

he was tried, and we like swine, grumbling or howling when we are tried. O get a Christ-like temper!

Sixthly, Is there any among you that stagger at the promises, through unbelief, that cannot rely upon a word of promise, because their own unbelieving hearts fill them with unworthy suspicions of the power, faithfulness, or willingness of God to perform them to them? O that such would *behold the Lamb of God*, as represented in this ordinance! Are not all the promises of God sealed to believers in the blood of the Lamb? Heb. ix. 17, 18, 19, 20. Are not all the promises of God, in Christ, 'Yea, and Amen, to all that are in him?' 2 Cor. i. 20. Or is there any thing put into any promise of greater value than the blood of the Lamb, that was shed to purchase it? Or is not the giving of Christ to die for us the accomplishment of the greatest promise that ever God made to us? And after the fulfilling thereof, what ground remains for any to doubt the fulfilling of lesser promises?

Lastly, Is there any among you that desire to get up your affections at this table, to have your hearts in a melting temper, to awaken and rouse up all the powers of your souls in so great an occasion for it as this? *Behold the Lamb of God!* and this will do it.

Christ calls off your eyes and thoughts from all other objects to himself; Isa. lxx. 11. 'I said, Behold me! behold me!' Fix the eye of faith here, and you will feel a pang quickly coming upon your hearts like that, Cant. ii. 5. "Stay me with flaggons, comfort me with apples; I am sick with love." Your eyes will affect your hearts; whilst you behold, your hearts will melt within you.



THE SIXTH

MEDITATION,

UPON ROM. viii. 32.

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him freely give us all things.

THIS scripture contains a most weighty argument to encourage and confirm the faith of Christians in the expectation of all spiritual and temporal mercies. It proceeds from the greater to the less affirmatively: he that delivered his Son for us, what can he deny us after such a gift? Every word hath its weight.

Did not God spare (i. e. abate) any thing which his justice could inflict upon his Son, his own Son, opposed here to his adopted sons, as being infinitely more excellent than they, and most dear to him above and beyond all others? but, on the contrary, delivered him up, how dear soever he was unto him, to humiliation, contradiction of sinners, to all sorrows and temptations, yea, to death, and that of the cross, and all this *for us, for us sinners, for us enemies to God, for us unlovely wretches*; “How shall he not with him freely give us all things?” How is it imaginable that God should withhold, after this, spirituals or temporals, from his people? How shall he not call them effectually, justify them freely, sanctify them thoroughly, and glorify them eternally? How shall he not clothe them, feed them, protect and deliver them?

Surely if he would not spare or abate to his own Son one stroke, one tear, one groan, one sigh, one circumstance of misery, it can never be imagined that ever he should, after this, deny or withhold from his people, for whose sakes all this was suffered, any mercies, any comforts, any privilege, spiritual or temporal, which is good for them, and needful to them. So that in the words we find, 1. A proposition. 2. An inference from it.

The proposition opens the severity of God’s justice to Christ; the inference declares the riches of his mercy to us in Christ.

1. We have here before us a proposition, containing the severity of divine justice towards Christ; and this is expressed two ways, viz.

1st, Negatively, he spared him not.

2dly, Affirmatively, he delivered him up for us.

1st, Negatively; *He spared not his own Son*. There is a threefold mercy of God, viz. Preventing mercy, which steps betwixt us and trouble: delivering mercy, which takes us out of the hand of trouble: and sparing mercy, which though it do not prevent nor deliver, yet it mitigates, allays, and graciously moderates our troubles; and though sparing mercy be desirable and sweet, yet it is the least and lowest sort of mercy that God exercises towards any. Though it be mercy to have the time of sufferings shortened, or one degree of suffering abated, yet these are the lowest and least effects of mercy; and yet these were denied Jesus Christ, when he stood in our room to satisfy for us: God spared not one drop, he abated not one degree of that wrath which Christ was to suffer for us.

2dly, Affirmatively; but on the contrary, *He delivered him up for us all*.

He delivered him, as a judge by sentence of law delivers up the prisoner to be executed. It is true Pilate delivered him up to be crucified, and he also gave himself for us: but betwixt God’s delivering, Pilate’s delivering, and his own, there is this difference to be observed; in God it was an act of highest justice; in Pilate an act of greatest wickedness; in himself, an act of wonderful obedience.

God, as by an act of highest justice, delivered him up *for us*. For

us, notes the vicegerency of his sufferings, not only for our good, as the final cause ; nor only for our sins, as the meritorious cause ; but for us, (i. e.) in our room, place, or stead according to 1 Pet. iii. 18. and 2 Cor. v. 14.

2. We have also here before us a most sweet and comfortable inference and conclusion from this proposition: If God have so delivered him, *how shall he not with him, freely give us all things?* For Christ comprehends all other mercies in himself ; therefore in giving him for us, all other mercies are necessarily with him given to us.

And these mercies the poorest, weakest believer in the world may warrantably expect from God ; for as God delivered him for us all, so the treasures of all spiritual and temporal mercies are thereby freely opened to us all, to the weak, as well as to the strong.

He saith not, Christ was delivered for all absolutely, but for us all ; i. e. all that believe, all that are elected and called ; in whose person it is manifest the apostle here speaks, as Paræus on the place well observes. Hence these two doctrinal conclusions fairly offer themselves.

Doct. 1. *That the rigour and severity of divine justice was executed upon Jesus Christ, when he suffered for us.*

Doct. 2. *That believers may strongly infer the greatest of mercies to themselves, from the severity of God's justice to Jesus Christ.*

I would willingly speak to both these points at this time, each affording such proper matter of meditation to us in such a season as this. To begin therefore with the first observation.

Doct. 1. *That the rigour and severity of divine justice was executed upon Jesus Christ, when he suffered for us ; God did not spare him.*

In Zech. xiii. 7. you have God's commission given to the sword of justice, to smite his own Son, and that without pity ; "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow ; smite the Shepherd," &c. And when this commission came to be executed upon Christ, the text tells us, *God did not spare him* ; all the vials of his wrath were poured out to the last drop.

Two things require our attention in this point : 1. Wherein the severity of justice to Christ appeared. 2. Why must justice be executed on him in such rigour and severity ? Why there could be no abatement, mitigation, or sparing mercy shewn him in that day ?

1. Wherein the severity of divine justice to Christ appeared ? And this will manifest itself in the consideration of the following particulars.

First, Let us consider what Jesus Christ suffered, and we shall see the severity of justice in his sufferings, for he suffered all kinds of miseries, and that in the most intense degree of them : His sufferings were from all hands, from heaven, earth, and hell ; from his enemies, who condemned him, buffeted him, reviled him, scourged, and crucified him ; from his own disciples and followers, one of whom perfidiously be-

trayed him, another openly denied him, and all in the hour of his greatest trouble forsook and abandoned him.

He suffered in his body the most exquisite torments: the cross was a cruel engine of torment, and more so to him than any other, by reason of the excellent *crasis* and *temperament* of his body, and his most acute and delicate sense, for, as the schoolmen truly say, he was *optime complexionatus*, of the most exact and exquisite complexion; and his senses remained acute and vigorous, no way blunted, during the whole time of his sufferings, but full of life and sense to the last gasp, as may be gathered from Mark xv. 39. "When the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God."

He suffered in his soul; yea, the sufferings of his soul were the very soul of his sufferings; he felt in his inner man the exquisite torments and inexpressible anguish of the wrath of God. Hence was that preternatural bloody sweat in the garden, and hence that heart-rending outcry upon the cross, *My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?*

In all which sufferings from heaven, from earth, from hell, from friends, from enemies, there was no allay or abatement of the least degree of misery. "God spared not his own Son, (saith the text) but delivered him up." Wherein the severity of divine justice to Jesus Christ, is displayed in these five remarkable considerations following.

First, God spared not. If mercy, pity, and forbearance might be expected from any hand, surely it might be God; he is the fountain of mercy; "That the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy," saith the apostle, James v. 11. The most melting and tender compassions of a mother to her sucking child, are but cruelty in comparison with divine tenderness and mercy; Isa. xlix. 15. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb! Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."

Can a woman, the more affectionate sex, forget her sucking child, her own child, (and not a nurse child) her only child, whilst it hangs on her breast, and, with the milk from her breast, draws love from her heart? Can such a thing as this be in nature! Possibly it may; some such cruel mothers may be found, but *yet I will not forget thee*, saith God. Though human corrupt nature may be so vitiated, yet from the divine nature, compassion and mercy are inseparable; it flows as waters flow from their fountain, only here it restrained itself, and let not out one drop to Jesus Christ, in the day of his sufferings: God, the God of mercy, spared not.

Secondly, God spared not, saith the text; i. e. he abated not any thing which justice could inflict. Christ was not spared one stroke, one tear, one groan, one drop, one sigh, one shame, one circum-

stance; no, not the least which justice could demand as satisfaction for man's sin.

There be divers kinds of mercy in God; there is in him preventing mercy, delivering mercy, and sparing mercy. Now sparing mercy, (as Mr. Caryl on Job well observes) is the lowest mercy of all the three; it is less mercy to be spared or abated some degree or circumstance of misery, than to have misery prevented by mercy's stepping in betwixt us and it: it is less also than to be wholly delivered out of the hand of misery: Either of these are greater acts of mercy, than to abate a degree, or shorten an hour of our trouble; the least abatement of any one circumstance of misery had been sparing mercy, though it had been but the least and lowest act of mercy; and yet even this was denied to Christ; he was not abated one minute of time, or the least degree of sorrow. God spared not.

Thirdly, He spared not his own Son, τὸν ἰδίον. So stiled *signanter*, his own, or his proper Son, in a special and peculiar manner, nearer and dearer to him than the angels, who are his sons by creation, Job i. 6. or any of the saints, who are his sons by grace, in the way of regeneration and adoption, John i. 12, 13. This was his own Son by nature, a Son of an higher rank and order, Psal. ii. 7. begotten in an ineffable manner, from all eternity, in his own divine essence; and so is his Son by nature, having the same essence and nature with the Father, being co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal with the Father.

No relation in nature is so intimate, strict and dear as this: our children, are not so much our own children, our bodies are not so much our own bodies, as Christ was God's own Son; and yet, though he were so dear to him, his other self, his express image, his own dear Son, *He spared him not: God spared not his own Son.*

Fourthly, And that which makes a further discovery of divine severity towards Jesus Christ, is this, that God spared not his own Son in the day of his greatest distress, when he cried to his Father in an agony, that if it were possible the cup might pass from him: For of that day, this scripture is mainly to be understood, the day when he fell to the ground and prayed, "That if it were possible the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee, take away this cup from me," Mark xiv. 35, 36. He beheld his own dear Son sweltering under the heaviest pressure of his wrath, sweating great drops of blood, crying, "If it be possible, let this hour, let this cup pass;" and yet it could not be granted. O the severity of God! he heard the cry of Ahab, and spared him; he heard the Ninevites cry, and spared them; he heard the cries of Hagar and Ishmael, and spared them; yea, he hears the young ravens when they cry, and feeds them; but, when his Son cried with the most vehement cry, that the cup might pass, he cannot be excused, he must drink it up, even the very dregs of the cup of trembling, and that to the last drop. O the justice and severity of God!

Fifthly, and lastly, Consider what the Father of mercies did instead of sparing the Son of his love, and the text will inform you that 'he delivered him up for us all.' So it is noted in Acts ii. 23. 'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.

There was a concession or permission to those wicked instruments that shed his blood, a loosing of the chain to those bandogs that compassed him about; such a concession as never was given them before; for till then they were tied up from perpetrating their wickedness; but now the restraints of Providence are taken away, and he is delivered unto their will; his own Father delivers him into the hands of cruelty. And thus you see wherein the severity of divine justice to Christ was manifest.

In the last place, let us see the ground and reason of this rigour and severity to Christ. Now, there are, among others, three special reasons why Christ could not be spared.

The honour of divine justice required, that he should suffer the utmost degree of punishment. It was meet that the rights of heaven should be vindicated to the full, and that the justice of God should have the last mite it could demand for satisfaction. And this was the special design and aim of God in the sufferings of Christ, as the apostle speaks, Rom. iii. 25, 26. It was 'to declare his righteousness;' and lest we should lose the emphatical word, it is doubled and repeated, 'to declare I say, at this time his righteousness.' And indeed herein God fully obtained his design; for never was justice so honoured before, to have such a person as the Son of God stand at its bar, and such a sum as his blood paid down at once for our discharge: so that justice triumphs as well as mercy, and one attribute is not robbed to pay another.

As it was necessary to God's satisfaction, so it was necessary to ours also. If the Lord Jesus had not made full payment to the utmost mite, we could never have had full satisfaction in our consciences, about that deep and dear concernment of our souls, the remission of sin. Man is a guilty and a suspicious creature, and hard to be brought to an entire confidence in the pardoning mercy of God. Yea, it is impossible to persuade a convinced conscience, of the possibility of remission, except you can also prove the fulness of divine satisfaction; for conscience requires as much to satisfy it, as God doth to satisfy him. If God be satisfied, then conscience can be satisfied too, and securely rest upon that ground; but if there be any doubt of that, there is no appeasing of an anxious and jealous conscience: greatly therefore hath God consulted our peace in the severity of his justice to Jesus Christ. 'Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,' Heb. xiii. 20. Let the words be weighed; he is stiled the God of peace, when he brought back Christ from

the dead: it was incensed justice that put him to death, and appeased justice that brought him back from the dead; and that which pacified God, is the only thing in the world that is able to satisfy the conscience of a sinner.

3. Therefore did God proceed with such rigour and severity with Jesus Christ, that thereby the demerit and evil of sin might be fully discovered to the world, and an everlasting caution left upon all hearts to beware of contracting new guilt. If justice had descended in a visible form, and hanged up millions of sinners in chains, it had not been such a warning as this against sin. Nay, let me say, the grievous and eternal torment that the damned suffer in hell, is not such a demonstration of the evil of sin as this is; for those torments are much unknown to men till they feel them; and when they begin to feel them, it is too late to be convinced or cautioned against sin then. But to see such a person as Christ exposed to the utmost severity of God's wrath for our sin, to see such things done in the green tree, may well make us cry out, "Lord, what will be done to the dry tree?" O the infinite evil of sin! O the inflexible severity of divine justice! It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

4. In a word; hereby Jesus Christ is endeared the more to his people, by suffering such great and hard things in their place and for their sakes. The extremity of his sufferings for us, commands the strength of his affection to us.

And thus you see the reasons of all this severity to Jesus Christ. God intended the sweetest mercies for you, and therefore prepared the bitterest sufferings for Christ: from his deep sufferings you may confidently conclude the best of mercies are designed for you; as you will hear in the prosecuting of the second doctrine, which, for dispatch, I purpose to handle as one use of this point now before me.

O the admirable and astonishing love of God to us poor worms of the earth, to deliver up his own Son into the hands of his enemies, that thirsted for his blood! Long had they been restrained from satisfying their wickedness, and executing their malice, till now; and this was the hour which he often spake of, 'My hour is not yet come.' But, oh! what a dismal hour was it when it did come, when Providence let loose both devils and men upon Christ, delivered him over to the will of his enemies! And this was not all; Christ was not only delivered up into the hands of the worst of men, but, which was much more terrible, into the severe hands of divine justice, to grapple with the pure, unmixed, and unallayed wrath of the great and terrible God.

Lastly, We will improve this point by a double use, by way of information and exhortation.

Use 1. Of information.

First, The severity of God's justice to Jesus Christ informs us what a dreadful evil sin is, which so incenses the wrath of God even

against his own Son, when he bare our sins, and stood before the bar of God as our surety.

Come hither hard hearts (hard indeed if this cannot break them;) you complain, you cannot see the evil of sin, so as to be deeply humbled for it: fix your eyes a while here, and intently consider the point in hand: suppose you saw a tender and pitiful father come into open court with fury in his face, to charge his own, his only, and his most beloved Son, and to prosecute him to death, and nothing able to satisfy him but his blood, and be well pleased when he sees it shed; would you not say, Oh! what horrid evil hath he done! It must be some deep wrong, some heinous crime that he is guilty of, else it could never be that his own father could forget his bowels of pity and mercy. Yet thus did the wrath of God break forth against his dear Son, when he stood before the bar, as our surety, charged with the guilt of our sins.

Secondly, Learn hence what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. Well might Luther cry out, *Nolo Deum absolutum, Let me have nothing to do with an absolute God.* Wo to them that stand before God in their own persons, without Christ, how will justice handle them! 'For if these things were done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry tree?' Luke xxiii. 31. Did the Son of God fear, tremble, sweat clots of blood? Did he stand amazed, and fall into such an agony of soul when he drank that cup, which he knew in a few hours he should drink up, and then never taste the bitterness of it more? How sad is their case that must drink of that cup for ever, a cup that hath eternity to the bottom!

Thirdly, How incomprehensible and ravishing is the love of God to men, that would rather be so severe to Jesus Christ, the darling of his soul, than make us the objects of his wrath for ever? Which of you (though there be infinitely less tenderness in your hearts than God's) would lay your hands upon a child, the worst child you have, and put him to death for the sake of the best friend you have in the world? but God with his own hand delivered his Son, his only Son, that from everlasting was the delight of his soul, who never offended him, to death, the most cursed and cruel death, and all this for enemies: how unspeakable is this love, and past finding out!

Fourthly, Did not God spare his own Son? then let none of us spare our own sins. Sin was that sword which pierced Christ: O let sorrow for sin pierce your hearts! If you spare sin, God will not spare you, Deut. xxix. 20. We spare sin when we faintly oppose it, when we excuse, cover and defend it, when we are impatient under just rebukes and reproofs for it; but all kindness to sin is cruelty to our own souls.

Fifthly, and lastly, If God did not spare Christ, certainly he intends to spare believers for his sake.

The surety could not be spared, that the principal might be spared for ever. If God had spared him, he could not have spared us; if

he afflicts his people, it is not for satisfaction to himself, but profit to us, Heb. xii. 10. Should God spare the rod of affliction, it would not be for our advantage; so many sanctified afflictions as are spared or abated, so many mercies and spiritual advantages are withheld from us. But as for those strokes of justice that are the effects of God's vindictive wrath, they shall never be felt by believers for ever. All the wrath, all the curse, all the gall and wormwood was squeezed into Christ's cup, and not one drop left to imbitter ours.

Use 2. Of Exhortation.

Did not God spare his own Son, but give him up to the death for us all! Then possess your hearts fully in the assurance of this great truth, *That the greatest and best of mercies shall not be denied or withheld from you, if you be in Christ*; lay it down as a sure conclusion of faith, and build up your hope and comfort upon it. This takes in the second observation; and surely never was any truth better fortified, never any inference more strongly inferred. Henceforth ye may infer temporal, spiritual, and eternal mercies; all must be yours, if you be Christ's, 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23. O, make sure that Christ is yours, and never hesitate at any other mercy! For,

First, God hath certainly a value and esteem for his own Son infinitely above all other things: he is his own Son, his dear Son, Col. i. 13. the *Beloved*, Eph. i. 6. the *delight of his soul*, Isa. xlii. 1. Nothing is valued by God at that rate that Christ is valued. If therefore he spare not the most excellent mercy, but parts with the very darling of his soul for us, how shall he deny, or withhold, any lesser inferior mercy? It is not to be imagined, for he is *the mercy*, emphatically so called, Luke i. 72.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is a comprehensive mercy, including all other mercies in himself; he is the tree of life, all other mercies are but the fruits growing on him; he is the *sun of righteousness*; and whatever comfort, spiritual or natural, refreshes your souls or bodies, is but a beam from that sun, a stream from that fountain. If then God part with Christ to you, and for you, he will not withhold other mercies; he will not give the whole tree, and deny an apple; bestow the fountain itself, and deny you the streams. All spiritual mercies are in him, and given with him; Eph. i. 3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." All temporals are in him, and given with him, Matth. vi. 33. they are additional to that great mercy.

Thirdly, If God spared not Christ, the best mercy, but delivered him up for us all when we were his enemies, then certainly he will not deny lesser mercies when we are reconciled and made friends to him. And this is the forcible reason of the apostle, which even compels assent; Rom. v. 9. "Much more, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." In a word,

Fourthly, and lastly, If it were the very design and intention of God in not sparing his own Son, to open thereby a door for all mercies to be let in upon us, then it is not imaginable he should withhold them: he will not lose his design, nor lay so many stripes upon Christ in vain: some shall surely have the benefit of it, and none so capable as believers.

When God spared not his own Son, this was the design of it; and could you know the thoughts of his heart, they would appear to be such as these:

I will now manifest the fierceness of my heart to Christ, and the fulness of my love to believers. The pain shall be his, that the ease and rest may be theirs; the stripes his, and the healing balm issuing from them, theirs; the condemnation his, and the justification theirs; the reproach and shame his, and the honour and glory theirs; the curse his, and the blessing theirs; the death his, and the life theirs; the vinegar and gall his, the sweet of it theirs. He shall groan, and they shall triumph; he shall mourn, that they may rejoice; his heart shall be heavy for a time, that theirs may be light and glad for ever; he shall be forsaken, that they may never be forsaken; out of the worst of miseries to him, shall spring the sweetest of mercies to them. O grace! grace beyond conception of the largest mind, the expression of the tongues of angels!

THE SEVENTH
MEDITATION,

UPON MARK ix. 24.

And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.

THE occasion of these words is to be gathered from the context: and briefly it was this: A tender father brings a possessed child to Christ to be cured; with *Si potes?* a doubting question, "If thou canst do any thing? have compassion upon us, and help us:" Words importing much natural affection and tender love to his child; "Have compassion [upon us,] and [help us.]" If the child be sick, the parent is not well; what touches the child, is felt by his father.

And as they import his natural affection to his child, so also his own spiritual disease, or the weakness of his faith. His child was