

A SERIES OF SERMONS,
INCLUDING THOSE PREACHED ON THE
NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES OF CHRIST.

THE BEST SECURITY AGAINST THE DAY OF WRATH.*

HEB. xi. 28,

Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born, should touch them.

SOLOMON tells us, Prov. xxii. 3, "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on and are punished." We may be sure there is a sad and trying time abiding the world. God will have his day when the world has got theirs. Of this there is no great ground to doubt, that there is a sad and trying time abiding these nations. At the last occasion of this nature we had, the Lord seemed to be giving the word to cut up the cumber-ground fig-tree of the Church of Scotland; yet, beyond hope, he has let it alone another year. But let us take heed; there may be more depending on the effects of the digging and dunging this year than we are aware of. It has got deep, very deep snegs already, and the axe is still lying at the root. And therefore I think we have the duty of this day, this communion-day, in the text; and that is, that we make it a hiding day under the covert of blood, for time and for eternity; as Moses did in the like case.

God had long sat still, and his enemies had been provoking him; now he was risen up, and was begun to reckon with them; and, after several lesser strokes, the warning is given, that the root-stroke was at hand. What does Moses, with other believing Israelites, in this trying time?

1. He goes to his duty, in a sealing ordinance, and makes a covenant with God by sacrifice; he "kept the passover," &c. He saw that he and his Israelites deserved the stroke, as well as the Egyptians; that God would have a sacrifice off both their hands; that the destroying angel should either find blood on their houses, or shed blood in them. Then says Moses, Let the Egyptians do as they will, the Lamb shall be our sacrifice this night; we will sprinkle the blood on our houses. So he "kept the passover," (*Gr. made*);

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not that he gave a being to it, instituting it at the command of God, though that was true; but it is an Old Testament expression, 2 Chron. xxxv. 1, well rendered, "he kept," i. e. celebrated this holy ordinance, whereof we have an account, Exod. xii. The passover was a Lamb slain and eaten by the Israelites, a sacrament of the old covenant of grace. The apostle speaks of "the sprinkling of blood," as a distinct thing; for though it was the blood of the paschal lamb, yet it was not used in the after passovers, after they left Egypt. The lamb represented Christ; and "the sprinkling of the blood," the believing application of his.

2. He managed this duty rightly. He had need; for there was much depending on it. He did it believingly "through faith." I may not stand on the detail of the actings of Moses's faith in this matter. Only I will give an instance of it both these ways, ver. 1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The object of faith is twofold. (1.) Things that have a being, but fall not under our sense. So Moses's faith was to him "the evidence of things not seen;" i. e. the spiritual instrument whereby he discerned and applied that in the ordinance which his eye could not see. He saw Christ in it, and the grand contrivance of salvation: and by the same mean he applied him. What else could give ease to a guilty sinner whose eyes were opened? And therefore, notwithstanding of Pharaoh's rage against him, and that they were all to march the next day, and that there was to be such a dreadful stir in Egypt that night, he keeps his temper and goes about his duty. (2.) Things that have no being but in the promise. So his faith was to him "the substance of things hoped for;" i. e. the spiritual instrument whereby he assured himself, that the deliverance which was not yet done should certainly be performed; and so the future deliverance was to him thereby as present. And our faith must act both these ways, if we manage this sacrament aright.

3. He had a particular view in his managing of it; "lest he that destroyed the first-born, should touch them." He saw there was a bloody time at hand, that God was to make the most dreadful time in that land that ever they saw with their eyes. The destroying angel was to pass through the land of Egypt that night, to smite all the first-born, both man and beast. He was afraid of the least touch of that angel armed with vengeance, knowing it would crush him as a moth. Therefore he takes the blessed opportunity which the Lord had put into his hand, to secure himself and his people; flying in under the covert of blood, to be hid in the day of the Lord. He does not gather his people together to stand to their own defence; that would not do: they must go into their houses, and lie at the

feet of mercy. To close the windows, bar the doors, &c. will not do it; but the blood of the lamb on the door-posts will. Therefore he "sprinkles that blood" for that very end.

DOCTRINE. The believing management of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, is the best security for a sinner against the day of wrath.

In handling of this doctrine, I shall shew,

I. What is that believing management of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, which is the best security for a sinner against the day of wrath.

II. What security this will be against the day of wrath.

III. Confirm the doctrine.

IV. *Lastly*, Make application.

I. *First*, I shall shew, what is that believing management of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, which is the best security for a sinner against the day of wrath. We will be helped to a view of this, by considering the ordinance pointed at in the text.

1st, The Christian and communicant that would manage this ordinance so as he may be secured against the day of wrath, must have his bunch of hyssop ready; that is, he must have *faith*, by which alone that blood can be sprinkled on the soul. An unbeliever can never believingly manage this or any other ordinance; for there can be no acting without a principle. Faith is the hand that must receive the atonement, that transfers the guilt on the head of our great sacrifice, the feet whereby we flee into the city of refuge, and the hand that draws the cover from wrath over our heads, and signs the covenant of peace betwixt us and an angry God.

2dly, He must believe his own desert of wrath, that he himself deserves to fall amongst them that fall. Blood on the door-posts of the Israelites proclaimed them guilty, as well as blood on the houses of the Egyptians did them. He must sit down at this table under a sense of sin, and desert of wrath; acknowledging that he deserves rather to be led to the altar for a sacrifice for vengeance to feed on, than to sit down at the table to feed on this costly sacrifice. If ye be this day to be marked with the sign of salvation, ye will be sensible ye have hung the sign of destruction before your own doors; and while others, in the view of wrath on the land, are dealing all the causes of wrath about them, ye will smite on your breasts, saying, with the publican, (Luke xviii. 13), "God be merciful to me a sinner;" a self, a land, a church destroyer.

3dly, He must, with an eye of faith, discern the sacrifice, and the virtue of it, seeing that in the ordinance which a carnal eye cannot

discern; as Exod. xii. 26, 27, "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean you by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses." The apostle tells us, how the spiritually blind bring wrath on themselves, instead of securing themselves against wrath, 1 Cor. xi. 29, "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." And here faith will say two things:—

1. Faith will look in through the ordinance, and seeing Christ in it, will say, "There is a hiding-place from wrath," John i. 29, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Eph. ii. 14, "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us." The believer will see the grand device of salvation in a crucified Redeemer: he will say, There is the Lamb that was slain to turn away the destroying angel; the "Lamb of God," that is, the Lamb which God himself hath provided, as he did the ram in the thicket; **JEHOVAH-JIREH**, (*i. e.* "God will provide"), said Abraham's faith long ago, Gen. xxii. 14.

2. Faith will look more narrowly yet, even through the hiding-place itself; and where the fearful unbeliever sees many faults, the believer will see none, but say, "He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," Heb. vii. 25. There is a bottom on which I may venture for time and eternity; there is a sufficient shelter, blow the storm from what air it will. There will be safety there when the Lord in anger will rain snares on a generation of his wrath; it will be safe there when the waters of Jordan swell to the brim. In a word, he will believe, (1.) That Christ is the appointed refuge against wrath; and, (2.) That he is a safe refuge, and that there is no other.

4thly, He must dip his bunch of hyssop in the bason where the blood of the Lamb is. Christ is our paschal Lamb, 1 Cor. v. 7; the covenant is the bason wherein the blood of the Lamb is poured, Heb. xiii. 20: and the cup the New Testament. The believing communicant will lay hold on the covenant made by sacrifice, that he may be safe in the day of wrath, Psalm l. 3—5. God offers himself to the sinner in the covenant; now must the man say, "I am the Lord's. The marriage of the Lamb is come," the Bridegroom has given his consent already, and he exhibits himself in the sacrament: and the soul by faith presents itself, and they join hands

and hearts at once. The Judge of the earth appears in the quality of a Bridegroom; and so they take him and are safe.

5thly, He must sprinkle this blood, make an effusion of it; apply it by faith, and receive the atonement. He must not stand afar, and say, I dare not meddle with that blood, though others may; I dare not lay my foul fingers on it. He must not sit down at the table, and only bathe himself in tears; not daring to bathe himself in the blood of a Redeemer. Call that what ye will, God will call it *unbelief* with a witness; and ye will rise even as clean as ye would come out of mire, notwithstanding ye would pretend to throw yourselves into it for washing. Therefore ye must touch, take, and apply that holy thing: say, This blood is for me, my peace, my pardon, my sanctification, &c., and on it I venture my all for time and eternity. Heaven and earth are my witnesses also, that I embrace the offer, and that it is mine, and that I must be found under the covert of it in the day of wrath, Gal. ii. 20, "Who loved me, and gave himself for me."

6thly, He must sprinkle it on the lintel and side-posts, only not on the threshold. Look with an eye of faith on it as precious blood; and sprinkle it over your whole man, above you, on every side; only not under your feet. Despise it not; consider that awful word, Heb. x. 29, "Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" It is the blood of God; the price and ransom of precious souls, the foundation of all the precious promises. But wrath from heaven hangs over your head, and over the land: sprinkle it above you, over your heads; take that blood for your scone, shelter, and defence. Satan will attack you on every side, and may be his hounds will be let loose on you; therefore sprinkle it on every side; and by all means on your weak side. Ye have weak heads, and weak sides; this blood is for all.

7thly, He must not sprinkle it only on the back of the door, but on the outside, the lintel and side-posts, that the angel may see it. The Lord is coming to call the land to a sad account, and to examine every one. On with your mark this day, on your foreheads. Antichrist's followers may take his either on their foreheads or their right hands, to serve a turn: but not so Christ's, Rev. xiv. 1, "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written on their foreheads." Your precious faith within must shine forth in an open profession, 2 Cor. iv. 13, "We also

believe, and therefore speak." Ye must not think to quit your profession, come what will come; but list yourselves this day among Christ's witnesses in the world, in Scotland, willing to seal your testimony with blood: Rev. xii. 11, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony: and they loved not their lives unto the death."

1. The substance of Christ's testimony; and that is holiness. The world with one voice is telling a lie of God, That he is a God that delights in wickedness; that folk may be happy with him in heaven, and come there, some say, in the way of profanity, or morality, or formality. Ye must give your testimony against this; and for holiness; That God is holy, and that there is no coming nor likeness to him, but in holiness; and this by a strict and holy walk, over the belly of the example of the world and your own lusts. This was the substance of the saints' testimony from the time of the righteous Abel, Gen. iv. 7, to this day, Rev. iii. 4; and xiv. 4. This is the substance of our covenants, national and solemn league; and will be the substance of the testimony of the Lord's people to the end of time.

2. The necessary appendages of the testimony; and these are twofold.

(1.) The revealed truths of God made known to you. You must bear witness to these, whoever run them down: the truths of doctrine, Prov. xxiii. 23, "Buy the truth, and sell it not." Mark viii. 38, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." This land is under the bond of a covenant to the maintenance of the truth of doctrine: and till the Lord raise up the spirits of his people to renew the covenant together, ye must seal the covenant for that effect at the Lord's table. If ye quit the truth of doctrine known to you, ye quit the substance of the testimony; for it is "the doctrine which is according to godliness," 1 Tim. vi. 3. It is the channel in which the sanctification of sinners, the great end of divine revelation, does run, Gal. iii. 2, "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

(2.) The instituted ordinances of God which ye have received. Ye must bear witness to these, though our beautiful house should be laid in rubbish, and men's ordinances and institutions set up in their room by law. We are under a covenant for the "pure ordinances," and against "men's ordinances." And ye must bear testimony to these divine ordinances: for so far as ye quit them, ye quit

the substance of the testimony ; for they are the means appointed of God for the sanctification of an unholy world. When we come to heaven, we will strive with no body for Presbytery against Prelacy, for the simplicity of gospel-worship against idolatry and superstition ; for then the end, holiness, is obtained, and we have no more need of the means. But we are not there yet : and therefore we must contend for these ordinances of God ; we must not lay by our staff, ere we arrive at our journey's end : we must use, and contend for the means, till we have obtained the end. Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, may be pleasanter rivers than Jordan ; but dipping in them will not cure us of our leprosy ; for they want one thing Jordan has, a word of divine appointment. Prelacy and ceremonies make a greater figure in the eye than purity and simplicity : but they are not means of holiness ; God never made them, and men cannot make them so. Accordingly we have found them cursed trees of men's planting, under whose shade piety went always to wreck, and profanity grew.

8thly, He must feed on the body and blood of Christ. Faith must taste, and feed, and relish the sweetness of Christ, and of every part of Christ ; unite the soul with him, and so draw virtue, sap, and strength from him, to stand before the Lord ; the tempter and an evil world without, and lusts within. And I am sure, if faith be in exercise, it will take up a crucified Christ, as fit for this, as the eating of a lamb was to strengthen for work or travel. And,

1. Ye must take and feed on a whole Christ ; Christ in all his offices. As your prophet. A day of wrath is a dark day, wherein many mistake their way, stumble into by-paths, and fall into error. But, says the believing communicant, I renounce my own wisdom and wit ; and take this Christ to be my guide ; and he has promised to guide me even unto death. A day of wrath is a day of sad challenges, of revenging strokes of justice ; but here is my priest, I shelter under his righteousness. Such a day is a day of fearful attacks from the devil, the world, and the flesh ; but I take him to be my king, and rely on his promises.

2. Ye must eat with the bitter herbs of repentance and sorrow for sin. If faith be stirring in thy heart, it will make a hole in your heart, though like a rock otherwise, Zech. xii. 10, " And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced ; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son ; and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." Thou wilt sorrow for thy own sins, and the sins of the land, that bring on wrath ; for the

dishonour done to Christ by yourself and all ranks, Ezek. ix. 4, "And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abomination that be done in the midst thereof." Hab. iii. 16, "When I heard, my belly trembled: my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness in my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble."

3. Ye must eat in a departing posture; turning your backs on the world and your lusts, and setting your face stedfastly to Immanuel's land. Ye must this day go to that table, joining yourselves to the Lord, resolute to "save yourselves from this untoward generation," Acts ii. 40; that if Christ mind to leave the land, ye will not stay behind, but go with him, and follow him whithersoever he goes. If ye can but have him present with you in the furnace of affliction, in exile, prison, or blood, ye are content. For this end ye must take hold of him never to part.

II. The *second* thing proposed, was, to shew what security this will be against the day of wrath.

1st, Thus ye will be secured from eternal wrath. When the great day of wrath comes, and all the enemies of God are before him in one body on the left hand, ye will be on the right. Ye will stand with Christ on the field, till ye see with him the backs of all his enemies, while they are driven with horrible roarings into the bottomless pit. And when they are closed up there under the load of everlasting wrath, ye shall get your "crowns on your heads, and palms in your hands," and help to make heaven ring eternally with your hallelujahs.

2dly, In a day of wrath upon the land; though the storm blow never so hard, ye shall have a manifold security. Though ye must not promise yourselves security from trouble, yet,

1. Ye shall be kept from mixing with the generation under God's wrath. Ye are to set up the partition-wall this day betwixt you and them; do it firmly, and assuredly in the heat of the wrath it shall stand. Build ye the partition-wall, and God will build the protection-wall, Psalm xii. 7, "Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." There are two generations in the world, the righteous and the wicked; those who fear God, and those who fear him not; but they are separate parties, opposite to one another: and they shall never mix. I confess, the two parties at this day are too near one another in the Church of Scotland. They are like the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image, part of clay, and part of iron; yet "iron is not mixed with clay," Dan. ii. 41, 43, &c. And when God kindles his fire, it will make men

of like natures run together, and make the separation greater; and the one generation may be less bulky, but nothing less worth; and the other generation more bulky, but less worth.

2. "It may be, ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger," Zeph. ii. 3. May be God may hide you in heaven ere then, as he has been doing with many eminent ministers and Christians of late, "taking them away from the evil to come." Or he can hide you under heaven, for "the earth is the Lord's:" and though men allow you not a hole to hide your head in, he can give you a broad place, whether they will or not. Though it be a very open place, he can draw a curtain over you, where the sharpest-sighted enemy shall not see through. He has an invisible lock and key on every place, where the most resolute and quick-sighted searchers may not be able to open the door, and see who is therein.

3. Ye shall not be straitened for provision, though it be a scarce time, Psalm cxlii. 5, "I cried unto thee, O Lord, I said, thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living." Though it may be hard to get a sermon without, ye shall have two preachers within. (1.) The bosom-preacher will be with you, that has his pulpit in the breast; that is a good conscience, one of the sweetest preachers that ever opened a mouth, that fills all his hearers with joy, 2 Cor. i. 12, "Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience," &c. (2.) The heart-preacher, that has his pulpit in the heavens; that is, Christ himself by his Holy Spirit, who is always a successful preacher, whose hearers are ever taught to profit: Psalm xxxii. 8, "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." He will be to you as a "little sanctuary." And these will carry you through till ye come to your journey's end.

4. Though the weight of common calamity should bruise you, yea, and crush you, "there shall no evil touch you," Job v. 19. (1.) No evil that is an only evil; mercy shall always be predominant in thy cup. (2.) The evil shall be taken out of the evils that come on thee. So that (ver. 22), "at destruction and famine thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth." Thou shalt say as Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 55, "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" "There shall be no more curse." God shoots poisoned arrows at his enemies, but none of these at his friends. The serpent shall be unstinged. May be thou wilt think, ere all be done, thou feelest a sting; but assure yourself it will be but a bee-sting, that goes only skin-deep, Matth. x. 28, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul," &c. (3.) The evils that may come on thee, shall be turned to good,

Rom. viii. 28, "And we know, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Every stone thrown at thee, shall turn a precious stone; and the most cross wind shall drive thee to thy harbour.

III. The *third* thing proposed, was, to confirm the doctrine. And here only two things may be noticed.

1st, He that thus manageth this ordinance, unites with Christ, the peace-maker; Christ is his; his security is in him, for Christ is in him, Gal. iv. 19, he cannot die. His blood is sprinkled on his people, and that marks them for the Lord. The Father has given all into his hand; and now though he be a lion to others, he is a lamb to them; and so he will not hurt them himself: a Lamb, a male of the first year, in his prime; not a bone broken, in his full strength, though sacrificed for them; therefore he is able to defend them, and will not let his enemies hurt them; slain and roasted with fire, therefore justice has no more to crave of them: without blemish, and therefore can cover all theirs.

2dly, He gets all this sealed under the broad seal of Heaven in this ordinance. Herein the covenant of peace between God and sinners is sealed in both hands; and all these, and much more, are promises and articles of the covenant. And what greater security can ye imagine in this world?

IV. *Fourthly*, I proceed to the application.

USE I. For information.

1st, The slighers of this ordinance, especially at such a time, are great fools, and despisers of their own mercy. Some remain in their gross ignorance, and have no such esteem of it, as to set them on to great knowledge. Some live in their profanity; and having no mind to be abridged of their sinful liberty, have slighted all these, and, it seems, will slight them to the last. Some, if the least demur be made about their admission, if but spoke to about amending what is a reproach to the gospel in their conversation, presently cast it off, and inquire no more about it. And some that formerly have sat down at that table, cast at that and other ordinances altogether. Well, sirs, I must tell you, ye are slighers of your own mercy; and the slight redounds to Christ himself, whose ordinance it is, and will lie heavy on your souls if ever your eyes be opened. The day of wrath will either rouse and bow, or break your careless, proud, and presumptuous spirits. Those things may serve to blind your consciences now, that will fall off like fig-leaf covers, when God comes to call you to an account for your opportunities of grace.

2dly, The mismanagers of this ordinance are great fools, who sit

down at the Lord's table, but communicate not believingly. They do the outward work, but it is not in faith; they bring no faith, no sense, no discerning, &c.; and so instead of securing themselves against the day of wrath, do mark themselves out for wrath. Ah! miserable work, for men to turn the food of their souls into poison; so to manage the treaty of peace with God, that they part greater enemies than before! The sin of mock-covenanting, and unworthy communicating, will be a dreadful item in the day of wrath here and hereafter.

USE II. Of exhortation.

1st, Ye that are not communicants, ye are in hazard of the day of wrath as well as others, though ye sit not at the table. Will ye by faith embrace the sacrifice exhibited there; receive and sprinkle the blood, the covenant sealed there.

2dly, Communicants, manage this work so as ye may be secured against the day of wrath. All of you, flee into Christ Jesus as the city of refuge; and make sure work, and lay down your measures for time and for eternity.

MOTIVE 1. Consider that there will certainly be a great day of wrath upon the world. "Our God will come." The day is coming when the dead shall be raised, and all shall be sisted before the tribunal. Eternal wrath will then sweep away all that shall be found out of Christ at that day. Where will ye then appear, O slighers and despisers of Christ?

MOR. 2. We have all imaginable grounds to look for a day of wrath against this church and these lands. The plague is begun already as to this poor church; her beauty is defaced; we have all left God, and he has left us in great measure: we have broken off from God, and are broken among ourselves. There is much of the carved work of Zion broken down already: and we have all ground to expect a root-stroke to the whole of the covenanted work of reformation. Matters are brought to that pass, that our lands can hardly miss to be a field of blood. The sins of the late times are like the iniquity of Baalpeor, which kindled the anger of the Lord against the congregation of Israel, and brought on a plague among them; and the iniquity of these times has not been suitably mourned over to this day. A spirit of apostasy and declining is on the growing hand amongst all ranks; the cry of our sins is gone up to heaven: and, notwithstanding all the alarming dispensations of the day, there is a visible hardness and stupidity on the generation, and the spirit of prayer is restrained, that we cannot see how we can escape. Prepare then to meet your God; and how will ye do it but in Christ?

I would only say two things.—

(1.) Seeing the glorious gospel-light has so shined among us, and that contempt of it and of religion does so appear in the sight of the sun, and a profane spirit does so much rage, it is very like God will have a particular eye for evil on the profane contemners of religion amongst us.

(2.) Seeing there is some ground to think that we shall yet have glorious days, it is like God will shovel out of the way many, that their eyes shall never see it; and that it will make a sad scattering among formal professors, strangers to the life of godliness.

Moz. 3. Consider Christ is now offering himself and the covenant of peace to us. It is time to be going when the Lord is risen up, and is drawing out his armies against us; to tremble when the lion roars. Come then, lest ye "mourn at the last, and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof? and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me?"

I close with two or three words of advice to those that resolve so to manage this sacrament, as that they may be secured against the day of wrath.

(1.) Let not the thoughts of wrath prevail to darken your view of the love of Christ in the gospel and in this ordinance. Particularly assure yourselves if ye be willing to be the Lord's, and take him for your God, the white side of the cloud is to you; and that though God were to destroy the whole land from off the face of the earth, if there were but one soul who would take shelter in the covenant of peace, he should be welcome.

(2.) As ye give yourselves to the Lord, so give your families too. Take all yours that way, and lay them over on him, and leave them with him for the evil day.

(3.) Let it be your main concern to get strength to be carried cleanly through; that ye be not led away with the sins and snares of the evil time, and so fall from your steadfastness.

(4.) *lastly*, Be not peremptory and particular as to what otherwise may be your portion of common calamity; but leave that on the Lord. Only in this be particular, that the sting of the curse must be taken away, and therefore that ye must put yourselves in the bottom of the everlasting covenant, and give yourselves to Christ as the great Steersman through the sea of this world, leaving that to him what weather ye shall meet with in your voyage to Immanuel's land.

Thus I have delivered my message to you from the Lord, as that which I judged is God's mind and call to you at this day. I desire to venture myself for time and eternity on this bottom; and it is my

request to you, that ye will take this method this day for your security against the day of wrath. And if I should never have another occasion of this nature to speak unto you, I would leave it with you, That this, and this only, is the way to be secured against the day of wrath.

THE SIN OF PEOPLE'S FORSAKING GOD AND BETAKING THEMSELVES TO THE CREATURE IN HIS STEAD.*

JER. ii. 13,

For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

THIS text is ushered in with a strange preface, wherein the heavens are called to stand amazed, to be filled with horror, and to dry up. Why, what is the matter? the sin and folly of Israel. "My people have committed two evils," &c. In which words there is,

First, A general charge against them: they have done "two evils," two ill things. Why, two is not many; yea, but they are two leading ill things, two mother evils. They are two fountain-sins, each of them casting out their thousands, as a fountain doth her waters. They are enough to overwhelm them with sins and sorrows. And the evils are the greater, that they are "my people," in covenant with me, that have done them. It is not the isles of Chittim, nor Kedar; but Israel.

Secondly, A particular condescension on these evils, these fountain-evils.

1st, Deserting of God: "They have forsaken me," left me, and gone away from me. I am their King and Lord, and they have shaken off their subjection to me; their Head and Husband, and they have run away from me. I am their confederate, who took them into covenant with me; and they have broken the bands, and burst the yoke. I am their God in covenant, whom they have forsaken.

2dly, Taking up with the creature. They have betaken themselves to the creature in my room and stead. They have "hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." (*Heb.* for to cut out, &c.) Thus they have made an exchange. They have

* Several sermons, preached at Ettrick in the year 1725.