes on anger as the last remedy, and if it prevail, it is as glad to put it off as it was unwilling to take it on. You may see a lively picture of this in God's dealing with Moses and this people in the preceding chapter. He had long endured this rebellious and obstinate people,—had often threatened to cut them off,—and yet, as it were, loath to do it, and repenting of it, he suffers himself to be entreated for them, but all in vain to them,—they corrupted their way still more, and in the 32d chapter fall into gross idolatry, the great trespass that he had given them so solemn warning of often, whereupon great wrath is conceived. And the Lord (chap. xxxiii. 2) threatens to depart from them,—Go your way, saith he to Canaan, but I will not go with you, take your venture of any judgments, and the people of the land's cruelty. Here is a sad farewell to Israel, and who would think he could be detained after all that?

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Who would think that he could be entreated? And yet he is not entreated, he is not requested, before he gives some ground of it, and before he first condescends; go, saith he, and put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. Will he then accept a repenting people, and is there yet hope of mercy? Should he that is going away show us the way to keep him still? And he that flees from us, will he strengthen us to pursue and follow after him? This is not after the manner of men, it is true, whose compassions fail when their passion ariseth, but this is the manner and method of grace, or of him who waits to be gracious. He flees so as he would have a follower. Yea, while he seems to go away, he draws the soul that he might ran after him. Hence is that word, Psal. lxiii. 8, "My soul followeth hard after thee, thy light hand upholdeth me." Well, the people mourn, and put off their ornaments in sign of humiliation and abasement, but all this doth not pacify and quench the flame that was kindled. Moses takes the tabernacle out of the camp, the place of judgement where God spake with the people, and the cloud, the sign of God's presence, removes. In a word, the sign of God's loving and kind presence departs from them, to signify that they were divorced from God, and, in a manner, the Lord by Moses excommunicates all the people and rulers both, and draws away these holy things from the contagion of a profane people. But yet all is not gone. He goes far off, but not out of sight, that you may always follow him, and if you follow, he will stand still. He is never without the reach of crying, though we do not perceive him. Now, in this sad case you may have a trial who is godly. Every one that seeks the Lord will separate from the unholy congregation, and follow the tabernacle, and this affects the whole people much, that they all worship in the tent door.

Now, in the meantime, God admits Moses to speak with him. Though he will not speak to the people, yet he will speak with their mediator, a typical mediator, to show us that God is well pleased in Christ, and so all Christ's intercessions and requests

for us will get a hearing. When they are come once in talking, the business is taken up, for He is not soon angry, and never implacably angry,—“slow to anger, and keeps it not long.” Moses falling familiar with God, not only obtains his request for the people, but becomes more bold in a request for his own satisfaction and confirmation. He could not endure to lead that people unless God went with him, and having the promise of his going with them he cannot endure distance with him, but aspires to the nearest communion that may be. Oh! that it were so with us. His great request is, that the Lord will show him his glory. Had he not seen much of this already and more than any man ever saw, when he spake in the mount with God, &c.? Nay, but he would see more, for there is always more to be seen, and there is in a godly soul always more desire to see it. The more is seen, the more is loved and desired. Tasting of it only begets a kindly appetite after it, and the more tasted, still the fresher and more recent but yet it is above both desire and fruition,—“Thou canst not see my face, &c.” All our knowledge of God,—all our attainments of experience of him,—do but reach to some dark and confused apprehension of what he is. The clearest and nearest sight of God in this world is, as if a man were not known but by his back, which is a great point of estrangement. It is said, in heaven we shall see him “face to face,” and fully as he is, because then the soul is made capable of it.

Two things in us here put us in an incapacity of nearness with God,—infirmity and iniquity. Infirmity in us cannot behold his glory. It is of so weak eyes, that the brightness of the sun would strike it blind. And iniquity in us, he cannot behold it, because he is of pure eyes, that can look on no unclean thing. It is the only thing in the creation that God's holiness hath an antipathy at, and therefore he is still about the destroying of the body of sin in us, about the purging from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and till the soul be thus purged of all sin, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, it cannot be a temple for an immediate vision of

him, and an immediate exhibition of God to us. Sin is the will of partition, and the thick cloud that eclipses his glory from us. It is the opposite hemisphere of darkness, contrary to light, according to the access or recess of God's presence, it is more or less dark. The more sin reigns in thee, the less of God is in thee, and the more sin be subdued, the readier and nearer is God's presence. But let us comfort ourselves that one day we shall put off both infirmity and iniquity, mortality shall put on immortality, and corruption be clothed with incorruption. We shall leave the rags of mortal weakness in the grave, and our menstruous clothes of sin behind us, and then shall the weak eyes of flesh be made like eagles' eyes, to behold the sun, and then shall the soul be clothed with holiness, as with a garment, which God shall delight to look upon, because he sees his own image in that glass.

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We come to the Lord's satisfying of Moses' desire, and proclaiming his name before him. It is himself only can tell you what he is. It is not ministers preaching, or other discourse, can proclaim that name to you. We may indeed speak over those words unto you, but it is the Lord that must write that name upon your heart. He only can discover his glory to your spirit. There is a spirit of life which cannot be enclosed in letters and syllables, or transmitted through your ears into your hearts, but he himself must create it inwardly, and stir up the inward sense and feeling of that name, of those attributes. Faith indeed, "cometh by hearing," and our knowledge in this life is "through a glass darkly, through ordinances and senses," but there must be an inward teaching and speaking to your souls to make that effectual, "the anointing teacheth you of all things," 1 John ii. 27. Alas! it is the separation of that from the word that makes it so unprofitable. If the Spirit of God were inwardly writing what the word is teaching then should your souls be "living epistles, that ye might read God's name on them." O! be much in imploring of and depending on him that teacheth to profit, who only can declare unto your souls what he is!

These names express his essence or being, and his properties, what he is in himself, and what he is to us. In himself he is Jehovah, or a Self Being, $\alpha\upsilon\tau\ \omicron\nu$ as we heard in the 3d chapter, "I am that I am", and *EL*, a strong God, or Almighty God, which two hold out unto us the absolute incomprehensible perfection of God, eminently and infinitely enclosing within himself all the perfections of the creature; the unchangeable and immutable being of God, who was, and is, and is to come, without succession, without variation, or shadow of turning, and then the almighty power of God, by which without difficulty by the inclination and beck of his will and pleasure, he can make or unmake all,—create or annihilate—to whom nothing is impossible. Which three, if they were pondered by us till our souls received the stamp of them, they would certainly be powerful to abstract and draw our hearts from the vain changeable, and empty shadow of the creature, and gather our scattered affections that are parted among them, because of their insufficiency, that all might unite in one and join with this self sufficient and eternal God. I say, if a soul did indeed believe and consider how all-sufficient he is, how insufficient all things else are, would it not cleave to him and draw near to him? Psal. lxxiii. ult. It is the very torment and vexation of the soul to be thus racked, distracted, and divided about many things, and therefore many, because there is none of them can supply all our wants. Our wants are infinite, our desires insatiable and the good that is in any thing is limited and bounded, it can serve, one but for one use, and another for another use and when all are together they can but supply some wants but they leave much of the soul empty. But often these outward things cross one another, and cannot consist together and hence ariseth much strife and debate in a soul. His need requireth both, and both will not agree. But O that you could see this one universal good, one for all, and above all, your souls would choose him certainly—your souls would trust in him! Ye would say, "Asshur shall not save us, we will not ride on horses." Creatures shall not

satisfy us, we will seek our happiness in thee and nowhere else; since we have tasted this new wine, away with the old, the new is better. I beseech you, make God your friend, for he is a great one, whether he be a friend or an enemy, he hath two properties that make him either most comfortable, or most terrible, according as he is at peace or war with souls,—eternity, and omnipotency. You were all once enemies to him. O consider what a party you have, an almighty party, and an unchangeable party! and if you will make peace with him and that in Christ, then know he is the best friend in the world, because he is unchangeable and almighty. If he be thy friend, he will do all for thee he can do and thou hast need of. Many friends willing to do, have not ability, but he hath power to do what he wills and pleases. Many friends are changeable,—their affections dry up and of themselves die, and therefore even princes' friendship is but a vain confidence, for they shall die, and then their thoughts of favour perish with them, but he abides the same for all generations. There is no end of his duration and no end of his affection; he can still say, “I am that I am. What I was, I am, and I will be what I am.” Men cannot say so, they are like the brooks that the companies of Teman looked after, and thought to have found them in summer as they left them in winter, but behold they were dried up, and the companies ashamed. God cannot make thee ashamed of thy hope, because he is faithful and able. Ability and fidelity is a sure anchor to hold by in all storms and tempests.

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Such is God in himself. Now, there are two manner of ways he vents himself towards the creatures,—in a comfortable way, or in a terrible way. This glorious perfection and almighty power hath an issue upon sinners, and it runs in a twofold channel, of mercy or justice, of mercy towards miserable sinners that find themselves lost, and flee unto him and take hold of his strength, and justice towards all those that flatter themselves in their own eyes, and continue in their sins and put the evil day far off. There is no mercy for such as fear not justice, and there is no

justice for such as flee from it unto mercy. The Lord exhibits himself in a twofold appearance, according to the condition of sinners. He sits on a throne and tribunal of grace and mercy, to make access to the vilest sinner who is afraid of his wrath and would fain be at peace with him, and he sits on a throne of justice and wrath, to seclude and debar presumptuous sinners from holiness. There were two mountains under the law,—one of cursings, and another of blessings. These are the mountains God sets his throne upon, and from these he speaks and sentences mankind. From the mountain of cursings, he hath pronounced a curse and condemnatory sentence upon all flesh, “for all have sinned.” Therefore he concludes all under sin that all flesh might stop their mouth, and the whole world become guilty before God. Now, the Lord having thus condemned all mankind because of disobedience, he sits again upon the mountain of blessings, and pronounces a sentence of absolution, of as many as have taken with the sentence of condemnation, and appealed to his grace and mercy, and those which do not so, the sentence of condemnation stands above their heads unrepealed. He erects his tribunal of justice in the world for this end, that all flesh might once be convicted before him, and therefore he cites, as it were, and summons all men to present themselves and appear before his tribunal, to be judged. He lays out an accusation in the word against them. He takes their consciences witness of the truth of all that is charged on them, and then pronounces that sentence in their conscience, “Cursed is he that abideth not in all things,” which the conscience subsumes, and concludes itself accursed, and subscribes to the equity of the sentence. And thus man is guilty before God, and his mouth stopped. He hath no excuses, no pretences, he can see no way to escape from justice, and God is justified, by this means, in his speaking and judging. Psal. li. 4. The soul ratifies and confirms the truth and justice of all his threatenings and judgements, Rom. iii. 4. Now, for such souls as join with God in judging and condemning themselves, the Lord

hath erected a throne of grace and tribunal of mercy in the word, whereupon he hath set his Son Jesus Christ, Psal. ii. 6, lxxxix. 14, xlv. 6, Heb. i. 8. And O! this throne is a comfortable throne. Mercy and truth go before the face of the king to welcome and entertain miserable sinners, and to make access to them. And from this throne Jesus Christ holds out the sceptre of the gospel, to invite sinners, self-condemned sinners, to come to him alone, who hath gotten all final judgment committed to him, that he may give eternal life “to whom he will,” John v. 21, 22. O! that is a sweet and ample commission given to our friend and brother, Jesus Christ,—power to repeal sentences passed against us,—power and authority to absolve them whom justice hath condemned, and to bless whom the law hath cursed, and to open their mouth to praise whose mouth sin and guiltiness hath stopped,—power to give the answer of a good conscience to thy evil self-tormenting conscience! In a word, he hath power to give life, to make alive and heal those who are killed or wounded by the commandment. Now, I say, seeing God hath of purpose established this throne of mercy in the word, thou mayest well, after receiving and acknowledging of the justice of the curse of the law, appeal divine mercy and grace sitting on another throne of the gospel. Thou mayest—if thy conscience urge thee to despair, and to conclude there is no hope—thou mayest, I say, appeal from thy conscience, from Satan, from justice, unto Jesus Christ, who is holding out the sceptre to thee. The minister calls thee, rise and come, stand no longer before that bar, for it is a subordinate judicatory, there is a way to redress thee by a higher court of grace. Thou mayest say to justice, to Satan, to thy own conscience,—“It is true, I confess, that I deserve that sentence, I am guilty, and can say nothing against it, while I stand alone. But though I cannot satisfy, and have not; yet there is one, Jesus Christ, who gave his life a ransom for many, and whom God hath given as a propitiation for sins. He hath satisfied and paid the debt in my name; go and apprehend the cautioner, since he hath

undertaken it, nay, he hath done it, and is absolved. Thou hadst him in thy hands O Justice! Thou hadst him prisoner under the power of death. Since thou hast let him go, then he is acquitted from all the charge of my sins; and therefore, since I know that he is now a king, and hath a throne to judge the world and plead the cause of the poor sheep, I will appeal to him, refer the cause to his decision, I will make my supplication to him, and certainly he will hear, and interpose himself between wrath and me. He will rescind this sentence of condemnation, since he himself was condemned for us and is justified,—‘It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again,’ who shall condemn me? He is near that justifies me, Rom. viii. 33, 34.” Now if thou do indeed flee unto him for refuge, that city is open for thee, and nothing to prejudice thy entry. But no curse, no condemnation can enter in it, Rom. viii. 1. He will justify and absolve thee from all things whereof the law could not justify thee, but condemn thee. There is forgiveness with him, that he may be feared. David may teach thee this manner of application, (Psal. cxxx. and cxlii. 2) of appealing from the deserved curse, to free undeserved blessing and mercy in Christ.

Let us consider this name of the Lord, and it shall answer all our suspicions of him,—all our objections against coming to him and believing in him. It is certain, ignorance is the mother of unbelief, together with the natural perverseness of our hearts. If we knew his name, we would trust in him; if his names were pondered and considered, we would believe in him. Satan knows this, and therefore his great sleight and cunning is to hold our minds fixed on the consideration of our misery and desperate estate. He keeps the awakened conscience still upon that comfortless sight, and he labours to represent God by halves, and that it is a false representation of God. He represents him as clothed with justice and vengeance,—as a consuming fire, in which light a soul can see nothing but desperation written; and he labours to hold out the thoughts of his mercy and grace, or diverts a soul

from the consideration of his promises; whence it comes, that they are not established, that though salvation be near, yet it is far from them in their sense and apprehension. Therefore I say, you should labour to get an entire sight of God, and you shall see him best in his word, where he reveals himself, and there you find, if you consider, that which may make you fear him indeed, but never flee from him,—that which may abase you, but withal embolden you to come to him though trembling. Whatever thought possess thee of thine own misery, of thy own guiltiness, labour to counterpoise that with the thought of his mercy and free promises. Whatever be suggested of his holiness and justice, hear himself speak out his own name, and thou shall hear as much of mercy and grace as may make these not terrible unto thee, though high and honourable. The Lord hath so framed the expression and proclamation of his name in this place, that first a word of majesty and power is premised,—“the Lord, the Lord God,”—that it may compose our hearts in fear and reverence of such a glorious one, and make a preparatory impression of the majesty of our God, which indeed is the foundation or all true faith. It begins to adore and admire a deity, a majesty hid from the world. The thoughts of his power and glory possess the soul first, and make it begin to tremble to think that it hath such a high and holy one to deal with.

But, in the next place, you have the most sweet, alluring, comforting styles that can be imagined, to meet with the trembling and languishing condition of a soul that would be ready to faint before such a majesty. Here Mercy takes it by the hand, and gives a cordial of grace, pardon, forgiveness, &c. to it, which revives the soul of the humble, and intermingles some rejoicing with former trembling. Majesty and greatness go before to abase and humble the soul in its own eyes; and mercy and goodness second them to lift up those who are low and exalt the humble. And in the description of this, the Lord spends more words, according to the necessity of a soul, to signify to us how great and strong

consolation may be grounded on his name,—how accessible he is, though he dwell in accessible light,—how lovely he is, though he be the high and the lofty one,—how good he is, though he be great,—how merciful he is, though he be majestic. In a word, that those that flee to him may have all invitation, all encouragement to come, and nothing to discourage, to prejudge their welcome; that whoever will, may come, and nothing may hinder on his part. And then, after all this, he subjoins a word of his justice, in avenging sin, to show us that he leaves that as the last; that he essays all gaining ways of mercy with us; and that he is not very much delighted with the death of sinners, that so whosoever perishes may blame themselves for hating their own salvation and forsaking their own mercy. [051]

Now whoever thou art that apprehendest a dreadful and terrible God, and thyself a miserable and wretched sinner, thou canst find no comfort in God's highness and power, but it looks terrible upon thee, because thou doubttest of his good-will to save and pardon thee. Thou sayest with the blind man, If thou wilt, thou canst do it; thou art a strong God, but what comfort can I have in thy strength, since I know not thy good-will? I say, the Lord answers thee in this name, I am “merciful,” saith the Lord. If thou be miserable, I am merciful as well as strong; if thou have sin and misery, I have compassion and pity. My mercy may be a copy and pattern to all men to learn it of me, even towards their own brethren, Luke vi. 36. Therefore he is called “the father of mercies,” 2 Cor. i. 3. *Misericors est cui alterius miseria cordi est.* Mercy hath its very name from misery, for it is no other thing than to lay another's misery to heart; not to despise it, not to add to it, but to help it. It is a strong inclination to succour the misery of sinners, therefore thou needest no other thing to commend thee to him. Art thou miserable, and knowest it indeed? Then he is merciful; and know that also, these two suit well.

Nay, but saith the convinced soul, I know not if he will be merciful to me, for what am I? There is nothing in me to be regarded.

I have nothing to conciliate favour, and all that may procure hatred. But, saith the Lord, I am “gracious,” and dispense mercy freely, without respect to condition or qualification. Say not, if I had such a measure of humiliation as such a one,—if I loved him so much,—if I had so much godly sorrow and repentance,—then, I think he would be merciful to me. Say not so, for behold he is gracious. He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; and there is no other cause, no motive to procure it; it comes from within his own breast. It is not thy repentance will make him love thee, nor thy hardness of heart will make him hate thee or obstruct the vent of his grace towards thee. No! if it be grace, it is no more of works,—not works in that way that thou imaginest. It is not of repentance, not of faith in that sense thou conceivest; but it is freely, without the hire, without the price of repentance or faith, because all those are but the free gifts of grace. Thou wouldst have these graces to procure his favour, and to make them the ground of thy believing in his promises, but grace is without money. It immediately contracts with discovered misery, so that if thou do discover in thyself misery and sin, though thou find nothing else, yet do not cast away confidence, but so much the more address thyself to mercy and grace, which do not seek repentance in thee, but bring repentance and faith with them unto thee. Yet there is something in the awakened conscience. I have gone on long in sin; I have been a presumptuous sinner; can he endure me longer? Well, hear what the Lord saith, I am “long-suffering” and patient. And if he had not been so, we had been damned ere now. Patience hath a long term, and we cannot outrun it, outweary it. Why do we not wonder that he presently and instantly executed his wrath on angels, and gave them not one hour's space for repentance, but cast them down headlong into destruction, as in a moment; and yet his majesty hath so long delayed the execution of our sentence, and calls us unto repentance and forgiveness, that we may escape the condemnation of angels? His patience is not slackness and negligence, as men

count it, 2 Pet. iii. 9. He sits not in heaven as an idol, and idle spectator of what men are doing; but he observes all wrongs, and is sensible of them also. And if we were mindful and sensible of them also, he would forget them. He is long-suffering. This is extended and stretched-out patience beyond all expectation, beyond all deserving, yea contrary to it. Therefore, as long as he forbears, if thou apprehend thy misery and sin, and continuance in it; do not conclude that it is desperate. "Why should a living man complain?" As long as patience lengthens thy life, if thou desire to come to him, believe he will accept thee.

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But, saith the doubting soul, I am exceeding perverse and wicked, there is nothing in me but wickedness. It so abounds in me that there is none like me. But, saith the Lord, I am "abundant in goodness." Thy wickedness though it be great, it is but a created wickedness, but my goodness is the goodness of God. I am as abundant in grace and goodness as thou art in sin—nay, infinitely more. Thy sin is but the transgression of a finite creature, but my mercy is the compassion of an infinite God,—it can swallow it up. Suppose thy sin cry up to heaven, yet mercy reaches above heaven, and is built up for ever. Here is an invitation to all sinners to come and taste—O come and taste, and see how good the Lord is! Goodness is communicative; it diffuses itself, like the sun's light. There is riches of his goodness. Rom. ii. 4. Poor soul, thou canst not spend it though thou have many wants!

But I am full of doubtings, fears, and jealousies. I cannot believe in his promises. I often question them. How, then, will he perform them? I say, saith the Lord, I am abundant in truth. He will certainly perform. Shall our unbelief, or doubting, "make the faith of God without effect?" &c. Rom. iii. 3. God forbid! His faithfulness reaches unto the clouds; he will keep covenant with thee whose soul hath chosen him, though thou often question and doubt of him. Indeed, thou shouldst not give indulgence to thy doubtings and jealousies, but look on them as

high provocations. For what can be more grievous to fervent love than to meet with jealousy? Jealousy would quench any creature's love, but though it grieve and provoke him, yet he will not change, he will not diminish his. Only do not think your disputings and quarrelling innocent and harmless things. No certainly, they grieve the Spirit—stir up the beloved to go away, as it were, before he please—and make thee walk without comfort, and without fruit. Yet he will bear with, and not quench “the smoking flax” of a believer's desires, though they do not arise to the flame of assurance.

But the wounded spirit hath one or two burdens more. I have abused much mercy; how can mercy pity me? I have turned grace into wantonness so that when I look to mercy and grace to comfort me, they do rather challenge me. The sins of none are like mine,—none of such a heinous and presumptuous nature. But let us hear what God the Lord speaks. I keep “mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin. Thou hast wasted much mercy, but more is behind, all the treasure is not spent. Though there were many thousand worlds besides, I could pardon them all, if they would flee unto my mercy. Thou shalt not be straitened in me.” Mercy will pardon thy abuse of mercy, it will forgive all faults thou dost against itself. Thou that sinnest against the Son of man, the Redeemer of the world, and remedy of sin—yet there is pardon for thee, whatever the quality, condition, or circumstance of thy sin be. Whoever, convinced of it, and loadened with it, desirest rest to thy soul, thou mayest find it in Christ, whose former kindness thou hast answered with contempt. Many sins, many great sins, and these presumptuous sins cannot exclude, nay, no sin can exclude a willing soul. Unbelief keeps thee unwilling, and so excludes thee.

Now, as the spider sucks poison out of the sweetest flower, so the most part of souls suck nothing but delusion and presumption and hardening out of the gospel. Many souls reason for more liberty to sin from mercy. But behold, how the Lord backs it

with a dreadful word, “who will by no means clear the guilty.” As many as do not condemn themselves before the tribunal of justice, there is no rescinding of the condemnatory sentence, but it stands above their heads, “he that believeth not is condemned already.” Justice hath condemned all by a sentence. He that doth not, in the sense of this, flee unto Jesus Christ from sin and wrath is already condemned. His sentence is standing. There needs no new one. Since he flees not to mercy for absolution, the sentence of condemnation stands unrepealed. You guilty souls who clear yourselves, God will not clear you. And, alas! how many of you do clear yourselves! Do you not extenuate and mince your sins? How hard is it to extort any confession of guilt out of you, but in the general! If we condescend to particulars, many of you will plead innocency almost in every thing, though you have, like children, learned to speak these words that ye are sinners. I beseech you consider it; it is no light matter, for God will by no means clear the guilty, by no means, by no entreaties, no flatteries. What! will he not pardon sin? Yes indeed! his name [053] tells you he will pardon all kind of sins, and absolve all manner of guilty persons, but yet such as do condemn themselves, such as are guilty in their own conscience, and their mouths stopped before God,—you who do not enter into the serious examination of your ways, and do not arraign yourselves before God’s tribunal daily till you find yourselves loathsome and desperate, and no refuge for you,—you who do flatter yourselves always in the hope of heaven, and put the fear of hell always from you,—I say, God will by no means, no prayers, no entreaties, clear or pardon you, because you come not to Jesus Christ, in whom is preached forgiveness and remission of sins. You who take liberty to sin, because God is gracious, and delay repentance till the end, because God is long suffering,—know God will not clear you, he is holy and just as he is merciful. If his mercy make thee not fear and tremble before him, and do not separate thee from thy sins,—if remission of sins be not the strongest persuasion to thy

soul of the removing of sin,—certainly thou dost in vain presume upon his mercy.

Now consider what influence all this glorious proclamation had on Moses. It stirs up in him reverence and affection,—reverence to such a glorious Majesty, and great desire to have him amongst them, and to be more one with him. If thy soul rightly discover God, it cannot but abase thee. He “made haste” to bow down and worship. O, God's majesty is a surprising and astonishing thing! It would bow thy soul in the dust if it were presented to thee. Labour to keep the right and entire representation of God in thy sight,—his whole name, strong, merciful, and just,—great, good, and holy. I say, keep both in thy view, for half representations are dangerous, either to beget presumption and security when thou lookest on mercy alone, or despair when thou lookest on justice and power alone. Let thy soul consider all jointly, that it may receive a mixed impression of all. And this is the holy composition and temper of a believer,—Rejoice with trembling, love with fear, let all thy discoveries of him aim at more union and communion with him who is such a self sufficient, all sufficient, and eternal Being.