

own wings; or to a man, to eat the most pleasant food when he is an hungry; "I have rejoiced (saith David,) in the way of thy commandments, as much as in all riches," Psal. cxix. 14.

And as to sufferings for Christ, they should not be grievous to Christians, that know how Christ came from the bosom of the Father to die for them. What have we to leave or lose, in comparison with him? What are our sufferings to Christ's? Alas, there is no compare; there was more bitterness in one drop of his sufferings, than in a sea of ours.

To conclude, Your delight and readiness in the paths of obedience, is the very measure of your sanctification.

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THE NINTH  
MEDITATION,

UPON ZECH. xii. part of ver. 10.

*And they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced: and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son; and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.*

**T**HIS promise is confessed to have a special respect to the Jews conversion to Christ: It was in part accomplished in the apostles days, Acts ii. 37. yet that was but a specimen or handsel, of what shall be, when the body of that nation shall be called.

But yet it cannot be denied, that all Christians find the same piercing sorrows, and wounding sense of sin, when God awakens them by convictions, and brings them to see the evil of sin, and the grace of Christ, that is here expressed concerning them at their conversion.

The words present us with three very remarkable particulars in evangelical repentance; viz.

*First,* The spring and principle of it.

*Secondly,* The effects and fruits of it.

*Thirdly,* The depth and measure of it.

*First,* The spring and principle of repentance, expressed in these words, *They shall look upon me, whom they have pierced.* This looking upon Christ, is an act of faith; for so it is described in scripture, John vi. 40. Isa. xlv. 22. and it respects Christ crucified, as its proper object: Yea, and that by them, not only as their progenitors involved them in that guilt, by entailing it on them, but as their own sins were

the meritorious cause of his *death* and *sufferings*; *they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced.*

*Secondly*, The effects and fruits of such an aspect of faith upon Christ, is here also noted; *They shall mourn and be in bitterness*: i. e. it shall melt and thaw them into godly sorrow; it shall break their hard and stony hearts in pieces: The eye of faith shall affect their hearts. For indeed, evangelical sorrows are hearty and undissembled tears, dropping out of the eye of faith.

*Thirdly, and lastly*, The depth and measure of their sorrow is here likewise noted. And it is compared with the greatest and most piercing sorrows men are acquainted with in this world, even the sorrow of a tender-hearted Father, mourning over a dead son, yea, an only son, and his first-born; than which no earthly sorrow is more penetrating and sharp; Jer. vi. 26. Hence the note will be,

*Doct. That the sufferings of Christ are exceedingly powerful, to melt believers' hearts into godly sorrow.*

The eye of faith is a precious eye; and according to its various aspects upon Christ, it produceth various effects upon the hearts of men. Eyeing Christ as our complete righteousness; so it pacifies and quiets the heart: Eyeing him as our pattern; so it directs and regulates our actions: Eyeing him as a sacrifice offered up to divine justice for our sin; so it powerfully thaws the heart, and melts the affections.

By meltings, I do not only understand tears; as if they only were expressive of all spiritual sorrow: For it is possible, the waters of sorrow may run deep in the heart, when the eye cannot yield a drop.

There be two things in repentance; trouble and tears. The first is essential, the last contingent. The first flows from the influence of faith upon the soul; the last much depends upon the temper and constitution of the body. It is a mercy, when our tears can flow from a heart filled with sorrow for sin, and love to Christ; yet it often falls out, that there is an heavy heart, where the eyes are dry. But that there is efficacy in faith to melt the heart, by looking upon the sufferings of Christ for sin, is undoubted: And how it becomes so powerful an instrument to this end, I will shew you in the following particulars.

*First*, Faith eyes the dignity of the person of Christ, who was pierced for us; how excellent and glorious a person he is. In the captivity, it was for a lamentation, that "princes were hanged up by the hands, and the faces of elders were not honoured," Lam. v. 12. We read also the lamentation of David, 2 Sam. iii. 38. as he followed Abner's hearse, "A prince, and a great man, is fallen in Israel to-day."

But what was Abner, and what were the princes of Israel to the Son of God? Lo, here, by faith, the believer sees the Prince of the kings of the earth, the only begotten of the Father, equal to God, in nature and dignity, He, whom all the angels worship, hanging dead

upon the cursed tree. Faith sees royal blood, the blood of God poured out by the sword of justice, for satisfaction and reconciliation; and this cannot but deeply affect the believing soul.

*Secondly*, Faith represents the severity of divine justice to Jesus Christ, and the extremity of his sufferings; and this sight is a melting sight.

The apostle tells us, Gal. iii. 13. he was made *κατάρα*, a curse and execration for us. It relates to the kind and manner of his death upon the cross, which was the death of a slave; *servile supplicium*: A freeman was privileged from that punishment. It looks upon, and well considers the sad plight and condition Christ was in, in the days of his humiliation for us. It is said of him, Matth. xxvi. 28. He was *Περγυπτος*, *undequaque tristis*, surrounded with griefs; exactly answerable to his name, Isa. liii. 3. *a man of sorrows*. Let him look which way he would, outward or inward, upward or downward, to friends or enemies; he could behold nothing but sorrow, and what might increase his misery. Another *evangelist* saith, he was *sore amazed*; Mark xiv. 33. *Ἐθαμβήσασαι*: It notes such a consternation, as makes the hair of the head stand upright; *Horripilatio*. A third tells us, his *soul was troubled*, John xii. 27. *ἡ ψυχὴ μὲν ταρασσάται*, *unde tartarus*, a word from whence hell is derived; and denoting the anguish and troubles of them that are in that place of torment.

And the fourth tells us, he was in an agony; Luke xxiii. 44. all expressing in several emphatical notions and metaphors, the extremity of Christ's anguish and torment. This cannot but greatly affect and break the believer's heart.

*Thirdly*, But then that which most affects the heart, is Christ's undergoing all this, not only in love to us, but in our room and stead. He suffered not for any evil he had done, for there was no guile found in his mouth, Isa. liiii. 4, 5. But the just suffered for the unjust, 1 Pet. iii. 18. It was for me, a vile, wretched, worthless sinner. It was my pride, my earthliness, the hardness of my heart, the corruption of my nature, the innumerable evils of my life, that brought him down to the dust of death: 'He was made sin for us, who knew no sin,' 2 Cor. v. 21.

Who can believingly eye Christ, as suffering such pains, such wrath, such a curse, in the room of such a sinner, such a rebel, so undeserving, and so ill-deserving a creature, and not mourn as for an only son, and be in bitterness as for a first-born?

*Fourthly*, Faith melts the heart, by considering the effects and fruits of the sufferings of Christ, what great things he hath purchased by his stripes and blood for poor sinners; a full and final pardon of sin, a well-settled peace with God, a sure title and right to the eternal inheritance; and all this for thee, a law condemned, a self-condemned sinner. Lord, what an I, that such mercies as these should be purchased by such a price for me? For me, when thousands and ten

thousands of sweeter dispositions must burn in hell for ever! Oh, what manner of love is this!

*Fifthly*, Faith melts the heart, by exerting a threefold act upon Christ crucified:

*1st*, A realizing act, representing all this in the greatest certainty and evidence that can be. These are no devised fables, but the sure and infallible reports of the gospel.

*2dly*, An applying act; 'He loved me, and gave himself for me,' Gal. iii. 20. 'He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,' Rev. i. 5.

*3dly*, and *lastly*, By an inferring or reasoning act. If Christ died for me, then I shall never die: If his blood were paid down for me, then my sins, which are many, are forgiven me: If he was condemned in my room, I am acquitted, and shall be saved from wrath to come, through him. O how weighty do these thoughts prove to believing souls!

### 1. Use, for information.

*Then sure there is but little faith, because there is so much deadness and unaffectedness among professors.* A believing sight of Christ will work upon a gracious heart, as a dead son, a beloved and only son, uses to do upon a tender father's heart.

Reader, was it ever thy sad lot to look upon such an heart-rending object? Didst thou ever feel the pangs and commotions in thy bowels that some have felt upon such a sight? Why, so will thy heart work towards Christ, if ever thou believingly lookest on him whom thou hast pierced.

*Infer. 2. Then the acting and exercising of faith is the best expedient to get a tender heart, and raise the dead affections.*

We are generally full of complaints, how hard, how dead and stupid our hearts are; we are often putting such cases as these, how shall I get a heart broken for sin? How shall I raise my dead heart in duty? Why this is the way, no expedient in all the world like this; look upon him whom thou hast pierced; it is the melting argument.

### 2. Use, of examination.

But that which I especially aim at in this point, is for the trial and examination of thy heart, reader, in the point of true evangelical repentance, which is thy proper business at this time; and I will go no further than the text for rules to examine and try it by.

*Rule 1.* All evangelical repentance hath a supernatural spring, 'I will pour out the Spirit of grace, and they shall mourn.' Till the Spirit be poured out upon us, it is as easy to press water out of a rock, as to make our hearts relent and mourn. There are indeed

natural meltings, the effects of an ingenuous temper, but these differ in kind and nature from godly sorrow.

*Rule 2.* Godly sorrows are real, sincere, and undissembled; they ‘shall mourn, as for an only son.’

Parents need not any natural helps to draw tears on such accounts; O! their very hearts are pierced, they could even die with them; sighs, groans, and tears, are not hanged out as false signs of what is not to be found in their hearts.

*Rule 3.* Evangelical sorrow is very deep; so much the mourning for an only son, a first-born, must import. These waters, how still soever they be, run deep, very deep, in the bottom channel of the soul. See Acts ii. 37. *They were cut to the heart.*

*Rule 4.* Faith is the instrument employed in breaking the heart; ‘they shall look, and mourn.’ This is the burning-glass that contracts the beams, and fires the affections.

*Rule 5.* Lastly, The wrong sin hath done to God, and the sufferings it hath brought Christ under, are the piercing and heart-wounding considerations: ‘They shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and mourn.’ The piercing of Christ by our sin, is that which must pierce thy soul with sorrow.



#### THE TENTH

## MEDITATION,

UPON JOHN vi. 55.

*For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*

**I**N the context our Lord Jesus Christ makes a most spiritual and excellent discourse to the Jews, about the nature and necessity of faith in him; taking the occasion thereof from the bread, which a little before he had so miraculously multiplied and fed them with; raising up their minds to more sublime and spiritual things, and letting them know that bread, how sweet soever it was, was but a shadow of himself, infinitely more sweet and necessary.

These words are a proposition, in which are these three things observable:

*First,* The subject; my flesh and my blood.

*Secondly,* The predicate; it is meat and drink.

*Thirdly,* The manner of predication; it is meat indeed, and drink indeed.