

SECONDLY, Sinners, and all whosoever would have the day of death better to you than the day of your birth, improve life for that end. To sum up your duty in a word, as you have already heard, (1.) Let it be your great care and concern to get the favour and friendship of God through Christ, by taking hold of God's covenant of free grace, uniting with Christ the head of it, through faith in his name. (2.) Lead your life a life to the honour of God, studying to please him in all things. Renounce your own will, and your own corrupt affections, and wholly give up yourselves to him, to be ruled by him, and governed by his laws. (3.) Live usefully for men. Lay out yourselves to promote the spiritual and temporal welfare of all ye have access to in your station. By these means, and no other way, ye will obtain the good name, by which your dying-day will be better to you than your birth-day.

CHRIST'S SPECIAL ORDER FOR GATHERING HIS SAINTS TO HIM  
AT THE LAST DAY; WITH THEIR DISTINGUISHING CHARACTER,  
AS ENTERING INTO HIS COVENANT NOW, CONSIDERED.

The substance of several Sermons preached at Ettrick, in May, 1730.

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PSALM L. 5.

*Gather my saints together unto me: those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.*

LOOKING forward to the other world, we will see a great gathering to come, a gathering of saints, and a gathering of sinners; what part we shall have in these, depends on the entertainment we now give to the gathering unto Christ, in the covenant; they that will not now be gathered to Christ in the bond of the covenant, will then be driven from him, and gathered with sinners into the pit; they that gather now to him in that bond, will be gathered to him in glory then. *Gather my saints together unto me: those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.*

This psalm certainly relates to the coming of Christ for judgment, ver. 3. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." But whether to his first coming, to abolish the ceremonial law, set up the simple gospel-worship, and to judge, condemn, and take vengeance on the formal superstitious Jews, de-

stroying their temple, and ruining their kingdom; or to his second coming to judge the world, is a question. I think it is plain it relates to both, the former as an emblem, pledge, and type of the other: and thus we find them stated by our Saviour himself, *Matt. xxiv.* Only the coming of the Judge is expressed in terms, directly and immediately looking to his second coming, as the procedure and issue in terms directly and immediately looking to his first coming. So our text falling within the former part, we have all ground to consider it as relating to the other world. In this psalm,

1. We have the party in whose name the court is called and held. It is in the name of the Holy Trinity, Heb. "God! God! Jehovah; he hath spoken," &c. God will judge the world by the man Christ.

2. The issuing out of the summons to the whole world, called the earth from the rising of the sun, unto the going down thereof; from east to west, from the one end to the other. All nations must come to it, Asian, European, African, American, Christian nations, and Jews, Mahommedan, and Pagan nations.

3. From whence the Judge sets forth, making his glorious appearance. At the giving of the law he came from Sinai with terrible majesty, *Deut. xxxiii. 2.* At this his appearance he will come from Zion, the city of the living God, namely, from heaven, the church being so called as a heaven on earth. Thence he will come shining in power and great glory. He comes out of Zion, because he comes as a Saviour to his own, and that now men having heard the gospel, are judged according to it.

4. His awful coming to the judgment. He is God, as well as man. Devouring fire shall be his harbinger, *2 Thess. i. 8.* But will any then bid him welcome? Yes, his people will, Heb. "Let our God come; and let him not be silent," *q. d.* Come, Lord Jesus! Be not as one deaf, to the cries and sighs of thy friends, and the tumult of thine enemies. Sometime his people, doubting and fearing, trembled at the thoughts of his coming; but then they will be beyond all these, seeing the day their own.

5. Whither the summons shall be directed. To the heavens, where the souls of the blessed are that are dead; to the earth, where the living are, good and bad, and where the bodies of the dead are, under which is comprehended hell, where the souls of the wicked are, *Rev. xx. 13.*

6. A special gracious order in favour of his people, in the words of the text. Now comes the time of setting all to rights with them, completing their desires, and full answering of all their expectations from him.

1st, We have the order in itself, "Gather my saints together unto me;" wherein consider,

(1.) The parties in favour of whom it is issued out. It is the saints, holy ones, Heaven's favourites, beneficent ones that were useful in their generation. These were sometimes little regarded in this world; but then they will be the only persons that will be regarded. Christ the Judge will acknowledge them as his own, Mal. iii. 17. "They are my saints; the world disowned them, and contemned them; and I was silent, and many time seemed not to own them neither. But now I will speak out in their favour, I own them to be mine whoever are saints." Then farewell all other marks of distinction among men, rich and poor, healthy and sickly, learned or unlearned; saints and sinners is the only remaining distinction then.

(2.) What is ordered about them, "Gather them together unto ME." Gather them to me; not before me only, among themselves; such a gathering there will be of sinners there, as well as saints, Matth. xxv. 32. But gather them close to me, says Christ the Judge, that they may be where I am, sit with me on my throne, be ever with me. They have been scattered here and there in the cloudy and dark day; now gather them together, and that to me, as my members, Gen. xlix. ult.

(3.) To whom the order is directed. It is plain from the original, that it is to others than them, and to a plurality; and that as plainly shews it is to the Judge's attendants, the holy angels, Mark xiii. 27. These are they that gather the tares in bundles for the fire, and the wheat to the Master into his barn.

2dly, The parties to be gathered to him characterised, "Those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." Their names not being expressed in the order, how shall they be known from others? Why, here is their distinguishing character. Christ the Judge sometime set up his standard in the world, as being an appointed head for sinners to gather to, Gen. xlix. 10. He published in the gospel sinners' welcome, and invited them to come to him in the bond of his covenant. While some slighted him and the covenant, they came into it and so were gathered to him by faith, while others staid away. Now, says Christ, all those that gathered to me, embracing the covenant offered to them in the gospel, gather them now to me, that they may receive their crown, and the benefits of that covenant in full tale. But the further explication of this part of the text shall be deferred till afterwards.

From the first clause I observe the following doctrine, viz.

DOCT. When Christ comes again to put an end to this world, and complete the state of the other world, he will publicly own the saints as his own, and they shall be honourably gathered to him by his order.

In treating of this doctrine, I shall,

I. Consider the time of these great events, when this order for gathering the saints to Christ shall be given.

II. Christ's public owning the saints as his own.

III. The gathering of them to him.

IV. The order for this gathering.

V. *Lastly*, Conclude with an use of exhortation.

I. I shall consider the time of these great events, when this order for gathering the saints to Christ shall be given. It will be at his second coming, his coming to the general judgment. What number of years must run out before that, we know not; only we know that it will be, and it is drawing on. And to set the purpose of the text in due light, it is fit here to consider.

1. That Christ will certainly come again, in the character of the Judge of the world. As sure as he came the first time, and was judged, condemned, and crucified by sinners; so sure will he come the second time in power and great glory, and judge the world, Acts i. 11. "This same Jesus which is taken up from you unto heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." It is a piece of his exaltation, and reward of his sufferings, for which he has yet trusted his Father, and has not yet got: but it is impossible, by reason of the divine faithfulness, that it should fail, Phil. ii. 9, 10. "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." It is the joint desire of the saints' wrought in them by the Spirit, that he should come, Rev. xxii. 17. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come;" to which he echoes back, ver. 20. "Surely I come quickly." And he has appointed the sacrament of the supper, not only as a memorial of his first coming, but as a pledge of his second coming, 1 Cor. xi. 26.

2. When Christ comes again, this earth will be very throng, and a wonderful mixture will be in it more than ever at any time before; he having called to heaven, and the other receptacle of departed souls, and brought them all back to their bodies which are in the earth. Then surely,

(1.) The earth will be thronger than ever, though there will be no striving then for more room in it, as now; the now strivers would then be content to be lost in the crowd. But, I say, it will then be

a thronger earth than ever. For not only will there be a generation alive on it as now, but those of all generations before them from the beginning of the world will rise up among them too. And what a throng world will that make ?

(2.) There will be a wonderful mixture then in it, at a pitch there never was before. For there will be a mixture of saints and sinners in the generations then alive ; and besides, all the saints and sinners of former generations will rise up among them. There will be a mixture of Pagans and Christians, Papists and Protestants, good and bad, sincere Christians, profane and formal hypocrites. For instance, in our own land, there have been generations that lived and died pagans or heathens, others that lived and died Papists besides those that have been since the Reformation. Now all these lie buried in our land, and therefore all of them must rise there. What a mixture will this make in Scotland ? What a throng is in our churchyards, though there is no want of room there ? but the mixture cannot be discerned ; there is no discerning the difference of the dust of the body that was for fornication, and that which was for the Lord, there. But when they are raised, the mixture will be visible.

(3.) Only that will be a throng that will soon be separated, a mixture that will not last, but quickly be done away. The gathering of the saints will put an end to it, which being done by the ministry of angels, we may be sure will be quickly dispatched.

3. When Christ comes again, he will put an end to this world ere he go. His very first appearance will put an end to the business of it. All trades, employments, and diversions in this world, will be dropt that moment for ever. The shepherd will not give a cry or a look more to his sheep ; nor will the ploughman make out his furrow, nor the huntsman pursue his game a step further. And ere he leave it, he will put an end to itself by setting it on fire ; by the general conflagration, cities and villages, mountains and valleys will be consumed to ashes ; so that it shall no more be capable of affording a habitation to man or beast ; while withal the heavens that cover it shall pass away, 2 Pet. iii. 10.

*Lastly,* When Christ comes again, he will complete and settle for ever the state of the other world, Rev. xxi. 5. The state of this world is fitted for men's probation and trial, and is very variable ; the state of the other world, of men, and affairs in it, will be quite new, suited for reward of men's deeds done in the flesh ; and it will be made unalterable for ever. It is begun already in the case of separate souls, godly and wicked ; but then it will be brought to a pitch—the godly made happy, the wicked miserable, completely, and settled for ever, there no more to change.

II. I proceed to consider Christ's public owning the saints as his own. At that time when Christ comes again for these great purposes, what will be the lot of believers? Why, he will own them as his saints. We may take up this in the following things.

1. Saintship will be the only mark of distinction among men then. The persons of distinction now are those descended of honourable families, the rich and wealthy, able to make a figure in a vain world, that appear in their gay clothing; they must gather by themselves now, others must know and keep their distance. But then all that kind of distinction is razed for ever, and there is an absolute levelling. The only persons of distinction remaining are the saints, to be honourably gathered to the great King, while others are all to be cast away out of his presence, as the vile trash of this world.

2. Saintship will then be declared Christ's badge. In all ages of the world, while hypocrites have falsely pretended to it, it has been the object of the ridicule of the profane, and an eyesore to both, Isa. lix. 15. Saints is a name of mockery with many; but they will see it then a name of honour. The faith that is without works of a holy tender life, whereby people pretend to be believers in Christ, but show not holiness in their life, will leave them without the mark, Rev. xiv. 1. Only a faith that sanctifies the heart and life will avail.

3. Those that have borne this badge, Christ will not forget nor misken. Though they have been long buried and out of mind in the world, he will remember them; though they have lain among the pots, under various afflictions, reproaches, and ill names, he will not misken them. He was himself once in a very low condition, but then he will appear in glory; and so shall they with them, Luke xxii. 28, 29. All the filth cast on them will then be wiped off.

4. He will own them as his before his Father and the holy angels, Rev. iii. 5. "He that overcometh, I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." He is to bring them into his Father's house there to dwell for ever; and therefore he owns them before his Father, because they can come thither only in his right. They are to be the companions of the angels for ever, and this is their recommendation to them—they are my saints.

*Lastly,* The grounds of his special propriety in them shall then be opened and appear, Mal. iii. 17. "They shall be mine," *i. e.* appear to be mine, "saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." He will own them as his Father's gift to him, his own purchase, his own conquest by his grace, his by his own consent,

participation of his Spirit, and spiritual marriage; his people, his brethren, his spouse, his own members mystical.

III. I shall next consider the gathering of them to him. This gathering,

1. Pre-supposes the resurrection of the dead saints, and the changing of those found alive. Of the ministry of the angels in these we find no mention; the voice of Christ himself raiseth the dead, John v. 28. whether the archangel that sounds the alarm, 1 Thess. iv. 16. be a created angel or not. And the changing of those alive appears to be performed in the same manner, 1 Cor. xv. 52. That they may be gathered to Christ, they are raised up out of their graves, and soul and body reunited.

2. It lies in these three things.

(1.) In severing and separating them from among the wicked. Those found alive will be found mixed with wicked ones, and those in the graves will be found lying among the wicked too. But the angels will make a separation, a cleanly separation, that they shall never mix more, Mat. xiii. 48, 49. Sometimes they sighed, and said, "Wo is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar. My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace," Ps. cxx. 5, 6. But the beginning of that gathering will put a full end to that.

(2.) In bringing them together from all corners of the earth into one company, Matth. xxiv. 31. By the gospel efficacy on them, they were separated from the world in respect of their state and manner of life; and were gathered together in one spiritual bond; but in respect of their bodily presence they were still mixed with unbelievers, and at a distance from other saints. They were scattered far abroad over the face of the earth, and few places could show any considerable number of them together; but then the eastern and western saints, the northern and southern, shall all be gathered into one glorious company. The evening of the world is come, and Christ's flock is brought together.

(3.) In bringing them altogether unto Jesus Christ, in the place where he will be in the air, 1 Thess. iv. 17. Thither the Judge will come, and there will he set his throne; and where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Thither will the raised and changed saints ascend to him in one glorious company, and be set on his right hand as his friends, while the wicked are left standing as criminals on his left hand on the earth. And thus the happy gathering is completed.

3. For the kind of it, this gathering will be,

(1.) A great gathering, greater than any now to be seen in this

world. It is true, the saints appear few now in comparison of others; but when the saints of all generations, in all places of the world, shall be gathered together, it must needs be a great gathering; they will be numerous like the stars of heaven, which no man can number, Gen. xv. 5. Accordingly John saw "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stand before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands," Rev. vii. 9.

(2.) A speedy gathering, being performed by the ministry of angels which move like a flame of fire, Psal. civ. 4. The bodies of the saints will then no more be heavy and lumpish, but spiritual bodies, light, nimble, and active-like spirits, being new fashioned after the likeness of the second Adam's body. So that it must needs be soon dispatched. Yet,

(3.) An exact and accurate gathering, so as there shall neither be one goat brought away with the sheep, nor one sheep left among the goats. But all saints that ever lived from the beginning to the end of the world, shall be gathered together to Christ, and they only, without the least mixture of another sort.

(4.) A gathering never to part. The gatherings in this world, good as well as bad, continue only for a little; they soon break up and disperse; but this gathering being once assembled, shall never break up nor be dissolved, but continue through all the ages of eternity.

IV. I shall drop a word to the order for gathering them to him.

1. It speaks them his favourites, whom he has a special regard for. Now he is coming in flaming fire to take vengeance on his enemies; but as the angels were dispatched to Sodom to bring away Lot, before the overthrow of that city; so are they ordered to gather Christ's saint's to him before the final overthrow of the world, and the wicked therein. Others had common favours in life heaped on them, but now these are at an end; and the saints appear the only favourites of heaven.

2. A design to honour them before the world, as when one is by a great man called to him in the sight of others. God's people have their time of trial, and living by faith on heaven's promises; the world therefore reckons them fools, and because their course and way is opposite to theirs, they hate them and are hard on them. Now Christ comes to end the dispute, and declare and decide at length, who were the wise, who the fools; and decides it by their gathering to him, while others stand trembling before him awaiting their fearful sentence.

3. A design to complete their desires and happiness. It was



their desire to be with Christ, as best of all, and now says he, "Gather them to me." They were wearied of Mesech and Kedar; they longed for the society of saints that would be comfortable; and to be at the highest pinnacle of their happiness. This gathering them to him answers all these ends.

I shall conclude this doctrine with an use of exhortation. I exhort you,

1. To be in greatest concern of all things, to be Christ's saints now. Despise it not; if so, you will see yourselves fools at last. Neglect it not, lest ye be neglected and passed by when this gathering comes. It is better to have your name enrolled by Jesus among his saints, than by men among the great and honourable of the earth.

2. Gather to Christ now as your head, by faith. He has his Father's commission for this purpose to take out of the world lying in wickedness, a people for himself, Gen. xlix. 10, "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." He has visited our ends of the earth for that purpose, set up his standard among us, and now we have, as we have often had, a solemn call to come in; gather then to him, as ever you would be gathered to him in the end of the world.

*Lastly*, Having gathered to him by faith in the bond of his covenant, publicly own him as yours, your Head, your Priest, Prophet, King, and Lord. The sacrament of the supper is appointed for that end, as a public owning ourselves to be his, before the world, angels, and men. And those that are indifferent of doing that honour to Christ, would do well to consider what expectations they have of his owning them.

We proceed now to the character of the parties to be gathered to Christ at his coming, "Those that have made a covenant with me, by sacrifice;" Heb. "Cutters off of my covenant upon a sacrifice." Their character is taken, not from worldly advantages that attended them, for these will then be perished; but from the covenant, for that will be then lasting, Isa. liv. 10. So their character is true covenanters, they that have been gathered into the bond of the covenant unto him. Where observe,

1. The covenant from which their character is taken; it is not a covenant of their own devising; nor the covenant of the first Adam; but it is Christ's covenant, "my covenant," says the Judge of the world, who gives order to the angels to gather them to him. It is the covenant the Father made with Christ as second Adam, called commonly the covenant of grace.

2. The nature of that covenant; it is a covenant upon a sacrifice

namely, the sacrifice of Christ, that expiatory sacrifice. The covenant of works was not upon a sacrifice, for God was not then offended; but this covenant being made with an offended just God, behoved to be upon a sacrifice, and could not be without it.

3. Their coming into that covenant, every one personally for himself. This is expressed by their being cutters off of it, a phrase taken from the cutting a beast asunder at parties entering into a covenant, Jer. xxxiv. 18, which had a reference to the curse of the covenant to fall on the breakers. And the cutting off of the one part, so as they were never to come together again, imported the inviolableness of the covenant, Gen. xv. 10, 18. Hence the phrase is used for entering into a covenant, the sign for the thing signified. To this their action also the words upon a sacrifice do relate, *q. d.* That cut off upon a sacrifice my covenant made upon a sacrifice. Now the sacrifice being the sacrifice of Christ, it is plain our cutting off in that case must be by laying as it were our hand on the head of the sacrifice cut off by divine justice; and so it denotes our entering into the covenant by believing on Christ. And it presupposes the offer of the covenant made to us.

From this part of the text, we observe the two following doctrines, viz.,

Doctr. I. There is a covenant with God, which is Christ the second Adam's covenant, made upon the sacrifice of himself, and offered to sinners.

Doctr. II. Those who now gather unto Christ, personally and sincerely entering into his covenant of grace offered to them in the gospel, while others slight him and his covenant, shall at the last day be joyfully gathered to him in the air, to receive their welcome to the kingdom of heaven, while others shall be left on the earth to receive their doom from him, to be driven to the pit.

Doctr. I. There is a covenant with God, which is Christ, the second Adam's covenant, made upon the sacrifice of himself, and offered to sinners.

In discoursing from this doctrine, I shall,

I. Consider the nature of this covenant in the general.

II. Shew in what respects it is Christ's covenant.

III. Consider its being a covenant upon a sacrifice, and that of himself.

IV. Make application.

I. I shall consider the nature of this covenant in the general. It is a covenant of peace and reconciliation betwixt God and sinners, Isa. lv. 10, whereby an offended God and offended sinners may be

come friends for ever, and they re-instated in his favour, and established therein. And hence ye may perceive, that,

1. Not the necessities of Christ the Maker of it, but of sinners whom it was made for, required it. He was infinitely happy in himself and in his Father's love, and stood in need of nothing without himself; but they needed it, and he made it for them, Cant. iii. 10. It is a covenant of grace, for his making it was an act of pure grace to us.

2. It is the new covenant, brought in to repair the ruins of mankind by the ruins of the first. God and Adam, were friends when they entered into the covenant of works; but that being broken, sinners fell under the curse; and to recover them out of that ruinous state, this covenant was made.

3. It is the covenant by which sinners may have life and salvation, Mal. ii. 5. By it all their sores may be healed. In it there is righteousness secured for the unrighteous, a pardon for the guilty, sanctification for the unholy, and eternal happiness in the other world for heirs of hell and wrath. There is as much in it as may make one easy and joyful in the face of death; hence David in his last words says, 2 Sam. xxii. 5. "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."

O blessed covenant, which, by what is said, you may see is just the covenant of grace! O happy device! Do not your hearts say within you, Whom is it owing to? Whose covenant is it? Surely it never came out of our forge. Christ claims it as his. It is my covenant, says he. Therefore we shall shew,

II. In what respects it is Christ's covenant.

1. He devised it; it never bred in our breast, and never would. He was with his Father and Spirit the offended party; but the devising of the covenant of peace is not owing to the offenders, but the offended. For it was devised before the offenders were in being, Prov. vii. 29, 30, 31; 1 John iv. 19.

2. He made it with his Father without us, in all its articles and clauses, Psal. lxxxix. 3; Cant. iii. 9. The bargain was concluded from eternity between the Father and the Son, in our favour, while we were not yet any of us in being. So that the remedy for us was kindly provided, before we fell under our disease; that so it might be ready for us, and we might not die of it.

3. He was the head of it, the sole undertaker in it, on the side of sinners. There was in this covenant a burden to be undertaken for sinners, and Christ took burden on himself alone for them, to pay

their debt, and to bear their punishment; and accordingly he bare the burden alone, Isa. lxiii. 3. He gave it as his bond of suretyship for the elect, which the Father accepted, no more to look to them, but to him for satisfaction, Heb. vii. 22. The condition of it lay on him solely, viz. that he should fulfil all righteousness. Sinners could do nothing in this, but he undertook to do it, by his being born perfectly holy, living perfectly righteous, and making satisfaction by his death.

4. The promises of it were made to him, not only that of a glorious reward to himself, but of eternal life to all his, Gal. iii. 16; Tit. i. 2. As when a father covenants with a surgeon to heal his son's broken leg; the promise is made to the father, and he also pays the surgeon's fees, though the benefit redounds to the son.

5. He receives sinners into it, the administration thereof being wholly committed to him, so that coming to him by faith is our coming into the covenant, John x. 9. "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Justly is it reckoned his covenant, since the Father has left it with him, to take in whom he will into it; and none are instated in it, but by, in, and through him.

6. All the benefits of it are in his hand. They are now purchased by him, and the Father has lodged them with him, intrusted him with them all from the least to the greatest, Matth. xi. 27. So that he has the dispensing of them all; if the sinner would have the pardon of the covenant, he must go to Christ for it; if he would have the sanctifying influences of the covenant, he must apply to Christ for them, for he is our Joseph, who has all the stores of grace and glory in his hand.

7. *Lastly*, It is in his right alone that sinners can get the benefits of it, or claim them, Phil. iii. 9. They can claim them no otherwise than as they are his members, his spouse, his children. Hence at the last day, when they are to get the complete enjoyment of the covenant-benefits all together, the order is given by him, "Gather them to me;" *q. d.* for they cannot go into heaven, but at my back; they cannot have the benefits but as they are in me, Rom. v. 17.

III. I come to consider this covenant's being a covenant upon a sacrifice, and that of himself. And here consider,

1. Why this covenant behoved to be upon a sacrifice.

2. Why on the sacrifice of Christ himself.

3. The import of its being a covenant on a sacrifice.

*First*, Consider, why this covenant behoved to be upon a sacrifice. The reason is, the honour of God injured by man's sin required, that if there was to be another covenant for life and salvation to man now a sinner, it behoved to proceed on a sacrifice making atonement

for the breach of the first by sin. Man could not break the first covenant unpunished, else where were the honour of the holiness, justice, and law of God, Isa. xlii. 21. Rom. iii. 25. ? Therefore is that caution added, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." At the proposal of a covenant of peace for sinners, justice stands up and pleads, There shall be no peace unless I be satisfied, Heb. ix. 22; therefore a sacrifice is provided, that the covenant of peace may upon it go on, and the broken first covenant is ingrossed in the second, that all it demands shall be answered.

*Secondly,* But why is it a covenant on the sacrifice of Christ himself! The reason is, because no other sacrifice could avail in the case, Heb. x. 5, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me." One can hardly think, that if the covenant could have been made on a less costly sacrifice, that the only begotten Son of God would have been made the sacrifice, John iii. 16. There was a necessity for Christ's death, if sinners were to have life, Luke xxiv. 26.

1. The Levitical sacrifice of beasts could never avail in this case. For they were not of equal value with the guilty heads, beasts being in value far below men. Therefore by them indeed the debt might be acknowledged, and the way of paying it typified; but not paid.

2. Men could not be sacrifices for themselves in this case to procure a covenant of peace; for if once the sacrificing knife had come to their throat, they would never have recovered; if they had been once laid on the altar, they would have been consuming but never have sent forth a savour of rest to incensed justice.

3. Angels could not have been a sacrifice; for neither could they have ever overcome the weight of wrath that was due, but would have sunk under it. And their sufferings not being of infinite value, could not have been accepted for recompense of the wrong done to an infinite God. Wherefore Christ only could be a sacrifice to procure the covenant of peace. For,

(1.) He only could bear the curse, and overcome it. The curse of the first covenant behoved to be executed, in order to the establishing of the second for peace to sinners; and he only could bear it, so as to bear it out, and bear it off, Gen. xv. 10, 17, 18. Gal. iii. 13. The wicked in the other world will bear the curse indeed for themselves, and so will be made sacrifices for themselves, according to that, Psal. xciv. ult. "He shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness;

yea, the Lord our God shall out them off." But they will never be able to drink this cup up, and overcome it; so they shall have no peace for ever.

(2.) He only was of infinite dignity, and so his sufferings only could equal the offence of an infinite God by the sins of the world. Christ's sacrifice was of "a sweet smelling savour unto God," Eph. v. 2. It is an Old Testament expression used, Gen. viii. 21, "The Lord smelled a sweet savour," Heb. a savour of full rest, namely, "quieting his Spirit," as the expression is, Zech. vi. 8. The sins of the elect world, most abominable to God, sent up as it were a most rank smell into his nostrils: no sufferings of the creature could master it, but the sufferings of Christ did it fully.

*Thirdly,* Let us consider the import of this covenant's being a covenant on a sacrifice.

1. This says, that wrath is appeased, justice has got satisfaction for sin; the bar which the broken first covenant laid in the way of sinners' peace with God, is removed; for the new covenant is made on a sacrifice, whereby atonement is made for the breach of the first covenant, and justice has got of the Surety, for the sinner, what it could demand, 2. Cor v. ult.

2. It is consistent with the honour of God, to take sinners into this covenant, and receive them into favour as his confederates; for now the holiness, justice, and truth of God, have the wrong done them repaired by this sacrifice; and his mercy and grace have a free vent thereby, Psal. lxi. 4.

3. Sinners have free access into it. Solomon observes, Prov. xviii. 16. "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." And what will Christ's gift of himself as a sacrifice not do? Surely now the sinner may come forward under the covert of that precious blood; the sword that guarded the tree of life was sheathed in the sacrifice of Christ, and laid by, Cant. ii. 10, 11.

4. There is a feast for them, a feast on the sacrifice, the parties covenanting feasting together. Upon the covenant made betwixt Jacob and Laban there was a feast kept, Gen. xxxi. 54. So upon this covenant made on the sacrifice of Christ, there is a feast, 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast." The flesh and blood of Christ crucified is meat indeed and drink indeed, and we are to feed and feast thereon by faith.

*Lastly,* It is a sure covenant, as made on that sacrifice, the virtue and efficacy whereof being eternal, one can never be shaken out of it. The mercy and grace of God to sinners have a sure foundation

here, Psal. lxxxix. 14. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face." What can shake a sinner out of this covenant when he is once really in it? Nothing can be supposed to do it but sin. But then it is a covenant on a sacrifice whereby sin is expiated, and therefore it cannot have that malignant effect. Accordingly the promise of the covenant runs, Jer. xxxii. 40. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

I shall now make some improvement of this doctrine.

1. Then see how Christ loved us! When the Jews saw Christ come weeping to Lazarus's grave, they said, "Behold how he loved him!" John xi. 36. How much more may we say so, when we consider him making a covenant with his Father for the salvation of lost sinners of mankind, and that on the sacrifice of himself? It was much that he took any notice of our just ruin, being enemies to him as well as to his Father; more than he made a covenant for our recovery; most of all, that in order to establish it, he made his soul an offering for sin, and consented to shed his precious blood for it.

2. Then let us take this his covenant, and rest in it, as made by him. Let us leave to him the glory.

(2.) Of sole Maker of it with his Father, Zech. vi. 13. Let us not pretend to frame, make, and devise a covenant of our own, distinct from his, in our accepting of it. Let us not quarrel his covenant, nor go about to model it anew, agreeable to our corrupt minds. Let us make no exceptions against it, no exception in favour of any beloved lust, no exception against any of the duties of the covenant, nor against the discipline thereof, which is the cross. Let us desire nothing out that he has put in, nor anything in that he has left out, Acts ix. 6. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" So sincere covenanters look upon it as well ordered in all things, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

(2.) Of sole undertaker in it. He was so when it was made, and when it was fulfilled, Isa. lxiii. 3. "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me." Let none now then put in for a share in the undertaking. Some, in their pretended covenanting with God, undertake for their part, that if God will save them for Christ's sake from hell and wrath, they will be good servants to God as long as they live, and keep his commands, and so do their part; and so they would share the glory with Christ, Rom. iv. 4. They consider not that they are without strength, and

can do nothing; that they have as much need of the grace of Christ to sanctify, as to justify them. But come ye to Christ in his covenant, to get your nature changed, the power of sin broken, and to be caused by him to walk in new obedience.

(3.) Of the sole immediate right to the promises of it, Gal. iii. 16. You are welcome to claim the promises, according to your need; but ye must claim them only in his right, and be content to come in at his back to get them made out to you. This has been the way of the saints, as Daniel, chap. ix. 17, 18. and Paul, Phil. iii. 9. There is no standing of a sinner before God, but under the covert of the Mediator's blood; and no plea for sinners, but in his name.

And to move you hereto, to acquiesce in the covenant as his, leaving him the glory, consider,

(1.) It is best for us as he has made it, Eccl. iii. 14. If we should offer to mend it, by adding to or taking away anything from it, we would be sure to mar it. Infinite wisdom knew best what was for our good, and infinite love set him on it. As Christ saw better than we, what was our true interest; for he loved us more than we loved ourselves, for he loved us infinitely, Eph. iii. 19.

(2.) Only he is able enough for that undertaking, Psal. lxxxix. 19. And the work can be put in no other hand, but it will be marred. Why should we desire to take burden on ourselves, when he is content to be the great Burden-bearer, to bear our weight, and all the weights that hang at us, whether of duty, guilt, or affliction? He is sure, and can never stumble under our weight, nor fall; but we are ready to fall at every turn, Psal. lv. 22; Isa. xlii. 4.

(3.) The promise is sure in his right, and the claim that way cannot miss, Ps. lxxxix. 33. When pleading the benefit of the promise, we consider ourselves, we see nothing but guilt, sinfulness, unworthiness, sickliness, and inconstancy, to cut off our hopes: but looking to Christ, we see perfect holiness and righteousness, infinite dignity and excellency; so that we may say, "Lord, I am unworthy, yet my Saviour Christ is worthy for whom thou shouldest do this for me."

*Lastly*, Let poor trembling sinners be encouraged to come into this covenant, since it is a covenant on a sacrifice. It is an awful thought for a sensible guilty creature to enter into a covenant with a holy jealous God. Our God is a consuming fire; how then can we stand before him, and not be consumed? The sacrifice being interposed we are safe, Christ going between mediating the peace with his atoning blood, wrath is turned away, and the sinner received into favour and friendship. I proceed now to,



Doct. II. Those who now gather unto Christ, personally and sincerely entering into his covenant of grace offered to them in the gospel, while others slight him and his covenant, shall at the last day be joyfully gathered to him in the air, to receive their welcome to the kingdom of heaven, while others shall be left on the earth to receive their doom from him, to be driven to the pit.

In discoursing from this doctrine, I shall,

I. Premise some things on this point in the general.

II. Consider sinners' sincere personal entering into Christ's covenant of grace now, that will secure their joyful gathering to him at the last day.

III. *Lastly*, Make improvement.

I. I shall premise some things on this point in the general.

1. All mankind were by Adam's fall separated and scattered from God, as sheep gone astray, 1 Pet. ii. ult. Mankind was at first joined to God in the bond of the first covenant, and so they were his family about his hand, headed by him, and enjoying his favour. But by sin they broke away from him, and being gone from him the centre of unity, they were separated in affection one from another, Tit. iii. 3. And in this state they remain while out of Christ, scattered and wandering on the mountains of vanity.

2. To bring scattered sinners to God again, Christ was appointed the head to whom their gathering should be, 1 Pet. ii. ult. "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." Chap. iii. 18. "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." The first Adam was the head under whom they went away, and he left them wandering, a ready prey for the devourer; the second Adam is the head for their return, by whom they may be brought back unto God, and put up in safety with him for ever, John xi. 52. He is the great Shepherd, intrusted by his Father for gathering the strays of mankind, into one stock and fold.

3. There is a double gathering of scattered sinners to Christ. The one is now a doing, has been from the beginning, and will be to the end of the world; and that is a gathering of sinners by the gospel to him into the bond of the covenant of grace, Gen. xlix. 10. The other is to come certainly at the world's end, and that is a gathering of them by the angels to meet him in the air, never to set their foot more on the cursed earth, but to go away with him to heaven. And that will be a gathering quickly dispatched, as appears from the text.

4. There are many who will not be gathered to Christ now, what-

ever pains he is at to gather them, Mat. xxiii. 37.—“How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” He sets up his standard among them, he calls to them to come to him; but they get away from him. They love better to wander on, than to return; they prefer a vain world, and their deceitful lusts, to Christ; and they love rather to be at their liberty, than to be brought into the bond of his covenant. They cannot endure to be so hedged up, Ps. ii. 3. So they refuse to gather to him.

5. Yet there are still some who with heart and good will gather to him, and willingly come into the bond of his covenant. Efficacious grace makes them willing, Ps. cx. 3. They are weary of their distance from God, and their wandering life, seeing how in that case they are exposed to the utmost danger, and are in no safety from the roaring lion, who goes about seeking whom he may devour; and so they willingly gather to Christ, and come into the bond of his covenant, as their only safety.

*Lastly,* At the end of the world, whatever separation there is between these parties now, the wanderers and those within the bond of the covenant, there will be a greater then. The wanderers and the gathered being both raised out of their graves at the sound of the last trumpet; all those gathered together to Christ in the air, to go with him, and be ever with the Lord; and the wanderers will be brought together on the earth before him, receive their dreadful sentence to depart from him; and then they going away, the earth will be set on fire.

I shall consider sinners' sincere personal entering into Christ's covenant of grace now, that will secure their joyful gathering to him at the last day. And here three things are to be distinguished.

1. The proposal of the covenant.
2. The sinner's entering into it in a saving manner, so as to secure his gathering to Christ at the last day.
3. The profession and declaration of that entering into it, by some fit sign.

*FIRST,* The proposal of the covenant. It must be proposed to us, before we can enter into it; and so it is indeed proposed to us to be entered into.

*FIRST,* Consider how it can be proposed or offered to us. The covenant of grace being determined to be Christ's covenant, made and concluded from eternity betwixt his Father and him, and its conditions perfectly fulfilled already by Christ, and all its promises made to him; it is a difficulty with some, how that covenant already concluded can be proposed or offered to us to be entered into. But,

1. Suppose one in a town makes a bargain with the master in his own name, and the name of his neighbours there, fulfils the condition, and the benefit only remains to be received; and all this is done without advising with them, or their knowledge of it; may not that man when he comes home offer that covenant to his neighbours, and they enter into it just by acquiescing in it? If any of them will not, it will not be forced on them; but if they acquiesce and accept it is as good and valid as if they had been at the making of it. So it is in this case.

2. Adam's covenant was also made without us in the name of mankind, and broken too while we were not; yet by our very descending from him by natural generation, we are personally instated in it to our condemnation; and this without waiting our acquiescing or consent to that covenant. How much more may the second Adam's covenant be offered to us, and we instated in it to our salvation, by our express approbation and acceptance?

*Secondly*, Consider how it is actually proposed and offered to us. It is proposed and offered to us in the gospel, by Jesus Christ in his own and his Father's name; therefore he is called, "the Messenger of the covenant," Mal. iii. 1. who came from heaven, and proclaims and offers the covenant to sinners. Now it is offered to us in the gospel.

1. At large, in its several articles and clauses, both the conditionary part as fulfilled, Rom. i. 17. and the promissory part to be fulfilled, Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. and downwards, and so the rest of it promises to be found through the whole Bible. All are proposed and offered under the name of the covenant at large, Isa. lx. 3. "Here and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you," which takes in all the promises.

2. In compend, in the offer of Christ himself the head of the covenant. Say not, How shall we take up the covenant that such a large and ample transaction, and withal the parts thereof scattered through the whole Bible! It is set before you abridged, *viz.* in Jesus Christ, to be taken up with one glance of your eye, Isa. xlix. 8. "I will give thee for a covenant of the people." The offer of Christ to you is the offer of the covenant; even as if a father who has made a beneficial bargain for his family, should offer to adopt you; that offer of himself for a father to you, would be the offer of that bargain. Now you have this offer of the covenant.

(1.) Under Christ's hand in his written word, which ye have in the scripture. A wise man will make no offer in writing to one, but what he minds to perform; his hand-writing will bind him, if it is accepted. And may not the offer of the covenant made you in writ-

ing, under the hand of the great God our Saviour, satisfy you in that point? Take heed then, lest when "God has written to you the great things of his law, ye count them as a strange thing," Hos. viii. 12.

(2.) By public proclamation in his name, by the voice of the ministers of the gospel, his criers appointed for that effect, Prov. ix. 3. If a prince proclaims an offer of indemnity to rebel-subjects, may not that satisfy them as to the reality of the offer! And should not this offer actually proclaimed to you sinners, in the gospel, by Christ's ambassadors, fully satisfy you as to the reality thereof? *Object.* Ministers are but fallible men. *Answ.* True; but their commission is infallible; and so far as they stick by that, which they do in offering the covenant to sinners, you have an infallible ground of faith in what they say. And as the crier's voice in a proclamation is in effect the king's, so is theirs in this case. Hence the apostle says, Heb. xii. 25. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refuseth him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." And says our Lord, Luke x. 16. "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me."

*Thirdly,* To whom it is offered? Christ's covenant of grace is offered to sinners of mankind indefinitely; that is, it is offered to them, and any of them whosoever without distinction. So the offer stands in the written word, and so the ministerial offer is to be made. This is clear from many testimonies, Prov. viii. 4. "Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men," Mark xvi. 15. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." 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 everlasting life." Isa. lv. 1. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." Rev. xxii. 17. "Whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." Therefore it is offered to you, and every one of you, and you are warranted to enter into it.

*Object.* But it may be I was not elected, and Christ did not represent me in that covenant. *Ans.* Your warrant to enter into Christ's covenant does not at all depend on your election, or non-election, but on the revealed will of God making a real offer of it to you, Deut. xxix. ult. and that you have, and that you believe it not, you disbelieve the gospel, Isa. liiii. 1. make God a liar, 1 John v. 10. and so must perish, Mark xvi. 16. Where do you find that ever a person's election was the ground of his believing or entering into the covenant?

It is not revealed to the elect to bring them to believe in Christ; but they first believe, and then by that means they see they were elected.

Moreover, the promises are proposed indefinitely. So was the first promise, Gen iii. 15. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." So are other promises of the covenant, Isa. lv. 3. "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12. "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Where is there any limitation or distinction of persons there?

*Object.* The conditional promises are indeed to all, but not the absolute ones. *Ans.* There is a connection of duty and privilege in some promises; but I know no promises properly conditional, but to Christ, who has fulfilled the conditions of them already; Rom. iv. 4, 5. "Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." The promises of the covenant, call them as ye will, are to all indefinitely; for *non est distinguendum ubi lex non distinguit*. Therefore the apostle lays it for a ground of faith to the murderers of the Lord of glory, Acts ii. 38. 39. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

*Inst.* If these promises be to all, then they must be fulfilled to all. *Ans.* That is false; according to the apostle's reasoning, Heb. iv. 1. "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." It follows indeed that that must be fulfilled to all who accept them

by believing; and so they shall, John iii. 26. But not to them who will not accept them, believe, nor apply them to themselves. No promise binds the promiser, if it is not accepted by the party. It is no imputation on God's faithfulness, that they are not fulfilled to unbelievers of them.

SECONDLY, The next thing is the sinner's entering into the covenant in a saving manner, so as to secure his gathering to Christ at the last day. This the text expresseth by "cutting off his covenant on a sacrifice," that is, by cutting off the sacrifice to enter into the covenant. And this being the sacrifice of Christ himself, can be no other but the laying the hand on the head of the sacrifice which then was to be cut off by divine justice. And this in gospel language is just believing on Jesus Christ sacrificed for us. So it is by believing on Christ crucified, that we are personally and savingly entered into the covenant.

It is agreeable to the nature of the covenant, that this should be the way of entering into it. For whereas the covenant is not made with us immediately, as parties, contractors for ourselves, in which case we would enter into it by promising to do something on our part as the condition thereof; but mediately through Jesus, who mediated therein as a representative, undertook the fulfilling the condition thereof, and had the promises thereof made to him; it is evident there can be no way of our personal entering into it in a saving manner, but by uniting with him, which the scripture determines to be by faith alone, Eph. iii. 17. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Accordingly it is determined, John x. 9. "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

Now this believing on Christ crucified or sacrificed for us, whereby we are entered into the covenant, formally lies in three things.

1. Believing the absolute sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ for the salvation of sinners, and, your salvation in particular, and the complete security of the covenant for that effect to all within the bond of it, Jer. iii. 22, 23. "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings; behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God. Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains; truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." The soul seeing the infinite ill that is in sin, as an offence and abomination to an infinite God, must see also the infinite dignity of the sacrifice of Christ, arising from the infinite dignity of his person, ere it can believe this; and must also see the immovable faithfulness of God, as the ground of believing the complete security of the covenant.

2. Believing that this covenant, in the condition thereof fulfilled

by Christ's sacrifice of himself, and the promises thereof made thereupon and bearing salvation, is offered really and truly to you in particular, by Jesus Christ, with the good will of his Father; so that it is lawful for you to come forward into it, and use it as your own. This is the report of the gospel, Isa. lv. 3, cited above, 1 John v. 11, "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." And it is demonstrated by the Spirit inwardly to the elect, whereby they see the door of the covenant open to them, Isa. liii. 1; and whoso believeth it not, can never enter into the covenant, but make God a liar by their unbelief of it.

3. Trusting on the sacrifice of Christ for your salvation from sin and wrath, upon the ground of God's faithfulness in the covenant, Acts xv. 11, "We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved." The soul renounceth all confidence in itself, or in any other, and relies wholly on the sacrifice of Christ, the fulfilled condition of the covenant, for the promises of the covenant being fulfilled to itself, because God has so engaged in his proclaimed covenant, and he cannot but be faithful in his covenant.

Thus the soul is formally entered into the covenant, receiving Christ in his priestly office, and so uniting with him.

And this necessarily brings along with it the covenanter's,

1. Receiving Christ as his Prophet, renouncing his own wisdom and the wisdom of the world, giving up himself to be guided by his word and Spirit, Matth. xvi. 24; Acts xiii. 22. Uniting with him, he must needs be our head for direction and guidance.

2. Receiving him as his King and Lord, renouncing the dominion of sin, the devil, and the world, and wholly giving up himself to be ruled by him as his head for government, Psal. ii. ult.; Isa. xxvi. 13.

And thus the soul entering into the covenant, taking Christ in all his offices, takes God in Christ for his God, and gives up himself to be one of his people for ever, consenting to the offer made, Heb. viii. 10, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Whoso thus enters into the covenant now, shall be joyfully gathered to him at the last day, as those that have entered into his covenant on a sacrifice.

THIRDLY, The last thing on this head is the profession and declaration of that entering into Christ's covenant, by some fit sign. This is a solemn declared entering into the covenant, in which one may be either sincere or hypocritical, Deut. xxix. 10, 12, "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God;—that thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day." And so it will not

of itself, if it be separate from the former, secure our gathering to him at the last day. Meanwhile it is a duty required of us now for God's honour, and requisite for our comfort, Deut. xxvi. 17. It is done three ways.

1. By words spoken, Psal. xvi. 2, either in prayer to God, wherein a person solemnly and in express words declares unto God in secret his acceptance of and entering into the covenant; or before men, where the thing being proposed by one, others signify their acquiescing by some fit gesture, or bowing of the head, Exod. iv. 30, 31.

2. By writing under their hand, declaring their accepting of the covenant, Isa. xlv. 5, "One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." This has been an useful practice of many in their life, and comfortable to their relations when they were gone, when they found their written acceptance of God's covenant of grace.

3. By instituted significant actions. Such is the partaking of the Lord's table. The very taking of the bread and wine at the Lord's table, and eating and drinking the same, being a solemn declaration before the world, angels, and men, that we enter into Christ's covenant. So in case it be separate from believing, though it cannot savingly enter us, we will be treated as covenant-breakers.

USE. To conclude, I beseech you by your gathering together to Christ at the last day, that you now gather to him in his covenant. For this cause I recommend to your consideration,

1. That this is a special gathering time, wherein the great trumpet of the gospel is sounding, and double sounding, a gathering; a time wherein the Lord is sending out the angels of the churches, ministers, to gather you. Let not the trumpet of the gospel sound in vain for you, nor the angels of the churches attempt in vain to gather you. They bring Christ's voice and the offer of the covenant to you.

2. As sure as the trumpet of the gospel is sounding now in your ears, and the angels of the churches are at work to gather you to Christ now, whose attempts you may render vain; so sure will the last trumpet sound in the same ears, and the angels of heaven gather them joyfully to Christ who now come unto him, to meet him in the air, while they will leave the rest on the earth.

3. What will you think to see at that day, others taken as within the bond of the covenant, and yourselves left as without it? With what pale faces, and trembling hearts, will ye look up to the Judge coming in the clouds of heaven, and to your neighbours, Christ's co-



venant people, carried by angels, and flying above you, away to meet the Lord in the air, with a shining glory on them?

*Lastly*, How will ye brook your last sight of them, when they having in the first place received their welcome to their kingdom from the Judge on the throne, ye shall get your sentence to depart from him into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; and so must turn your backs, and make away to your place, they being then the spectators of your begun misery, and your beloved world being set on fire?

Think on these things in time, and whatever ye are, or have been, know that you are allowed free access into the covenant; and therefore enter into it sincerely. Go alone by yourselves, think on your lost state by nature, examine yourselves as to your liking of the covenant, and if you find your heart pleased with it, go to your knees, and solemnly declare before God, you accepting and entering into it, taking Christ in all his offices, and God in Christ for your God and portion for ever. And so be persuaded, that on this your gathering to Christ in the bond of his covenant now, depends your being gathered to him in glory at the last day.

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THE SAINT'S LIFETIME IN THIS WORLD A NIGHT-TIME; THEIR EXPECTATION OF THE DAY'S BREAKING IN THE OTHER WORLD, AND THE SHADOWS FLEEING AWAY; AND THEIR GREAT CONCERN FOR CHRIST'S PRESENCE TILL THAT HAPPY SEASON COME.

The substance of several Sermons preached at Eitrick, in the year 1730.

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SONG ii. 17.

*Until the day break, and the shadows flee away; turn, my Beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bethel.*

In these words you have the breathing of a gracious soul, with respect to the time that may pass in this world, before one comes to enter into the other world; it is to have his countenance and the communications of his grace by the way, until they come there, where there will be nothing to intercept it. And it would be a good sign of meeting with a kindly reception from Christ into that world at last, that we were now saying from the heart, "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away; turn, my Beloved, and be