

2. He manifests himself to be what the name bears. What he is called, he is found to be in the experience of saints.

USE. Study the name of Christ, as represented in the word, so as your souls may be enamoured of him.

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CHRIST'S NAME WONDERFUL.

ISAIAH ix. 6,

*His name shall be called Wonderful.*

HERE begins the name of him whom the Father presents and gives to us for our prince. The first syllable of it is "Wonderful."

The word signifies "miracle," a work past reach of the creature's power and skill, or knowledge, and so competent to God alone; Exod. xv. 11, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the Gods? who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" Psalm lxxvii. 14, "Thou art the God that dost wonders." Every miracle is wonderful, but every wonderful thing is not a miracle. Our Lord Christ is not only a wonderful one, but a miracle, a miraculous one, one most wonderful. He is beyond the creature's comprehension. So that this is fitly made the first syllable of his name, that men may know, that whatever they know of his excellencies, there is still more behind; and though they may apprehend, they cannot comprehend what he is.

DOCTRINE. Jesus Christ, who is presented and given to us of the Father for our prince, is and appears to be a miraculous one, a most wonderful personage.

In prosecuting this doctrine, I shall enquire,

I. Under what notion Christ is held forth as a miracle, a miraculous person.

II. What is the import of Christ as God-man his being and appearing to be a miraculous one.

III. In what respects he is so.

IV. *Lastly*, Apply the doctrine.

I. I shall enquire, Under what notion Christ is held forth as a miracle, a miraculous person. Ye have heard already, a miracle is a divine work, and competent to God alone, beyond the reach of any creature. Now, Christ is and appears a miracle. Hence it follows, that he is not so called,

1. In respect of his being a miracle-worker. For it is himself, and not his work, that is here called a miracle. Moreover, the prophets and apostles were miracle-workers, John xiv. 12. Yet this name is above every name, not competent to them, but to him alone.

2. Nor in respect of his divine nature simply, and his eternal generation of the Father. This part of his name does not point him out to us simply as God. For besides that that is, by itself, another syllable of his name, "The Mighty God," the scripture, for all that I can discern, doth not warrant us to call him the work of his Father in that respect. And the Father works miracles through the Son by the Spirit; Luke xi. 20, compared with Matt. xii. 28. But the eternal generation of the Son is proper to the Father alone.

3. Nor in respect of his human nature simply. This part of his name does not point him out simply as man neither. For though man is indeed a divine work, yet he is not a work competent to God alone; for the scripture owns man himself to be the father of man's flesh; Heb. xii. 9. But,

4. Christ is held forth as a miracle, a miraculous personage, as God-man in one person. This part of his name points him out to us precisely as our incarnate Redeemer, and is given him precisely in respect of his incarnation. Behold him, God-man, the Word made flesh; and ye behold the miracle, the miraculous person. So the text, "A child, a son, his name Wonderful."

Thus he is a work done or made; John i. 14, "The word was made flesh;" a divine work: Heb. x. 5, "When he cometh into the world, he saith,—A body hast thou prepared me; competent to God alone, as a work of creating power; Jer. xxxi. 22, "The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man." The Son of God in our nature is a miracle indeed, a work beyond the reach of the creature's capacity. Many miracles had been wrought before the Son of God was incarnate, The sea had been divided, the dead raised, a world created out of nothing, which was more; but a greater miracle than any of these, was the incarnation of the Son of God; after all these had been done, this was the creating of a new thing, never any of the kind before.

Wherefore this is the name of our incarnate Redeemer; and when we hear it named, it must represent to us the Son of God in man's nature.

USE 1. O the love of God to poor sinners of mankind! John iii. 16, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have ever-

lasting life." The greatest work that ever God did, was for their salvation. He made the world for man, and gave it him, Psalm cxv. 16; and the visible heavens too, Gen. i. 17; (Heb.) yea the highest heavens also he made for them, and gives to them in his Son, Matt xxv. 34. But a greater work than all these he did for them, when he did this miracle of the incarnation of his own Son for them, and gave him, an incarnate Redeemer, to them. O how can we escape the most fearful doom, if we neglect this great salvation! How worthy are they to perish, that will not be saved, when God has wrought this greatest miracle to save them?

2. What unaccountable stupidity is it in men, not to consider, admire, and be swallowed up in contemplation of this miracle; and not to be in deepest love with this miraculous personage given to them? Ah! have we not all been careless, unmoved spectators of this miracle? How many have never spent a few minutes in the consideration and admiration of him? Have ye not gazed on and wondered at some trifle, more than at this greatest of the works of God? Have ye not been more deeply in love with some person or thing for its shadowy excellencies, than with this miraculous person? Cease to wonder at the Jews' obstinacy, in not being moved to believe by all his miracles; for a greater than them all is here, to wit, his miraculous self; and yet we are unmoved.

II. What is the import of Christ as God-man, his being and appearing to be a miraculous, most wonderful one? Considering this as the name of Christ, to commend him to sinners; it imports,

1. The excellency of his person as God-man. He is an excellent, glorious, and lovely one; Heb. i. 3, "Being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." Though the blind world perceive not his excellency, saying as Isa. liii. 2, "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him;" it is not but through their own default, by reason of their blindness; for his glory shines forth, to be perceived by those whose eyes are opened; John i. 14, "We beheld his glory," &c. But the glory of the sun is not seen by the blind man, nor the glory of Christ by unbelievers.

2. The fulness of excellencies in him, our incarnate Redeemer. His name is Miracle, a collective word. There is a confluence of excellencies in him; look to him in every part, and all is excellent in him; Cant. v. 16, "He is altogether lovely." Some excel in one thing, some in another; as Moses in meekness, Samson in strength, Solomon in wisdom: but none but Christ in all. Moses, we would say, was a miracle of meekness, Samson of strength, and Solomon of wisdom. But Christ is miracle all over: meekness, strength,

wisdom, and all other excellencies, meet in him, to a miracle, There is no blemish, no want at all in him; Col. i. 9, "For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell."

3. The uncommonness and singularity of his excellencies. Miracles are but rare, in respect of the common operations of providence. And Christ among the sons of men is as "a standard-bearer among ten thousand;" Cant v. 10; he is a personage of singular excellencies. It is observed, that what is done by miracle, doth in its kind excel what is the product of nature in that kind. The water that was made wine was far better than the wine of the vine, John ii. 10. So the man Christ is "fairer than the sons of men," Psalm xlv. 2. So every excellency in Christ is beyond that excellency in another; so was Christ's meekness beyond Moses's meekness, his strength beyond Samson's, and his wisdom beyond Solomon's, as the sun's light beyond that of the stars.

4. The absolute matchlessness of his person, for excellency and glory; Prov. viii. 11, "Wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired, are not to be compared to it." Seek through all the creatures in heaven and earth, and there is none comparable to him; Psalm lxxiii. 25, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." His match is not to be found among all the ranks of created beings.

1. Among created persons, the like to him is not to be found; Jer. xxxi. 22, "The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man." Consider them in all their excellencies.

(1.) What are men to this miracle of men? Great men are contemptible, wise men fools, good men's goodness disappears, in comparison with him.

(2.) Consider devils in their knowledge and might, the only excellencies remaining with them; and their knowledge is but ignorance in comparison of his, Rev. v. 3, 5; their power weakness, Matt. xii. 29. He can bind them as easily as a giant a little child.

(3.) What are glorified saints, but so many bright stars shining with his borrowed light, wonders of his mercy, monuments of his free love? Rev. iv. 10.

(4.) What are angels that never sinned? They are all his servants, Heb. i. 14, to worship him, verse 6. He is the son of the house, they are but servants of it. He is the Lord of angels. Moses was not content with the offer of an angel, but would have himself; Exod. xxxiii. 15, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence;" nor was Mary content, till she got himself.

2. Among created things his match is not to be found, however men take the shadow for the substance.

(1.) Worldly good things are not comparable to him, in their greatest abundance and choice of them. Riches, honour, strength, &c. are a poor portion in his room and stead; "Prov. viii. 11, "Wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired, are not to be compared to it." All of them are greater in expectation than fruition, broken cisterns soon running dry, bitter sweets uncommensurable to the desires of the soul; he the quite reverse.

(2.) Spiritual good things do come from him as rays from the sun. Grace is a created quality, heaven itself is but the place where he keeps his court, And as the prince himself is preferable to all the jewels in his crown, and to his palace; so is Christ above all these.

5. The shining forth of his excellencies, fit to draw all eyes upon him. A miracle is the centre of men's eyes, to which all men are ready to look; it is a sight every one would desire to see, and to see narrowly. There is an attractive beauty and glory in this wonderful one. This is a mystery to the world, who are ready to say, as Cant. v. 9, "What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?" seeing nothing in him to fix their eyes on him. But,

(1.) His Father's eyes are fixed on him, as the object of his good pleasure; Matt. iii. 17, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Lamb is in the midst of the throne above, Rev. v. 6. It is a strange word that is said of the temple; 2 Chron. vii. 16, "For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually." But a greater than the temple is meant there. The eyes of the Holy Spirit are on him; Zech. iii. 9, "Behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes; behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of Hosts." Compared with Rev. v. 6, "In the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."

(2.) The eyes of the angels are drawn after him, as a most wonderful sight. The faces of the cherubims were therefore made looking towards the mercy-seat; Exod. xxv. 20, to teach us, that Christ the Mediator, reconciling God and sinners, is the object of the angel's wonder; 1 Peter i. 12, "Which things the angels desire to look into."

(3.) The eyes of all the saints are drawn after him, as the object of their admiration and affection. No sooner are the eyes of the blind soul opened, but they fix on him; John iv. 10, "If thou

knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Therefore faith is called a "looking unto Christ;" Isa. xlv. 22, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." Cant. iii. 11, "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon," &c. And it is not a looking after a wonder of a few days; but it must remain all along their course through the world; Heb. xii. 1, 2, "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." And when they come to glory, they will fix their eyes on him for ever, never weary, but always refreshed with the sight. Therefore "the Lamb is in the midst of the elders," Rev. v. 6; "and the multitude before the Lamb," chap. vii. 9.

And that the eyes of all men are not upon him, is because they know him not, are not capable to discern his glory; Psalm ix. 10, "And they that know thy name, will put their trust in thee."

6. *Lastly*, The incomprehensibleness of him to any creature. He is a miracle past their reach, the reach of their knowledge as well as their power; Eph. iii. 19, "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Men are soon non-plussed in the works of nature; there are things there which they cannot comprehend; Job xxxviii. and xxxix., as in the wind that bloweth; John iii. 8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." Eccl. xi. 5, "As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." How much more must they find themselves at a loss in miracles, where the laws of nature are neglected, and God works quite beyond them? Then how must they be quite lost in this great miracle: the Son of God become man? Agur long ago challenged the wit of all mankind to comprehend his name; Prov. xxx. 4, "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?" And the Son of God himself declared his name to be past reach; Judges xiii. 18, "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?" Whatever the saints know of it, the half is not known, there is still more behind.

USE I. Whosoever do truly discern what Christ is, cannot choose but to love him above all persons and things, and choose him for their portion being offered to them; "Psalm ix. 10, "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee." John iv. 10, "If thou

knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink ; thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." His matchless excellencies make him such a lovely one, that the discovery of them does command the surrender of the heart to him, and captivates the affections ; sinks the value of all created things in competition with him, and enthrones him in the heart ; Phil. iii. 8, " Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Psalm lxxiii. 25, " Whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." Hence true believers can neither be boasted nor bribed, frightened nor flattered from his love ; Cant. viii. 6, 7, " Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm ; for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave ; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it ; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned."

2. Believers' love to Christ must needs be lasting, everlasting, for his excellencies are infinite and incomprehensible. When we meet with an object among the creatures that commands our admiration and love, we are taken with it ; but some defect comes afterwards to be perceived in it, and then the admiration ceaseth, or turns into contempt. At least, the perfections of the object are all seen through, and they become familiar, and the admiration dwindles away into nothing ; and what was at first sight admired as new, ceaseth to be so when it affords no more new. But no defect or blemish can ever be espied in him, who is fairer than the sun ; and there being an incomprehensible depth of excellencies in him, there is ever place for new discoveries ; so the admiration must be kept up for ever ; Rev. xxii. 2, " In the midst of the street of it, and of either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month ; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

3. Those whose greatest admiration and supreme love Christ is not the object of, are yet certainly in the midnight darkness of their natural state. Whosoever of you admire and love any created person or thing as much or more than Christ, ye have never yet seen nor known him ; Psalm ix. 10, " They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee." Luke xiv. 26, " If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." The predominant love of the world, prizing and esteeming the things thereof above him, is a concluding evidence, that ye

are walking in the dark, that the scales are yet on your eyes, and that Christ is a veiled Christ to you.

4. *Lastly*, See here how it is not to be thought strange, that there are who stumble at the doctrine of an incarnate God our redeemer. Corrupt nature is blind and venturous. Our incarnate Redeemer is a miracle, past the reach and comprehension of the creatures. They are blind, and cannot apprehend his glory; yet they are proud and lofty, and will not admit the mystery, because they cannot comprehend it. Now, it cannot be comprehended; therefore either they must be humbled, or stumble at it as a stumbling stone. See Matt. xi. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 6—8.

III. In what respects is our incarnate Redeemer a miraculous one, a most wonderful personage? This is a subject which no man can fully comprehend, and will never be exhausted by the saints in glory through eternity. We will touch on a few things to show that he is miracle all over. He is wonderful,

1st, In his person and natures. He is God-man, God and man in one person. None such in heaven or earth.

1. The man Christ is the true God, the second person of the glorious Trinity, the one supreme most high God, with the Father and the Spirit; 1 John v. 20, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." He is "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person," Heb. i. 2, 3. Therefore he said to Philip, John xiv. 9, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." He is the Father's fellow, Zech. xiii. 7; his equal, Phil. ii. 6.

2. Christ the Son of God is true man. The eternal Son of the Father is a Son of Adam; Luke iii. 23—38, being, as was supposed, "the son of Joseph, which was the son of Adam." He was really human flesh; John i. 14, "The Word was made flesh;" and our flesh, as "made of a woman," Gal. iv. 4. He is a man, consisting of a soul; Matth. xxvi. 38, and a body of flesh, and blood, and bones; Luke xxiv. 39; as really man as any man whatsoever.

So he is God and man in one person. Here is a wonderful person indeed, whom we cannot comprehend; true God, yet man; true man, yet God; a mysterious person, undiscerned by most that saw him with their eyes, perceived only by the enlightened eye; John i. 14. The uniting of a soul to an earthly body, forming one person called man, was a work of wonder; but what is the putting together of two pieces of clay, in comparison of the Potter's uniting with his



own clay? Should we behold an angel assuming to himself and appearing in a crawling worm, as his own body; we would cease to wonder at it, beholding this surpassing wonder, an incarnate God! Here eternity and a being of yesterday meet together in one person, a child, and yet the Everlasting Father; here infinite and finite meet in one; God and his own creature!

*2dly*, In his perfections and qualifications; Psalm xlv. 2, "Thou art fairer than the children of men; "grace is poured into thy lips." All qualities that render one desirable and lovely meet together in him; and all these are in him to a miraculous pitch. So his Father is well-pleased in him, Matth. iii. 17; and the Spirit rested on him, ver. 16. And every soul beholding him with an eye of faith, will take up its eternal rest in him. Particularly he is wonderful,

1. In his spotless and unchangeable holiness and purity; Heb. vii. 26, "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." The fulness of the Spirit of holiness is in him; John iii. 34, "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." The brightest of the saints here below want not their spots; at best they are but fair as the moon; but there is no darkness in him at all. The saints and angels in heaven have but each one their measure of holiness, the fulness of a vessel; they have none to communicate to others; but in him there is the fulness of a fountain, to fill all with holiness; John i. 16, "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

2. In his wisdom; Col. ii. 3, "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The least portion and the greatest that any have of it in the world, is from him; John i. 9, "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The apostle challenges the whole world with that; Rom. xi. 34, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?" But his name is the Counsellor, and he hath known the mind of his Father; Matth. xi. 27, and can open the sealed book, and look into the secrets there. O the admirable wisdom of Christ, appearing all along in the conduct of his providence in the church and in the world, whereby men and devils are outwitted!

3. In his power. There is nothing too hard for him to do. What astonishing works of power did he while he was in the world! Matt. xi. 5, "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." And he is the beginning of the creation of God; Heb. i. 2. How often has the song of victory been raised in the church to his praise! Psalm xcvi. 1, "O,

sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvellous things ; his right hand, and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory." His triumphing over death, devils, hell, and the grave, are lasting monuments of his power.

4. In his goodness, mercy, and grace. The Prince of the kings of the earth is the Prince of peace. There is grace in his lips, whereby he speaks to poor sinners ; Psalm xiv. 2, "Grace is poured into thy lips." Though he has power sufficient to strike terror into the stoutest of his enemies, yet he is a matchless mirror of goodness, patience, and meekness.

5. *Lastly*, In a word, He is wonderful in the centering of all perfections in him, each in its perfection ; Cant. v. 16, "His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely."

*3dly*, He is wonderful all along in his duration. Some are wonderful in one part of their life, some in another ; but he is miracle all over his duration. And particularly he is wonderful,

1. In his eternal generation of the Father ; Psalm ii. 7, "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." He was before he was born ; John viii. 58, "And Jesus said to them ; Verily, verily I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." He was in the beginning of time ; John i. 1, "In the beginning was the Word ;" before time, from everlasting ; Prov. viii. 22, 23, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." See Micah v. 2, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Wonderful One ! A Son, and yet from eternity, without beginning of days Heb. vii. 3. A Son, and yet his duration of equal extent with his Father's. An incomprehensible One ! Who can comprehend this his generation ? Begotten from eternity ! The same numerical divine essence communicated from the Father to him !

2. In his birth ; Matth. i. 23, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted, is, God with us." Adam's body was made of the dust, without help of man or woman ; Eve of Adam's without the help of a woman ; before the laws of generation took place. But after they took place, and had gone on uninterrupted for four thousand years, Christ was conceived of a virgin, without the help of a man, Heb. vii. 3. This was a miracle, a wonderful birth, incomprehensible to us ; Luke i. 35, "The angel said unto Mary, the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the

power of the Highest shall overshadow thee ; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God."

3. In his life. In his private life, a wonderful infant, lying in a manger, yet worshipped as God ; Herod set to kill him, yet he preserved, while the several babes about were slain, that he might not be missed ! A wonderful child, ruling the whole world ; yet subject to Joseph and his mother. A wonderful youth, engaging the doctors at twelve years of age, having never learned, John vii. 15. His public life was one continued wonder, in his temptations, preachings, and miracles, especially in the untainted holiness which ran through his whole life ; never a wrong action, word, nor thought, notwithstanding of all he suffered from an ungrateful world.

4. In his death. Betrayed by one of his own ; forsaken by them all ; acquitted by his judge as innocent, yet condemned to a most cruel death. Astonishing wonder, God dying in man's nature ! the beloved Son of God hanging on a cross ; heaven, earth, and hell, all pouring in at once floods of suffering on him : but he in the meantime wholly resigned, and patient to a miracle under all ; taking the bitter cup of wrath kindly out of his Father's hand, and maintaining his confidence in him, praying for men his enemies, and triumphing over devils on the cross. Cease to wonder at men's laying down their life for their friends ; at Samson's dying with the Philistines. A greater wonder is here. The sun had never seen such a wonder, and was struck blind with the sight, and death, astonished, let go its prisoners.

5. In his burial. The Lord of life lying down dead in a grave ; the spotless Jesus making his grave with the wicked ; the great deliverer from death carried prisoner to its dark regions ; is a wonder that may hold us in admiration for ever ! The beautiful fabric of heaven and earth pulled down, heavens rolled up and cast by like old rags, would be no such wonder, as the Christ of God laid down in a grave, and the powers of hell seeming so to have carried the day against him.

6. In his resurrection. Behold him dead and buried, a rock the walls of his grave, closed up with a huge stone, the stone sealed, a guard of soldiers set to watch there ; and so for two days the wicked world and hell triumphing over him ; but all of a sudden, on the third day, the earth and rocks fall a-quaking and shaking ; an angel rolls away the stone ; the guards become as dead men ; death itself loses its gripes of him ; the bands of all the elect's guilt, wherewith it held him, become as tow touched with the fire ; and the slain Redeemer rises again, and comes forth ; stands conqueror on the field of battle, laden with the spoils of his enemies, death and hell ; bringing away the keys of them with him.

7. In his ascension into heaven. Behold him ascending into heaven from the earth, where he stood with his disciples; making his way through the air upward, they looking on, till a cloud received him out of their sight, Acts i. 9, being carried up into heaven, Luke xxiv. 51. Then he was returning conqueror from the battle unto his Father's palace; and he is attended in his triumphal chariot with his captives; Psalm lxxviii. 18, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive;" and with joyful acclamations and sound of trumpet; Psalm xlvii. 5, "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." Behold how he is admired by those of the upper house, while he is coming towards them, as a most wonderful one; Isa. lxiii. 1, "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." Then he enters the gates, and sets them open for all his people to follow.

8. In his sitting at the right hand of God, Heb. i. 3. When the man Christ came into the highest heavens, his Father seated him at his right hand, Psalm cx. 1. The most favourite angel never had at any time such an honour put upon him, as this most wonderful man was fixed in, at his first arrival in the upper house, Heb. i. 13. There he sat, there he sits, and there he will sit, in a state of glory, rest, and expectation of his enemies becoming his footstool, till the mystery of God be finished.

9. In his coming again to judge the world, 2 Thess. i. 7—10. What tongue can express, or heart conceive the wonders that shall then take place about him? The attendance of all the holy angels on him as the Judge, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, the resurrection of all the dead at his coming, their appearance before him, the separating of the sheep from the goats, the sentencing of both, driving the wicked away into hell, and taking the righteous along with him to heaven, will shew him wonderful at that day to those who now see no glory in him.

10. *Lastly*, In his continuing for ever to be the eternal band of union, and mean of communion, between God and the saints for ever; Rev. vii. 17, "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Heb. vii. 25, "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Every saint shall shine there as a star in the firmament; but he is the Sun for ever, from whom they shall derive all their light and glory; Rev. xxi. 23, "And the city had no need of the sun,

neither of the moon to shine in it : for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." If they are to be as the seven lamps in the temple above, he is and will be as the bowl in the candlestick from which they will all be fed ; he only immediately communicating with the Godhead.

*4thly*, He is wonderful in his offices. And,

1. In his prophetic office. How would men run together to see a prophet of the Lord ; how would they admire him ? But he is the great prophet, never was there such a one as he. The Spirit came at the times on the Prophets, but he rested on him ; Isa. xi. 2. They had their foreknowledge of future events at second hand ; but it is his privilege to look with his own eyes into the sealed book ; John i. 18, "No man hath seen God at any time ; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." All that they could do, was to teach externally ; but he can render his teaching effectual, and that on the weakest and foolishlest creatures that are. Hence he hath chosen the foolish things of the world. So we may conclude, Job xxxvi. 22, "Behold, God exalteth by his power ; who teacheth like him ?"

2. In his priestly office. The priests under the law had their altars of stone, or brass, or gold ; their sacrifices of beasts, their offerings of divers sorts. But here is a most wonderful Priest ; who is the priest, the altar, and the sacrifice, all in one. He offered himself a sacrifice unto God ; and from himself was the sacrifice rendered acceptable. All the sacrifices offered before his, were but as hand-writings to own the debt of sin ; but could pay none. His sacrifice was truly expiatory, purchased the Spirit, reconciliation with God, and eternal life for sinners. Never was there such a priest nor sacrifice. And he is the great Intercessor, wonderful in respect of the ground of his intercession, the objects of it, the manner of it, and the infallible success of it continually.

3. In his kingly office. Such a wonderful King the world never saw, among all the crowned heads that ever were on it. Zion's King is most wonderful in his victories, rescuing men from the power of the devil, subduing their hearts to him, and conquering their wills ; in his defence of his subjects, from the devil, the world, lusts, frowns, and flatteries of the world ; in ruining his enemies totally, and completing the happiness of his friends. Christ's kingdom is the most ancient kingdom, being erected on the sixth day of the creation ; the most extensive kingdom, reaching both heaven and earth. Never a kingdom had so many enemies and so potent ; yet has it stood through all ages, and will stand for ever and ever, without end.

*5thly*, He is wonderful in his relations. And,

1. He is nearly related to the house of heaven, and so has the highest possible relation. The monarchs of the earth are the creatures of God, the angels are the servants of the house of heaven; but Christ is the Son of that house, the Son of God, Heb. i. 5; and has the management of it all in his hand, John v. 22.

2. He is nearly related to the house of Adam. He is a Son of that house too, the top-branch of it; Luke iii. 3, 8. He has a common relation to them all. He is their Saviour by office; 1 Tim. iv. 10; the Saviour of the world; 1 John iv. 14. He has a nearer relation to the elect. He is their surety and representative, who undertook for them in the covenant; Heb. vii. 22, John x. 15; and a yet nearer relation to believers. He is their brother; Heb. ii. 11; their father, Isa. ix. 6; their husband, 2 Cor. xi. 2; and their head, Col i. 18. And thus by his relation to both,

3. He is the centre of union to the two. In him they meet; John xvii. 2, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." There was war declared between the two houses; and the house of Adam could never have made their part good against Heaven; but the Son of God married our nature to himself, and so brings together the two houses, making peace through the body of his flesh. So, as he is the foundation-stone, on which all believers are laid; he is the corner-stone, joining and knitting heaven and earth.

*6th Lastly,* He is wonderful in his love; Eph. iii. 18, 19, "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," viz. his love to the children of men. His love will appear wonderful, if ye consider,

1. The subject of it, the party loving us. He is the eternal Son of God, the Prince of the kings of the earth. That ever there should have been an eye of love cast from heaven on us, not from among the courtiers, but from the throne, the King himself, is wonderful. That the Father's delight should have made the sons of men his delight, Prov. viii. 30, 31, may cause us to cry out, Psalm cxliv. 3, "Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man, that thou makest account of him?"

2. The objects of it, the parties beloved; men, sinful men. Consider them as to their rank of being, and they are the lowest of the rational creatures; but a superior rank, viz., angels, were passed over, and they were made the objects of it; Tit. iii. 4, "The kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared." Consider them as to their quality, and they were enemies to him; Rom. 5. 10, "For when they were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son."

3. The effect, force and energy of this love. It is absolutely matchless; never did any love work so powerfully as his. It began (if I may so say) before the world was; Prov. viii. 31; and engaged him in suretyship for the debt of an elect world. In time he died for them, he so loved them, Rom. v. 8. It rests not till he have them with himself in the highest heavens, John xvii. 24, for ever.

4, *Lastly*, The qualities of it. These are wonderful.

(1.) It is free love; Hos. xiv. 4, "I will love them freely." There was nothing in the object lovely, to engage it. But as the sun shines without hire on the dunghill, as well as on the bed of roses; so Christ's love was unhired. See the freeness of it, Ezek. xvi. 8, "When I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness, yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine."

(2.) It is sovereign love. There were objects equally miserable with fallen man; yet there was no love to them. Christ looked on the fallen part of the creation, and the angelic tribe, and the human tribe, were both before him; and sovereignty passes the former, but fixes the love on the latter.

(3.) It is preventing love; John xv. 16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Love begets love, as one coal kindles another. But Christ's love to us had nothing from us of that kind, nor of any other, to kindle it. We never love him, till he love us first; 1 John iv. 19.

(4.) It is tender love; Isa. xl. 11, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." It is tender as of a father to his children; Psalm ciii. 13, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him;" as of a mother to her sucking child; Isa. xlix. 15, 16, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me." It is tender, as one is to the apple of his eye; Zech. ii. 8, "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye."

(5.) It is unchangeable love; John xiii. 1, "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. 2 Tim. ii. 19, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Whatever falls out in the course of the believer's lot and life, though the manifestations of that love may be very variable, yet the love itself never alters. See Hos. ii. 19, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever."

(6.) *Lastly*, It is everlasting love. It never had a beginning, and will never have an end; Jer. xxxi. 3, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love."

And thus Christ appears to be all over wonderful.

USE 1. For Information. See here,

1. The greatness of the Father's love in giving to us such a wonderful one for our Prince; John iii. 16, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," &c. The love of God appears here to a wonder. O what honour is put upon man, by making such a gift to him, than which Heaven could not give a greater! O what happiness appears to be designed for man by this gift! We may say, as Hiram King of Tyre said to Solomon, 2 Chron. ii. 11, "Because the Lord hath loved his people; he hath made thee king over them."

2. The reasonableness of the believer's superlative love to Christ. Every believing soul loves Christ above all persons and all things. They will love him more than all the world, and all that is therein, and more than their own life; Luke xiv. 26. And good reason there is for it; for there is no object so lovely. If we look to confessors parting with their goods, their liberty, and their worldly comforts, for Christ, to the martyrs parting with their lives, embracing fires, gibbets, &c., the most cruel deaths for Christ, we will cease to wonder at their so doing, when we consider what a wonderful One he is for whom they undergo the loss of all. Gaining Christ, they are the greatest gainers, whatever they lose; Phil. iii. 7, 8.

3. The reasonableness of the gospel-demand of all to receive and submit to Christ as their Prince and Governor. His transcendent excellence entitles him to the principality and government over the sons of men. His merit requires our absolute resignation to him. He is the Father's choice; and in making that choice, he has acted like himself, having chosen for us this most wonderful personage.

4. *Lastly*, The dreadful sin and danger of the slighting of Christ. The more wonderful and excellent he is, the deeper will the guilt be of refusing him; the deeper the guilt, the more fearful will be the vengeance for rejecting him; Heb. ii. 3, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

USE 2. Of Exhortation. Be exhorted then to give this wonderful one your heart; Prov. xxiii. 26, "My son, give me thine heart." And,

1. Make him the choice of your soul, saying, Psalm. lxxiii. 25, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." Take him for your portion, as one who is the best of portions. Let your souls solemnly consent to the gospel-offer.



2. Part with all for him, as the wise merchant, who sold all that he had, and bought the one pearl of great price, Matth. xiii. 44, 45. Give up with your lusts and idols; renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, resting on Christ for all, for time and eternity.

3. Dwell in the contemplation of his matchless excellencies. Let it be the substance of your religion to love him, to admire him, to be swallowed up in his love. And let love to him set your souls a-moving in all holy obedience.

MOTIVE 1. Ye can never bestow your hearts so well. What is all the world in comparison of Christ, but loss and dung? Alas! that shadows should have our hearts, while the most substantial good courts it.

MOTIVE 2. Consider that it is for this end Christ is commended to you. We preach Christ, that ye may fall in love with him.

MOTIVE 3. *Lastly*, Consider how ye will answer it to him before the tribunal, that ye have preferred other lovers to the lovely one.

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#### CHRIST THE COUNSELLOR.

ISAIAH ix. 6,

*His Name shall be called—Counsellor.*

THE scope of this part of the verse being to commend the Prince presented and given to us for our Prince and Governor, this syllable of his name refers to his singular capacity for management of matters, in respect of his vast reach in point of wisdom. Other princes must have their counsellors, by whose advice they may act: but he himself is, and shews himself to be Counsellor, an oracle of government, a Prince in whose own breast is the oracle for right management of all things relating to his dominion.

DOCTRINE. Jesus Christ, who is presented and given to us of the Father for our Prince, is and shews himself to be the great Counsellor, an oracle of government.

In prosecuting this doctrine, I shall shew,

I. In what respects Christ is the Counsellor.

II. What is the import of this part of his name.

III. *Lastly*, Improve the subject.

I. In what respects is Christ the Counsellor.

1st, He is of the secret council of Heaven; Zech. vi. 13, "The counsel of peace shall be between them both." He is a member of