

## SERMON XXII.

## The third preparative Act of Christ for his own Death.

LUKE xxii. 41, 42, 43, 44.

*And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

**T**HE hour is now almost come, even that hour of sorrow, which Christ had so often spoken of. Yet a little, a very little while, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. He hath affectionately recommended his children to his Father. He hath set his house in order, and ordained a memorial of his death to be left with his people, as you have heard. There is but one thing more to do, and then the tragedy begins. He recommended us, he must also recommend himself by prayer to the Father; and when that is done, he is ready, let Judas with the black guard come when they will.

This last act of Christ's preparation for his own death, is contained in this scripture; wherein we have an account, 1. Of his prayer. 2. Of the agony attending it. 3. His relief in that agony, by an angel that came and comforted him.

1. The prayer of Christ; in a praying posture he will be found when the enemy comes; he will be taken upon his knees: he was pleading hard with God in prayer, for strength to carry him through this heavy trial, when they came to take him. And this prayer was a very remarkable prayer, both for the *solitariness* of it, he withdrew about a stone's cast, verse 41. from his dearest intimates, no ear but his Father's shall hear what he had now to say; and for the *vehemency* and importunity of it; these were those *κραυγαι*, Heb. v. 7. strong cries that he poured out to God in the days of his flesh. And for the *humility* expressed in it; he fell upon the ground, he rolled himself as it were in the dust, at his Father's feet. And in divers other respects it was a very remarkable prayer, as you will hear anon.

2. This scripture gives you also an account of the agony of Christ, as well as of his prayer, and that a most strange one: such as in all respects never was known before in nature. It was a sweat as it had been blood, which, [as] is neither an hyperbole, as some would make it: nor yet a similitude of blood, as others fancy,

but a real bloody sweat. For so [as] is sometimes taken for the very thing itself, as John i. 14. And as a \* worthy divine of our own well notes, that if the Holy Ghost had only intended it for a similitude or resemblance, he would rather have expressed it, *as it were drops of water*, than *as it were drops of blood*, for sweat more resembles water than blood.

3. You have here his relief in this his agony, and that by an angel dipatched post from heaven to comfort him. The Lord of angels now needed the comfort of an angel. It was time to have a little refreshment when his face and body too stood as full of drops of blood, as the drops of dew are upon the grass. Hence we note,

Doct. *That our Lord Jesus Christ was praying to his Father in an extraordinary agony, when they came to apprehend him in the garden.*

To open and explain this last act of preparation on Christ's part for our use. I shall at this time speak of these particulars. *First*, The *place* where he prayed. *Secondly*, The *time* when he prayed. *Thirdly*, The *matter* of his prayer. And *lastly*, The *manner* how he prayed.

*First*, For the circumstance of *place* †, where was this last and remarkable prayer poured out to God? It was in the garden: St. Matthew tells us it was called Gethsemane, which signifies, (as Pareus on the place observes) “the valley of fatness, *viz.* of olives, “which grew in that valley or garden most plentifully.” This garden lay very near to the city of Jerusalem. The city had twelve gates, five of which were on the east side of it, among which the most remarkable were the *fountain gate*, so called of the fountain Siloe. Through this gate Christ rode into the city in triumph, when he came from Bethany, the other was the *sheep-gate*, so called from the multitude of sheep driven in at it for the sacrifice, for it stood close by the temple; and close by this gate was the garden called Gethsemane, where they apprehended Christ, and led him through this gate, as a sheep to the slaughter. Betwixt this garden and the city, ran the brook Cedron, which rose from a hill upon the south, and ran upon the east part of the city, between Jerusalem and the mount of olives: and over this brook Christ passed into the garden, John xviii. 1. To which the Psalmist alludes in Psal. cx. 7. “He shall drink of the brook in the “way; therefore he shall lift up the head.” For this brook running

\* Mr. Ambrose, Looking to Jesus.

† *In locum Gethsemane, Gr. Γεθσημανη; reddunt villam, vel prædium dictum Gethsemane, Heb. ירת שנים* quod sonat valem pinguium, nempe clearum quæ nimirum istic uberius proveniebant. Par.

through the valley of Jehosaphat, that fertile soil, together with the filth of the city which it washed away, gave the waters a black tincture, and so fitly resembled those grievous sufferings of Christ, in which he tasted both the wrath of God and men.

Now, Christ went not into this garden to hide, or shelter himself from his enemies. No, that was not his end; for if so, it had been the most improper place he could have chosen, it being the accustomed place where he was wont to pray, and a place well known to Judas, who was now coming to seek him, as you may see, John xviii. 2. "And Judas, which betrayed him, knew the place, for Jesus oft times resorted thither with his disciples." So that he repairs thither, not to shun, but to meet the enemy; to offer himself as a prey to the wolves, which there found him, and laid hold upon him. He also resorted thither for an hour or two of privacy before they came, that he might there freely pour out his soul to God. So much for the circumstances of place where he prayed.

*Secondly*, We shall consider the *time* when he entered into this garden to pray\*: and it was in the shutting in of the evening: for it was after the passover and the supper were ended. Then (as Matthew hath it, chap. xxvi. 36.) Jesus went over the brook into the garden, betwixt the hours of nine and ten in the evening, as it is conjectured; and so he had betwixt two and three hours time to pour out his soul to God. For it was about midnight that Judas and the soldiers came and apprehended him there. So that it being immediately before his apprehension, it shews us in what frame and posture Christ desired to be found: and by it he left us an excellent pattern, what we ought to do, when imminent dangers are near us, even at the door. It becomes a soldier to die fighting, "and a minister to die preaching †," and a Christian to die praying. If they come, they will find Christ upon his knees, wrestling mightily with God by prayer. He never spent one moment of the time of his life idly; but these were the last moments he had to live in the world, and here you may see how they were filled up and employed.

*Thirdly*, Next let us consider the *matter* of his prayer, or the things about which he poured out his soul to God in the garden, that evening. And verse 42. informs us what that was: he prayed, saying, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." These words

\* At that time, viz. at the approach of the evening, after the celebration of the Passover and Eucharist, having given thanks, they sang a bymn. *Par. in locum.*

† *Oportet theologum concionantem mori.*

are involved in many difficulties, as Christ himself was when he uttered them. By the *cup*, understand that portion of sorrows then to be distributed to him by his Father. Great afflictions and bitter trials are frequently expressed, in scripture, under the metaphor of a cup. So, that dreadful storm of wrath upon the wicked, in Psal. xi. 6. "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and a horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup," *i. e.* the punishment allotted to them by God for their wickedness. And an exceeding great misery, by a large or deep cup. So Ezek. xxiii. 32, 33. "Thou shalt drink of thy sister's cup deep and large: thou shalt be laughed to scorn, and had in derision; it containeth much. Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, with the cup of astonishment and desolation, with the cup of thy sister Samaria." And when an affliction is compounded of many bitter ingredients, stinging and aggravating considerations and circumstances, then it is said to be mixed. "In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red, (noting a bloody trial) it is full of mixture, and he poureth out the same, but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out and drink them:" *i. e.* they shall have the worst part of the judgment for their share. Thus, afflictions and calamities are expressed by the metaphor of a cup; great calamities by a deep and large cup; afflictions compounded of many aggravating circumstances, by a mixed cup. And from the effect it hath on those that must drink it, is called a cup of trembling, Isa. lvii. 17. "Thou hast drunken at the hand of the Lord, the cup of his fury, the dregs of the cup of trembling." Such a cup now was Christ's cup; a cup of wrath; a large and deep cup, that contained more wrath than ever was drunk by any creature, even the wrath of an infinite God. A mixed cup, mixed with God's wrath and man's in the extremity. And all the bitter aggravating circumstances that ever could be imagined; great consternation and amazement; this was the portion of his cup.

By the *passing of the cup* from him, understand his exemption from suffering that dreadful and horrid wrath of God, which he foresaw to be now at hand. For as the coming of the cup to a man, doth, in scripture-phrase, note his bearing and suffering of evil, as you find it, Lam. iv. 21. "Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz; the cup also shall pass through unto thee; thou shalt be drunken, and make thyself naked;" which is an ironical reproof of the Idumeans, the deadly enemies of the Jews, who wickedly insulted over them, when the cup was at their mouths: as if the Lord had said, you have laughed and jeered at my people, when my hand was on

them; you rejoiced to see their calamities: well, make yourselves merry still if you can, the cup shall pass through unto thee; thy turn is coming, then laugh if thou canst. So, on the contrary, the passing away of the cup, notes freedom from, or our escaping of those miseries. And so Christ's meaning, in this conditional request, is, Father, if it be thy will, excuse me from this dreadful wrath; my soul is amazed at it. Is there no way to shun it? Cannot I be excused? Or if it be possible, spare me. This is the meaning of it. But then here is the difficulty, how Christ, who knew God had from everlasting determined he should drink it, who had compacted and agreed with him in the covenant of redemption so to do, who came (as himself acknowledges) for that end into the world, John xviii. 37. who foresaw this hour all along, and professed when he spake of this bloody baptism with which he was to be baptized, that he was "straitened till it was accomplished," Luke xii. 50. How (I say) to reconcile all this with such a petition, that now when the cup was delivered to him, it might pass, or he excused from suffering; this is the knot, this is the difficulty.

What! did he now repent of his engagement? Was all he said before but a flourish, before he saw the enemy? Doth he now begin to wish to be disengaged, and that he had never undertaken such a work? Is that the meaning of it? No, no, Christ never repented of his engagement to the Father, never was willing to let the burden lie on us, rather than on himself; there was not such a thought in his holy and faithful heart; but the resolution of this doubt depends upon another distinction, which will clear his meaning in it.

1st, You must distinguish of prayers. Some are *absolute* and peremptory; and so to have prayed that the cup might pass, would have been chargeable with such absurdities, as were but now mentioned: others are *conditional* and submissive prayers, "If it may be, if the Lord please." And such was this, if you be willing; if not, I will drink it. But you will say, Christ knew what was the mind of God in that case; he knew what transactions had of old been betwixt his Father and him; and therefore though he did not pray absolutely, yet it is strange he would pray conditionally it might pass. Therefore in the

2d Place, you must distinguish of the *natures* according to which Christ acted. He acted sometimes as God, and sometimes as man. Here he acted according to his human nature; simply expressing and manifesting in this request the reluctancy it had at such sufferings: wherein he shewed himself a true man, in shunning that which is destructive to his nature.

As Christ had two distinct natures, so two distinct wills. And

(as one well observes) in the life of Christ, there was an intermixture of power and weakness, of the divine glory, and human frailty. At his birth a star shone, but he was laid in a manger. The devil tempted him in the wilderness, but there angels ministered to him. As man he was deceived in the fig-tree, but as God he blasted it. He was caught by the soldiers in the garden, but first made them fall back. So here, as man he feared and shunned death; but as God-man he willingly submitted to it.

“It was (as \* Deodatus well expresses it) a purely natural desire, mere man, by which for a short moment he apprehended and shunned death and torments; but quickly recalled himself to obedience, by a deliberate will, to submit himself to God. And besides that, this desire was but conditional, under the will of God, accepted by Christ; but from the contemplation of which he was a while diverted by the extremity of horrors; therefore there was no sin in it, but only a short conflict of nature, presently overcome by reason, and a firm will: or a small suspension, quickly overcome by a most strong resolution. Finally, this sacred deliberation in Jesus was not made simply, or in an instant, but with a short time, and with a counterpoise, which is the natural property of the soul in its motions, and voluntary actions.”

In a word, as there was nothing of sin in it, it being a pure and sinless affection of nature; so there was much good in it, and that both as it was a part of his satisfaction for our sin, to suffer inwardly such fears, tremblings, and consternations: and as it was a clear evidence, that he was in all things made like unto his brethren, except sin. And lastly, as it serves notably to express the grievousness and extremity of Christ's sufferings, whose very prospect and appearance, at some distance, was so dreadful to him.

If the learned reader desire to see what is further said on this point, let him read what the judicious and learned Parker, in his excellent book *de descensu* †, hath collected upon that case.

*Fourthly*, Let us consider the *manner* how he prayed, and that was,

1. *Solitarily*, He doth not here pray in the audience of his disciples, as he had done before, but went at a distance from them. He had now private business to transact with God. He left some of them at the entering into the garden; and for Peter, James, and John, that went farther with him than the rest, he bids them remain there, while he went and prayed ‡. He did not desire

\* *Deodati Annot.* in Mat. xxvi. 59.

† *Parker de descensu*, lib. 3. p. 192, &c.

‡ He seeks relief to grief, by prayer, in which, that he might be more at liberty, he retires a little.

them to pray with him, or for him; no, he must tread the wine-press alone. Nor will he have them with him, possibly lest it should discourage them to see and hear how he groaned, sweat, trembled, and cried, as one in an agony, to his Father.

Reader, there are times and cases, when a Christian would not be willing, that the dearest and most intimate friend he hath in the world, should be privy to what passes betwixt him and his God.

2. It was an *humble* prayer; that is evident by the postures into which he cast himself: sometimes kneeling, and sometimes prostrate upon his face. He creeps in the very dust, lower he cannot fall; and his heart was as low as his body. He is meek and lowly indeed.

3. It was a *reiterated* prayer; he prays, and then returns to the disciples, as a man in extremity turns every way for comfort: so Christ prays, "Father, let this cup pass," but in that the Father hears him not; though as to support he was heard. Being denied deliverance by his Father, he goes and bemoans himself to his pensive friends, and complains bitterly to them, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." He would ease himself a little, by opening his condition to them; but alas, they rather increase than ease his burden. For he finds them asleep, which occasioned that gentle reprehension from him, Mat. xxvi. 40. "What, could you not watch with me one hour?" What, not watch with me? Who may expect it from you more than I? Could you not watch? I am going to die for you, and cannot you watch with me? What! cannot you watch with me one hour? Alas! what if I had required great matters from you? What: not an hour, and that the parting hour too! Christ finds no ease from them, and back again he goes to that sad place, which he had stained and purpled with a bloody sweat, and prays to the same purpose again. O how he returns upon God over and over, as if he resolved to take no denial! But, however, considering it must be so, he sweetly falls in with his Father's will, *Thy will be done*.

4. And lastly, It was a prayer accompanied with a strange and wonderful agony: so saith verse 44. "and being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Now he was red indeed in his apparel, as one that trod the wine-press. "It was not a faint thin dew, but a clotted sweat \*, *θρομβου αιματος*," clodders of blood falling upon the ground. It is disputed whether this sweat was natural or preternatural. That some in extremity have sweat a kind of bloody thin dew, is affirmed. I remember † Thuanus

\* Non fuit sudor diaphoreticus, sed crassus et grumosus.

† Dux quidem indigno mortis motu adeo concussus in animo fuit, ut sanguineum sudorem oto corpore fudit. Thuan. lib. 11.

gives us two instances that come nearest to this, of any thing I ever observed or heard of. “The one was a captain, who by a cowardly and unworthy fear of death was so overwhelmed with anguish, that a kind of bloody dew or sweat stood on all his body. \* The other is of a young man condemned for a small matter to die by Sixtus V. who poured out tears of blood from his eyes, and sweat blood from his whole body.”

These are rare and strange instances, and the truth of them depends upon the credit of the relator; but certainly for Christ whose body had the most excellent crasis and temperament, to sweat clotted blood, or globules of blood, as some render it; and that in a cold night, when others needed a fire within doors to keep them warm, John xviii. 18. I say, for him to sweat such streams through his garments, falling to the ground on which he lay, must be concluded a preternatural thing. And indeed, it was not wonderful that such a preternatural sweat should stream from all parts of his body, if you do but consider what an extraordinary load pressed his soul at that time, even such as no mere man felt, or was able to stand under, even the wrath of a great and terrible God, in the extremity of it. “Who (saith the prophet Nahum, chap. i. 6.) can stand before his indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.”

The effects of this wrath, as it fell at this time upon the soul of Christ in the garden, are largely and very emphatically expressed by the several Evangelists who wrote this tragedy. Matthew tells us, his soul was “exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,” Matth. xxvi. 38. “The word † signifies beset with grief round about.” And it is well expressed by that phrase of the psalmist, “The sorrows of death compassed me about, the pains of hell got hold upon me.” Mark varies the expression, and gives it us in another word no less significant and full, Mark xiv. 33. “He began to be sore amazed and very heavy,” ‡ “Sore amazed, it imports so high a degree of consternation and amazement, as when the hair of the head stands up through fear.” Luke hath another expression for it in the text; he was *εν αγωνια*, *in an agony*. An agony is the labouring and striving of nature in extremity. And John gives it us in another expression, John xii. 27. “Now is my

\* *Juvenis ob levem casuum, a Sixto V. ad mortem damnatus, præ doloris vehementia, lacrymas cruentas sudasse, et sanguinem pro sudore e toto corpore mittere visus est.* Thuan. lib. 80.

† *Περίλωπος*, *undequaque tristis.* Beza.

‡ *Ἐκθαμβηθῆναι*, *medici vocant horripilationem: και ἀδημονεῖν*, *gravissime angabatur.* Beza.



“soul troubled.” The original word is a very full word. And it is conceived the Latins derive that word which signifies hell, from this, by which Christ’s troubles are here expressed. \* This was the load which oppressed his soul, and so straitened it with fear and grief, that his eyes could not vent or ease sufficiently by tears; but the innumerable pores of his body are set open, to give vent by letting out streams of blood. And yet all this while, no hand of man was upon him. This was but a prelude, as it were, to the conflict that was at hand. This bloody sweat in which he prayed, was but as the giving or sweating of the stones before a great rain. Now he stood as it were, arraigned at God’s bar, and had to do immediately with him. And you know “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” The uses of this follow in this order.

*Inference 1.* Did Christ pour out his soul to God so ardently in the garden, when the hour of his trouble was at hand? Hence we infer, *That prayer is a singular preparative for, and relief under, the greatest troubles.*

It is sweet, when troubles find us in the way of our duty. The best posture we can wrestle with afflictions in, is to engage them upon our knees. The naturalist tells us, if a lion find a man prostrate, he will do him no harm. Christ hastened to the garden to pray, when Judas and the soldiers were hastening thither to apprehend him. O! when we are nigh to danger it is good for us to draw nigh to our God. Then should we be urging that seasonable request to God, Psal. xxii. 11. “Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help.” Wo be to him, whom death or trouble finds afar off from God. And as prayer is the best preparative for troubles, so the choicest relief under them. Grievings are eased by groans. The heart is cooled and disburdened by spiritual evaporations. You know it is some relief if a man can pour out his complaint into the bosom of a faithful friend, though he can but pity him; how much more to pour out our complaints into the bosom of a faithful God, who can both pity and help us; Luther was wont to call prayers the leeches of his cares and sorrows; they suck out the bad blood. It is the title of Psal. cii. *A prayer for the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.* It is no small ease to open our hearts to God. When we are as full of grief, as Elihu was of matter, let us say as he did, Job xxxii. 19. “Behold, Lord, my heart is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst as new bottles. I will speak that I may be refreshed.”

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\* Τεταραχται, unde Tartarus, quia terret omnia.

To go to God when thou art full of sorrow, when thy heart is ready to burst within thee, as it was with Christ in this day of his trouble; and say, Father, thus and thus the case stands with thy poor child; and so and so it is with me; I will not go up and down complaining from one creature to another, it is to no purpose to do so; nor yet will I leave my complaint upon myself: but I will tell thee, Father, how the case stands with me; for to whom should children make their moan, but to their Father? Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me. What thinkest thou, reader, of this? Is it relieving to a sad soul? Yes, yes; if thou be a Christian that hast had any experience this way, thou wilt say there is nothing like it; thou wilt bless God for appointing such an ordinance as prayer, and say, Blessed be God for prayer: I know not what I should have done, nor how in all the world I should have waded through the troubles I have passed, if it had not been for the help of prayer,

*Inf. 2.* Did Christ withdraw from the disciples to seek God by prayer? Thence it follows, *That the company of the best men is not always seasonable.* Peter, James, and John, were three excellent men, and yet Christ saith to them, Tarry ye here, while I go and pray yonder. The society of men is beautiful in its season, and no better than a burden out of season. I have read of a good man, that when his stated time for closet-prayer was come, he would say to the company that were with him, whatever they were, *Friends, I must beg your excuse for a while, there is a friend waits to speak with me.* The company of a good man is good, but it ceases to be so, when it hinders the enjoyment of better company. One hour with God is to be preferred to a thousand days enjoyment of the best men on earth. If thy dearest friends in the world intrude unseasonably betwixt thee and thy God, it is neither rude nor unmannerly to bid them give place to better company; I mean, to withdraw from them, as Christ did from the disciples, to enjoy an hour with God alone. In public and private duties we may admit of the company of others to join with us; and if they be such as fear God, the more the better: but in secret duties, Christ and thou must whisper it over betwixt yourselves; and then the company of the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, that is as thine own soul, would not be welcome. "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet; and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret," Mat. vi. 6. It is as much as if Christ had said, See all clear; be sure to retire in as great privacy as may be; let no ear but God's hear what thou hast to say to him. This is at once a good note of sincerity, and a great help to spiritual liberty and freedom with God.

*Inf. 3.* Did Christ go to God thrice upon the same account?

Thence learn, *That Christians should not be discouraged, though they have sought God once and again, and no answer of peace comes.* Christ was not heard the first time, and he goes a second: he was not answered the second, he goes the third and last time, yet was not answered in the thing he desired, *viz.* that the cup might pass from him; and yet he hath no hard thoughts of God, but resolves his will into his Father's. If God deny you in the things you ask, he deals no otherwise with you than he did with Christ. "O my God (saith he) I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not; and in the night, and am not silent." Yet he justifies God, "but thou art holy," Psal. xxii. 2. Christ was not heard in the thing he desired, and yet heard in that he feared, Heb. v. 7.

The cup did not pass as he desired, but God upheld him, and enabled him to drink it. He was heard as to *support*, he was not heard as to *exemption* from suffering: his will was expressed conditionally; and therefore though he had not the thing he so desired, yet his will was not crossed by the denial. But now, when we have a suit depending before the throne of grace, and cry to God once and again, and no answer comes; how do your hands hang down, and your spirits wax feeble!

Then we complain with the church, Lam. iii. 8. "When I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayers; thou coverest thyself with a cloud, that our prayers cannot pass through." Then, with Jonah we conclude "we are cast out of his sight." Alas! we judge by sense according to what we see and feel; and cannot live by faith on God, when he seems to hide himself, put us off, and refuse our requests. It calls for an Abraham's faith, to "believe against hope, giving glory to God." If we cry, and no answer comes presently, our carnal reason draws a headlong hasty conclusion. Sure I must expect no answer: God is angry with my prayers: The seed of prayer hath lain so long under the clods, and it appears not; surely it is lost, I shall hear no more of it.

Our prayers may be heard, though their answer be for the present suspended. As David acknowledged, when he coolly considered the matter, Psal. xxxi. 22. "I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes; nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplication, when I cried unto thee." No, no, Christian; a prayer sent up in faith, according to the will of God, cannot be lost, though it be delayed. We may say of it as David said of Saul's sword, and Jonathan's bow, that they never returned empty.

*Inf. 4.* Was Christ so earnest in prayer, that he prayed himself into a very agony? *Let the people of God blush to think how unlike their spirits are to Christ, as to their prayer-frames.*

O what lively, sensible, quick, deep, and tender apprehensions and sense of those things about which he prayed, had Christ? Though he saw his very blood starting out from his hands, and his clothes died in it: yet being in an agony, he prayed the more earnestly. I do not say Christ is imitable in this; no, but his fervour in prayer is a pattern for us, and serves severely to rebuke the laziness, dulness, torpor, formality, and stupidity, that are in our prayers. How often do we bring the sacrifice of the dead before the Lord! how often do our lips move, and our hearts stand still! O how unlike Christ are we! his prayers were pleading prayers! full of mighty arguments and fervent affections. O that his people were in this more like him!

*Inf. 5.* Was Christ in such an agony before any hand of man was upon him, merely from the apprehensions of the wrath of God, with which he now contested? “Then surely it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; for our God “is a consuming fire.”

Ah, what is divine wrath, that Christ staggered when the cup came to him! Could not he bear, and dost thou think to bear it? Did Christ sweat clots of blood at it, and dost thou make light of it? Poor wretch, if it staggered him, it will confound thee. If it made him groan, it will make thee howl, and that eternally. Come, sinner, come; dost thou make light of the threatenings of the wrath of God against sin? Dost thou think there is no such matter in it, as these zealous preachers make of it? Come look here upon my text, which shews thee the face of the Son of God standing as full of purple drops under the sense and apprehension of it, as the drops of dew that hang upon the grass. Hark how he cries, “Father if it be possible, let this cup pass.” O any thing of punishment rather than this. Hear what he tells the disciples; “My soul, (saith he,) is sorrowful even to death: amazed, and very heavy.” Fools make a mock at sin, and the threatenings that lie against it.

*Inf. 6.* Did Christ meet death with such a heavy heart? *Let the hearts of Christians be the lighter for this, when they come to die.* The bitterness of death was all squeezed into Christ’s cup. He was made to drink up the very dregs of it, that so our death might be the sweeter to us. Alas! there is nothing now left in death that is frightful or troublesome, beside the pain of dissolution, that natural evil of it. I remember it is storied of one of the martyrs, that being observed to be exceeding jocund and merry when he came to the stake, one asked him, What was the reason his heart was so light, when death, (and that in such a terrible form too) was before him? O said he, my heart is so light at my death, because Christ’s was so heavy at his death.

*Inf.* 7. To conclude, what cause have all the saints to love their dear Lord Jesus with an abounding love? Christian, open the eyes of thy faith, and fix them upon Christ, in the posture he lay in the garden, drenched in his own blood; and see whether he be not lovely in these his dyed garments. He that suffered for us more than any creature could or did, may well challenge more love than all the creatures in the world. O what hath he suffered, and suffered upon thy account! it was thy pride, earthliness, sensuality, unbelief, hardness of heart, that laid on more weight in that day that he sweat blood.

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## SERMON XXIII.

The first Preparation for CHRIST'S Death, on his Enemies<sup>t</sup>  
Part, by the treason of *Judas*.

MATTH. xxvi. 47, 48, 49,

*And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude, with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail master; and kissed him.*

**T**HE former sermons give you an account how Christ improved every moment of his time, with busy diligence, to make himself ready for his death. He hath commended his charge to the Father, instituted the blessed memorial of his death, poured out his soul to God in the garden, with respect to the grievous sufferings he should undergo; and now he is ready, and waits for the coming of the enemies, being first in the field.

And think you that they were idle on their parts? No, no, their malice made them restless. They had agreed with Judas to betray him. Under his conduct, a band of soldiers was sent to apprehend him. The hour, so long expected, is come. For "while he yet spake," saith the text, "lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude, with swords and staves."

These words contain the first preparative act, on their part, for the death of Christ, even to betray him, and that by one of his own disciples. Now they execute what they had plotted, ver. 14, 15. And in this paragraph you have an account, 1. Of the traitor, who he was. 2. Of the treason, what he did. 3. Of the man-