

SERMON XXXVIII.

Wherein four weighty Ends of CHRIST'S Humiliation are opened, and particularly applied.

ISA. liii. 2. 11.

He shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.

WE are now arrived at the last particular place which we designed to speak to in Christ's *state of humiliation*, namely, the *designs* and blessed *ends* for which he was so deeply abased. It is inconsistent with the prudence of a common agent, to be at vast expences of time, pains, and cost, and not to propound to himself a design worthy of all those expences. And it is much less imaginable, that Christ should so stupendously abase himself, by stooping from the bosom of his Father to the state of the dead, where our last discourse left him, if there had not been some excellent and glorious thing in his eye, the attainment whereof might give him a content and satisfaction, equivalent to all the sorrows and abasements he endured for it.

And so much is plainly held forth in this scripture, "He shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied." In which words three things fall under our consideration.

First, The *travailing pangs* of Christ. So the agonies of his soul and torments of his body are fitly called, not only because of the sharpness and acuteness of them, being in that respect like the sharpness and acuteness of them, being in that respect like birth-pangs of a *travailing woman*, for so this * word signifies, but also because they fore-run, and make way for the birth, which abundantly recompenses all those labours. I shall not here insist upon the pangs and agonies endured by Christ in the garden, or upon the cross, which the prophet stiles "the travail of his soul," having, in the former sermons, opened it largely in its particulars, but pass to the

Second Thing considerable in these words, and that is the *assured fruits* and effects of this his travail; *he shall see the travail of his soul*. By seeing, understand the fruition, obtainment, or enjoyment of the end of his sufferings. He shall not shed his blood upon an hazard; his design shall not miscarry; but he shall certainly see the ends he aimed at, accomplished.

And *Thirdly*, This shall yield him great satisfaction: as a

* עִמְלָה, ὠδίνω, This word signifies both the birth and pain attending it.—*Strigel.*

“ woman forgets her sorrow, for joy that a man is born into the “ world,” John xvi. 21. he shall see it and be *satisfied*. As God, when he had finished the work of creation, viewed that his work with pleasure and satisfaction; so doth our exalted Redeemer, with great contentment, behold the happy issues of his hard sufferings. It affords pleasure to a man to see great affairs, by orderly conduct, brought to happy issues. Much more doth it yield delight to Jesus Christ to see the results of the most profound wisdom and love wherein he carried on redemption-work. All runs into this doctrine,

Doct. That all the blessed designs and ends for which the Lord Jesus Christ humbled himself to the death of the cross, shall certainly be attained, to his full content and satisfaction.

My present business is not to prove, that Christ shall certainly obtain what he died for; nor to open the great satisfaction and pleasure which will arise to him out of those issues of his death, but to point at the principal ends of his death: making some brief improvement as we pass along.

First, Then let us enquire into the designs and ends of Christ's humiliation, at least the main and principal ones; and we shall find, that as the sprinkling of the typical blood in the Old Testament was done for four weighty ends or uses, answerably, the precious and invaluable blood of the Testator and surety of the New Testament is shed for four weighty ends also.

First, That blood was shed and applied to *deliver* from danger; Exod. xii. 13. “ And the blood shall be to you for a * token upon “ the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass “ over you: and the plague shall not be upon you, to destroy you, “ when I smite the land of Egypt.”

Secondly, The blood that was shed to make an *atonement* betwixt God and the people; Lev. iv. 20. “ And he shall do with the “ bullock as he did with the bullock for a sin-offering; so shall he “ do with this, and the priest shall make an atonement for them, “ and it shall be forgiven them.”

Thirdly, That blood was shed to *purify* persons from their ceremonial pollutions, Lev. xiv. 6, 7. “ He shall dip the cedar-wood, “ and scarlet, and hyssop, with the living bird, in the blood of “ the bird that was killed over the running water, and he shall “ sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven

* The Jews implicitly acknowledged by this ceremony, that they were to be liberated from eternal death by the blood of the Messiah. *Vatab.*

“times* ; and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living “bird loose in the open field.”

Fourthly, That † blood was shed to *ratify* and confirm the testament or covenant of God with the people, Exod. xxiv. 8. “And “Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made “with you concerning all these words.” These were the four main ends for shedding and sprinkling that typical blood. Suitably, there are four principal ends for shedding and applying Christ’s blood. As that typical blood was shed to deliver from danger, so this was shed to deliver from wrath, *even the wrath to come*. That was shed to make an atonement, so was this. That was shed to purify persons from uncleanness, so was this. That was shed to confirm the Testament, so was this. As will appear in the following particulars more at large.

First, One principal design and end of shedding the blood of Christ was *to deliver his people from danger, the danger of that wrath which burns down to the lowest hell*. So you find, 1 Thess. i. 10. “Even Jesus who delivered us from wrath to come.” Here our misery is both *specified* and *aggravated*. Specified, in calling it *wrath*, a word of deep and dreadful signification. The damned best understand the importance of that word. And *aggravated*, in calling it *wrath to come*, or coming wrath. Wrath to come implies both the *futurity* and *perpetuity* of this wrath. It is wrath that shall certainly and inevitably come upon sinners. As sure as the night follows the day ; as sure as the winter follows the summer, so shall wrath follow sin, and the pleasures thereof. Yea, it is not only certainly future, but when it comes it will be abiding wrath, or wrath still coming. When millions of years and ages are past and gone, this will still be *wrath to come*. Ever coming as a river ever flowing.

Now from this *wrath to come*, hath Jesus delivered his people by his death. For that was the price laid down for their redemption from the wrath of the great and terrible God, Rom. v. 9. “Much more then, being justified by his blood, we shall be “saved from wrath through him.” The blood of Jesus was the price that ransomed man from this wrath. And it was shed not only to deliver them from *wrath to come*, but to deliver them freely, fully, distinguishingly, and wonderfully from it.

First, Freely, by his own voluntary interposition and susception of the mediatorial office, moved thereunto by his own bowels of

* *Seven times*, signifies perfect expiation ; this number was consecrated to denote perfection. *Menoch*.

† The *shedding* and *sprinkling* of blood signifies that the covenant would be sure and stable, even with the hazard of life. *Rivet*.

compassion, which yearned over his elect in their misery*. The saints were once a lost generation, that had sold themselves, and their inheritance also; and had not wherewithal to redeem either: but they had a near kinsman (even their elder brother by the mother's side) to whom the right of redemption did belong; who being a mighty man of wealth, the heir of all things, undertook to be their *God*; and out of his own proper substance to redeem both them and their inheritance. Them, to be his own inheritance, Eph. i. 10. and heaven, to be theirs, 1 Pet. i. 4. All this he did most freely, when none made supplication to him. No sighing of the prisoners came before him. He designed it for us before we had a being. And when the purposes of his grace were come to their parturient fulness, then did he freely lay out the infinite treasures of his blood to purchase our deliverance from wrath.

Secondly, Christ by death hath delivered his people *fully*. A full deliverance it is, both in respect of *time* and *degrees*. A full deliverance in respect of *time*. It was not a *reprieve*, but a *deliverance*. He thought it not worth the shedding of his blood to respite the execution for a while. Nay, in the procurement of their eternal deliverance from wrath, and in the purchase of their eternal inheritance, he hath but an even bargain, not a jot more than his blood was worth. Therefore is he become "the author of eternal salvation to them that obey him," Heb. v. 9. And as it is full in respect of *time*, so likewise in respect of *degrees*. He died not to procure a mitigation or abatement of the rigour or severity of the sentence, but to rescue his people fully from all degrees of wrath. So that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, Rom. viii. 1. All the wrath of God to the last drop, was squeezed out into that bitter cup which Christ drank off, and wrung out the very dregs thereof.

Thirdly, This deliverance obtained for us by the death of Christ, is a *special* and distinguishing deliverance. Not common to all, but peculiar to some; and they by nature no better than those that are left under wrath. Yea, as to natural disposition, moral qualifications, and external endowments, oftentimes far inferior to them that perish. How often do we find a moral righteousness, an harmless innocency, a pretty ingenuity, a readiness to all offices of love, in them that are notwithstanding left under the dominion of other lusts, and under the damning sentence of the law; whilst on the other side, proud, peevish, sensual, morose, and unpolished natures, are chosen to be the subjects of this salvation? "You see your calling, brethren," 1 Cor. i. 26.

* See Mr. Case's Mount Pisgah, p. 85.

Fourthly and lastly, It is a wonderful salvation. It would weary the arm of an angel to write down all the wonders that are in this salvation. That ever such a design should be laid, such a project of grace contrived in the heart of God, who might have suffered the whole species to perish. That it should only concern man, and not the angels, by nature more excellent than us; that Christ should be pitched upon to go forth upon this glorious design. That he should effect it in such a way, by taking our nature and suffering the penalty of the law therein. That our deliverance should be wrought out and finished when the Redeemer and his design seemed both to be lost and perished. These with many more are such wonders as will take up eternity itself to search, admire, and adore them.

Before I part from this first end of the death of Christ, give me leave to deduce two useful corollaries from it, and then proceed to a second.

Coroll. 1. Hath Christ by death delivered his people from the wrath to come? *How ungrateful and disingenuous a thing must it be then for those that have obtained such a deliverance as this, to repine and grudge at those light afflictions they suffer for a moment upon Christ's account in this world!*

Alas! what are these sufferings, that we should grudge at them? Are they like those which the Redeemer suffered for our deliverance? Did ever any of us endure for him what he endured for us? Or is there any thing you can suffer for Christ in this world, comparable to this *wrath to come*, which you must have endured, had he not, by the price of his own blood, rescued you from it.

Reader, wilt thou but make the comparison in thine own thoughts, in the following particulars, and then pronounce when thou hast duly compared. *Compare.*

First, What is the wrath of man to the wrath of God? What is the arm of a creature to the anger of a Deity? Can man thunder with an arm like God? *The natures.*

Secondly, What are the sufferings of the vile body here, to the tortures of a soul and body in hell? The torments of the soul, are the very soul of torments. *Subjects.*

Thirdly, What are the troubles of a moment to that wrath, which, after millions of years are gone, will still be called *wrath to come*? O what comparison betwixt a point of hasty time, and the interminable duration of vast eternity! *Duration.*

Fourthly, What comparison is there betwixt the intermitting sorrows and sufferings of this life, *Continuity.*

and the continued uninterrupted *wrath to come*? Our troubles here are not constant, there are gracious relaxations; lucid intervals here; but the *wrath to come* allows not a moment's ease or mitigation.

Fifthly, What light and easy troubles are those, which, being put into the rank and order of adjuvant causes, work under the influence and blessing of the first cause, to the everlasting good of them that love God, compared with that *wrath to come*, out of which no good effects or issues are possible to proceed to the souls on which it lies?

Sixthly, and lastly, How much more comfortable is it, to suffer in fellowship with Christ and his saints for righteousness sake, than to suffer with devils and reprobates for wickedness sake? Grudge not then, O ye that are delivered by Jesus from *wrath to come*, at any thing ye do suffer, or shall suffer from Christ, or for Christ in this world.

Corol. 2. If Jesus Christ hath delivered his people from the *wrath to come*, how little comfort can any man take in his present enjoyments and accommodations in the world, whilst it remains a question with him, whether he be delivered from the *wrath to come*? It is well for the present, but will it be so still? Man is a prospecting creature, and it will not satisfy him that his present condition is comfortable, except he have some hopes it shall be so hereafter. It can afford a man little content that all is easy and pleasant about him now, whilst such passages and terrible hints of *wrath to come* are given him by his own conscience daily. O, methinks such a thought as this, *what if I am reserved for the wrath to come*? should be to him, as the fingers appearing upon the plaster of the wall were to Belteshazzar in the height of a frolic*. It is a custom with some of the Indians, when they have taken a prisoner (whom they intend not presently to eat) to bring him with great triumph into the village, where he dwelleth that hath taken him; and placing him in the house of one that was slain in the wars, as it were to re-celebrate his funeral, they give him his wives or sisters to attend on him, and use at his pleasure: they apparel him gorgeously, and feed him with all the dainty meats that may be had; affording him all the pleasure that can be devised; when he hath passed certain months in all these pleasures, and (like a capon) is made fat with delicate fare, they assemble themselves upon some festival day, and in great pomp bring him to the place of execution, where they kill and eat him.

Such are all the pleasures and enjoyments of the wicked, which feed them for the day of slaughter. How little stomach can a man

* Sir R. Barkley, on the felicity of Man, p. 12, 13.

have to those dainties that understands the end and meaning of them ! Give not sleep therefore to thine eyes, reader, till thou hast got good evidencce, that thou art of that number whom *Jesus hath delivered from the wrath to come*. Till thou canst say, he is a Jesus to thee. This may be made out to thy satisfaction three ways.

First, *If Jesus have delivered thee from sin, the cause of wrath, thou mayest conclude he hath delivered thee from wrath, the effect and fruit of sin.* Upon this account the sweet name of Jesus, was imposed upon him, Mat. i. 21. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, "for he shall save his people from their sins." Whilst a man lies under the dominion and guilt of sin, he lies exposed to *wrath to come* ; and when he is delivered from the guilt and power of sin, he is certainly delivered from the danger of this coming wrath. Where sin is not imputed, wrath is not threatened.

Secondly, *If thy soul do set an inestimable value on Jesus Christ, and be endeared to him upon the account of that inexpressible grace manifested in this deliverance, it is a good sign thy soul hath a share in it.* Mark what an epithet the saints give Christ upon this account, Col. i. 12, 13. "Giving thanks to the Father, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the "kingdom of his [dear] Son." Christ is therefore *dear*, and dear beyond all compare to his saved ones. I remember it is storied of the poor enthralled Grecians, that when * Titus Flaminus had restored their ancient liberties, and proclamation was to be made in the market-place by an herald ; they so pressed to hear it, that the herald was in great danger of being stifled and pressed to death among the people ; but when the proclamation was ended, there were heard such shouts and joyful acclamations, that the very birds of the air fell down astonished with the noise, while they continued to cry, Σωτήρ, Σωτήρ, a Saviour, a Saviour ; and all the following night they continued dancing and singing about his pavilion.

If such a deliverance so endeared them to Titus, how should the great deliverance from wrath to come, endear all the redeemed to love their dear Jesus ? This is the native effect of mercy upon the soul that hath felt it.

Thirdly, To conclude, *A disposition and readiness of mind to do, or endure any thing for Christ's sake, upon the account of his deliverance from the wrath to come ; is a good evidence you are so delivered*, Col. i. 10, 11. "That we may walk worthy of the Lord to all "pleasing, being fruitful in every good work." There is readiness to do for Christ. "Strengthened with all might, according to his glori-

* Plutarch. in vita T. Flaminii.

"ous power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." There is a cheerful readiness to endure any thing for Christ. And how both these flow from the sense of this great deliverance from wrath, the 12th verse will inform you, which was but now cited. O then, be serious and assiduous in the resolution of this grand case. Till this be resolved, nothing can be pleasant to thy soul.

End 2. As the typical blood was shed and sprinkled to deliver from danger, so it was shed to make *atonement*, Lev. iv. 20. "He shall expiate (we translate *atone*) the sin." The word imports both. And the true meaning is, that by the blood of the bullock, all whose efficacy stood in its relation to the blood of Christ, signified and shadowed by it, the people, for whom it was shed, should be reconciled to God, by the expiation and remission of their sins. And what was shadowed in this typical blood, was really designed and accomplished by Jesus Christ, in the shedding of his blood.

Reconciliation of the elect to God, is therefore another of those beautiful births which Christ travailed for. So you find it expressly, Rom. v. 10. "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." This [if] is not a word of doubting, but argumentation. The apostle supposes it is a known truth, or principle yielded by all Christians, that the death of Christ was to reconcile the elect to God. And again he affirms it with like clearness, Col. i. 20. "And having made peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things." And that this was a main and principal end designed both by the Father and Son in the humiliation of Christ, is plain from 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." God filled the humanity with grace and authority. The Spirit of God was in him to qualify him. The authority of God was in him by commission, to make all he did valid. The grace and love of God to mankind was in him, and one of the principal effects in which it was manifested, was this design upon which he came, viz. to reconcile the world to God. Upon which ground Christ is called the "propitiation for our sins," 1 John ii. 2. "* Now *reconciliation* or atonement is nothing else but the making up of the ancient friendship betwixt God and men which sin had dissolved, and so to reduce these enemies into a state of concord, and sweet agreement." And the means by which this blessed design was effectually compassed, was by the death of Christ, which made complete satisfaction to God, for the wrong he had done him. There was a breach made by sin betwixt God

* *Reconciliare nihil aliud est quam amicitiam offensione aliqua gravi diremptam resacire, et sic inimicos in pristinam concordiam reducere.* Daven. in Col. i. 20.

and angels, but that breach is never to be repaired or made up ; since, as Christ took not on him their nature, so he never intended to be a mediator of reconciliation betwixt God and them. That will be an eternal breach. But that which Christ designed, as the end of his death, was to reconcile God and man. Not the whole *species*, but a certain *number*, whose names were given to Christ. Here I must briefly open, 1. How Christ's death reconciles. 2. Why this reconciliation is brought about by his death, rather than any other way. 3. What are the articles according to which it is made. And 4. What manner of reconciliation this is.

First, How Christ reconciles God and man by his death. And it must needs be by the satisfaction his death made to the justice of God for our sins. And so, reparation being made, the enmity ceases. Hence it is said, Isa. liii. 5. "the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed." That is (as our English Annotators well explain it) he was chastised to procure our peace, by removal of our sins, that set God and us asunder, the guilt thereof being discharged with the price of his blood.

Now this reconciliation is made and continued betwixt God and us, three ways ; namely, by the *oblation* of Christ, which was the price that procured it, and so we were *virtually* or meritoriously reconciled. By the *application* of Christ and his benefits to us through faith, and so we are *actually* reconciled. And by the virtual *continuation* of the sacrifice of Christ in heaven, by his potent and eternal *intercession*, and so our state of reconciliation is *confirmed*, and all future breaches prevented. But all depends, as you see, upon the death of Christ. For had not Christ died, his death could never be applied to us, nor pleaded in heaven for us. How the death of Christ meritoriously procures our reconciliation, is evident from that fore-cited scripture, Rom. v. 10. "When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son," i. e. Christ's death did meritoriously or virtually reconcile us to God, who, as to our state, were enemies long after that reconciliation was made. That the *application* of Christ to us by faith, makes that virtual reconciliation to become actual, is plain enough from Eph. ii. 16, 17. "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. And came and preached peace to you that were afar off, and to them that were nigh. Now therefore (as it is added, verse 19.) Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints," &c. And that this state of friendship is still *continued* by Christ's intercession within the vail, so that there can be no breaches made upon the state of our peace, notwithstanding all the daily provocations we give God by our sins, is the comforta-

ble truth which the apostle plainly asserts, after he had given a necessary caution to prevent the abuse of it, in 1 John ii. 1, 2. "My little children, these things I write unto you that ye sin not; and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation," &c. Thus Christ reconciles us to God by his death.

Secondly, And if you enquire why this reconciliation was made by the death of Christ, rather than any other way, satisfaction is at hand, in these two answers.

First, That we can imagine no other way by which it could be compassed. And,

Secondly, If God could have *reconciled* us as much by another way, yet he could not have *obliged* us so much by doing it in another way, as he hath by doing it this way. Surely, none but he that was God manifested in our flesh could offer a sacrifice of sufficient value to make God amends for the wrong done him by one sin, much less for all the sins of the elect. And how God should (especially after a peremptory threatening of death for sin) re-admit us into favour without full satisfaction, cannot be imagined. He is indeed inclined to acts of mercy, but none must suppose him to exercise one attribute in prejudice to another. That his *justice* must be *eclipsed*, whilst his *mercy shines*. But allow that Infinite Wisdom could have found out another means of reconciling us as much, can you imagine, that in any other way he could have obliged us as much, as he hath done by reconciling us to himself by the death of his own Son? It cannot be thought possible. This therefore was the most effectual, just, honourable, and obliging way to make up the peace betwixt him and us.

Thirdly, This reconciliation, purchased by the blood of Christ, is offered unto men by the gospel, upon certain articles and conditions; upon the performance whereof it actually becomes theirs; and without which, notwithstanding all that Christ hath done and suffered, the breach still continues betwixt them and God. And let no man think this a derogation from the freeness and riches of grace, for these things serve singularly to illustrate and commend the grace of God to sinners.

As he consulted his own glory, in the terms on which he offers us our peace with him: so it is his grace which brings up souls to those terms of reconciliation. And surely he hath not suspended the mercy of our reconciliation upon unreasonable or impossible conditions. He hath not said, if you will do as much for me, *as you have done against me*, I will be at peace with you; but the two grand articles of peace with God, are *repentance* and *faith*. In the first, we lay down arms against God, and it is meet it should be so, before he re-admits us into a state of peace and favour; in the

other, we accept Christ and pardon through him with a thankful heart, yielding up ourselves to his government, which is equally reasonable.

These are the terms on which we are actually reconciled to God. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." So Rom. v. 1. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." And surely it would not become the holy God to own, as his friend and favourite, a man that goes on perversely and impenitently in the way of sin; not so much as acknowledging, or once bemoaning the wrong he hath done him, purposing to do so no more; or to receive into amity one that slights and rejects the Lord Jesus, whose precious blood was shed to procure and purchase peace and pardon for sinners.

But if there be any poor soul, that saith in his heart, it repents me for sinning against God, and is sincerely willing to come to Christ, upon gospel-terms, he shall have peace. And that peace,

Fourthly, Is no common peace. The reconciliation which the Lord Jesus died to procure for broken-hearted believers, it is,

First, A firm well-bottomed reconciliation, putting the reconciled soul beyond all possibility of coming under God's wrath any more, Isa. liv. 10. "Mountains may depart, and hills be removed, but the covenant of this peace cannot be removed." Christ is a surety, by way of *caution*, to prevent the new breaches, 2 John i. 2.

Secondly, This reconciliation with God is the fountain out of which all our other comforts flow to us; this is plainly included in those words of Eliphaz to Job, chap. xxii. 21. "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace, thereby good shall come upon thee." As trade flourishes, and riches come in when peace is made betwixt states and kingdoms; so all spiritual and temporal mercies flow into our bosoms, when once we are reconciled to God. What the comfort of such a peace will be in a day of straits and dangers, and what it will be valued at in a dying day, who but he that feels it can declare? And yet such an one cannot fully declare it, for it passes all understanding, Phil. iv. 7. We shall now make some improvements of this, and pass on to the third end of the death of Christ.

Inference 1. *If Christ died to reconcile God and man, how horrid an evil then is sin! And how terrible was that breach made betwixt God and the creature by it, which could no other way be made up but by the death of the Son of God!* I remember I have read, that when a great chasm or breach was made in the earth by an earthquake, and the oracle was consulted how it might be closed; this answer

was returned, *That breach can never be closed, except something of great worth be thrown into it.* Such a breach was that which sin made, it could never be reconciled but by the death of Jesus Christ, the most excellent thing in all the creation.

Inf. 2. How sad is the state of all such as are not comprised in the articles of peace with God! The impenitent unbeliever is excepted. God is not reconciled to him; and if God be his enemy, how little avails it, who is his friend? For, if God be a man's enemy, he hath an Almighty enemy in him, whose very frown is destruction, Deut. xxxii. 40, 41, 42, "I lift up my hand to heaven and say, "I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword, and my hand "take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to my enemies, "and I will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows "drunk with blood, (and my sword shall devour flesh) and that "with the blood of the slain and the captives, from the beginning "of revenges upon the enemy."

Yea, he is an *unavoidable* enemy. Fly to the utmost parts of the earth, there shall his hand reach thee, as it is Psal. cxxxix. 10. The wings of the morning cannot carry thee out of his reach. If God be your enemy, you have an immortal enemy, who lives for ever to avenge himself upon his adversaries. And what wilt thou do when thou art in Saul's case? 1 Sam. xxviii. 15, 16. Alas, whither wilt thou turn? To whom wilt thou complain? But what wilt thou do, when thou shalt stand at the bar, and see that God, who is thine enemy, upon the throne? Sad is their case indeed, who are not comprehended in the articles of peace with God.

Inf. 3. If Christ died to reconcile us to God, give diligence to clear up to your own souls, your interest in this reconciliation. If Christ thought it worth his blood to purchase it, it is worth your care and pains to clear it. And what can better evidence it, than your conscientious tenderness of sin, lest you make new breaches. Ah, if reconciled, you will say, as Ezra ix. 14. "And now our "God, seeing thou hast given us such a deliverance as this; should "we again break thy commandments?" If reconciled to God, his friends will be your friends, and his enemies your enemies. If God be your friend, you will be diligent to please him, John xv. 10, 14. He that makes not peace with God is an enemy to his own soul. And he that is at peace, but takes no pains to clear it, is an enemy to his own comfort. But I must pass from this to the third end of Christ's death.

End 3. You have seen two of those beautiful births of Christ's travail, and lo, a third cometh, namely, The sanctification of his people. Typical blood was shed, as you heard, to purify them that were unclean; and so was the blood of Christ shed to purge away

the sins of his people: so speaks the apostle expressly, Eph. v. 25, 26. "Christ gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it." And so he tells us himself, John xvii. 29. "And for their sakes I sanctify myself," i. e. consecrate or devote myself to death, "That they also might be sanctified through the truth." Upon the account of this benefit received by the blood of Christ, is that *Doxology*, which, in a lower strain, is now sounded in the churches, but will be matter of the Lamb's song in heaven, Rev. i. 5, 6. "To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins, in his own blood,—be glory and honour for ever." Now, there is a twofold evil in sin, the *guilt* of it, and the *pollution* of it. Justification properly cures the former, sanctification the latter; but both justification and sanctification flow unto sinners out of the death of Christ. And though it is proper to say the Spirit sanctifies, yet, it is certain, it was the blood of Christ that procured for us the Spirit of sanctification. Had not Christ died, the Spirit had never come down from heaven upon any such design.

The pouring forth of Christ's blood for us, obtained the pouring forth of the spirit of holiness upon us. Therefore the Spirit is said to *come in his name, and to take of his, and shew it unto us*. Hence it is said, 1 John v. 6. "He came both by blood and by water;" by blood, washing away the guilt; by water, purifying from the filth of sin. Now this fruit of Christ's death, even our sanctification, is a most incomparable mercy. For, do but consider a few particular excellencies of holiness.

First, Holiness is the image and glory of God. His image, Col. iii. 10. and his glory, Exod. xv. 11. "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, glorious in holiness." Now, when the guilt and filth of sin are washed off, and the beauty of God put upon the soul in sanctification, O what a beautiful creature is the soul now! So lovely in the eyes of Christ, even in its imperfect holiness, that he saith, Cant. vi. 5. "Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me." So we render it, but the Hebrew * word signifies, "they have made me proud, or puffed me up." It is a beam of divine glory upon the creature, enamouring the very heart of Christ.

Secondly, As it is the soul's highest beauty, so it is the soul's best evidence for heaven. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," Matt. v. 8. "And without holiness no man shall see God," Heb. xii. 14. No gifts, no duties, no natural endowments will evidence a right in heaven, but the least measure of true holiness will secure heaven to the soul.

Thirdly, As holiness is the soul's best evidence for heaven, so it is a continual spring of comfort to it in the way thither. The purest and sweetest pleasures in this world are the results of holiness, "Till we come to live holy, we never live comfortably. Heaven is epitomized in holiness.

Fourthly, And to say no more; it is the peculiar mark by which God hath visibly distinguished his own from other men, Psal. iv. 3. "The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself," *q. d.* this is the man, and that the woman, to whom I intend to do good for ever. This is a man for me. O holiness, how surpassingly glorious art thou!

Inference 1. Did Christ die to sanctify his people, how deep then is the pollution of sin, that nothing but the blood of Christ can cleanse it! All the tears of a penitent sinner, should he shed as many as there have fallen drops of rain since the creation to this day, cannot wash away one sin. The everlasting burnings in hell cannot purify the flaming conscience from the least sin. O guess at the wound by the largeness and length of this tent that follows the mortal weapon, Sin.

Inf. 2. Did Christ die to sanctify his people? Behold then the love of a Saviour. "He loved us, and washed us from our sins "in his own blood." He did not shed the blood of beasts, as the priests of old did, but his own blood, Heb. ix. 12. And that not common, but precious blood, 1 Pet. i. 1, 19. The blood of God; one drop of which out-values the blood that runs in the veins of all Adam's posterity. And not some of that blood, but all; to the last drop. He bled every vein dry for us: and what remained lodged about the heart of a dead Jesus, was let out by that bloody spear which pierced the *Pericardium*: so that he bestowed the whole treasure of his blood upon us. And thus liberal was he of his blood to us when we were enemies. This then is that heavenly Pelican that feeds his young with his own blood. O what manner of love is this! But I must hasten.

End 4. As Christ died to sanctify his people; so he died also to confirm the New Testament to all those sanctified ones. So it was in the type, Exod. xxiv. 8. and so it is in the text. "This is the New "Testament in my blood," Mat. xxvi. 28. i. e. ratified and confirmed by my blood. For, where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator, Heb. ix. 16. So that now all the blessings and benefits bequeathed to believers in the last will and testament of Christ, are abundantly confirmed and secured to them by his death. Yea, he died on purpose to make that testament of force to them. Men make their wills and testaments, and Christ makes his. What they bequeath, and give in their wills, is a free and voluntary act, they cannot be compelled to do it.

And what is bequeathed to us in this testament of Christ, is altogether a free and voluntary donation*. Other testators use to bequeath their estates to their wives and children, and near relations; so doth this testator; all is settled upon his spouse, the church, upon believers, his children. A stranger intermeddles not with these mercies. They give all their goods and estates, that can that way be conveyed, to their friends that survive them. Christ giveth to his church, in the New Testament, three sorts of goods.

First, All temporal good things, 1 Tim. vi. 1. Matt. vi. 33. i. e. the comfort and blessing of all, though not the possession of much. "As having nothing, and yet possessing all things," 2 Cor. vi. 10.

Secondly, All spiritual good things are bequeathed to them in this testament, as remission of sin, and acceptation with God, which are contained in their justification, Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26. Sanctification of their natures, both initial and progressive, 1 Cor. i. 30. Adoption into the family of God, Gal. iii. 26. The ministry of angels, Heb. i. 14. Interest in all the promises, 2 Pet. i. 4. Thus all spiritual good things are in Christ's testament conveyed to them. And as all temporal and spiritual, so,

Thirdly, All eternal good things. Heaven, glory, and eternal life, Rom. viii. 10, 11. No such bequests as these were ever found in the testaments of princes. That which kings and nobles settle by will upon their heirs, are but trifles to what Christ hath conferred in the New Testament upon his people. And all this is confirmed and ratified by the death of Christ, so that the promise is sure, and the estate indefeasible to all the heirs of promise.

How the death of Christ confirmed the New Testament is worth our enquiry. The Socinians, as they allow no other end of Christ's death, but the confirmation of the New Testament, so they affirm he did it only by way of testimony, or witness-bearing in his death. But this is a vile derogation from the efficacy of Christ's blood, to bring it down into an equality with the blood of martyrs. As if there were no more in it than was in their blood.

But know, reader, Christ died not only, or principally, to confirm the Testament by his blood, as witness to the truth of those things, but his death ratified it as the death of a testator, which makes the New Testament irrevocable. And so Christ is called in this text. Look as when a man hath made his will, and is dead,

* *Nullo presentis metu periculi*, i. e. Without any fear of present danger. *Coke's Instit.* l. 5. cap. 10.

that will is presently in force, and can never be recalled. Besides, the will of the dead, is sacred with men. They dare not cross it. It is certain the last will and testament of Christ is most sacred, and God will never annul or make it void. Moreover, it is not with Christ as with other testators, who die, and must trust the performance of their wills with their executors, but as he died to put it in force, so he lives again to be the executor of his own testament. And all power to fulfil his will is now in his own hands, Rev. i. 18.

Inference 1. Did Christ die to confirm the New Testament, in which such legacies are bequeathed to believers. How are all believers concerned then to prove the will of a dead Jesus! My

The probate of Christ's last will and testament.

meaning is, to clear their title to the mercies contained in this blessed testament. And this may be done two ways. By clearing to ourselves our covenant-relations to Christ. And

by discovering those special covenant-impressions upon our hearts, to which the promises therein contained, do belong.

First, Examine your relations to Christ. Are you his *spouse*? Have you forsaken all for him? Psal. xlv. 10. Are you ready to take your lot with him, as it falls in prosperity or adversity? Jer. ii. 2. And are you loyal to Christ! "Thou shalt be for me, and not for another," Hos. iii. 3. Do you yield obedience to him as your Head and Husband? Eph. vi. 24. then you may be confident you are interested in the benefits and blessings of Christ's last will and testament; for can you imagine Christ will make a testament and forget his spouse? It cannot be. If he so loved the church as to give himself for her, much more what he hath is settled on her. Again, are you his spiritual seed, his children by regeneration? Are you born of the Spirit? John iii. Do you resemble Christ in holiness? 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. Do you find a reverential fear of Christ carrying you to obey him in all things? Mal. i. 6. Are you led by the Spirit of Christ? "As many as are so led, they are the sons of God," Rom. viii. 14. To conclude, Have you the *spirit of adoption*, enabling you to cry, *Abba, Father*? Gal. iv. 6. that is, helping you in a gracious manner, with reverence mixed with filial confidence, to open your hearts spiritually to your Father on all occasions? If so, you are children; and if children, doubt not but you have a rich legacy in Christ's last will and testament. He would not seal up his testament, and forget his dear children.

Secondly, You may discern your interest in the new testament or covenant (for they are substantially the same thing) by the new covenant-impressions that are made on your hearts, which are so many clear evidences of your right to the benefits it contains.

Such are spiritual illuminations, Jer. xxxi. 34. gracious softness and tenderness of heart, Ezek. xi. 19. the awful dread and fear of God, Jer. xxxii. 43. the copy or transcript of his laws on your hearts in gracious correspondent principles, Jer. xxxi. 38. These things speak you the children of the covenant, the persons on whom all these great things are settled.

Inf. 2. To conclude, it is the indispensable duty of all on whom Christ hath settled such mercies, *to admire his love, and walk answerably to it.*

First, Admire the love of Christ. O how intense and ardent was the love of Jesus! who designed for you such an inheritance, with such a settlement of it upon you! These are the mercies with which his love had travailed big from eternity, and now he sees the travail of his soul, and you also have seen somewhat of it this day. Before this love let all the saints fall down astonished, humbly professing that they owe themselves, and all they are, or shall be worth, to eternity, to this love.

Secondly, And be sure you walk becoming persons for whom Christ hath done such great things. Comfort yourselves under present abasements with your spiritual privileges, James ii. 5. and let all your rejoicing be in Christ, and what you have in him, whilst others are blessing themselves in vanity. Thus we have finished the state of Christ's humiliation, and thence proceed to the second state of his exaltation.

An Introduction to the State of Exaltation.

Having finished what I designed to speak to, about the work of redemption, so far as it was carried on by Christ in his humble state, we shall now view that blessed work as it is further *advanced*, and *perfected in his state of exaltation.*

The whole of that work was not to be finished on earth in a state of suffering and abasement, therefore the apostle makes his *exaltation*, in order to the finishing of the remainder of his work, so necessary a part of his priesthood, that without it he could not have been a priest, Heb. viii. 4. "If he were on earth he should not be a priest," i. e. if he should have continued always here, and had not been raised again from the dead, and taken up into glory, *he could not have been a complete and perfect priest.*

For look, as it was not enough for the sacrifice to be slain without, and his blood left there; but after it was shed without, it must be carried within the veil, into the most holy place before the Lord, Heb. ix. 7. so it was not sufficient that Christ shed his own blood on earth, except he carry it before the Lord into heaven, and there perform his *intercession-work* for us.

Moreover, God the Father stood engaged in a solemn covenant

to reward him for his deep humiliation, with a most glorious and illustrious advancement, Isa. xlix. 5, 6, 7. And how God (as it became him) made this good to Christ, the apostle very clearly expresses, Phil. ii. 9.

Yea, justice required it should be so. For how could our surety be detained in the prison of the grave, when the debt for which he was imprisoned was by him fully discharged, so that the law of God must acknowledge itself to be fully satisfied in all its claims and demands? His resurrection from the dead was, therefore, but his discharge or acquittance upon full payment. Which could not in justice be denied him.

And, indeed, God the Father lost nothing by it, for there never was a more glorious manifestation made of the name of God to the world, than was made in that work. Therefore it is said, Phil. ii. 11. speaking of one of the designs of Christ's exaltation, it was, (saith the apostle), "That every tongue should confess that "Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." O how is the love of God to poor sinners illustriously, yea, astonishingly, displayed in Christ's exaltation. When, to shew the complacency and delight, which he took in our recovery, he hath openly declared to the world, that his exalting Christ to all that glory, such as no mere creature ever was, or can be exalted to, was bestowed upon him as a reward for that work, that most grateful work of our redemption, Phil. ii. 9. Wherefore God also hath *highly exalted him*; there is an "emphatical pleonasm in that word," our English is too flat to deliver out the elegancy of the original, it is *super-exaltation*. The Syriac renders it, "he hath multiplied his "sublimity." The Arabic, "he hath heightened him with an "height." Justin, "he hath famously exalted him." Higher he cannot raise him, a greater argument of his high satisfaction and content in the recovery of poor sinners cannot be given. For this, therefore, God the Father shall have glory and honour ascribed to him in heaven to all eternity.

Now this singular exaltation of Jesus Christ, as it properly respects his human nature, which alone is capable of advancement; for, in respect of his divine nature, he never ceased to be the Most High. So it was done to him as a common person, and as the Head of all believers, their Representative in this as well as in his other works. God therein shewing what, in due time, he intends to do with the persons of his elect, after they, in conformity to Christ, have suffered a while. Whatever God the Father intend-

* Ὑπερψύχωσε, *Pleonasmus emphaticus*, Hieron. *Multiplicavit sublimitatem ejus* Arab. *Sublimitate sublimavit eum*, Syr. *Insigniter extulit*, Justin. M. *Secundum eandem naturam dicitur exaltatus, secundum quam humilitatus fuit.* Zanch.

eth to do in us, or for us, he hath first done it to the person of our *Representative, Jesus Christ*. And this, if you observe, the scriptures carry in very clear and plain expressions, through all the degrees and steps of Christ's exaltation, viz. his *resurrection, ascension, session* at the right-hand of God, and returning to judge the world; of which I purpose to speak distinctly in the following sermons.

He arose from the dead as a public person, Col. iii. 1. "If ye then be risen with Christ," saith the apostle, so that the saints have communion and fellowship with him in his resurrection.

He ascended into heaven, as a public person, for so it is said in Eph. ii. 6. "He hath raised us up," or exalted us together with Christ. He sits at God's right-hand, as a common person, for so it follows in the next clause, "and hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." We sit there in our Representative. And when he shall come again to judge the world, the saints shall come with him. So it is prophesied, Zech. xiv. 5. "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." And as they come with Christ from heaven, so they shall sit on thrones with him, judging by way of suffrage. They shall be assessors with the Judge, 1 Cor. vi. 2. This deserves a special remark, that all this honour is given to Christ, as our Head and Representative, for thence results abundance of comfort to the people of God. Carry it therefore along with you in your thoughts, throughout the whole of Christ's advancement. Think when you shall hear that Christ is risen from the dead, and is in all that glory and authority in heaven, how sure the salvation of his redeemed is. "For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Surely, it cannot be supposed, but "he is able to save to the uttermost, all them that come to God by him; seeing he ever lives to make intercession," Heb. vii. 25. Think how safe the people of God in this world are, whose Head is in heaven. It was a comfortable expression of one of the fathers, encouraging himself and others with this truth in a dark day; "Come, (said he) why do we tremble thus, Do we not see our head above water *?" If he live, believers cannot die, John xiv. 19. "Because I live, ye shall live also."

And let no man's heart suggest a suspicious thought to him, that this wonderful advancement of Christ may cause him to forget his poor people, groaning here below under sin and misery. For the temper and disposition of his faithful and tender heart, is not changed with his condition. He bears the same respect to us as

* *Nonne videmus caput nostrum super aquas.* Greg.

when he dwelt among us. For indeed he there lives and acts upon our account, Heb. vii. 25. 1 John ii. 1, 2.

And how seasonable and comfortable will the meditations of Christ's exaltation be to thee, O believer, when sickness hath wasted thy body, withered its beauty, and God is bringing thee to the dust of death! Ah! think then, that that "vile body shall be conformed to the glorious body of Christ," Phil. iii. 21. As God hath glorified, and highly exalted his Son, "whose form was marred more than any man's;" so will he exalt thee also. I do not say, to a parity, or equality, in glory with Christ, for, in heaven he will be discerned and distinguished, by his peculiar glory, from all the angels and saints; as the sun is known by its excellent glory from the lesser stars. But we shall be conformed to this glorious Head, according to the proportion of members. O whither will love mount the believer in that day!

Having spoken thus much of Christ's exalted state, to cast some general light upon it, and engage your attentions to it, I shall now, according to the degrees of this his wonderful exaltation, briefly open it, under the fore-mentioned heads, viz. his resurrection, ascension, session at the Father's right-hand, and his return to judge the world.

SERMON XXXIX.

Wherein the Resurrection of CHRIST, with its influences upon the Saints Resurrection, is clearly opened, and comfortably applied, being the first Step of his Exaltation.

MATTH. xxviii. 6.

He is not here; for he is risen, as he said: come, see the place where the Lord lay.

WE have finished the doctrine of Christ's humiliation, wherein the Sun of righteousness appeared to you, as a setting sun, gone out of sight; but as the sun when it is gone down to us, begins a new day in another part of the world, so Christ, having finished his course, and work in this world, rises again, and that, in order to the acting another glorious part of his work in the world above. In his death, he was upon the matter totally eclipsed; but in his resurrection, he begins to recover his light and glory again. God never intended that the darling of his soul should be lost in an obscure sepulchre. An angel descends from heaven, to roll