

(10.) *Lastly*, If ye will not stoop and bow to him, he will break you in pieces. God has settled an irreversible decree, that 'to him every knee shall bow;' and if they do it not cheerfully and willingly, they shall be made to do it with force and constraint. He has a rod of iron, and therewith he will break in pieces the mightiest potentates of the earth that will not subject themselves to him. Hence we have that counsel given them by the Spirit of God, Psal. ii. 10, 11, 12. 'Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they that put their trust in him.'

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OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION.

PHILIPPIANS ii. 8.—*He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

HAVING discoursed of our Redeemer and his incarnation, and the several offices he executes under that character, I come now to treat of his amazing humiliation and abasement, to which he willingly submitted, in order to accomplish the redemption of elect sinners. The text holds forth his state of humiliation.

1. The voluntariness of it: it was no matter of force or compulsion; *He voluntarily humbled himself.*

2. The nature of it: it was *obedience*, viz. to the Father's will, which comprehends the whole of what Christ did and suffered for our redemption.

3. The depth of it: it was *unto death*; and he could go no lower. As for the kind of death, he humbled himself to the basest and most humiliating kind of it, *the death of the cross*. Under this is comprehended his burial, and continuing for a time under the power of death. Death had our Redeemer as low as it could carry him.

4. The continuance of this humiliation. He had a race thereof set before him, in which he continued till he came to death, as the end of it.

Christ's humiliation was a voluntary thing; he voluntarily did and suffered whatever he did and suffered for us, Psal. xl. 7. 'Lo, I come,' said he. Even in the deepest points of his humiliation, 'he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth,' to oppose the

humbling treatment he was exposed to. Man fell off from God by his ambition, and therefore was Christ humbled, that he might be recovered again from his misery to the favour of God, and allegiance to him.

In discoursing further from this subject, I shall consider the several parts of our Lord's humiliation, as they are laid down in the Catechism, viz. 'his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; his being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.' What a catalogue of humiliating circumstances is here, to which the Son of God was subjected from the cradle to the grave; the consideration of all which should excite us to hate sin, the fatal cause of all, and to endear to us the merciful Redeemer, who for our sake went through all this scene to accomplish our salvation.

FIRST, The Son of God was born, and that in a low condition. Here is a wide step at first, a step from heaven to earth; which is a mystery of infinite condescension. Take this article in pieces, and behold humiliation in every point. The Son of God was humbled in his incarnation, his conception, his birth, and the circumstances attending it.

1. The Son of God became man. To see a king become a slave, and the order of angels degraded into crawling worms, would be matter of wonder; but a greater is here, viz. God not become an angel, though that would have been infinitely below him, but a man, a son of Adam, taking the likeness of sinful flesh. Hence the apostle cries out with admiration, 1 Tim. iii. 16. 'Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh.' O deep humiliation! far greater than if all the creatures had been degraded to the lowest degree of existence.

2. He was conceived in the womb of a sinful woman, the virgin Mary, who, as a daughter of Adam, was certainly infected with original sin as well as the rest of his posterity. O the depth of the Son of God's humiliation! It would have been low, had the great God, the Creator of heaven and earth, purposing to become man, been created as Adam, as it were at once, and in a perfect state of manhood. But to be conceived in the womb of a woman, was yet lower. He whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain as God, was as man shut up for the ordinary number of months in the womb of a woman, whom he himself had made. His body was formed not of any substance sent down from heaven, but of her's a creature, Gal. iv. 4. He was 'made of a woman;' that is, his body was formed of a part of her substance, being of the seed of David, and

of the tribe of Judah. He was born of a sinful creature, and yet without sin; the Holy Ghost having purified it from all defilement, as God alone can bring a clean thing out of an unclean, though man cannot.

3. He was born of a woman. Had there been no more about him but that he had been born of an empress, a sovereign princess, who made a great figure in the world, it would have been very wonderful: but that he was born of any woman at all, be her rank in life what it will, may well strike us with amazement. I shall say no more of this, but that our birth is such as the due consideration of it might humble us all our life; and yet to it Christ humbled himself. O the depth of his humiliation.

4. He was born in a low condition. There were several circumstances of the lowest abasement about the birth of Christ. He was not born of a great princess, seated on a splendid throne, and attended with a brilliant court, but a mean woman, though of the seed-royal of David, and married not to a mighty potentate, but a poor mechanic, a carpenter, Luke i. 48. and that not in her own house, but in that of another; not in the inn, the great house where the richer and more noble company chuse their lodging, there being no room there for him who was born King of the Jews, yea, who is the Prince of the kings of the earth, but in a stable among cattle; and when born, not clothed with embroidered or costly garments, as the children of kings use to be, but swaddled in tattered clothes, rent pieces of a garment, as the original word signifies; and laid not in a servant's bed in the stable, but in a manger, out of which the cattle eat their provender, instead of a cradle, Luke ii. 7. A far lower state of humiliation than most of the sons and daughters of Adam are reduced to. Well may we cry out with astonishment, How low, O Son of God, wast thou humbled in every circumstance relating to thy conception and birth! O that we might study humility from thy low abasement!

SECONDLY, Our Redeemer was made under the law, though he be the Lord of all, and the Lawgiver unto his rational creatures. Rebellious man had shaken off the yoke of his obedience, and Christ therefore lays his neck under it. He submitted himself to the ceremonial law, undergoing the painful operation of circumcision on the eighth day after his birth, as was therein enjoined; to the civil law paying tribute, &c.; and to the moral law, obeying the precepts thereof, and suffering the penal sanction of it, which was added in case of transgression by man, in whose room he substituted himself.

1. He submitted to the preceptive part of the law as a covenant of works, which man had broken: and this he fulfilled, so that he

was even subject to Joseph his supposed father, and to Mary his Mother, according to the flesh, Luke ii. 51. ; nay, to every branch of it, in fulfilling all righteousness, Matth. iii. 15. By this his obedience the law was magnified and made honourable, and got its full due in respect of active obedience, which it could never have got from men, though all their pieces of obedience had been accumulated into one sum.

2. He submitted to the threatening or penal sanction of the law. Though there was no guile found in his mouth, and he owed the law nothing, as being the great Lawgiver, yet the law took him by the throat, as the undertaker for sinners, saying, 'Pay me what thou owest.' The threatening was enacted, and he answered it to a tittle, bearing that death in his soul and body which it had threatened on account of sin. And thus he took on the debt of elect sinners, and he paid it to the utmost farthing. O wonderful condescension in the Lord and Lawgiver, to yield obedience to his own law, that was made for creatures, in all its demands, the most rigorous not excepted? O blessed Undertaker, who hast paid all the debt of bankrupt men!

THIRDLY, He underwent the miseries of this life, which was infected with the plague of sin, and thereby rendered very grievous to bear; and yet he, though sinless, humbled himself to bear the tokens thereof. As,

1. Poverty: 'Though the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, yet he, the Son of man, had not where to lay his head.' Adam had reduced all his posterity to beggary, and Christ submitted to the poverty following it; not having wherewith to maintain himself, but receiving supplies from some women who ministered to him of their substance. He was so poor that he had not wherewith to pay the tribute exacted of him till he wrought a miracle for it. In his greatest state, and when attended with the grandest cavalcade, he was mounted, not on a horse finely caparisoned, but on a silly ass, and that none of his own, but borrowed from another.

2. Sorrow: Isa. liii. 3. He was 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.' There was a constant cloud of sorrow on him. Once we read of his rejoicing in spirit, but never of his laughing; frequently of his complaints, tears, and groans. He was content to sorrow for us, that we might rejoice, and to weep that we might be glad.

3. The indignities of the world, in the contempt, reproach, and despite poured upon him. He was despised and rejected of men. Hence he says of himself in this respect, Psal. xxii. 6. 'I am a

worm and no man : a reproach of men, and despised of the people.' He was contradicted of sinners, called Beelzebub, a madman, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, &c.

4. The temptations of Satan. He was tempted of the devil forty days in the wilderness and elsewhere : nay tempted to self-murder, and to the worship of that damned spirit, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. And Satan seems to have often set upon him, though the particular times are not mentioned in the sacred records ; as appears from Luke iv. 13. where it is said, that 'the devil departed from him (after his grand temptation) for a season ;' denoting that he would attack him again.

*Lastly*, The sinless infirmities of human nature. He was subjected to weariness, hunger, thirst, &c. as the history of his life in the evangelists abundantly declares. Thus low was the Son of God humbled on account of sinners, that they might not perish for ever. O let us admire his humiliation and abasement, and let his low estate for ever hide pride from our eyes, and teach us, in whatever state we are, therewith to be content.

FOURTHLY, He underwent the wrath of God. Thus he humbled himself to drink the bitter dregs of his Father's wrath for us. The curse of the law was laid upon him, and he bore it for us, Gal. iii. 13. His soul was troubled, John xii. 27. He was beset with sorrows of the deepest sort, when he said, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,' Matth. xxvi. 38. He was in an agony, so as it made him sweat great drops of blood, that trickled from his blessed body in a cold night in the open air. Whence was all this but from the load of his Father's wrath that lay on him, on account of all the sins of his elect people imputed to him ? a load, which, if laid on all the angels in heaven and men on earth, would have sunk them to the lowest hell. Compare the martyrs quietly bearing the most fearful deaths. They were supported by divine consolations flowing into their souls, without one drop of God's wrath in the cup given them to drink. But from him all divine comforts were withheld. See that desertion of God of which he so bitterly cried out on the cross, when there was an eclipse of comfort from his holy soul, as there was of the sun in his cheering beams from the earth, that he might bear that wrath in full measure. O what an amazing step of humiliation was this ! Who knows the power of the Lord's wrath ? If fatherly anger made David to roar, and vindictive justice devils to tremble under the fearful apprehensions of the wrath to come upon them, how dreadful behaved that wrath to be which was due to the sins of all the elect, when accumulated in one sum, and all charged upon Christ at once ? He was set up as a mark

against which all the arrows of the divine wrath were levelled; the quiver thereof was emptied upon him. No wonder then that he was in agony, that blood trickled from every pore of his body, and that his holy human soul recoiled, as it were, from the terrible shock it underwent under this load of wrath and the curse of the law.

FIFTHLY, He underwent the cursed death of the cross. Being betrayed by Judas, forsaken by all his disciples, denied by the self-confident Peter, and condemned by Pilate, he was put to death on the cross. This death of Christ was,

1. Most painful. No death is without pain. But his death was most painful: for 'it pleased the Lord to bruise him.' Consider here,

(1.) Our Lord was scourged, having his blessed back beaten with sharp rods, Matt. xxvii. 26. which was a most shameful and painful thing.

(2.) He was crowned with thorns; and the mad soldiers struck him on the head, when this prickly crown was on his head, thereby driving the thorns into it, and making them penetrate the deeper, Matt. xxvii. 29, 30. whereby it seems he was so overspread with his own blood, that Pilate thought him already an object of commiseration, and brought him forth to the Jews, saying 'Behold the man,' John xix. 5. Add to this what he suffered from blows and cuffs laid on him without mercy, and their compelling him to bear his own cross, till, fainting with the heavy load and his inward sufferings, they obliged another to drag it to the place of execution.

(3.) He was crucified; which was a most painful and excruciating death. For consider,

[1.] The extending of his body on the cross, which lying on the ground, his body was with such force stretched out its full length, that his bones were drawn out of joint, as he himself pathetically expresses it in prophetic language, long before the tragical event took place, Psal. xxii. 14. 'My bones are out of joint,' His sinews were distended, and his bones dislocated by the violent distension.

[2.] The nailing of the body so extended unto the cross. These nails were driven through the hands and the feet, the sinewy and most sensible parts of the body; which could not but occasion greater pain to Christ's body, which was of a finer temperature and more acute feeling than the bodies of other men, as being entirely exempted from the corruption and distempers these are liable to. And great indeed it seems they were; for he says, 'they pierced my hands and feet;' in Hebrew they *digged* them, as it were with spades and mattocks, which could not but occasion the most excruciating and acute pain.

[3.] What dreadful pain behoved the lifting up of the cross, with him nailed to it, be to his blessed body, especially if done with a sudden jerk, which we may suppose to have been probably the case, considering the eagerness of his enemies to have him dispatched; and then thrusting it down again into the ground that it might stand upright, attended no doubt with shaking from side to side? Every one may well perceive what dreadful pain must have attended all this horrid scene.

[4.] It was a longsome or lingering death. He hung on the cross about six hours, from nine in the morning till three in the afternoon, Mark xv. 25, 34. What pain behoved to attend such a long suspension on the cross, his blessed body hanging all the while by his hands nailed to the upper part?

2. His death was most shameful and ignominious, Heb. xii. 2. 'He endured the cross, despising the shame.' Much shame was cast upon him. They spit upon him, and mocked him. The death of the cross was a death for bondmen, seldom for freemen, and those only of the baser sort, and for some of the highest crimes. While he was a-dying he stood naked on the cross; for they that were crucified were first stript naked of all their clothes, Matt. xxvii. 35. He was crucified in the midst of two thieves, as if he had been the chief of them, and that without the gate, as the blasphemer was without the camp. They wagged their heads at him. He was mocked in his prophetic office: they blindfolded him, and bad him 'prophesy who smote him.' He was mocked in his priestly office, 'He saved others, but himself he cannot save.' And he was mocked in his kingly office; they cried unto him, 'Hail, King of the Jews;' and this title, 'This is Jesus the King of the Jews,' was inscribed on his cross, as giving him out for a mock monarch.

3. It was a cursed death, Deut. xxi. 23. 'He that is hanged, is accursed of God.' That was but a ceremonial curse, but it was a real one to him, Gal. iii. 13. 'He was made a curse for us.' There were many other kinds of death among the Jews; but that kind only was accursed: and therefore it behoved Christ our Surety so to die. It is thought this crucifying of criminals was forbidden in the time of the Emperor Constantine.

SIXTHLY, He was buried, so that there might be full assurance given of his death, upon the reality of which the hopes and happiness of his people depend, inasmuch as thereby transgression was finished, an end put to sin, reconciliation made for iniquity, and everlasting righteousness brought in. He was buried too, that he might conquer death in its darkest and strongest hold, even in the gloomy recesses of the grave: to sanctify and sweeten it to all his

friends and followers, that it may be to them a place of repose, where their bodies may rest till the resurrection; that his people may have power and strength to bury sin, so as it may never rise up against them to their condemnation; and to teach his followers to give one another's dead bodies a just and decent interment.

The persons who concerned themselves in our Lord's funeral, were Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, John xix. 38,—42. They were rich men, senators, and counsellors in the Jewish state, and of as bright and distinguished characters as any who sat in the sanhedrim; and yet they were so far from reckoning it a dishonour, that they counted it a piece of singular glory to be employed in this last act of kindness to their dead Lord. Now, when the apostles were all fled, and none of them appeared to shew this respect to their Master, Providence stirred up these two great and rich men to act a part upon this occasion which was truly great and honourable. And those persons were well affected to our Redeemer. Though the weakness of their faith moved them to conceal their profession during his life, yet now, when he is dead, and none of all his followers have the courage to own or concern themselves about him, they boldly appear in acting this part of sincere friends to him.

The place where our Lord was buried was a new sepulchre in a garden, wherein no man had ever been laid, John xix. 41. Thus our Lord was buried not in his own, but in another man's grave. As in the days of his life he was in such circumstances, that he himself said, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has not where to lay his head;' so when he was dead he had no grave of his own to be laid in. When he was born, he was born in another man's house; when he preached, he preached in another man's ship; when he prayed, he prayed in another man's garden; when he rode to Jerusalem, he rode on another man's ass; and when he was buried, he was buried in another man's grave. He had nothing peculiar to himself but his cross; which no man would touch, far less take from him, even when he was ready to faint under the weight of it, till Simon of Cyrene was compelled to bear it. The grave belonged to Joseph of Arimathea, who was a rich man; and thus there was a memorable fulfilment of that prophecy, Isa. liii. 9. 'He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.' Though upon the cross he was insulted and despised, yet he was honourably laid in the grave. It was a new grave; which a wise Providence so ordered, that the Jews might have no ground to surmise, either that some other buried before had risen, or that his resurrection was not the effect of his own power, but of virtue flowing from the body of some saint formerly interred

there, as in the case of that dead man, who being let down into the grave of Elisha, and touching his bones, revived, and stood up on his feet, 2 Kings xiii. 21. This grave was in a garden; which Joseph contrived to have so, that it might be a memorandum to him, while living amidst all the pleasures and products of this garden, to think of death, and to be diligent in preparing for it. In a sepulchre in a garden Christ's body was laid. In the garden of Eden death and the grave received their power, and now in a garden are conquered, disarmed, and triumphed over. In a garden Christ began his passion, and in a garden he would rise and begin his exaltation. Christ fell to the ground as a corn of wheat, John xii. 24. and therefore was sown in a garden among the seeds, for his dew is as the dew of herbs, Isa. xxvii. 19; yea, he is the fountain of gardens, Cant. iv. 15.

As to the manner of our Lord's funeral, several things may be observed.

1. Joseph, inspired with an undaunted courage, went to Pilate, and boldly asked the dead body of Jesus. Though while our Redeemer lived, Joseph was so far sunk under the power of fear and cowardice, that he acted only as his secret disciple, yet now when he is dead, holy boldness and courage rose to such a pitch in his spirit, that he openly asked his body of Pilate, in order to a decent interment. Though he might have formed a party to have carried it off by violence, yet he rather chose to do it in a regular and peaceable manner; and therefore made a dutiful application to Pilate, who was the proper person to be addressed on this occasion, in regard he had the disposal of the body. In things wherein the power of the civil magistrate is concerned, due regard must be had to that power, and nothing done to break in upon it.

2. Upon this application, Pilate very readily granted Joseph the body of Jesus, in order to its being decently interred. Perhaps by this step he imagined to do something towards atoning that guilt wherewith his conscience charged him in condemning an innocent person. But whatever might be in this, it is certain, that, in Joseph's petition and Pilate's ready grant of it, honour was done to Christ, and a testimony borne to his integrity.

3. Joseph having obtained his desire, instantly repaired to the accursed tree, from which he took down the body of Jesus; and mangled and mascerated as it was, carried it in his arms to a place proper for its being dressed. Thus did he act under the prevailing conduct of the deepest and dearest love to his Redeemer.

4. Our Redeemer's body being brought into some adjoining house, it was washed from blood and dust, and then wound in linen with

spices, as the manner of the Jews was. But why did Joseph and Nicodemus make all this ado about the body of Christ? Though perhaps in this their management we may discern the weakness of their faith, for a firm belief of the resurrection of Christ the third day would have saved them this care and cost, and have been more acceptable than all spices; yet herein we may evidently see the strength of their love, together with the value they had for his person and doctrine, which was no way lessened by the reproach of the cross.

5. The time of our Lord's burial was on the day of the preparation, when the Sabbath drew on; and this was the reason that they made such haste with the funeral. Though they were in tears for the death of Christ, yet they did not forget the work of an approaching Sabbath; but set themselves with all convenient speed and care to prepare for it.

6. The company who attended our Redeemer's funeral, was not any of the disciples, but only the women who came with him from Galilee, who, as they staid by him while he hung upon the cross, so they followed him all in tears, beheld the sepulchre where it was, which was the way to it, and how his body was laid in it: and all this they were led to, not by their curiosity, but by their affection to the Lord Jesus, which was strong as death, cruel as the grave, and which many waters could not quench.

7. The Redeemer's funeral was actually solemnized; for after all the above circumstances were over, then they acted as is related, John xix. 41, 42. 'Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews preparation day, for the sepulchre was nigh at hand. 'There laid they Jesus,' i. e. the dead body of Jesus. Some think that the calling of that *Jesus* intimates the inseparable union between the divine and human natures in his blessed person. Even this dead body was Jesus a Saviour; for his death is our life. Thus, without pomp or solemnity, is the body of Jesus laid in the cold and silent grave. Here lies our Surety arrested for our debt: so that if he be released, his discharge will be ours. Here is the Sun of righteousness set for a while to rise again in greater glory, and set no more. Here lies a seeming captive to death, but a real conqueror over death. Yea here lies death itself slain, and the grave conquered: 'Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

SEVENTHLY, Our Redeemer continued under the power of death for a time. 'For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the

whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, Matth. xii. 40. For clearing the import of Christ's continuing under the power of death for a time, consider,

1. That death hath a very strange and strong power in the world, which invades and prevails against all the children of men. 'For what man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?' says the Psalmist. This interrogation plainly imports, that no man, high or low, great or small, rich or poor, can possibly cover himself from the stroke of death. And no wonder; for as the apostle tells us, 'death hath reigned from Adam,' Rom. v. 14. The empire of death hath made an universal spread through the face of the earth, and, with an unrelenting fury, bears all the sons of men before it. And it is no way strange it be so, seeing it acts under the conduct of Heaven's irrevocable decree, 'It is appointed unto men once to die,' Heb. ix. 27.

2. That the empire, power, and dominion of death, was introduced into the world by sin, Rom. v. 12. 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. The wages of sin is death.' And therefore man no sooner gave into apostacy from his Maker, but the awful sentence went forth, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,' Gen. iii. 19.

3. That our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of life, fell under the power of death, and that in its most frightful and amazing form: for he died the painful, the cursed, the shameful, and lingering death of the cross; and this he did not by constraint, but with the utmost cheerfulness.

4. That it was for the sins of his elect people that the Lord of life came under the power of death. Their sins were imputed to him: 'He was made sin for us,' says the apostle, 'who knew no sin.' Because their sins were imputed to him, therefore death, the punishment of sin, came upon him. He was not only wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, but he died for our sins. He bare the sins of many; and for the transgressions of his people was he stricken, yea, stricken even unto death.

5. That though our Redeemer continued under the power of death, yet it was only for a time. Though this king of terrors brought the King of glory down to the gloomy shades of the grave, yet he could not hold him long there. Hence the apostle says, Acts ii. 24. 'God loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.' Christ was imprisoned for our debt, and thrown into the hands of death; but divine justice being satisfied, it was not possible that he should be detained there, either by

right or by force; for he had life in himself, and in his own power, and had conquered the prince of death.

6. That the time of our Redeemer's being under the power of death was only till the third day. For he rose the third day after his death; which was the time he had often prefixed, and he kept within it. He was buried in the evening of the sixth day of the week, and rose in the morning of the first day of the following week; so that he lay in the grave about thirty-six or thirty-eight hours. He lay so long to shew that he was really and truly dead, and no longer, that he might not see corruption.

If it should be asked, What were the reasons and ends of this amazing humiliation of the Son of God? I answer, That *Christ humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

1. That he might satisfy divine justice in the room and stead of an elect world. When man by sin rebelled against his rightful Lord, incensed justice called aloud for vengeance upon the atrocious offender; and had its rigorous demands been answered, all the race of mankind had perished in the depths of death and damnation for ever. But Christ, by the whole scene of his humiliation, has so fully answered all its demands of his chosen, that it can crave no more. For he by his obedience and satisfaction, as the Surety of unjust sinners, has so perfectly paid all their debt, that justice is completely atoned and pacified. Hence our Redeemer drew his last breath on the cross with these words, 'It is finished.'

2. To confirm and seal his testament. He had bequeathed many great and glorious legacies to his chosen; all which had failed for ever, if by his death he had not ratified and confirmed this his testament, 'For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all whilst the testator liveth,' Heb. ix. 16, 17. Wherefore, that our Lord's testament might in that respect be made good, he sealed it with his heart's blood: 'This cup,' says he, 'is the new testament in my blood,' i. e. the new testament, which is ratified by my blood.

3. To conquer and subdue the devil. This malicious and subtil enemy of mankind had by his craft and power brought the whole race of Adam in subjection to his empire, reigning over and leading them captive at his pleasure. But our Lord through death destroyed him that had the power of death. It is true, the crucifying of Jesus was the devil's plot; for he put Judas upon betraying him, the Jews upon accusing him, Pilate upon condemning him, and the soldiers upon executing him. But our Lord outshot him in his own

bow, and snared and took him in his own hands. Thus the devil, by plotting and pushing on the death of the Son of God, to prevent his own ruin, procured and promoted it.

4. To finish transgression, and put an end to sin, yea, to take away sin with all its direful effects, Rom. viii. 3. 'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.' For when an elect world lay sunk under the guilt of sin, captives under the power of it, vile under the pollution of it, undone under the weight of it, and most miserable under the baneful effects of it, Jesus humbled himself to the death on purpose to rescue and deliver them from all this. 'We have redemption through his blood,' says Paul, 'even the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace.' And says another apostle, 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.'

5. To deliver his people from the curse of a broken law, and the wrath of God. 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us,' Gal. iii. 13. 'Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come,' 1 Thess. i. 10. When all the curses of the law were marching forth, as it were in battle-array, against the children of Adam, and the dreadful wrath of an Almighty God was ready to pour in upon them, then did our Lord step in, and, by his deeply debased birth, life, and death, divert the furious storm from his chosen, so that not one curse, or the least drop of wrath, shall ever fall to their share.

6. *Lastly*, That in due time he might bring all his people to the complete possession of immortal glory. When he saw them wallowing and sinking in the depths of sin and iniquity; when he saw them exposed to eternal death and damnation by reason of sin, and when he took a view of them as absolutely unable to do any thing towards their own relief and deliverance, his soul pitied them, and his bowels of compassion yearned upon them; so that in their stead he satisfied divine justice, subdued their enemies, abolished sin and death, rescued them from hell and wrath, and prepared for them eternal life and glory,

I shall conclude with a few inferences.

1. Here see the love of Christ in its most distinguishing glory. For the deeper he debased and the lower he humbled himself, the higher did he raise, and the more clearly did he manifest his love. What heart can conceive, what tongue can express, the greatness of this love! It is love without a precedent or parallel. It passeth knowledge.

2. Here see the awful and tremendous severity of divine justice,

which no less could satisfy than the Son of God's humbling himself, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Its resentment against sin swelled so high, that nothing could appease it, or move it to let go the criminal offenders, till the Son of God fell an expiatory sacrifice to it. And when the time of its acting this bloody tragedy upon our Redeemer came on, it would not forego nor abate one tittle of its demands. It would not spare him in one article of suffering which it could exact of him.

3. See here the prodigious evil of sin. Though the generality of men look upon it with a very light and easy eye; though they account it a very small matter to break in upon the divine law, and to transgress the bounds which the great God has fixed therein; yet whoever duly reflects upon the deep humiliation and sorrowful sufferings of Christ, will entertain quite other thoughts about it. Of all evils sin is infinitely the worst. Though a holy and just God has given many severe and terrible testimonies of his displeasure against sin, yet none of them appear with such an amazing awe as that which appears in the humiliation, death, and sufferings of his dear Son.

4. Let this look the pride of our hearts out of countenance; and let us think nothing too mean or low for us, whereby the glory of God and the good of others may be advanced. For Christ humbled himself deeper and lower than any ever did or can do, to procure the favour of God to sinners, to magnify the divine law and make it honourable; and therein hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps.

5. Let this teach you highly to prize the salvation purchased by Christ, and offered to sinners in the gospel. Say not of the sufferings of Christ, by your slighting the redemption thereby procured, What needs all this waste? Surely sin must be of a more malignant nature, the justice of God more exact and rigorous, souls more precious, and salvation and mercy more difficult to obtain, than is ordinarily imagined. Take a view of Christ in his amazing humiliation and heavy sufferings, and see if ye can entertain those thoughts.

6. Let impenitent sinners and rejecters of Christ tremble. Was this done in the green tree, what shall be done to the dry? If Christ, when he became a sinner only by imputation was exposed to such heavy sufferings as would have sunk millions of men and angels, what shall be the fate of those who spurn at his love, reject the offers of his grace and mercy, and refuse to accept of his salvation? What can they expect, but that the wrath of God shall come upon them to the uttermost, and they shall undergo the sorest punishment that incensed and insulted justice can inflict?

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.

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#### 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