

enter into it, are like to a ship that comes, as it were, with up-sails, very near the port, and is unexpectedly blown back to the sea again; whereas the believer, who has his anchor cast on firm and sure ground within the vail, is enabled to endure tossing, being like a right ship, that is able to ride out the storm, and to stem the port: His treasure is in heaven, and there is a sure and indissoluble knot cast betwixt heaven, where his treasure is, and his heart. Now, from all this judge, what a mighty prejudice it is to be earthly-minded, and to slight this walk with God, and conversation in heaven: And who are they that dare offer or presume to come before God the righteous Judge of heaven and earth, in whose sight the very heavens are not pure, to abide his trial, who have been puddling all their days in the world, never once seriously and suitably minding a conversation in heaven? O let the consideration of eternal happiness on the one hand, and of eternal misery on the other, provoke you, and necessitate you all to study in good earnest to have your conversation in heaven. And ye believers in Christ, and children of light, walk in the light, suitably to your heavenly Father, and to the hope of your heavenly inheritance: O be more conversant in heaven, before ye come to it, and where ye shall be by and by for evermore.



## A Preparation-Sermon for the Communion;

On Isa. 55. 1, 2, 3. — *I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure Mercies of David.*

**I**T is hard to conceive or express, whether the things which the gospel offereth be the most large, or the terms on which they are offered be the most free. There is that, no doubt, in both together, which may make the beholder stay and wonder. Among many excellent offers of the gospel, that which is here, is one very full and free: Would to God we could look on it suitably. But, alas! we may fear, that we shall rather leave the sweet words with a vail cast over the beauty, splendor and lustre

of them, than lay them forth and unfold them as we ought, and as they call for ; we would therefore look to himself whose words they are, and beseech him to explain and make them out to us.

That this text speaks of the gospel, of the times of the gospel, and of gospel-mercies, we take for granted, and have good reason to do so, as on other accounts, so from *Acts* 13. 34. which clearly holds out to us, that these promises are not to be understood of temporal things : The 5th verse withal telling us, that the offer of this grace promised shall be made to the *nations*.

We may take up the words in these *four* ; or, there is here a gospel-cried fair or market set out in *four* things : 1. In the wares, *wine and milk, that which satisfies, and is good, and fatness*, v. 2. *Soul, life, and the sure mercies of David*, v. 3. These are the wares, which do all come to the same amount. If ye would know what that is, ye may consider *David* two ways, one is properly and personally, as he is the son of *Jesse* and king of *Israel* ; it is the covenant which was made with him, a main article whereof was, *that out of his loins there should One spring, who should sit upon his throne for ever* ; and thus the *sure mercies of David*, are Christ and his benefits : The other way that ye would look on *David* is, as he was a type of Christ the Antitype and principal Covenanter or confederating Party with God ; and so in effect it turns to the same thing, only this latter way is more clear : So then, we look on *David* here, as it is not unusual for the scriptures to hold him forth, *viz.* as a type of Jesus Christ ; and indeed the words following do abundantly clear it : For *David*, personally considered, was now long since dead and gone, and was not *the Witness* nor *the Leader of the people* ; therefore it must needs be Jesus Christ that here is meant, mainly and principally at least ; as is very clear, *Acts* 13. 34. Christ then being looked on as here understood, the *sure mercies of David* are the sure mercies covenanted and bargained (to speak so) to Christ before the world was ; and it plainly implies, that there was a covenant or bargain betwixt the Father and the Son about the elect before the beginning of the world, whereof, as to the benefits therein covenanted to the Mediator, the gos-  
pel

pel maketh an assignation to believers in time. 2. We have the chapman (to say so) or the merchant to whom the wares are offered ; it is he that *thirsts*, he that wants and would have : And if any serious poor souls should think, that they are not suitably sensible of their wants ; then, saith the Lord, *Let him that hath no money come ;* that is, plain dyvours (as we speak) or bankrupts that have nothing. 3. We have the term, on which all are offered to sale, and they indeed suit wondrously well with the merchant ; *Come* (saith the Lord) *buy without money, and without price, bear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you :* There is (to speak so with reverence) not a purse opened in, nor a penny paid for the assignation of this bargain ; tho' by Christ's satisfaction there was a very great, a very costly and dear price paid : When Christ came to buy and make a purchase of all these mercies for the elect, the market was very high, and the prices were up ; but, when believers come by the covenant of grace to receive them, the market is come down, and the prices are fallen wonderfully low ; that which stood him very dear, is to be had by them *gratis*, very freely, even for nothing : 'Tis good that Christ was at the market before us, he hath cheapened the prices admirably. And, lest any should think, that tho' there be no merit, yet something must be to mollify the Seller, and to commend the merchant to him ; it is said, *Let him come without money and without price ;* without money or money-worth ; he that hath no commending qualification, is bid come. 4. We have the proclamation of this market : As grace hath choice wares, and sets them out very freely to sale, so it keeps them not close shut up, but brings them forth to publick view, and to every one, *Ho, come to the waters :* It inviteth all to come (as it were) to the shore, as if some fleet were come in with rare and rich commodities, for which men were to pay nothing ; the proclamation is, *Come, and buy without money.* And, because grace will not easily take a nay say, there is *Oho*, an *oyes* prefixed ; *Ho, come and buy.* But, because there is dulness and slowness on our part, notwithstanding all this, there is an expostulation added, *v. 2. Wherefore spend ye your money for that which is not*

bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not ? The assignation of the bargain, and the offer of the wares, are again urged ; Come, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you. And, to let us know that this is sure, he subjoins, v. 4. *I have given him for a Witness and Leader to the people ;* that all who are sensible of their own inability to come, may be heartned to it, in hope of his help to enable them.

We shall only, in short, observe these two points of doctrine from the words ; The first whereof is, *That there is a most gracious and merciful transaction betwixt the Father and the Son, for the good and salvation of poor souls, even of all the elect, past before the world was.* There are sure mercies bargained to David ; for they are first his : This is clear from that part of the words, *Even the sure mercies of David.* The second is, *That all those mercies are put to sale in the gospel to (dyvour) bankrupt sinners, upon exceeding easy, low and condescending terms.*

The first doctrine is implied, viz. *That the covenant of redemption, wherein there were so many given to Christ, whose price he undertook to pay, is settled and established ;* according to that, *John 6. 39. This is the Father's will, that of all he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.* The second looks to the administration of this covenant, by the covenant of grace in the gospel ; according to v. 40. *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day :* So that, what is laid on the Son, v. 39. as the condition of this covenant, is in the 40 v. made offer of to believers by the gospel.

The first doctrine hath two branches ; The first whereof is, *That there was a transaction concerning the salvation of lost sinners, betwixt the Father and the Son, before the world was :* A covenant made with David, before it is or can be declared and preached in the gospel ; the terms whereof were resolved on, and all the articles of it agreed upon ; the Father proposing, and the Son accepting the bargain from eternity : As is clear, *Psal. 40. 6, 7.* where, when it is, as it were, consulted what shall be the price of redemption, it is not *sacrifices nor burnt-offerings ;* but, a *body*

body hast thou prepared me: Behold, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God, which is expressly applied to Christ, Heb. 10. 7. This is easily cleared from the consideration of the Parties contracting, and of the ends for which this covenant was undertaken, and of the effects that follow upon it.

The second branch of the doctrine is, *That this as to sinners is a most gracious and merciful, a most kind, loving and lovely transaction, exceedingly for the behoof and advantage of sinners.* There are four words in the text, which hold out this; 1. The nature of this covenant is *mercy*, all the articles of it savour strong of mercy to sinners; they are exempted, tho' Christ came under sore strokes: Whether we consider this covenant as exacting of Christ, or promising to Christ, it is always for sinners behoof. It is a covenant of *mercies*, of many various mercies: So, 2 Sam. 23. 5. it is said to be *an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure*; and, 2 Pet. 1. 4. it is said, *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness*: Mercies of justification, pardon of sin, sanctification in all its gradual advances, of fellowship with God, of grace and glory, even of every good thing, or good things of all sorts. 3. It is very gracious and merciful in respect of the excellent kind of these mercies; they are not common mercies, *but mercies of David*, bestowed upon his Anointed: Christ is furnished and filled with them, *that out of his fulness we may receive, and grace for grace*; even grace in a good measure. 4. They are stable mercies, not fleeting and quickly gone, not a glance of mercy which evanisheth; the covenant is everlasting, and the mercies are *the sure mercies of David*.

If we might particularly go through all the parts of this covenant, mercy will be found sweetly looking out in every article, clause and circumstance of it. Look, 1<sup>st</sup>, More generally, to the *whole* of it; 'tis all loving-kindnesses and mercies to sinners: Look to Christ's sufferings and death, O what mercy shines conspicuously there! To his qualifications for the discharge of all his offices; to his anointing with the Spirit without measure, there is great mercy there; to all the promises made to him, such as these, *He shall see his seed; the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand*;

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 hand ; by his knowledge shall be justify many ; he shall have  
 a willing people, eternally to reign with him, &c. Are not  
 these loud-speaking mercies ? The grace and wisdom  
 that is on the Father's side, and the grace and love that is  
 on the Son's side, are all for the behoof and good of sin-  
 ners ; 'tis all wonderfully behoofful : Is it not great mercy  
 to you believers, that you were minded in this bargain ?  
 The Lord Christ, as God, neither needed nor was capable  
 of any accession of grace ; he took the relation of our  
 Redeemer and Mediator, and as such, in the human na-  
 ture, was filled with grace and bowels of mercy and com-  
 passion, that grace and mercy might look through that re-  
 lation to us. 2dly, And more particularly, look to the  
 rise of it : It bred in God's own bosom (to speak so) *John*  
*3. 16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten*  
*Son, that whosoever should believe on him, might not perish, but*  
*have everlasting life :* And the Son laid down his life out  
 of pure love ; there was no necessity on him to do so, but  
 what he voluntarily came under ; there was no motive  
 from us to it, nor had he any adviser to it. 3dly, Look  
 to the manner of his undertaking : It was very readily,  
 cheerfully, and with ardent, vehemently ardent love ; so  
 that we may say of it, as of that chariot mentioned, *Cant.*  
*3. 10. It is made of and paved with love, for the daughters*  
*of Jerusalem.* The elect being under the curse, Christ  
 out of mere love undertakes to satisfy justice for them ;  
*Sacrifices* will not do it, *rivers of oil* will not do it, the  
*first-born of the body* will not do it, nor satisfy for the *sin*  
*of the soul ;* what will do it then ? Grace suggests, that  
 the Son shall become man, and do it ; and the Son saith,  
*Lo, I come :* O what love and mercy are here ! 4thly, Look  
 to the contrivance of it, and there ye will find much grace  
 and mercy ; that it is made with a *Mediator*, and with a  
*Mediator* that is a *Surety* ; that the stock is bestowed on  
 him, and put under his custody ; that the promises are  
 made to him, and the price exacted from himself. 5thly,  
 Look to the manner of executing it : What love, grace  
 and mercy shines forth in the Father, in taking vengeance  
 on his only begotten Son for us ? What love in the Son, in  
 yielding to take it on, and in his leaving his manifestative  
 glory for a time, that he might undergo the curse, and in  
 his

his doing all this with delight? 6thly, Look to the confirmations of this covenant: The oath of God on the Father's side, the death of the Mediator on the Son's side; and he hath freely bequeathed it as a confirmed testament and legacy to us believers, and hath instituted sacraments, to be seals thereof. O what mercy upon mercy! 7thly, Consider the effects of it: It runs in the sweet streams of grace, into the vast gulf and ocean of glory; wonderful mercy! 8thly, Look to the Parties confederating and covenanting: The Father, Son, and Spirit, all are here; and 'tis grace and mercy that they covenant. 2. Who are the Contrivers of it? Are not even they in their deep wisdom, and in their exuberant, superabundant and infinite grace and mercy? 3. What is the end of it? Even *the praise of the glory of his grace*, Eph. 1. 5. Grace bringing forth and manifestly shewing here its great masterpiece. 4. As infinite wisdom and love contrive, so infinite power executes it: And when all these concur in this bargain, when the infinitely wise God, all the Persons of the most glorious, dreadful and adorable Trinity (as it were) set themselves to set forth the glory of free grace, to make angels and saints behold and admire in it infinite wisdom and incomprehensible love; what a rare piece must it needs be! And this is the end of it, as is clear, Eph. 3. 9, 10. *That all men might see what is the fellowship of this mystery, which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.*

The second doctrine is, *That this good and gracious bargain, that is past betwixt the Father and the Son, which is wholly mercy, is brought to the market, and exposed to sale, on exceeding easy and condescending terms, and that to bankrupt sinners.* What proclaims the Lord here? even this; I will give you the *sure mercies of David*: That which I and my Son have carved out for the glory of grace, and for a proof of the riches of my bounty, I will make all over to you freely. Hence, Eph. 3. 8. it is called, *the unsearchable riches of Christ*; so that, whatever Christ hath as Mediator, it is holden forth here, *that out of his fulness*

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*we may receive grace for grace, a proportion of all the*  
*grace that is in him.*

In prosecuting this point, we shall shew, 1. More particularly, what this bargain is, that is put to the sale. 2. Who the merchant is. 3. What are the terms on which; and how it is made. 4. What is the manner how the gospel puts home this bargain, and lays Christ and his fulness forth upon *stands* in the market-place, as it were (to speak thus with reverence of this divine mystery) that there may be free access to whosoever will come and buy these rare and rich wares and commodities.

As for the *first*, That ye may know what the *bargain* is, and what is in your offer in this day of the gospel, take it in these few particulars; 1. All that ever any believer in the world had, is put to sale here: If any believer ever had fair privileges, sure it was *David*; if ever any had a merciful bargain, he had it. And such is this covenant; justification, adoption, peace with God, grace and glory; all these marrowy, material, massy and essential blessings that *David* had: It was not another Christ, nor another heaven, nor another covenant of grace that he had, but the same that is here. 2. Consider it further, and we will find it to be all that is made over to our Lord Jesus Christ: If he had a good bargain, the Spirit without measure, fulness of truth and grace, great glory and honour, being advanced to the right hand of the Father, the same is believers their bargain proportionally, a due and just proportion being kept betwixt the Head and the members, *John* 1. 16. *Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace*: It is not another, but the same grace that our Lord Jesus hath; yea, it is not another glory they are advanced to, no other table they are set down to, no other throne they are set on; but the same glory, table, and throne; It is to *behold his glory*, to *sit at his table*, to *sit with him on his throne*, *John* 17. 22, 24. *Luke* 22. 30. *Rev.* 3. 21. In a word, there are not two covenants of redemption betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator, one for himself, and another for the elect; but it is one and the same covenant for both, tho' with many vastly different respective considerations and circumstances. 3. Look to the wares and commodities (to speak so) that are exposed



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to sale in the gospel: They are not only the promises made to Christ, but Jesus Christ himself is brought forth to the market; he is the great Promise, and far beyond all the other promises made in and the graces given by the covenant; *I have given him* (saith the Lord, v. 4.) *for a Witness and Leader to the people.* He is the great Gift of God, *that Gift of gifts, being the Father's Fellow*: Nothing in heaven or earth, no person, man or angel, can by far, very far, infinitely far, equal him: To whom can you liken or compare him? *To us* (saith the prophet *Isaiab*, Chap. 9.) *a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*: This is *David's* most substantial massy mercy. He is called *Wonderful*, because there is no possibility for creatures adequately to conceive, or with exact suitableness to express what his name is, or what is comprehended within his name.

4. Look on Christ as Mediator, as God-Man, *Immanuel*, *God with us*: There is put to the market (to speak so with reverence) God himself; for thus the covenant is expounded and sum'd, as frequently elsewhere in the scripture, so particularly, *2 Cor. 6. 16. I will be their God*; and *Rev. 21. 17. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God*. Now, consider all these in a conjunction, viz. What all believers have; what Christ hath, and Christ himself; what God hath, and God himself: O what an incomprehensibly rich and rare, great and glorious bargain is this! And yet all is by the gospel brought forth, laid before the hearers of it, and made offer of to them, on most easy and wonderfully condescending terms. May we briefly and in a few words sum up what is in it? (1.) All things that may make up believers their peace with God, and remove the quarrel. (2.) All things pertaining to, or needful for life and goldiness; as it is, *2 Pet. 1. 4.* (3.) All things that belong to the comfort and consolation of believers, even *strong consolation*, as it is called, *Heb. 6. 18.* There is no want so great, but there is a supply for it here; no case so sad, but there is a comfort for it here; there is not any thing that looks like a crack or uncertainty, but there is sufficient security for it here, in

in this covenant, (in this most full and wonderfully well-ordered covenant in all things and very sure) to all who are fled to Christ for refuge. (4.) There is in it what is needful and requisite to full satisfaction, to the place, delight, joy and compleat happiness of the persons that cordially close with it: So that a soul can crave no more, nor wish for more; it is even *all their desire*, as David saith of it, 2 Sam. 23. 5. *'Tis mensura voti*, nay, *ultra mensuram voti*; it never entred into man's heart to conceive, much less to desire it. It makes the soul say, as it is, Psal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? there is none on earth whom I desire besides thee.* It hath all things in it; as it is, Rev. 21. 7. *He that overcometh shall inherit all things*: For if God and Christ, grace and mercy be in it, is there any thing amissing? or can there possibly be any thing wanting in it? May I not very confidently ask you, Is it not a good bargain? If the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, grace, heaven and glory be a good bargain; this is then most certainly a good bargain, a wonderfully good, matchless, and none-such bargain: And is not this gospel, whereby all these great things are brought to the market, good news? Take heed then that ye receive not this grace in vain, that these wares, worthy of all possible intertainment and welcome, stand not before you unbought: I say again, take heed that ye receive not all this grace in vain, that these precious and costly wares go not from the market unbought up.

*Secondly*, Who are the chapmen or merchants? You would have readily thought that such wares would have required mighty monarchs, great statesmen, learned philosophers, or holy kings, prophets, apostles and great men; and yet the proclamation is (for grace cometh ordinarily in the lower way) *Ho, every one that thirsts, and he that hath no money*: These are the merchants who are meet for this rich ware. Are there any that want what may make them happy, and would fain have? are there any that have their peace to make with God? any that have not their interest clear and made sure? any that are wrestling with a body of death, and groaning under it? any that fain would have sin pardoned and subdued? any that would have grace, heaven and glory, and have nothing

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 to give for all these or any of them, and who have spent many years labour in vain and to no purpose, to come by them? 'Tis to you, even to you, that all these rich wares and rare commodities are in a special manner offered in this cried-fair of grace. And, to clear this a little, I suppose there are none of you but you are some way under one of these *three*, tho' the external call and offer comes indifferently to you all: Ye are either, 1. Senseless and secure; and to you the gospel says, *How long, ye fools, will ye love simplicity?* and, *How long will ye sleep, O sluggards?* As there is a challenge and regret here, so there is a conditional offer made to you, in as far as it is here implied, that the offer is made to them *who have no bread*, and have been *bestowing their labour on that which satisfies not*; glutting themselves with the world, or wrapping themselves up in the groundless conceit of their own righteousness: To such it saith, *How long will ye spend your labour for that which is not bread?* Or, 2. Ye are some way affected with sin, lying under convictions, stinged, some way burnt up, and consumed with the apprehensions of the wrath and terrors of God: The word which this offer hath to such, is the very first in the proclamation, *Ho, every one that thirsts, come.* And as we expostulated with the first sort, viz. senseless, secure, unconcerned, proud and conceity standers-aloo, so we bid you earnestly come: And if ye shall say, your conviction hath no edge with it, it is not deep enough; we answer, *Let him that hath no money, come*: If ye have quite given over all hope of your prayers, and other performances, as to making your peace with God by them, and have in that respect utterly renounced your own righteousness, and so *have no money, no price*; tho' ye be not pinched and pricked at the heart under the sense of sin and deserved wrath, as ye would; yet come, O come. Or, 3. Ye are such as have taken with your sin and lost state, and are in some measure, tho' but faintly (at least to your own apprehension) stirring towards Christ, and would fain be at him: Up; for to you the offer most kindly says, *Hear, and your souls shall live; eat, and be satisfied.* The wares are not brought forth and laid before you, that ye should only (to say so) block or cheapen, and ask the price; but also, and mainly, that ye should buy

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buy, eat and feed on them: The gospel doth not, as it were, so much offer to make with you a bargain, as it offers you the benefit of a bargain already made, *viz.* with Christ. And thus these *three* take in every person that wants, and is not (it may be) so sensible of it, and every one that wants and would have.

For the *third*, *viz.* the *terms* on which the closing of the bargain depends: They are holden forth in four words in the text, with two qualifications, which make up the terms. The first word is, *Come*; and that supposeth peoples leaving of their present standing-place and posture, and their moving towards the market-place where the rich ware is exposed to sale. The second word is, *Buy*; which imports a price put on the market-ware, a valuing of it, and a sort of treating to make it ours. The third word is, *Hearken, incline the ear*, to wit, to God, and to his word, to believe and receive it, *and your souls shall live*. And the fourth word is, *I will make an everlasting covenant with you*; which implies an engagement by covenant to the Lord, after hearing and inclining the ear to his word, a striking of hands, and closing with the bargain. Add to these the qualifications, *viz.* Coming, buying, striking hands (as it were) and closing the bargain, and that without offering *money or price*, money or money-worth, without offering or giving any thing less or more in compensation.

*Fourthly*, Let us see how the gospel puts all this to the market; so that, where it comes, those that are called must either close the bargain, or it will be their own fault. 1. It proclaims the fair (as it were) to all round about, that there are such wares to be had, and at such a price; the rarest and richest wares and commodities, and at the cheapest rates that ever the world heard tell of. 2. It doth not only proclaim, but invite, and double the invitation to come. 3. It not only invites, but puts the invitation so home, that people must either make the price (to say so, tho' it may be soon made, there being in effect no price) and buy, or refuse the bargain: If they will not be at the pains to come in to the shop, as it were, it brings forth the wares and lays them down in the market-place, and (as it were) one *stands* in the street, and cries, *Come, buy, come and enter the covenant freely*: And this it doth

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by a frank offer, by earnest and perswasive inviting, and  
by the easy conditions that it proposeth the bargain on.  
It stands in a manner with arms stretched out, ready to  
receive all comers very freely, whatever their poverty,  
wants and necessities be; it craves no more but that we  
willingly take what he offers to put in our hand: *The  
righteousness of faith saith not, Who shall ascend to heaven?  
or who shall descend to the depth?* There is nothing now to be  
suffered, nor to be purchased by any more suffering; *But  
the word is near thee, in thy heart, and in thy mouth:* It lays  
the ware at our very door (as it were) so that we have no  
more to do, but to stoop down and take it up; but heartily  
to say the word, and it is a bargain.

Now, for *application*: May we not resume, and say,  
that there is a good and excellent bargain to be had in the  
gospel, and on very good and easy terms? 'Tis a market-  
day, and indeed it were a pity that such wares should be  
brought to the market, and that few or none should buy;  
that Christ should (to speak so) open his pack, and sell no  
wares. Therefore let me say a few words to you for per-  
swading you readily and presently to embrace the offer of  
this richest bargain. And, in the 1<sup>st</sup> place, We pray you  
believe this truth: Alas! there is little or no faith given  
to it; souls come straitned, not thoroughly believing that  
God is putting Christ, grace and glory, heaven and hap-  
piness and all to sale: These are *days of the Son of man*, in  
a special manner, wherein Christ's fleet (to speak so with  
reverence) is come home, the shops are now well furnished  
with rich commodities, all his *stands* are set out and full of  
grace. 2<sup>dly</sup>, Wonder that God hath condescended to make  
offer of such a bargain to us; that that which cost Christ  
so very dear, is offered so exceeding cheap to us. 3<sup>dly</sup>,  
We exhort and obtest you, that, while these choicest wares  
are set to sale, ye receive not this offer in vain. Are there  
any merchants here for such wares? Here is the market,  
the wares are good and sufficient, and the terms very easy,  
and the price wondrously low, even so low, that it comes  
to *no money, no price*: Can ye possibly wish a better bar-  
gain, or more easy terms? Are there any chapmen that  
*want money*, any that are *thirsty*, then come; yea, be the  
frame and disposition of your heart what it may be, if  
you

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you would have it righted, come; there is here that which will make you rich and happy here and hereafter. Are there none of you that will seriously ask, what the Lord will say, what Christ will take (as it were) for these wares, or what are his terms, with a sincere resolution to take them on these very terms? Will ye not be prevailed with to make experimental trial, what it is to have Christ *made of God to you wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*? Are there none among you all that have sins to be pardoned, wants to be supplied, strong and stirring corruptions to be subdued and mortified? Is it possible that so many are come hither for the fashion? Are there none living at distance from God, nor under his curse really or to their own apprehension, that would have the distance and curse removed? Are there no weak graces to be strengthened? If there be any such merchants, that have a mind and heart to the wares; I say to them from the Lord, as his herald, *Ho, every one that thirsts, and be that hath no money, come.* This is the scope of the gospel, and the preparation for Christ, and also for the communion, that it calleth for from poor souls, that would fain close the bargain, and set their seal to it, and would have God's seal set to it to-morrow, by taking the sacrament. Speak, what say ye? Pose and put your hearts to it, to declare if they be indeed willing and well content to make and hold the bargain on his own terms; if they be so, (as there is all the reason in the world they should) then, I say, ye have a good bargain: I say again, Speak, pose your hearts, if ye will make and hold the bargain on these terms or not.

There are these things that do singularly commend this bargain. (1.) The excellency of it. Ye will go through all the markets in the world, ere ye get such rich mercies, of so rare a kind, so sure and so cheap: Ye would, be-like, think much to have so much land, gold or money; but what are those to this bargain? Those will vanish and turn to ashes, when this will endure and abide with you for ever: What are ye doing? who are like so many horse-leeches, sucking up, and glutting yourselves with the world, or living securely and carelessly, or patching up your own righteousness; is there any of those bargains like

like this? We appeal to your own consciences, and nothing doubt but they will one day bear witness against you, that ye heard of such a bargain and had it in your offer, and yet wilfully refused to accept of it. (2.) Is there any bargain more suitable for you who have your peace to make with God, for you who have corruption lively in you, than to have a King, Captain and Conqueror to bring it down, and to trample on it, after he hath as a Priest reconciled you to God? Is there any more suitable bargain for you who have your own pinches and straits, and your comforts at a very low ebb, for you who have wants which cannot be numbred, and who cannot of yourselves command one stayed spiritual thought? If ye were perfectly righteous, and fairly landed in eternity, ye might possibly think the less of it (tho' even glorified saints put a great value on it, and glorious angels admire it) but that sinners dwelling on earth in cottages of clay, whose habitation is in the dust, should think little of it, 'tis strange, and even stupendious: Is there, or can there be a more suitable bargain for you that want money? Is it not exactly calculated for your case, and shapen out for you, so as in every thing it may meet with your wants, difficulties and objections? (3.) Are not the terms most reasonable? No great thing is sought for from you; if a lordship or a kingdom were offered to a poor man for a peny, that hath no money at all, it would signify nothing at all to him; but, behold, here peace and pardon, grace and glory, even all good things are offered to you freely. (4.) Is not your necessity such, that ye cannot be well without it? For, tho' ye should spend your money, and bestow much labour, and even wear out your very eyes with weeping, and your hearts with grief and sorrow, if ye take not this course, all will only have this motto written thereon, *Vanity of vanities, all is but vanity and vexation of spirit*: When ye come to feed on it, ye will find it to be but wind. If peace with God, if God and Christ, if grace and glory be necessary, then this bargain is necessary; but if ye will continue lazy, indifferent, lukewarm and unconcerned in the matter, ye shall find that ye have sitten in your own light greatly, and suffered the opportunity of the market to slip,

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 slip, which ye will never possibly recover : And therefore, for the Lord's sake, let neither legal weeping, carnal fear or sorrow, hypocrisy, self-conceit, nor mistakes of Christ and of free grace, divert you from making this bargain ; but seek grace, come over these and all other obstructions, and, while the market lasts, *Come and buy without money and without price.* It is hard to know how long your day shall last : There are many country-sides and cities, in the streets whereof these packs (to say so) of rich wares were opened up, laid forth and exposed to sale, that now for many years, yea for several ages, have not heard of them, nor the gospel preached ; What (at least in purity and power) is now in *Jerusalem*, and in the seven famous Churches of *Asia*, but the *voice of terror*, and, as it were, the screaming of owls ? And, seeing *God is not slack, as men count slackness* ; what know ye, when the kingdom of God may be taken from you, and given to others ; and when he will cry (to speak so) Pack and go ? Every day is not a market-day, every Lord's day is not a communion day : Many congregations in *Ireland* and elsewhere have sadly found this, wherein it hath come to pass, that great scarcity and want are come where there was once great plenty. And, to press this a little further, we may, in the 1<sup>st</sup> place, Ask, Whereat it sticks and halts ? I tell you, that there either must be a bargain, or it must (and will sometime) be known where the blame lies : Were it but the bare reading of these very words, they bring the invitation and offer to you ; and will ye dare to cast at the wares, or the terms on which they are offered ? Grace brings a good bargain to you, and stoops very low with it. For, 1. It will not stand with you on by-gones, if now you deal honestly ; *The sure mercies of David* will cover and blot out those. And if any of you think that ye have much debt on your head, as who hath not ? it will not upbraid you ; *The iniquity of Jacob shall be sought for, and shall not be found* : There shall be, as it were, scores drawn through them, your accounts shall be all dashed out by free grace's pen. This is a cried fair and proclaimed market of free grace, from which no honest comer shall be secluded, thrust back or sent away empty ; for here an empty purse needs not make a blate or bashful



ful merchant. 2. Grace stands not precisely on fore-preparations (where souls honestly and sincerely come) as that ye have not been so and so humbled, and have not such and such previous qualifications, as ye would be at: Nay, someway it excludes these, as offering to bring money and some price, which would quite spoil the nature of the market of free grace; nay yet, I say further, if it were possible that a soul would come without sense of sin, grace would embrace it; sense of sin being no condition of the covenant, but a physical (so speak so) qualification of the covenanter, and grace is free to them that want it. And let it be supposed to be in a person void of grace, and still in unrenewed black nature, 'tis there but a splendid sin, as those shadows of moral virtues in all merely natural men are; grace can, at the instant of coming, create qualifications. There could readily be no qualifications in *Zaccheus* when he was on the tree; yet Christ tells him, *Salvation this day is come to thy house*. 3. Grace stands not on the want of any effect of faith, where it calls to believing; It will not stand on darkness of interest, nor on want of progress in sanctification, nor on things being out of order; for, where it comes, it puts things in order. It will be no relevant exception for a person that hath not closed with the bargain, and hath not embraced Christ, to say, *Alas! I have no love to God, to the godly, and to his interest*: Because grace can say, Thou hast not closed with Christ, and so canst not have the effect before the cause. Come and close, and these and other effects shall follow. 4. It stands not on degrees of faith, nor on the strength, firmness and height of it; it will take little, even a look, or a glance of the soul's eye that sees not clearly; according to that memorable word, *Psal. 34. They looked to him, and were lightened*: The more that souls look to Christ, their eye grows the clearer. It will take an honestly willing mind and hearty consent, tho' the ability be very little; a receiving, or a sincere minding at receiving of the offer; *Him that cometh*, or is really a-coming, tho' he be not yet come, at least as he thinks, but is, with the prodigal, still (as he apprehends) afar off, *will Christ and grace in no case cast out*; for no sooner doth spiritual life stir in faith's weakest acting and moving

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 moving towards Christ, but grace meets it. 5. It stands on no concomitants. Tho' there should be many idols and lusts raging in the person, if there be a real consenting by faith to the bargain, with a sincere resolution to abandon all these, grace will not send him away empty: Or, if the man say, *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief*; that is a done bargain: Nay, were it to come with many spiritual issues and sores running, and with fear to presume, and (as it were) to steal a hint of Christ, not to speak a word to him, but to touch him; he will not be angry nor upbraid, but will say, *Go in peace, thy faith hath made thee whole*. We may ask yet further, to the recommendation of grace, (1.) Was there ever a merchant that came to the market with that purpose, to buy on its own terms, that went away empty and without wares? If all the congregation of the first-born were put to it, they would be ready to bear witness, that grace never stood with them on any qualification in them, when they came honestly. (2.) I would ask, Was there ever any that adventured honestly on it, whom it misgave; that hazarded (to speak so) and yet fell by the way; or that ever repented themselves that they hazarded and entrusted their souls to this bargain? (3.) Let me ask, Was there ever any that took hold on and gripped it, in whose hand it brake? The bargain and covenant is *everlasting*, the mercies are *sure mercies*; once sure, and always sure; once rich, and for ever so: It was and is a *covenant well ordered in all things and sure*; Blessed for ever be the Contriver and Surety thereof. Some may possibly think, that this doctrine looks to be somewhat lax or loose: But sure grace is not lax; for, as we may say of God's power, *Is any thing too hard for him?* so we may say of his grace, *Is any thing too free for it?* Only abuse not grace, prostitute it not, turn not your back on it, neither turn it into wantonness: If ye look on grace, and cheapen only, and do not buy; or if ye bid for one piece of it only, and not for all; wo unto you, that ever it was offered unto you. What would ye be at? Is it holiness, heaven and happiness, and that freely? They are here: Is it Christ, and Christ freely, and all that is his? He is here in your offer: What means then this whining (to speak so) and standing so much on terms,

as if the way of grace were a hard, untoward, unpassable way, and as if God were a hard Master? Nay, 'tis a good, soft, sweet, easy way, and plain to them that walk in it; and God the best Master that ever rich or poor served, and the easiest to serve, and the best to please, where there is sincerity and willingness to live honestly: He pities and spares all upright-hearted servants, *as a father pitieth his children, and a man spareth his son that serveth him*; and, if any think they find it otherwise, 'tis most certainly their own fault. Therefore, I beseech you, study, 1. To be in case to take grace's wares home with you, repentance, faith, hope, love, mortification, meekness, patience, &c. These things are in the covenant betwixt Christ and you, and set to sale in the market. 2. Be making ready, for the market is ready: Many shops (as it were) are opened, and much precious ware laid out; bring empty vessels, and not a few, that ye may carry them away full, that ye may take a rich loading home with you. Tho' you take up never so much of this ware, it will never be missed nor grow the less. And indeed it is a part, and a considerable part of our preparation for the communion, to be rooted in the faith of these great things, and to get our affections stretched, dilated and widened to receive them; to get *the everlasting doors cast up, that the King of Glory may come in*; that, when he calls for entry, the doors may be opened at the very first knock. 3. If so be your desires be stirred up, and your appetites quickened in any measure, there is nothing that will more effectually and powerfully stir them up, provoke and sharpen them, than grace believingly looked to, and improved. Longing to see his power and glory, as they have been seen by his people in the sanctuary, would notably make way for him. Pleading and working with your own hearts alone, will not do the business, but grace employed and made use of will do it effectually and to purpose; and, the more grace you draw forth out of Christ's fulness, and drink, so much the better: It will be (to speak so) no forestalling of the market; neither will the sweet savour of the perfume be the weaker or less to-morrow, that ye break the box of this precious ointment to-night. Now, God himself, who proclaims the fair, sets the market, and exposeth the

rich ware to sale, give you wisdom to prove wise merchants, to your eternal advantage and upmaking.



## A Sermon preached after the Communion,

On Psal. 85. 8. *He will speak peace to his people, and to his saints: But let them not turn again to folly.*

**I**T is hard to know, in spiritual exercises, whether it be more difficult to attain some good frame, or to keep and maintain it when it is attained; whether more seriousness is required for making peace with God, or for keeping of it when made; whether more diligence should be in preparing for a communion, or more watchfulness after it: Sure, both are required; and it was our blessed Lord's word, *Matth. 26. 41. after the first celebration of this his supper, Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.* Here that saying holds eminently, *Non minor est virtus, quam quærere, parva tueri*: No less virtue and valour is requisite to maintain, than to make a purchase or conquest.

In the words (to leave the introduction and scope) there are, 1. A great mercy promised from the Lord to his people, *viz. He will speak peace to them.* 2. A special caveat and advertisement given them, pointing at their hazard, *But let them not turn again to folly*: That is, let not his people and saints, to whom he hath spoken peace, return to sin; let them beware of bounding and dallying with God's mercy, and of turning his grace into wantonness, of cooling in their affections to him, of slipping back to their old way, and of embracing their old lovers and idols; for that is folly, even *in folio*, to speak so.

We shall first propose six observations from the words, and then apply them. First then, Observe, *That sin against God is an exceeding great folly; 'tis the foolishest and maddest thing in the world*: Therefore it is here called *folly*, to wit, in an eminent way and degree. 'Tis that which doth most, yea, that which doth in effect only mar and interrupt saints peace. That which, *v. 2.* is called *iniquity*,