

God gave up to vile affections, and to all sorts of most abominable filthiness, because, though they knew that such things ought not to have been done, yet they not only did, but took pleasure in them that did them: I leave it, with all the seriousness I can win to, on you, and take instruments of witness in your consciences, that ye have had great offers, and have made fair mints, and come under, at least, seeming engagements: If ye have not done so, declare so much; but, since ye all profess that ye have engaged, and some have really engaged, *not to turn again to folly*; walk suitably to your engagements, as ye would not have your consciences condemning you, and God who is greater than your consciences to condemn you. Many, I fear, have sleeping consciences, and that will not now speak to them; but the conscience of every one will speak at length, and not keep silence. We shall now say no more, but pray that this word may be blessed of God to you.



These Five following Sermons were all preached about the Time of the Communion; the first Four within a very few Days before it, as it gradually approached; the Fifth after it,

On Jeremiah 50. v. 4, 5.

In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: They shall go, and seek the Lord their God.

Verse 5. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.

S E R M O N I.

THE repairing and making up of a breach betwixt God and a people, is a matter of greatest moment and concern; and, when men are serious in it, *O* how uptaking is it to them! Which is holden out to the life

lite in these words, that lay forth before us very clearly the frame and carriage of a people, which formerly have dealt loosely and deceitfully in the matter of their covenant with God, when they come through his grace to be serious and in good earnest in the upmaking of it again.

As for the people spoken of here, they are *Israel* and *Judah*, the Lord's own covenanted people, who had dealt falsely and foully in the covenant, and had thereby procured sad strokes to themselves, and had divided and separated themselves from God, and one of them from another; which division and separation continued lamentably long. They are both here represented as coming home together, seriously endeavouring to amend and make up the breach betwixt God and them, and among themselves.

As for the time that this relates to (*In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord*) it looks literally, and according to the cohesion, to *Babylon's* destruction, and the Lord's bringing down the *Babylonish* monarchy by the *Persian* king *Cyrus*; in which time the people of God had some liberty to return to their own land: Yet, considering the great scope of the words, and that this liberty of the *Jews* is in a great part fulfilled in Christ, and that the union spoken of here is such as hath in it the gathering together of all the tribes; and withal, that the covenant which they enter into with the Lord Christ, is such as *shall never be forgotten*: We must extend the words to their *ingrafting again into their own olive*; when all *Israel* shall be saved, and they shall be grafted into their own root and stock from off which they were broken. As for the scope, 'tis partly to encourage the *Jews*; this being not only a promise of their return, but also (and mainly) of their repentance, and of their friendship and reconciliation with God and with one another. *In those days*, they that had been far from him, and busy vexing one another, *shall come, and come together*: Their work and business, in coming, is to *seek the Lord*; and the manner of it is *going and weeping*, praying and repenting: And, altho' the way be somewhat dark, and not so discernible to them; yet they go on, *asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward*: They ask how they may come to him, worship God again aright

aright, and perform the duties of a people in church'd to, and in covenant with him; and (as it were) from one post or town to another, they ask the way, and get direction from one day to another, and from one duty to another: And their design in all is, *Come, say they on the matter, we were once in covenant with God and with one another, but we have been unfaithful in both; now let us amend and make up the breach in both: Let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten: Let us renew our covenant with God, and let it be done firmly and surely, so as it may not be broken again.* This looks and hath respect to *Jer. 31. 31, &c. and 32. 39, 40.* where the Lord promiseth to *make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:* Cited by the apostle, *Heb. 8.* and 'tis called, *Chap. 32. an everlasting covenant:* Which is not so much to be understood of mere external covenanting, as of saving sharing in, and partaking of Christ's righteousness for the pardon of sin; and of their engaging to God, in his own strength, to be forthcoming in the fruits of saving grace and holiness in their practice. This is, in sum, the way and course which they take; and is a short directory for what should be a people's carriage, when they would make up the breach of a broken covenant with God.

As for the particular scope of this place, as it relateth to *Israel and Judah* their returning together, we shall not insist in it: Yet from these words we may see, *First,* That *there is good ground for us to expect the Lord's bringing back his scattered people the Jews, and their ingrafting again into their own Olive.* The same God that perswaded *Japhet* to dwell in the tents of *Shem*, can perswade *Shem* to dwell in the tents of *Japhet*. As they minded us *Gentiles*, as a little sister, and were holily solicitous what they might do for us, we ought in gratitude to mind them as the elder sister, that they may turn again to the Lord; who hath given us his faithful word for it, which cannot fail, but must be fulfilled.

Secondly, We see, That *heart-melting towards God, and seriousness to make up the breach of a broken covenant betwixt a people and him, conduce naturally to make the hearts of those that have been divided and set at variance from one another,*

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in much warmth of love to unite and sweetly to join together. 'Tis from this, that *Israel and Judah become one stick in the Lord's hand, Ezek. 37.* This makes them as melted metal to run close together, as it were, into one lump: Tho' it was a long-continued schism, and had much bitterness attending it; yet, when their hearts are touched with a sense of sin and of a broken covenant, their former differences and animosities vanish. Softness of heart, in the sense of bygone sin, would silence many things among us, that all disputings, writings and printings will not be able to do. Pray for this to the land, as the most effectual mean and way of curing our divisions, and of uniting us in the Lord: It joins *Judah and Israel* together, whose breach was much greater, and of far longer continuance than ours.

Thirdly, We see here, That a people's joining and running together in serious seeking of the Lord, is very commendable and lovely, and a good token and evidence to them of their turning to God, and of God's accepting of them: Even as bitterness and division is exceeding displeasing to God, and prejudicial to themselves, and to the work of grace in them. This is an happy-like, hopeful and promising day of repentance and turning to God, that bodeeth much, unspeakably much good to a land and people.

But we come to consider the words as they do direct unto, and chalk out the way for a people returning to make up a broken covenant with God, which is the scope. And we may take it up in these three, 1. As it respects the frame of their hearts; And O what a tender, humble, warm and mournful frame are they represented to be in! *They shall come, and go together, exciting one another, going and weeping, with their faces towards Zion.* 2. As it respects and holds forth the great design they have, and that is, to renew and make sure the covenant betwixt God and them: Tho' it was now broken, and they want not challenges for it; yet they do not say, We will never enter in it again, because we brake it the last time we made it; but, *Come (say they) let us make it the more firm and stable.* 3. As it respects and holds out their posture, and the way which they take in pursuing this design: There is a going and weeping, a praying to, and

and seeking of the Lord; in a word, they seek and endeavour to renew their covenant with God, seriously, diligently and humbly: And thus they pursue their design.

First then, If we look to their frame, we will find implied in it, 1. A guilty condition. 2. A challenging and convinced condition. 3. A repenting condition; they are kindly affected with the wrongs done to God, and desire and use means to have them righted.

We shall name two or three general doctrines from this first consideration of the word, tho' in effect it will fall in with the last. The *first* whereof is this, *That God's covenanted people may deal foully and falsely in his covenant:* For their coming to renew the covenant, supposeth that they had broken it; and 'tis also implied in their mourning and weeping, and saying, *Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten.* This needs no further proof than the history of God's people their dealing with him; which holds out clearly and convincingly the strong propension and bent of heart that is naturally in them to backslide, and like a deceitful bow to turn aside and to prove unstedfast in his covenant.

Secondly, There is here implied a distance betwixt God and them, following on the breach of covenant: Their going to seek the Lord, saith, that he is a-seeking; this is very sad, yet most true, *That sin, and unfaithful dealing in God's covenant, will make a separation betwixt him and a people in covenant with him.* Thus 'tis said, *Isa. 59. 1. The Lord's hand is not shortned that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot bear; but your iniquities have separated betwixt you and your God.* 'Tis very like, that many believe not this, that sin hath such influence in making separation betwixt God and sinners; but in that day, when an eternal separation shall be made betwixt God and them, it will be undeniably made known and manifest, when many of you, that now throng to the ordinances, will, if grace prevent not, meet with that sentence (O dreadful sentence!) *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity; I never knew you.*

Thirdly, There is here their sensibleness of both these, 1. That they had broken covenant. 2. That God had separated

separated himself and withdrawn his presence from them for their breach of covenant. Tho' sin be very evil, and the want of God's presence very sad; yet they had this good, that they were kindly sensible of both: Whence we may observe, *That conviction of bygone wrongs done to God, and kindly resenting of his absence, are the first rises and springs of repentance and turning to God;* or, they are *the first steps of conversion.* What is it, I pray, that all this business and stir among this people flows from? Here it is, *First,* They apprehend a quarrel betwixt God and them; and, *Next,* They apprehend a distance: And this puts them seriously to mind turning to God with weeping and supplications, and to renew their covenant, for recovering of God's presence: This same is the Spirit's method, *John 16. I will* (saith the Lord Christ) *send the Spirit;* and the first thing he doth is this, *He convinceth the world of sin:* So *Acts 2. 37.* the first thing that ever (to speak so) turned the chase in *Peter's* hearers was, that *they were pricked in their hearts* for sin; and this did put them to an advisement, and to cry out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* And indeed there is a necessity of this, considering the Lord's way of administering his grace: For, so long as persons are not convinced of their sin, they are not apprehensive of a quarrel; but conviction of sin makes them apprehensive of it, and to think, that they would be obliged to any who would relieve them out of that sad condition: And, while God is absent and not missed, they sleep on; and tho' he be absent, yet they know it not, as *Samson* knew not that God had left him, till he went out to *shake himself;* But, when God's departure becometh sensible, it will make a wicked *Saul* to howl, and will make a gracious tender soul to take the alarm hot; as we see, *Cant. 3. 5.* where the Bride, missing Christ, is put to seeking; and, still missing him, her heart is kept fluttering and on wing in pursuing after his presence, till she recover and find it.

As the *Use* of the point, we would *exhort* you to let this truth sink in your hearts: There is a necessity of the conviction of these *Two*, 1. Of the wrongs done to God, 2. Of God's absence, ere ye can be serious in the exercise of repentance and turning to God. What is the cause that

that many ly still in deep security with much debt upon their score, and ly down and rise up without God's company? Even this, that they never had it, and were never troubled for the want of it; they were never convinced and made sensible of their sin. Now, this conviction is not, simply to know that we have sin, as many take it to be, who think it enough that they know that they are sinners; but 'tis such a conviction, as arrests the sinner before God, and puts him to answer for his sin: 'Tis like an officer coming with an order to put a man in prison for debt; he may go confidently and stoutly enough up and down the street, under the knowledge of his debt; but, when he is arrested for it by the officer, it affects him, and toucheth him in the quick: So is it with a soul thoroughly convinced of sin; men may know that they are sinners, but the conscience for a time may not much trouble them, and they may take on more to a long day, and shift challenges and convictions; but, when the conscience awaketh, and the law arresteth them, the matter sinks deeper on them. Would ye then know what is a suitable frame for fasting and communicating? We would commend this to you, even to study a thoroughness of the conviction of sin, and to be sensible of the distance that is betwixt God and you, and narrowly to observe whether he be present or absent. 'Tis very sad, and much to be lamented, that many, who are ignorant of the way of God, should be so strongly perswaded of the goodness of their condition, that there is no access for any word so much as once to bear upon them: If we should ask many of you, Whether are ye thoroughly convinced of your wrongs done to God, and sensible of the distance betwixt him and you? Ye would readily answer, That ye never wanted nor missed him; he hath been always your God, and ye have been always his people: Not from any strength of faith, but from ignorance, stupidity and carnal presumption. Yea, many of you have not so much knowledge as to cover your ignorance and hypocrisy; neither can any gain the least ground of you, to make you sensible that your faith and communion with God are unsound and delusory, because they have not had a right rise from conviction of sin and of distance from God, putting you on to repentance and

covenanting with him. But, because several persons will be ready to think and say, that they have convictions of sin; as indeed there is much ground and reason for them: I shall point at some convictions, for which there is just ground, and whereby ye may know if your convictions have been thorow and sound; most whereof, if not all of them, may be gathered from the words. 1. There is a conviction of the want of faith: The holy Spirit's first work, *John 16. 9.* is to *convince the world of sin, because they believe not on him.* Were ye ever convinced of your unbelief? Many will be convinced of sabbath-breaking, of cursing, swearing, lying, drunkenness, &c. to be sins, who were never convinced of the sin of their want of faith; for they always had it, as they think. And what, I pray, can such as ye do at a fast or humiliation for sin, when this is your great sin, and ye cannot by any means be brought to take with it, tho' you take with other sins; but can come boldly to the table of the Lord as believers, and such as have no just reason to doubt of the soundness of your faith, while, in the mean time, all the faith that ye have is but rotten presumption? This is a most fearful condition: For, so long as ye think that ye have faith, ye cannot think yourselves to be lost; neither can ye cast yourselves down with a stopped mouth before God, nor is there access for any word from him to do you good. A 2d conviction or challenge is of, or for the want of a new nature. Were ye ever convinced of this? not only of this and that and the other particular sin, but that ye were in a sinful and unrenewed state? *Nicodemus, John 3.* comes to Christ, and speaks him fair; but the Lord lets him know that fair words, a great profession, and some, yea, much knowledge, will not do the turn; he must necessarily have somewhat else, even a new nature; he must *be born again, else he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.* He is very unwilling and loth to digest that doctrine; but the Lord tells him, that, *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.* It were good that many of you had that word from your heart in your mouth, which is, *Jer. 31. 18.* *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned:* Convictions of a natural state, alas! are very rare; if any of you have had such convictions, try what became of them,

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and what followed on them. A 3^d conviction or challenge is of, or for former breaches of covenant, for gospel-sins, and the sin of dealing unfaithfully in God's covenant: And, can any of you shift this challenge, considering what ye were tyed to in baptism, and by other vows and engagements which ye have come under since that time, especially at the Lord's supper? how few of those have been kept? or rather, have they not been as so many ropes of sand? And, who are suitably challenged for, and convinced of such breaches, as it is implied here, that these people are? A 4th conviction is, of the want of God's presence, insinuated in their *going to seek the Lord*, which imports an absence of God, and that sinfully procured by them, for which they weep and are kindly affected. The absence of God, simply considered; is no ground of challenge, it being an act of sovereignty; but absence, procured thro' our sin, is a great ground of challenge. Alas! the most part know not, neither are acquainted with any such challenge; they think God is always with them, however the Lord is absent: And it would well become us to search out diligently that which hath procured his absence; for, whatever may be God's end in it, there is abundant ground of just challenge that we may get against ourselves in it. A 5th ground of challenge is, in respect of their own stupidity and ignorance, which have incapacitated them to take up the way how to come to God for making up the breach; therefore they *ask the way to Zion*. And this may be another sad challenge to many, who, thro' their ignorance, senselessness and stupidity, have utterly indisposed and unfitted themselves to make their peace with God, and are without knowledge of the way how to vent their desires to him. A 6th challenge implied is, the want of love to one another; and a challenge for seen distance betwixt God and them, helps to bear in on them this challenge for distance betwixt one another: Therefore, now they say, *Come and let us join ourselves*. This is another challenge, which we should not shift; it is too evident, whatever our professions be, that we are much cooled and fallen behind in our love to one another. A 7th challenge is, lying long under a seen evil condition, without being suitably affected with it; therefore these people go now

with the more tenderness about the work of turning to God, and of their renewing covenant with him, that they were so long a falling to it: I suppose, many of you who never knew what repentance was, and others also who have been more serious than now they are, may have this challenge. It is no strange nor uncouth thing that is called for from us, to fit and prepare us for fasts and communions; it is even seriousness in these most plain, common and obvious things: And if ye can hold up your faces, and say, that these concern you not, nor the present occasion, ye may wave and lay them aside; but, if they be such things as your consciences convince you of, it is most necessary that ye take time to think upon them and lay them to heart, and that ye study thro' grace to be humbled for them before the Lord.

But the observation, that we intend mainly to speak a word to at this time, is this, *That there is no amending or righting of an ill condition, but by making sure and fast the covenant betwixt God and us.* What is the remedy of this people's ill condition here, when they find themselves so far wrong? *Come* (say they) *and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten.* When I speak here of covenanting, as that on which the quieting of our consciences, and the remedy of things wrong in our condition, doth so much depend; it is not to be understood of a bare promise only to right and amend things that are wrong and amiss, but it is to be understood of a real covenanting with God, of a real and cordial accepting of the offer of Jesus Christ made to us in the gospel, whereby an union betwixt God and us thro' him as Mediator is made up: Wherein there is God's offer and promise, on the one side; and our faith, accepting of, and submitting to the terms and conditions on which the offer is made, on the other side: Whereupon there followeth a mutual closed bargain betwixt God and us; or the very bargain is thus made up: And so, whatever way we look upon and consider our condition as evil or sad, whether in respect of challenges for, and convictions of sin, and of wrongs done to God; or in respect of darkness, uncleanness and confusion; or in respect of crosses and afflictions; this is the way to win at the remedy thereof

thereof. Thus David, 2 Sam. 23. 5. when he is drawing near to death, and hath many challenges for things that had been wrong in his personal walk and in his house, which had brought on it much affliction and trouble; and when he finds himself very infirm, and under the want of much of that lively sense he had wont to have, he betakes himself to this, *Though (says he) my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; and this is all my salvation and all my desire, though he make it not to grow.* And if we look on the prodigal, Luke 15. when he is under a conviction of his sin and misery, what resolves he upon as a remedy? *I will go (saith he) to my Father, and I will say, Father, I have sinned, &c.* The first thing he betakes himself to, and resolves upon, is, to catch hold of the covenant-relation betwixt his Father and him. And there is a necessity of this, on a *threefold* account; 1. Because there can be no solid ground for extricating and bringing one out of an evil condition, but by covenanting with God; for what else, I pray, can silence a challenge, or quiet and calm the conscience in respect of guilt, when it saith to the person, *Thou hast sinned, and art liable to the curse?* There is no way to get sin and the curse removed, but by fleeing to Jesus Christ, and closing with God's offer of pardon upon the account of his satisfaction rested on by faith: Therefore is faith compared to a *shield whereby we may quench the fiery darts of the devil.* 'Tis true, saith the soul accused of enmity against and wrongs done to God, *I was an enemy to him, and greatly wronged him; I was liable to his curse and wrath for sin: But he offered me pardon and reconciliation thro' the Mediator, and I have accepted of his offer, and do rest upon Christ's satisfaction for pardon; therefore I am justified, and shall not come into condemnation.* 2. Because there can be no peace to the soul, till there be some thorow evidence that the covenant is fixed and made sure; for this is the way that God hath laid down for making peace: As the quarrel and curse are founded on the breach of one covenant, so our peace ariseth upon our engaging with God in another covenant; hence are all those promises, Jer. 30. 31, 32, 33. and Heb. 8. which are so often repeated, *I will*

pardon their iniquities, I will remember their sins no more,
 &c. all which promises being privileges of a covenant
 with God, whoever would look for the performance of
 the promises, there is a necessity of their being in cove-
 nant with him, ere they can expect the performance of
 them, and attain to peace. 3. Because all that are with-
 out the covenant of grace are under the curse, being liable
 to the breach of the first covenant: Therefore, *Eph. 2.*
these two are put together, Strangers from the covenant, of
promise; and having no hope, being without God and Christ
in the world: And so, to be without the covenant, is to be
 without hope, and without God, and without Christ.

Use 1. Lay this for an unquestionable ground, that, if
 ever ye be well, it must be by this covenant with God.
 Is there any conviction of sin, of violating bygone en-
 gagements to God, and of wrongs done to him? Take it
 for a certain truth, that things must be thus adjusted, and
 thus secured betwixt God and you; that ye must have par-
 don and peace, by entering into, and making sure the new
 covenant with God on the grounds of his own grace: That
 is, when God is treating with you, and declaring that he
 is content to close with you, on condition that ye will
 take with your sin, renounce your own righteousness and
 submit to Christ's, and be content to live to him all the
 days of your life that are behind; step to, and close with
 him on his own terms: For the heart's yielding its consent
 to God, is the making of the covenant; and that entitleth
 to all the good that is in the Bible. In sum, 'tis this, If ye
 (saith the Lord) accept of my offering myself to be your
 God, and consent to give up yourselves to me, if ye will
 quit your own righteousness and embrace Christ's, I will
 pardon your sin, I will be forthcoming to you for hap-
 piness, and will sanctify you and make you fit to be par-
 takers of it: And your making of the covenant sure, is
 your yielding to be happy on these terms, even to be con-
 tent to take justification and pardon of sin freely, by virtue
 of Christ's satisfaction; and to give up yourselves to be his,
 to be for him, and to live to him and not to yourselves.
 As ye get God engaged to be yours, so ye engage and sub-
 scribe to be God's, and to walk suitably, according to
 your engagement, in his strength: *To be for him, and for*

no other, as the word is, *Hos. 3.* or as it is, *Isa. 44. 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*: He shall, as it were, write down his name, *I am God's*. This, in short, is covenanting with God; which may be done in hearing the word, in praying, in meditating, and in communicating; when faith is distinctly, at least really and truly, exercised on God's offer and promise; and when, upon deliberation, there is a sincere resolving with the person's self, *I will take God as he offers himself to me, and will give up and away myself to him*; and when, according to this resolution, there is actually a yielding to God.

Use 2. Seeing this is the only way to right and unravel an evil and ravelled condition, let me exhort you to pitch on this as your great work, and to aim at it as your great scope, these days that are before you, that a good understanding may be begotten betwixt God and you, and all quarrels removed and taken away, by declaring and acknowledging your iniquities before him, and by covenanting with him on his own terms: This would make much kindly heart-melting, and would make the communion to be cheering and refreshful, when, after a secretly closed bargain with God, we should come to receive his seal, and to append and put to ours: And whatever tossings and difficulties there may be to get ourselves made right here; yet we would seriously endeavour to get our hearts brought up, sincerely to say with the Psalmist, *Psal. 16. My soul hath said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord*; and to win at a settled deliberate yielding to God, so as there may be quietness in it for the time to come.

Use 3. There is here sad ground of *expostulation* with, and *reproof* to many. I know not what many of you are doing; most part, I suppose, are taken up about the outward ordinances, but as to the main thing of making up a covenant with God, as it is holden forth in the gospel, I fear that is much neglected and miskenn'd: Yet let me say it, tho' ye should pray and worship all these days, without this it is impossible that ye can have peace, or win to have a good understanding betwixt God and you: thus

yourselves therefore to the trial, and see if the frame of your spirits be such as holds any tolerable proportion to the frame and posture that *Israel* and *Judah* are represented to be in here: They are *going*, we are sitting still; they are *weeping*, our eyes are dry, and our hearts hard; the humble mournful way of religion, alas! is much gone from amongst us. Again, they are renewing the covenant; but, ah! what can we say, as to the securing of things betwixt God and us? Are not the most part as well satisfied with their state and condition, as if there were nothing wrong nor amiss in it? Alas! shall we slubber and scurf over religion, and veil ourselves from ourselves and from others, when in the meantime our hearts and consciences might, if awake, tell us that we are not in covenant with God? I know, many of you will be ready to say, ye are friends with God; but let me ask such, Did ye ever know and believe the enmity? did ye ever apprehend yourselves to be strangers to God, and without the covenant? did ye ever experimentally know any good that his word did to you, as to the bringing of you under the bond of the covenant? hath any gracious change followed upon it? The truth is, many of you think that ye may go to heaven without the word, and the saving effects of it on your hearts: Ye found them (as ye fancy) always inclined to love God; ye suppose that ye were always in friendship with him; which, tho' there were nothing else to prove it, is a manifest evidence that ye were never really in friendship with him. But let me ask yet further, Did ye ever know what it was, to make use of Christ's mediation, in the making up of a covenant betwixt God and you? 'Tis like, ye will say, ye prayed; but ye might have done that, tho' Christ had never come into the world, and tho' there had been no ground for your acceptance on his account. But I say again, What use made ye of his mediation and sufferings? I fear ye know little or nothing at all of this; but ye come to him, because ye imagine that he bears a good-will to all sinners, and is very easy to be dealt with, and that God the Father is more inexorable and a harder Party to deal with than he; as if Jesus Christ the Son were not as just as the Father; or,

as if God the Father were not as ready, thro' a Mediator, to accept of sinners, as the Son is. I would ask you yet further, Do ye think, or can ye with any just reason think, that your covenant is sure, when ye know neither what it is, nor how ye have entred into it? In the covenant, as there is an offer on God's side, so there must be a receiving on yours: Tho' I grant that oftentimes this, to serious souls, will be unclear, and it will be their burden that they have not strong enough desires to have it thorow and clear; such poor souls would put their darkness, unbelief and undexterousness in Christ's hand to be helped. But 'tis a sad matter, that, when we should be praying you to close with Christ in the covenant, it must be our work, and the hardest piece of it, to shake many of you out of your presumption: 'Tis no pleasure to us, God knoweth, to preach you out of the covenant; but your presumption layeth a necessity on us, to lance you to the quick, and to search down to the bottom of your sores; because these must be discovered and laid open, before there can be any just ground for the application of consolation: If once we could get you brought under a thorow conviction that ye have been deluding yourselves, we might yet have sweet, lively, comfortable and refreshful days: If ye were in this posture, *going and weeping for perverting your ways, with your faces towards Zion, towards God thro' the Mediator*, ye might expect God's blessing on these solemn ordinances, and that there should be a covenant made up with him *never to be forgotten*. O! be serious in the business, and let not this opportunity go by you unimproved to the best and utmost advantage; and himself graciously help you hereunto.



Jeremiah 50. ver. 4, 5.

In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: They shall go, and seek the Lord their God.

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Verse 5.