

7. Accept of Jesus Christ as he offers himself in the gospel. He is willing to receive sinners, nay, the very worst and most abandoned of them, or he had not swimm'd through a sea of blood to catch them. O! be not despisers, but cheerful and willing receivers, of him who has written his love and good will to you in characters of blood.

8. Revenge the death of Christ on your lusts and idols. Give no quarter to, nor suffer them to live, that were the cause of his most humiliating and ignominious death. To cherish any sin or lust, is a high indignity done to the Son of God, and as it were a crucifying him afresh. O! then fly from every sin, account it your enemy, and Christ's enemy; and shew your love to the Redeemer, who humbled himself so deeply for you, by doing whatsoever he commands you, and avoiding all appearance of evil.

9. *Lastly*, Grudge not to part with any thing for Christ. He left the bosom of his Father, laid aside the robes of his glory, and exposed himself to the severest hardships and most intolerable sufferings, that you might not perish for ever! and will ye refuse any thing for his sake? Ye have no reason to shift his cross, or decline to take on his yoke, when he suffered on the accursed cross to procure your deliverance from everlasting wrath and burnings.

---

#### OF CHRIST'S EXALTATION.

PHIL. ii. 9, 10, 11.—*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.*

HAVING spoke to the several parts of our blessed Redeemer's state of humiliation, I come now to treat of the several branches of his exaltation, or that high dignity and glory to which he is exalted, as the reward of his suffering even unto death. This bright Sun set as it were in a cloud, but he rose again, surrounded with the brightest rays of the most exalted glory and splendour. This exaltation is held forth very expressly in the text, which, as it is opposed to his death, includes his resurrection, or releasement from the grave. God has not only exalted him, but super-exalted him above the earth in his ascension. The name above every name which is given him, is the same in effect with his sitting at the right

hand of God. The bowing of the knee is that acknowledgement of this power, dignity, and authority of Christ, by angels, men, and devils; the great evidence of which shall be at the last day, Rom. xiv. 10, 11. 'We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.' For it is written, 'As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.'

In discoursing further from this subject, I shall consider the several steps of our Lord's exaltation, as they are laid down from the scriptures in our Catechism, viz. 'his rising from the dead on the third day, his ascending up into heaven, his sitting at the right-hand of God the Father, and his coming to judge the world at the last day.'

I. The first step of his exaltation was his resurrection, his rising out of the grave. Concerning this, consider the following things.

1. The nature of it. His resurrection was not the re-uniting of his divine to his human nature, for death had not separated that union, as I have formerly shewn; but his re-uniting his soul to his body, taking that life again which he had before laid down, John x. 17. And it was the very same body for substance which was crucified; it was the very same body that fell under death that rose again. It had been laid in the grave mangled and macerated with blows, stripes, and wounds; but in his resurrection the deformity thereby occasioned was removed, and nothing but the prints of the nails remained; as appears from John xx. 25, 27.

2. The truth of his resurrection. Christ truly rose again. This truth was attested by the soldiers who guarded the sepulchre, as ye will find, Matth. xxviii. 11—15. though the elders took care to smother the effect thereof. His friends bore the most ample testimony to it; such as the women who came to anoint his dead body, his disciples and many others. To these, 'he shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs,' Acts i. 3. And we are told, 1 Cor. xv. 6. that 'he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.' The evangelists are unanimous in this matter. This truth is also manifest from the person's being God, who could not be confined in a grave, and the many miracles wrought to confirm it, evincing him to be alive, and reigning in glory.

3. The necessity of his resurrection. It was necessary he should rise from the dead.

(1.) That the scripture might be fulfilled, 1 Cor. xv. 4. which cannot be broken. See Psal. xvi. 10. 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (the state of the dead); neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption.' This passage is expressly applied to the resurrection of Christ, Acts ii. 31. and xiii. 35. And it was prophesied

of him: Isa. liii. 10. 'He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.' A notable type of it was Jonah's coming out of the whale's belly, Matth. xii. 40.

(2.) In respect of the dignity and glory of his person. He was the true God and eternal life. How was it then possible, that he should be holden by death? Acts ii. 24.

(3.) In respect of his Mediatorial office, which would have been broken if he had not risen again. He was to reign for ever, Psal. xlv. 7. Luke i. 32; to intercede as a Priest for ever, Psal. cx. 4. and therefore to enter into the holiest of all, after he had expiated our sins by his blood.

(4.) In respect of our salvation. If Christ had not risen, all the elect's hopes of heaven had rotted in the grave for ever: 1 Cor. xv. 17. 'If Christ be not raised, (says the apostle), your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.' His resurrection was the life of his death, and had he not by his resurrection overcome death; it would for ever have devoured us also.

4. The time of his resurrection, the third day. He was crucified on Friday afternoon, and he arose early on the first day of the week, which has from that event been called the Lord's day, and observed as the Christian Sabbath in all the churches of Christ. This period was long enough to confirm the truth of his death. His body did not corrupt in the grave, Psal. xvi. 10. Acts xiii. 37. Nor was it ever after mortal, but put on immortality, Rom. vi. 9. 'Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.' This was one difference betwixt Christ's resurrection and that of Lazarus, who rose again only to a mortal life.

5. The author of his resurrection. The resurrection of Christ is ascribed to himself, and we are firmly to believe that he rose by his own power, John ii. 19. 'Destroy this temple, (says he), and in three days I will raise it up.' John x. 17. 'I lay down my life, that I might take it again.' And this the scripture insists upon as an argument of the divinity of Christ, Rom. i. 4. where he is said to be 'declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:' which must needs be thus understood; for Lazarus also was raised; yet no such thing followed on it. It is ascribed also unto the Father, Rom. vi. 4. But there is no inconsistency here: for whatsoever the Father doth, the Son also doth the same, the external works of the Trinity being common to each person. The reason why Christ's resurrection is ascribed to the Father, is, that he acted therein as a judge, letting out the prisoner when the debt was paid.

## 6. The manner of our Lord's resurrection.

(1.) It was ushered in with a terrible earthquake, Matth. xxviii. 2. 'Behold, there was a great earthquake.' As the earth shook and trembled at our Lord's passion, so did it also at his glorious resurrection from the dead. This was an extraordinary and miraculous shaking of the earth, proceeding immediately from the divine power, as the eclipse of the sun which happened during his passion. It was a sign of triumph, and a token of victory, by which our Lord intimated to the whole world, that he had overcome death in its own dominions, and lifted up his head as a glorious conqueror above all his enemies. He came out of the grave with great solemnity, and marched out of the bloody field with a pomp and majesty becoming the dignity of Heaven's champion.

(2.) Christ in his resurrection was attended by some of the courtiers of heaven, Matt. xxviii. 2. 'An angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.' Christ's power was not confined to the grave or the earth, but extended to heaven and all the host of it. Though the chief priests and Pharisees conspired together to keep him close shut up in the grave, sealed the stone which was rolled to the door of it, set a watch, and made all things as sure as they possibly could, yet one of the heavenly host by a touch baffled all their measures. The angel of the Lord rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. This action speaks a secure triumph over all the obstructions of Christ's resurrection. He sat on the stone, defying all the powers of hell to roll the stone to the grave again: and he sat as a guard to the grave; for having frightened away the enemy's black guard, he sat expecting the women to give them an account of our Lord's resurrection, as he very pathetically did, ver. 6. 'He is not here: for he is risen, as he said: come, see the place where the Lord lay.'

(3.) He laid aside all the ensigns of mortality and death: for he stript himself of the grave-clothes, and left them behind him, John xx. 5, 6, 7. The reasons of this laying them aside might be these. [1.] Because he rose to die no more. Lazarus came out with his grave-clothes on, because he was to die again; but Christ rising to an immortal life, came out free from all these incumbrances. [2.] Because he was going to be clothed with robes of glory. [3.] He left these clothes in the grave, as it were for the use of his people. For if the grave be a bed to the saints, he hath thus sheeted it, and made it ready for them, that in it they may lie quietly and easily till the morning of the resurrection, when they shall enter into the full and eternal possession of the glory that is to be revealed.

These grave-clothes were found in very good order ; which shews that his body was not stolen away when the watch slept, as the chief priests and elders foolishly bade them say. Robbers of tombs have been known to take away the clothes and leave the body ; but none ever took away the body, and left the clothes, especially when they were made of fine linen and new.

(4.) Christ's resurrection was attended with that of many others, Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. 'The graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.' Here observe, (1.) Who they were that rose. They are expressly called *saints*, persons sanctified by the Spirit and grace of God : for such only shall rise by the virtue and power of Christ's resurrection. Who they were, whether the ancient patriarchs, the Old Testament martyrs, or more modern saints, who lived in Christ's time, but died before him, cannot be determined. (2.) That their number was considerable ; they are called *many*. The benefits of our Lord's resurrection extends to many. (3.) The time of their rising was posterior to Christ's resurrection. For though before this the earth did quake, the rocks rend, and the graves were opened, yet none of them stirred out of these dark mansions till Christ was risen. It is in virtue of Christ's resurrection, that the bodies of all the saints shall in the fulness of time rise again. (4.) They went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. They did not appear to all the people, but to many ; but whether friends or enemies, in what manner they appeared, how often, what they did and said, and how they disappeared, are secret things not to be known. It is very probable, however, that the great design of their appearing to so many was to bear testimony to the truth and certainty, to the power and glory of our Redeemer's resurrection. [5.] What became of these saints afterwards, is a question not easy to be determined. Some are of opinion, that as they rose only to bear witness of Christ's resurrection to those to whom they appeared, so having finished this their work, they retired to their graves again. But it seems to be more agreeable both to the Redeemer's honour and theirs, to suppose, that they rose, as he did, to die no more, and therefore ascended with him into glory.

7. The fruits of Christ's resurrection. Amongst many, I only name the following.

(1.) It is an argument of his having made complete satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of his people, John xvi. 10. When the just Judge opens the prison door, it says that the prisoner's debt is fully paid, and he has received satisfaction for all

demands from him. Christ's resurrection was in effect a discharge of all the debt he had taken upon him to pay.

(2.) It is an argument, that the bodies of the elect shall be raised at the last day, 1 Cor. xv. 20. 'Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.' If Christ has risen, the power of death is broken. And the same Spirit dwells in his members, Rom. viii. 11. And all the benefits of the covenant shall be made forthcoming, seeing he is alive to become executor of his own testament.

(3.) The duty of believers flowing from this is to walk in newness of life, Rom. vi. 4. They are to rise from the grave of sin, and to put on the robes of true holiness. Dead sinners are not fit members of a living head.

II. Christ ascended into heaven, the seat of the blessed. Concerning this, let us observe,

1. In what respect he ascended. Not in respect of his divine nature, for that can change no place, and is confined to no place; but in respect of his human nature, which is so present in one place, that it cannot be in another at the same time, and it changeth one place for another by local motion. It was his human body that ascended into heaven, and which the heavens must contain till the restitution of all things.

2. The reality of his ascension. He did not merely disappear, but by a local motion went up from the earth into the highest heavens, leaving the one, and going to the other. And he ascended in a visible manner, before the eyes of his disciples.

3. The time of it, which was forty days after his resurrection, Acts i. 2, 3. This his long stay on the earth was the blessed effect of his matchless and unparalleled love to his church and people. Though ineffable glory was prepared and waiting for him in heaven, yet he would not go to possess it till he had ordered all things aright that concerned the good of his followers here on earth. More particularly, he staid so long on earth,

(1.) That he might the more convincingly testify unto his disciples the truth of his humanity, and confirm them in the faith of his being truly man.

(2.) To confirm them still the more strongly in the faith of his resurrection from the dead. This was a truth which the disciples were not easily induced to believe. Hence when they first heard it from Mary Magdalene, and the other women that had been at the sepulchre, it is said, that 'their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not,' Luke xxiv. 11. But his staying so long on the earth, and frequently conversing with them, gave them

full assurance of the reality of his resurrection. He showed himself alive to them by many infallible proofs. He walked and talked with them, ate and drank with them. He again and again shewed them the marks of the wounds in his hands, and feet, and side; which was the utmost proof the thing was capable of or required. Besides, it was not one or two, but many proofs which he gave them of this; for he was seen by them forty days; not indeed constantly residing with them, but frequently appearing to them, and bringing them by degrees to be fully satisfied of the truth of his resurrection.

(3.) To instruct them more clearly and perfectly in the knowledge of the mysteries of his kingdom, which after his departure they were to preach and propagate through the world. He had given them a general idea of that kingdom, and of the time when it should be set up, in the parable of the vineyard, Mark xii.; but upon this occasion he let them more clearly into the nature of it, as a kingdom of grace in this world, and of glory in that which is to come; and no doubt opened to them that covenant which is the great charter by which it is incorporated. Thus our Lord did not entertain his disciples with discourses about politics in the kingdoms of men, about philosophy in the kingdom of nature, but about pure divinity and his spiritual kingdom, which were matters of greatest concern, both to themselves and to those to whom they were in a little time to preach.

#### 4. The manner of our Lord's ascension.

(1.) He ascended not figuratively and metaphorically, but really and corporeally, by a local translation of his human nature from the earth to the highest heavens. He ascended from a mount, an high and eminent place, to ascertain his disciples of the truth of his ascension. He did not withdraw himself from them as at other times, but ascended openly in the view of them all, they looking stedfastly toward heaven as he went up. He ascended from the Mount of Olives, that he might enter on his glory nigh the place of his sufferings, and the last tragical scene of his life. It was at this mount that his heart was made sad; for there he began to be sorrowful and sore amazed: and it was there also that his heart was made glad, and filled with ineffable and triumphant joy. The same place afforded him a passage both to his cross and to his crown; for there his sorrows and sufferings began, and from thence he ascended into heaven.

(2.) He ascended while he was blessing his disciples. He blessed them as one having authority; yea, commanded the blessing upon them. And while he was so employed, he was parted from them, to intimate that his being so did not put an end to his blessing

them, but that this privilege was to be continued with them by virtue of his powerful intercession for them in heaven. The first tidings of our Redeemer's birth were attended with praises to God and blessings to men: he began his public ministry with pronouncing blessings on certain characters, Matth. v.; when he died, he breathed out his soul in blessings to his enemies, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;' and just when he was leaving the world, he was translated with a blessing in his mouth.

(3.) He ascended powerfully, even by his own almighty power. As by the power of his eternal Godhead he broke through the gloomy shades of the grave, and rose again to an immortal life; so by the same almighty strength he went gloriously up through the yielding air into the bright regions of eternal light. Enoch and Elijah were both translated soul and body into heaven; but this was not by their own, but by a divine power which exerted itself upon that occasion, by the ministry of angels. But our Redeemer went up upon the wings of his own almighty power.

(4.) He ascended softly and gradually. Though his conduct in this matter could not but strike with a strong surprise upon the minds of his disciples, yet his motion was so plain, easy, and distinct, that it fell very clearly under their observation; for while they beheld he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.' Thus he departed by little and little, and not in a rapturous haste.

(5.) He ascended in a glorious and triumphant manner.

[1.] There was a cloud prepared as his royal chariot to carry him up to his princely palace. A cloud, in the natural notion of it, is a thick and moist vapour, drawn up from the earth or sea, by the heat of the sun, to the middle region of the air, where it is condensed, congealed, and thickened, by the coldness of the place, and so hangs or moves like a huge mountain in the midst of the air, partly from natural causes, the sun or the wind, but especially by supernatural ones, the mighty power and appointment of God, who is said to use the clouds as princes do horses of state or chariots of triumph to ride on. Thus he descended in a cloud to Moses, and proclaimed the name of the Lord, *Exod. xxxiv. 5*: and it is said, *Isa. xix. 1*. 'Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud.' We find the clouds were serviceable to our Redeemer: for a bright cloud overshadowed him at his transfiguration; he was carried up in a cloud to heaven at his ascension; and at the last day the clouds will be the chariots which will bring him to judgment. Hereby Christ discovered himself to be the Lord of all the creatures. He had already trode upon the earth, walked upon the sea, van-

quished hell and the grave; and now he makes the clouds his chariots, and rides upon the wings of the wind.

(2.) In his ascension he was attended with a bright and blessed retinue of glorious angels. These angelic spirits graced the solemnity of his birth with anthems of triumphant joy; they ministered to him at the conclusion of his forty days' temptation by the devil; when he was exposed to his amazing agony in the garden the evening before his crucifixion, they waited on him; and now, when he is making his triumphant entrance into glory, their presence adds to the glorious solemnity of the happy day. To this we may add, that it is not an improbable supposition, that on this grand occasion he was attended with the company of those many saints that rose from the dead after his resurrection; whom he carried along with him, not only to grace the solemnity of his ascension, but as the first-fruits of his triumph over death and the grave, and a demonstrative evidence that the rest should follow in due time.

(3.) He went to heaven as a glorious conqueror, triumphing over all his enemies. 'When he ascended upon high,' says the apostle, 'he led captivity captive,' Eph. iv. 8. As conquerors of old in their solemn triumphs used to lead their captives fettered with iron chains: so Christ having spoiled principalities and powers, made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them, Col. ii. 15. Some think that at Christ's ascension there was some real visible triumph, some open pomp and shew, in which the devils were led as chained captives through the air: which was visible, not to all, but to God, the angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. But whatever be in this, it is certain that Christ fought and overcame all his enemies: he gave them the last blow upon the cross, he seized on the spoil at his resurrection, and led them in triumph at his ascension into heaven, and by his peaceable possession of his throne his subjects enjoy the benefit of all.

(4.) He ascended into heaven with shouts and acclamations of great joy, Psal. xlvii. 5. 'God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.' Hence, (1.) His ascension was celebrated with the acclamations of angels. If they sang so cheerfully when they came to proclaim his birth, O what shouts and jubiliations were heard among them when they accompanied him in his triumphant entrance into heaven! The whole city of God was moved at his coming; the very heavens resounded, and echoed their acclamations of joy. Hence is that passage, Psal. xxiv. 7. 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.' The entry of a mighty and victorious prince is there described; and so it is proper unto Christ:

they applaud him there as a mighty conqueror, newly returned from the spoils of his enemies. (2.) The blessed saints make the like applauses, as the prophet describes it, Isa. lxiii. 1, 2, 3. '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. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was 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.' There is here a dialogue between Christ and the saints, to express their acclamations at his victory. They are represented as filled with admiration at his glorious triumphs over all his enemies: and they celebrate his victorious return from so bloody a battle, like a great and valiant general, gloriously adorned with rich robes and royal apparel, and besprinkled with the blood of his implacable enemies. (3.) God testifies his approbation of what Christ had done, by giving him a kindly welcome home to heaven, Psal. cx. 1. 'The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool:' As if he had said, 'Thy work is well done, Son, thou art welcome home to glory; sit now at my right hand,' &c. And on this account it is said, Dan. vii. 13. 'I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him.' This vision of Christ was accomplished in his ascension. The holy angels bring him to the Father, called here, 'the Ancient of Days,' who gloriously rewards him for his toil and travel on earth, and his bloody sufferings in accomplishing the work of man's redemption, and receives him as it were with open arms, rejoicing exceedingly to see him again in heaven; and therefore he is said to be 'received up into glory,' 1 Tim. iii. 16.

(5.) He ascended into heaven in a most munificent manner, bestowing many royal gifts and blessings upon his people. Hence says the apostle, Eph. iv. 8. 'When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.' The apostle here refers to Psal. lxxviii. 13. 'Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.' There is here an allusion to the ancient customs of princes or generals, who, after some glorious achievements, or victories, used to mount their triumphant chariot, and enter into their royal cities attended

by their captive enemies, and afterwards to distribute gifts to their subjects and soldiers. Thus Christ, at his glorious ascension, when he entered heaven with solemn triumph, bestowed many rich and inestimable gifts upon men, to fit and qualify them for the work of the ministry, and to edify his mystical body. Some of these gifts were extraordinary, as the gifts of tongues and miracles, which were necessary and very useful in the first ages of Christianity. Others, again, were ordinary, and are to continue to the end of the world. And these are of various kinds. To some he gives depths of learning and a profound judgment; to others a gaining elocution; to some a mighty pathos, and melting influence upon the affections, and to others a forcible power of arguing. But they are all designed to gain souls to Christ, and promote the interests of his kingdom.

5. Why, or for what ends Christ ascended into heaven.

1. That he might be solemnly inaugurated and installed in glory. This was due unto him by Mediatory compact. He was to drink of the brook in the way, and therefore should he lift his head. This was the order that God appointed for his exaltation. The combat was to precede his triumph. He was first to suffer, and then to enter into glory. Hence we read, 1 Pet. i. 11. that 'the Spirit did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.' His triumphant laurel grew upon the thorns of his cross, and received a verdure from his dying tears. The palms spread in his way at his entrance into Jerusalem a little before his death, are regarded by some as an emblem of this, it being the nature of that plant to grow and increase the higher by the weights that are hung upon it. For so did our blessed Lord rise to a more glorious and triumphant height by his heavy pressures.

(2.) To make way for the Spirit. For if Christ had not gone away, the Comforter had not come. This plentiful effusion of the Spirit was very necessary to fit and qualify the apostles for propagating the gospel through the world. Such weak and illiterate men as they generally were, could not have managed so great a work without a mighty magazine of divine eloquence and vigorous courage. It was therefore needful that our great High Priest should enter into the holy place, and appear before God with the blood of his sacrifice; that the treasures of the Spirit might be opened, and that the divine flame might issue out thence to inspire them with abilities for so great an undertaking.

(3.) To plead and make intercession for his people. After he had shed his precious blood on the earth for the expiation of their sin, he rose again from the dead, and went up into heaven as their

Advocate and Intercessor, that, by virtue of his meritorious sacrifice, he might answer all the charges brought against them, and sue out all the good things promised to them.

(4.) To prepare mansions of glory for all his followers, John xiv. 2. These were indeed prepared for them from all eternity, in the immutable purpose and decree of God, and from the foundation of the world by his creative power. But they were further prepared by Christ's ascension. And this lies in the following particulars. [1.] By this he set open the gates of heaven, that poor sinners might enter in. He removed all the bars and obstructions that were in the way, and made a patent passage for them into glory. [2.] He hath as a public person taken possession of the celestial kingdom in their name. On this account he is called 'the forerunner,' Heb. vi. 20. [3.] He prepares it for his people, in his sanctifying and purifying it for them. This was typified of old by the sprinkling the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, with the blood of the sacrifices. Hence it is said, Heb. ix. 23, 24. 'It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.' We are not to think that heaven was polluted, and so under any necessity of being made clean: but the cry of man's sin had ascended up on high, as it were with a stinking savour; and therefore Christ behoved to go up and perfume it with his precious merit. [4.] He prepares it for his people, in providing and fitting all things for their entertainment against they come; as Joseph was sent into Egypt to prepare for his father Jacob.

*Lastly*, The duty that this lays on all that pretend interest in Christ. (1.) Let our hearts be there where our Lord is. Hence is that exhortation, Col. iii. 1, 2. 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.' Let us not be pursuing earthly things as our treasure, but live in this world as those whose heads are homeward, to the house prepared by their ascended Lord. (2.) Let us thence be encouraged to encounter with magnanimity and courage all difficulties that we may meet with in our Christian course and warfare; knowing that we shall be conquerors at last through him that loved us. Christ fought his way to the glory promised him through legions of armed hosts; and so must we, if we would be conformed to him as our Head: he has reached to the crown as the reward of his obedience

and sufferings; and so shall we if we follow on in his strength: 'Let us,' therefore, 'lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,' Heb. xii. 1.

III.—The third step of our Lord's exaltation, is his sitting at the right hand of God.

This phrase, 'the right hand of God,' Heb. i. 3. Mark xvi. 19. Eph. i. 20. 1 Pet. iii. 22. is not to be taken properly but in a figurative sense. For God being a pure Spirit, is void of all bodily parts. When it is said, that Christ sits at God's right-hand, it is a borrowed expression, wherein the Lord is pleased to condescend to the weakness of our capacities, to the end we may form suitable thoughts of that glorious and exalted state into which Christ is advanced in the heavens. The phrase is wholly metaphorical, taken from the custom of kings and princes, who use to place those at their right hands, and next to themselves, upon whom they would confer the chief marks of favour and honour. More particularly, the right hand denotes,

1. Majesty and honour. It is the place we confer upon those we highly esteem. Thus, Solomon placed his mother at his right-hand, when he was set on his royal throne, 2 Kings ii. 19. And it is said of the church, the spouse of Christ, to denote the honour that he puts upon her, that 'she is at his right-hand,' Psal. xlv. 9. 'Upon thy right-hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.' So God, in testimony of the great honour and esteem that he puts upon Christ as Mediator, hath set him at his right-hand, which on this account is called 'the right-hand of the Majesty on high,' Heb. i. 3.

2. His power. Hence saith the Psalmist, Psal. lxxvii. 10. 'I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right-hand of the Most High.' There we find God's power under the metonymy of *a right hand*, opposed to the infirmity of his servant. 'My infirm and weak faith (saith Asaph) made me apt to sink under the weight of Heaven's displeasure; but when I called to mind my sweet experiences of the divine power which had been exerted for my deliverance in former distresses, this revived my spirit, and refreshed me again.

Christ's 'sitting at the right-hand of God,' implies the following things.

1. A state of rest, Micah iv. 4. 'They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree.' Christ had a troublesome life while in the world; but now that he has finished the work the Father gave him to do, 'he has for ever sat down at the right hand of God,' Heb. x. 12. and is thereby set beyond the reach of men and devils.

While here, they would give him no rest from his cradle to his grave; but now they may tear his picture, and persecute his members, but they cannot reach his person.

2. Continuance in that state, 2 Kings vii. 3. 'Why sit we here until we die?' said the four leprous men at the gate of Samaria. The days of sorrow that he met with on earth shall never recur; his crown shall flourish on his head, and his kingdom stand firm and be established.

His 'sitting at God's right hand' denotes,

1. The accomplishment of that work, and the consummation of all those offices, which he was to perform on the earth for the redemption of elect sinners. For till all this was finished, he was not to return to his glory. 'For he that hath entered into his rest, hath ceased from his works, as God did from his,' Heb. iv. 10.

2. The great delight and satisfaction that the Father had in Christ, and in that glorious work which he had finished. When he returned from earth to heaven, the Father welcomed him with the greatest testimony of satisfaction and joy, 'Sit thou on my right hand,' &c. Psal. cx. 1.

3. The great honour and dignity to which he is advanced in heaven. While he was here on earth he veiled his divinity with the infirmities of the flesh, and lived in a mean and low condition: but now he is exalted to the highest honour. In this respect he hath bestowed more honour on his own Son as Mediator, than ever he did on any creature: for, as it is said, Heb. i. 13. 'To which of the angels said he at any time, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?'

4. His being invested with sovereign dominion and supreme authority and power. 'God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name,' Phil. ii. 9, 10. 'He hath set him at his own right-hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, &c. 'Thou madest him a little lower than the angels,' i. e. in respect of his state of humiliation on the earth; 'thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and set him over the works of thy hands, and hast put all things in subjection under his feet, Heb. ii. 7, 8.

It is Christ as Mediator that sits at the Father's right hand. With respect to his divine nature, which in the days of his flesh was as a bottle in the smoke, apparently sullied and veiled, it now breaks forth in all its essential glory and splendour. And with regard to his human nature, which while tabernacling here bore the likeness of sinful flesh, and had nothing more engaging in it than that of other men to outward aspect, it has attained a glory far

superior to all creatures, even the very angels being made subject to the man Christ.

The ends for which our Redeemer sitteth at the right hand of God are these following.

1. That, as a mighty King, he may protect and defend his church and people, against the rage of all their enemies, both temporal and spiritual, Isa. xxxii. 1, 2; Deut. xxxiii. 26, 27.

2. That he may subdue all the enemies of his kingdom and people, the devil, with all his retinue, the world, the flesh, sin, and hell, Psal. cx. 1. Acts ii. 36. Heb. x. 12, 13. 1 Cor. xv. 25.

3. That with royal munificence he may dispense unto all his faithful subjects all those gifts and graces that may qualify them for the fruition of that glory that is to be revealed, Acts v. 31.

3. That he may act the part of a powerful Intercessor for them, Rom. viii. 34.

5. That all his friends and followers may with him be translated into heaven, and advanced unto a glorious state, being made kings and priests unto God, Eph. i. 4, 5, 6. Rev. iii. 21.

USE. Behold here the great difference between our Redeemer's state while here on earth, and what it is now in heaven. How wonderfully is the scene changed! When he was on earth, he lodged in a stable, but now he reigns in a royal palace. Then he had a manger for his cradle, but now he sits in a chair of state. While here he was hated and scorned by men, but now he is adored by angels. Here his name was reproached and reviled, but there he hath a name above every name. Here he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; but now he is anointed with the oil of gladness, and filled with inexpressible delight and joy. While here he seemed to have no form or comeliness why he should be desired; but now he is manifestly the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. Here he lay grovelling upon the ground, sweating drops of clotted blood; but there he sits upon a royal throne, surrounded with many myriads of holy angels. Here he groaned, but there he triumphs; here he was crucified, but there he is crowned.

2. Behold how highly our nature is dignified and ennobled, in the person of our Redeemer. It is far exalted above that of the angels; and these glorious spirits bow the knee to him who is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.

3. This lets us see that the redemption of lost sinners, that was brought about by the death of Christ was very pleasing unto the Father. The great dignity and honour that is now conferred upon him, speaks a fragraney in his satisfaction to God, as well as a fullness of merit for the sons of men.

4. Then we should draw near to him in all the duties of worship, with the most awful reverence and deepest prostration of soul, such as becomes the glory and dignity of his adorable Majesty. Let us have grace whereby we may serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.

5. Then let this exalted Saviour have your hands and your heart. Will ye deny him a lodging in your souls, to whom the Father has given to sit on his right hand? The rejecting of Christ in his humble estate, was grievously punished on many individuals, and occasioned the destruction of the Jewish church and nation. And shall ye escape, if ye reject him now in his exalted and enthroned state? It is better that our hearts be his throne, where he may sway his sceptre in a way of mercy and grace, than that we be made his footstool in wrath.

6. Let this settle and compose the hearts of the Lord's people, with respect to the state of religion, and the interests of Christ's kingdom among men. Christ is seated on his throne, and will see to his interest in the world. Zion's God and King reigneth, Isa. lii. 7. If Christ be on his throne, all his enemies shall be destroyed. As sure as he reigns King for ever, so sure shall Antichrist be degraded and hurled from his throne, and all the rags he has left behind him in the Protestant churches be burnt up.

IV. The last step of our Lord's exaltation, is his coming to judge the world at the last day. As I discoursed to you of this formerly\*, I shall be the briefer now. I shall endeavour a little to consider,

1. The manner and circumstances of Christ's coming to judge the world.

2. The Judge.

3. The parties to be judged.

4. The matters about which they are to be judged.

5. The properties of it.

6. The final causes of the judgment.

FIRST, I am to consider the manner and circumstances of Christ's coming to judge the world.

1. He shall come with observation, in the view of the whole assembled world: for all the kindreds of the earth shall on that day see this mighty Personage with their bodily eyes. None of all the sons and daughters of Adam can possibly avoid this wonderful sight. 'Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him,

\* This probably is the discourse on *The General Judgment* inserted in the *Fourfold State*, as no other Sermon on that subject is to be found among the author's MSS.

and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him,' Rev. i. 7.

2. Though he shall come with observation, or in a visible manner, yet he will do so very suddenly and surprisngly. As the universal deluge found the old world sleeping in the deepest security, so at the second coming of Christ the sinners of the last times will be drenched in slumbering stupidity, as is plain from Matth. xxiv. 37, 38, 39. In short, the coming of a thief\* to break a house, is not more surprisng to those in it, than Christ's coming to judgment will be to sinners. Hence the apostle says, 1 Thess. v. 2. 'Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.'

3. He will come very seasonably, at the very precise point and period of time fixed upon in the eternal councils of heaven. When once that memorable moment begins, he will delay no longer, but instantly rend the heavens, and come down, 2 Pet. iii. 9, 10.

4. He will come very terribly. In that day the radiant rays of his majestic glory will break out with such an awful brightness, as will cause convulsions of the most formidable horror in the breasts of the ungodly. See Rev. vi. 14—17.

5. He will come gloriously: for 'then shall they see the Son of man coming with great power and glory,' Mark xiii. 26. To evince this, consider,

(1.) That this coming will be ushered in with that which our Lord himself calls 'the sign of the Son of man,' Matth. xxiv. 30. What this sign of the Son of man is, interpreters are not agreed. Some take it to be Christ himself, others the burning up of the world, others the sound of the last trumpet, and the Papists the cross. But I think none of these can be the sign of the Lord Christ coming to judgment. I rather incline to follow the opinion of a judicious divine, who gathers what the sign of the Son of man is from Matth. xxiv. 27. 'For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be;' that is, with infinite brightness and splendour will he come at that day. When he appears the second time without sin unto salvation, such rays of radiant brightness will set upon and shine from his body, as will darken all other lights, and awaken the drowsy world to look for his coming. Now, that such a brightness will encompass and shine from our Redeemer's body, we have no reason to doubt, seeing at his transfiguration upon the Mount 'his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was as white as the light,' Matth. xvii. 2. Now, all this beauty and brightness that appeared on our Redeemer's body at his transfiguration, was but a type and figure of that refulgent splendour which will shine from it in that

day when he will come to judge the world in righteousness. And this matchless and marvellous brightness we may presume to be that which he himself calls 'the sign of the Son of Man.'

(2.) When our Lord comes, the whole frame of nature will suffer the most fearful convulsions, and at last be rolled up in an universal flame, Psal. l. 3. Dan. vii. 9, 10. When once this mighty flame breaks out, it will burn with the keenest fury, and lay the earth, with all its works, in heaps of ruinous rubbish, 2. Pet. iii. 10.

3. At his coming he will be attended with a splendid retinue of ten thousand times ten thousand glorious angels. The flaming seraphims, those mighty ministers of his who fulfil all his pleasure, shall in a magnificent body form a majestic cavalcade, when the Prince of the kings of the earth comes to judgment, Matth. xvi. 27. 2 Thess. i. 7. Dan vii. 10.

4. When he comes, he will sit upon a throne high and lifted up; and before him shall the general assembly of men and devils, be solemnly sisted, Matth. xxv. 31, 32. Rev. xx. 11, 12.

SECONDLY, I come now to speak of the Judge. And this is the Lord Jesus Christ. 'For, (says the apostle) we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ,' 2 Cor. v. 10. Now, he is ordained Judge of the world.

1. Because this Judgment is to be acted visibly. Men are to be judged, and the whole process with them will be for things done in the body. Now God is invisible in his nature, and therefore hath most wisely ordained the last judgment of the world to be transacted by a visible person. The Son of God will appear in his human nature, seated on a visible throne, that he may be seen and heard of all.

2. Because Christ is only qualified for this office. (1.) On account of the great dignity and excellency of his person, being God-man. No mere creature is capable of so high a trust, and such a glorious commission. To pass a sovereign sentence upon angels and men, is a royalty reserved for the Son of God alone, (2.) On account of the immense difficulty of this work. No mere creature is able to discharge it. If a select number of the holy angels of the highest order were deputed for this purpose, they could not manage the judicial trial of one man. For, besides the innumerable acts and omissions in one life, the secret springs of the heart, from whence the guilt or goodness of moral actions is derived, are not open to them. 'It is he alone who discerns all things that can require an account of all.

3. He is constituted Judge of the world, as a reward of his death and bloody sufferings. So the apostle declares, Phil. ii. 8, 9, 10.

His victorious sufferings are the titles to his triumphs. His being so ignominiously condemned by men, is the just reason of his advancement to this dignity and glory. This will for ever roll away the ignominy of his cross.

THIRDLY, Who are they that shall be judged? All must appear before Christ's tribunal. Men of all conditions in the church, apostles and private Christians, ministers and people, old and young, the good and the bad, believers and unbelievers, the just and the unjust, Jews and Gentiles, bond and free. Men of all conditions in the world must stand before Christ's bar, high and low, rich and poor, noble and ignoble, princes and peasants. No rank, degree, or quality, can exempt men from this appearance. All the distinctions which are among men here cease at the grave's mouth. All stand there on the same level, and are of the same mould. In a word, all the apostate angels and the universal progeny of Adam, shall appear before Christ at that day.

FOURTHLY, What are the things about which men shall be judged? We learn from 2 Cor. v. 10. that 'they are the things done in the body.' And they are these three, works, words, and thoughts.

1. All men's works will come unto judgment, whether they be good or bad, Eccl. xii. 14. 'God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.' All their good works will then be tried, as acts of piety towards God, and acts of righteousness and charity towards men, with respect to their principle, motives, and end. All men's evil works will be tried in judgment, both open and secret. Many dig deep now to hide their counsels from the Lord, and carry their wickedness under a veil of darkness, and care not what they do, provided they do it undiscerned. There are many abominations committed in men's lives, which the eyes of the world cannot penetrate into; and there are innumerable evils lurking in their hearts, which no tongue can disclose. But at the last day all those things will be brought to light, such as midnight revels, secret murders, fraudulent dealings, and hidden hypocrisies.

2. All men's words shall be tried in judgment. God gave not the power and organ of speech to man, which is his glory and excellency above the beasts, to serve a sinful passion or corrupt humour, or to vent the froth and vanity of his own spirit, but to extol and magnify his Creator, and render him the praise of all his glorious and admirable works. Christians should employ their tongues for the honour of God, and the edification of one another. But O how wofully is this noble faculty abused by many, in cursing and swearing, lying, slandering, and detracting, and by belching forth

obscene and scurrilous speeches! The lips of many drop nothing but gall and poison, to infect and corrupt others. Now, all this must come into judgment. Our Saviour tells us, that every idle word that a man speaks, he shall give account of it in the day of judgment.

3. All men's thoughts will be tried in judgment. For Christ will 'make manifest the counsels of the heart,' 1 Cor. iv. 5. Many think now that thoughts go free; but it is not so in God's account. He knows all men's thoughts, and records them in the book of his remembrance, and at the last day they will be manifested and revealed. O what an infinite variety of thoughts is in every man's mind? This thinking faculty is never idle, but is always putting forth whole shoals of thoughts. Men have many atheistical and blasphemous thoughts, many murdering and revengeful thoughts, covetous and ambitious thoughts, unchaste and impure thoughts, vain, empty, and unprofitable thoughts, and many bold presumptuous thoughts. Now, all these must come into judgment.

FIFTHLY, What are the properties of this judgment?

1. It will be an universal judgment. Those that lived under the law, and those that lived under the gospel, and those that having no law were a law unto themselves, Rom. ii. 12. those that had many talents, and they that had but one, must all appear at Christ's bar. Those that were carried from the cradle to the grave, and those that stooped for age, the father and the child, the master and the servant, in a word, the whole offspring of Adam, will be judged at that day. The bowels of the earth, the bottom of the sea, and all the elements, shall give up their dead; and all the apostate angels shall then appear and receive their final doom.

2. It will be an awful judgment. It is called in scripture 'the judgment of the great day.' The immediate antecedents of Christ's appearing will make it very terrible. There will be a dreadful catastrophe of the world, which will fill men's hearts with horror and fear; the bands and ligaments of nature will then be broken asunder, and her present frame and constitution dissolved; the elements shall be reduced into their primitive confusion: the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken, Matt. xxiv. 29. There will be a strange convulsion of nature at the coming of the Lord. All the stately palaces and magnificent buildings which men doat so much upon now, will then be reduced to ashes. Again, the manner of his coming will be awful and solemn: 'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ

shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord,' 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. This will be such a shout as armies were wont to make when the signal of battle was given; and after this shout the trump of God shall sound. By this tremendous blast sinners shall be affrighted out of their graves; but to the saints it will carry no more terror than the roaring of cannons, when armies of friends approach a besieged city for the relief of those that are within it. And the dead being raised, they shall be gathered together before the great and awful throne on which Christ shall sit in his glory, and there they shall be exactly divided by the angels into two companies, one on the Judge's right-hand, and the other on his left. Here will be the greatest assembly that ever met; where Adam may see his numerous offspring, even as the sand upon the sea-shore, which no man can number.

3. This judgment will be exact and critical. It is the Searcher of the heart, to whom all secrets are known, that will pass this final sentence upon men. His eyes are as a flame of fire, and can penetrate into the centre of the soul. All sins, whether secret or open, shall be accounted for at that day; and the sins of men's thoughts and affections, which Satan could not accuse them of, shall then be brought into judgment. For in that day 'God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ,' Rom. ii. 16. All men's sins of omission, and their woful neglect of improving the means, advantages, and opportunities for doing or receiving good, shall be accounted for at that day. All acts of commission in youth and age, whether gross sensuality, as licentiousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries, and all excess of riot, shall be accounted for to him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead, 1 Pet. iv. 4, 5. And all acts of unrighteousness to men, yea, and sins of lesser guilt, for which the most part of men are not touched either with grief or shame while here, shall then be produced in judgment. And all the sins of men's words, which are so easily committed, but not so easily observed, shall be called to a heavy remembrance. This will be a day that will perfectly fan the world. Justice will then hold the balance in an even hand; Christ will go to work so exactly, that some divines have thought, that the day of judgment will last as long as the day of the gospel's administration hath done or shall do.

4. It will be a righteous judgment; 'He will judge the world in righteousness,' Acts xvii. 31. His knowledge of all men's characters and actions is infallibly true, and therefore his sentence upon

them will be incontestibly just, consistent with all the rules of the highest equity and justice. And the sentence he shall pass upon both saints and sinners, shall be universally applauded at that day.

5. *Lastly*, It is a final judgment, from which there can lie no appeal. Here in the world, if men judge themselves wronged in one court, they can appeal to another. But it is not so here: for this is the supreme tribunal, where the great Sovereign of heaven and earth will give judgment upon angels and men: and the sentence once passed, will immediately be put in execution, Matth. xxv. 46. Just after the sentence is pronounced by Christ, it is immediately added, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.' The sentence shall be irrevocable, and can never be repealed. It will determine the eternal state of all, and transmit them either to everlasting happiness or misery.

SIXTHLY, What are the final causes or ends of this judgment?

1. The glory of the justice and mercy of God; the former in punishing the wicked, and the latter in rewarding his friends. Many eminent displays of these attributes have been exhibited in the world, but the largest and fullest manifestation of them will be given at the last day, when the righteous judge 'shall take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;' 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. And then he shall say unto the righteous, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, Matth. xxv. 34.

2. The glory of the Lord Jesus, which will be highly manifested at that day. His first coming was obscure and without observation. For he came in the form of a servant, and was reproached and reviled by men. But then he will come in power and great glory, as the Lord and Heir of all things. At his first coming he veiled his divinity with the infirmities of flesh. But then the rays of his incomprehensible glory shall dazzle the eyes of all that behold him.—When he came first to the world, he stood before the tribunals of men, and was condemned to the cursed death of the cross; but then he will sit upon a glorious throne, and all the princes and potentates in the world shall stand trembling before him, expecting a sentence from his mouth, upon which their eternal destiny will depend. He is now seated at the right-hand of the Majesty on high; but the curtains of the heavens conceal his glory from us; and therefore there is a time fixed, when in the sight of the whole world he will manifest his glory.

3. The rewarding of men according to their works, and thereby

vindicating the providence of God from the imputation of unrighteousness in his governing the world.—Things seem to be carried with an unequal balance in the present life. The wicked prosper, as if they were rewarded for being evil; and the godly suffer, as if they were punished for being good. Yea, the virtuous and the vicious are equally miserable here. In common calamities, there is no difference between the righteous and the wicked. There is no peculiar antidote to secure them from pestilential infection; there is no strong retreat to defend them from the sword of a conquering enemy: they have no secret provisions in time of famine; for the wheat and the tares are bound in a bundle, and cast into the same fire: yea, oftentimes the godly are in the worse condition, and merely on account of their goodness. They are daily oppressed, because they do not make resistance; and loaded with sufferings, because they endure them with patience. They are for God's sake made the spectacles of extreme misery, while the insolent defyers of his majesty and laws enjoy all manner of visible felicity. And therefore, for the vindication of his justice, there must be a day of retribution, wherein God will reward every man according to his works. Divine justice requires that there should be a different procedure with those that differ among themselves; that it should be well with them that do well, and ill with them that do evil; and that every man should reap according to what he hath sown.

USE 1. Labour to get a firm belief and persuasion of this great and awful truth. Alas! the most part of men are so busied about the affairs of this present life, that they do not mind the future. These awful words, *death*, *judgment*, and *eternity*, make no more impression upon their hearts, than if they were words of no signification. This is a truth of the greatest importance, and therefore is clearly and plentifully revealed in the holy scripture. Harken then to the voice of this heavenly oracle, and believe and tremble at the thoughts of this awful day.

2. Think frequently on this terrible judgment, that the belief of it may be powerful on your hearts and lives. One great cause of men's woful neglect of duty is the want of serious thoughts concerning Christ's second coming. This renders them lazy and secure, so that they make no provision for it: but where it is firmly believed, and duly thought upon, O how active and diligent does it make them! It had this effect on Paul, 2 Cor. v. 9, 10, 11. Many put this day far away, and set it at a remote distance from them; and this makes them stupid and secure. I have read of a minister, who in a sermon described the last judgment in all its terrors, with such ardent expressions, and those animated with such an affecting voice,

and such an inflamed countenance and action, that his hearers broke forth into passionate cries, as if the Judge himself had been present to pass the final sentence upon them. In the height of their commotion, the preacher bade them stop their tears and passions, for he had one thing more to add, the most affecting and astonishing consideration of all the rest, namely, that, within less than a quarter of an hour, the memory and regard of that which so transported them would vanish, and their affections return to their carnal objects in their usual manner. The neglect of serious consideration makes even the doctrine of eternal judgment to become without efficacy. It is needful, therefore, that the belief of this truth be so firmly seated in the heart, that it may engage the attention of the thoughts, and may have a royal power over the will and affections, that so our lives may be ordered according to its rules. Serious thoughts of this awful day would prove the most effectual restraint from sin: and particularly it would have a notable efficacy in keeping them back from secret sins, and deprive the devil of one of his greatest advantages against men, arising from solitude and secrecy. It would be a powerful remedy against sensual temptations, which so easily ensnare the hearts of men; and would change the apprehensions of the mind, alter the taste of the appetite, and make the most enticing and irresistible lusts the objects of our greatest detestation.

3. We should fear and tremble at the thoughts of this awful day. The great ones in the world that are most powerful and unruly, may hence see that there is a power above them. Many oppose Christ and his interest now, saying, 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us,' Psal. ii. 3. But they should remember that 'he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision,' verse 4. The day is hastening on, when he shall speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure,' ver. 5. He 'will break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel,' ver. 9. The day is coming, when he shall appear in his power and great glory, and all the opposers of his cause and interest shall be sisted before his throne, and hear this dreadful sentence pronounced against them: 'Those mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me,' Luke xix. 27.

4. Then this should make the saints patient under all their trials and sufferings. They have no reason to be ashamed of suffering disgrace for Christ; for he will abundantly reward them at the great day. Whatever injustice they have got from men, they will have righteous judgment from God. This should make them des-

pise the reproaches and censures of their most malicious adversaries. There is a day appointed, wherein oppressed innocence shall obtain the noblest victory, and disgraced godliness the most public and highest honour. They may suffer under the tyranny of time, but they shall reign in the kingdom of eternity. The belief of this is enough to make them glory in the sharpest tribulations, and joyfully triumph over Satan with his perverted malignant world, Heb. xi. 25, 26. 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.

5. *Lastly*, Make the Judge your friend in time, by receiving and embracing him as your only Saviour, offered to you as such in the gospel; and give all diligence that ye may be found in him, clothed with his righteousness, in that terrible day. There will be no standing before his awful tribunal, unless you be clothed in the garments of your elder brother; and there will be no access into the guest-chamber, unless ye have on the wedding-garment of imputed righteousness. Therefore kiss the Son, and be reconciled to him, and so shall ye appear before him as your Judge at the last day. Acquaint now yourselves with him, and be at peace; for thereby good shall come unto you, particularly that of a solemn acquittal in the last judgment. But if ye will not now submit unto the sceptre of his grace and righteousness, and subject yourselves to him as your only rightful Lord and Sovereign, willing to have him to reign over you, and to be ruled by his laws, ye shall not be able to stand in judgment, but be condemned with his enemies, and have your eternal habitation in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. Knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord, be persuaded to flee from the wrath to come, and so iniquity shall not be your ruin.