

## SERMON XXXI

*The same which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, &c.*—VER. 20, 21.

THE power that wrought in Christ in his resurrection, I have spoke to that. As also of the several articles which are laid down here in these words: as, namely, that Jesus Christ was dead; that he was not only dead, but remained in the state of death, for he was 'raised from the dead;' and, lastly, that he was raised up, and that by God. I have despatched and explained these things out of these words. I come now to that state of exaltation which is here set forth to us; 'and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power,' &c.

There are five things in these first words, 'and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.'

The first is, *What is meant by setting him at his own right hand;* wherein we must consider both something about the phrase, and something about the thing itself imported thereby.

The second thing to be considered is, *The author of it, God;* it is he that set him.

The third is, *The subject of it, him;* 'when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand.'

Fourthly, *When it was he was set by God at his right hand.* It is plain, after his resurrection; 'which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him,' &c.

Lastly, *The place where;* 'in the heavenly places.'

These are the parts which remain of the 20th verse, concerning the exaltation, which I hope to despatch, and so likewise to proceed to the 21st verse, which is an explanation of the great dignity that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ enjoyeth in heaven. What he saith but metaphorically in the 20th verse, 'he set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,' he expresseth more really in the 21st verse, 'far above all principality and power,' &c.

*First,* To begin with the phrase, 'and set,' *και ἐκάθισεν.* The word is sometimes used, as we say in grammar, either intransitively, for the sitting of him that sits; or else transitively, to *make to sit*, to *cause to sit.* So it is here taken; for it is spoken of God the Father's setting of Christ, or making Christ to sit at his own right hand. It is used on the other side of Christ's own sitting; the same word *καθίσαι*, Acts ii. 30, as the Septuagint well readeth it, 'he raised him up to sit,' so they read the words. Yet so as that here are two things implied: one, that Jesus Christ doth sit at God's right hand; and the other, that God the Father hath set him there. Ps. cx. 1, 'He said unto him, Sit thou.' Now always God's word hath a causation with it; 'he said to him, Sit,'—that is, 'he made him sit,' or as it is here expressed, 'he made him sit with a mighty power,'—for where the word

of a king is there is power, and where the word of God is there is power ; it had the greatness of power going with it, the exceeding greatness of power, even the same that raised him up from the dead.

Further, for the phrase too, as it noteth out Christ's sitting at God's right hand, it is not a proper phrase of speech, it is but a metaphor, but a similitude to express that height of glory to us that Jesus Christ hath in heaven with God, by what is done by kings here on earth to those whom they will honour. It is but a metaphorical speech ; that is clear by this, because you know God properly hath no hand, nor right hand ; and if God have no right hand, then Christ's sitting at God's right hand must needs be a similitude likewise ; for they are relatives, if the one be not real, the other cannot be. That Christ hath 'all things under his feet,' which is another phrase used in the 22d verse, is but a metaphorical speech ; those who are below one, infinitely below one, are said to be under his feet ; so is it said here, that both Christ sitteth at God's right hand, and that he hath all things under his feet.

So that now, to gather what posture of his body Jesus Christ hath in heaven, or what posture he shall have when he cometh to judgment, though it is expressed by *sitting*, and *sitting at God's right hand*, and at the *right hand of power*, yet this phrase will not infallibly determine what shall be the posture of his body. Rather, if I would deliver what out of other scriptures seems to be more clearly held forth about it, it would seem to be *standing*, rather than *sitting* ; if you take it in its proper sense, as he is a man, standing is the prepest posture of a man.

I know not well what to say to that in Acts vii. 55, where it is said that Stephen 'looked up into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.' It seemeth to be a vision of his eye elevated supernaturally, such as Paul had when he was converted, when Christ from heaven spake to him. 'Last of all,' saith he, 'he was seen of me.' Therefore his bodily face did shine, because he saw him with his bodily eyes. And they saw a representative glory of God ; for you shall find that likewise in the Old Testament and in the New there was a place to represent the presence of God, as 1 Kings viii. 10, and Luke ii. 9, it is said the glory of God shone round about the shepherds.

Now, the like representation Stephen had when he saw heaven opened. 'I see the heavens opened,' saith he, 'and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God ;' he seemeth to speak clearly of what he saw, and the manner of it. I do not know what to say to this place. Sure it was not a seeing of him by faith only, such as is spoken of, Heb. ii. 9, 'We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour ;' this is more. There is only this that may be said of it, that it was such a kind of vision as was presented to John in the Revelation. He saw a throne, and he saw a Lamb slain ; so Rev. v. 6, and chap. i. 15, 16. He saw a man that had a sword come out of his mouth, his feet like unto fine brass, and his countenance was as the sun that shineth in his strength, &c. He speaks of Christ ; for, saith he, ver. 17, 'He said unto me, I am the first and the last, I am he that liveth and was dead.' This was but a vision ; now the like it may be was this of Stephen's only. And as those visions in the Revelation were but suited to the present occasion, so this vision was but suited to the present condition Stephen was in ; he was to suffer for Christ, and he seeth Christ *stand*, as being ready to help him.

But, however, we may learn this from it, which is to the point in hand, that these words *sitting* and *standing* being used thus promiscuously, the

Holy Ghost varying the phrase, that therefore the word *sitting* is not to be understood of the natural posture of his body. He would not vary the phrase so of standing and sitting, and being at the right hand of God, if it were taken properly and strictly.

If therefore, to come to the thing itself, for I have done with the phrase, it be meant by way of similitude, I shall open this similitude, what it is, thus:—

You must consider that it is spoken to us after the manner of men, and when he is said to sit at God's right hand, God is represented to us as a king, as the Lord Sovereign of heaven and earth; as, 1 Tim. i. 17, he is called, 'the King eternal, immortal, invisible, and only wise God.' A king that is full of glory, which glory is always represented to us under the same words and expressions that are familiar among men to represent glory by; and therefore when we speak of a king, we say 'His Majesty:' so when the Scripture speaks of God, this King, it calleth him 'the Majesty on high;' so Heb. i. 3. And as kings have their thrones, as Solomon had, to set forth his glory, and 'throne' in the Scripture is still put for kingly power, so likewise is God said to have a throne. The Scripture representeth the sovereignty of God, by having a throne that he sitteth on; therefore you shall still read, both in the Old Testament and in the New, that he appeareth upon a throne. Now this glory of God, and this throne of his, is said to be in the heavens, because it is certain that the glory of God and his sovereignty is there represented more, infinitely more than in this world it is. This is but his footstool, heaven is his throne; so you have it in that 7th of the Acts,—it is but some five verses before this vision of Stephen's,—'Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool;' and then he looks up and seeth the glory of God, and Christ standing at his right hand.

You see, now, how the glory of God is set forth in the way of kingly power, having a court where he manifests it; in which court standeth his throne, for heaven is so.

Now then, after the same manner of men is the glory of the man Christ Jesus set forth unto us by sitting at God's right hand. So, Heb. i. 3, it is said that he is 'sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;' as I said, majesty is put for the kingly power of God, and Christ is sat down on the right hand of that Majesty, that is, of God himself, as you call the king 'His Majesty.' And as in Heb. i. 3, he is said to sit down on the right hand of Majesty, so in Heb. viii. 1, he is said to sit on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, that is, of God, who displayeth his glory in the heavens. Therefore Stephen saw the glory of God first, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and in Matt. xxvi. 64, it is called 'sitting on the right hand of power;' and in Luke xxii. 69, it is explained 'the right hand of the power of God;' that is, of the powerful God.

It was the custom of the eastern nations for kings to express their respect to those whom they favoured by setting them at their right hand, as you know Solomon set his mother, 1 Kings ii. 19; and therefore it was the request of the mother of the sons of Zebedee for her children, that Christ would let them sit, the one at his right hand, the other at his left. And that in 1 Esdras iv. 29, though it be Apocrypha, it representeth what the manner of those nations was: it is said that Apame, the king's concubine, 'did sit on the right hand of the king.' So among the Romans, we read in Suetonius, in the Life of Nero, when the king of Parthia came, he set him at his right hand. But Christ's sitting at God's right hand is not only a token of familiarity, but it is more; for these, though they were set at the right hand, yet they were not invested with power by it, only a respect was shewn to them;

therefore we further read that the manner of those eastern nations was for the king's son always to sit upon the throne of his father, and that upon his right hand, for that was his hand of respect.

So we read in Exod. xi. 5, when he would express the eldest son of Pharaoh, he saith thus : 'From the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill.' And the like we have Exod. xii. 29, 'It came to pass, that the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon.' Here you see how the eldest son is expressed ; it is all one to say, the eldest son of a king, and to say, one that sat upon his throne. And accordingly you have it of Christ, being the eldest Son of God, Rev. iii. 21, 'To him that overcometh, I will grant to sit with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.' And therefore, as Solomon, 1 Kings i. 34, was crowned king, and was set upon his father's throne while his father was alive, and remained king, so is Jesus Christ, and in that Solomon was a type of Christ, and David of God the Father ; and though God be king still, yet he, as it were, hath given over the government, as David did, to his Son. Read Acts ii. 30, 31, &c. David 'being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne ; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ.' And, saith he, 'This Jesus hath God raised up ; therefore being by the right hand of God exalted,' &c. Here, you see, he doth apply this type of Solomon unto our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Therefore you shall find in Dan. vii. 9, 13, where the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and his inauguration into it, is set forth ; there 'the Ancient of days did sit,' and the Son of man was brought to him. And what saith he, ver. 19? 'I beheld till the thrones were cast down.' There are those that find fault much with this translation, and say it is clean contrary ; it is, 'till the thrones were set ;' and so the Septuagint reads it, 'till the thrones were set ;' as the Rabbins say, one throne for God the Father, and one for God the Son. The Ancient of days did sit, and then the Son was brought to him, and another throne was set for him, and he did give him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, &c., so ver. 13. So that to sit at God's right hand is not only a matter of favour, such as kings sometimes shew to those whom they would honour, but it is a matter of prerogative belonging to the eldest son ; the same that was performed to Solomon, that was crowned king and sat upon his father's throne in his father's lifetime ; his father withdrew, as it were, and so doth God the Father, and lets Christ execute the government. It was a prerogative that was never given to any creature. See for this, Heb. i. 13, 'To which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand ?' Not an angel had this privilege ; it is, therefore, a privilege peculiar to the eldest Son of the King of heaven, to sit at the right hand of God ; as you heard before, out of the place in Exodus, that to be the eldest son of a king, and to sit upon his throne, is all one. So that whereas God hath translated some into heaven, as Enoch and Elijah, and those that rose with Christ ; they are indeed translated to heaven, but none sat at God's right hand, that is peculiar unto Christ himself, that is God's own Son. And, indeed and in truth, when the thrones were set in that 7th of Daniel, you shall find that the angels stood ; so the expression is there, ver. 10, 'There were thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.' And now, in comparison of this, for they are

all metaphorical expressions, the saints are said to stand ; but it is the prerogative of Christ alone to sit : ‘ Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.’

In general, therefore, you see there are two things imported by Jesus Christ’s sitting down at God’s right hand. The first is the exaltation of Christ, as God’s eldest Son. Not only to be next him, to be second in heaven to him ; not only so, but as God’s eldest Son to be invested with all God-like power and authority, to sit upon his throne alone, and to do there as Solomon did upon David’s throne, even in David’s lifetime ; to be taken up to the participation of all that happiness, blessedness, glory, majesty, and power, which the great God himself enjoyeth, and that in such a manner as no creature is capable of. To none of all the angels did he say, Sit, as he saith to Christ. That is, I say, the sum of the meaning of these words, ‘ he set him at his own right hand.’

Now to come to the particulars of this advancement of Christ, that this, ‘ his being set at God’s right hand,’ holdeth forth.

First, It noteth out *the enjoyment of all blessedness* in an infinite manner ; that God is immediately his happiness. And this the words, ‘ being at his right hand,’ implieth. And then he is said to *sit*, because he doth quietly possess and enjoy all this happiness. That this is part of the meaning of the phrase is evident by that in Ps. xvi. 11, a psalm made of Christ, and quoted by Peter in that second of the Acts to which I have often had recourse. Now, what saith Christ there ? ‘ Thou wilt shew me the path of life ; in thy presence is fulness of joy.’ But this doth not speak home to that I would have, but that which followeth doth. ‘ At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.’ It is spoken assuredly of such pleasures as Jesus Christ by way of prerogative enjoyeth beyond all the saints and angels, he being at God’s right hand so as none of them are. It was that peculiar encouragement that Jesus Christ had, not to be in heaven only as a common saint, but to be in heaven at God’s right hand, and to have pleasures answerable, far above all the pleasures of men and angels, as I shall shew you when I come to handle that point.

There are said to be ‘ pleasures at God’s right hand.’ The right hand, you know, is that wherewith a man is bountiful ; if he will lay out himself and distribute of his riches, he doth it with his right hand : ‘ Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth.’ When Jesus Christ speaks of God’s distributing and communicating to him fulness of pleasures, he saith, ‘ At thy right hand are pleasures,’ &c. Jesus Christ is at God’s right hand, and therefore God doth communicate and impart to him, to the utmost, all his happiness, so far forth as that human nature is capable of. ‘ Length of days are at her right hand,’ that is, eternal life ; ‘ and at her left, riches and honour.’ So Wisdom speaks in the Proverbs ; for we are said to be at God’s right hand. The happiness of the saints at the latter day, how is it expressed in Scripture ? ‘ He will set them on his right hand.’ I speak it for this, that happiness, and being in heaven, is expressed by being at God’s right hand ; and Christ is said to be at God’s right hand : what happiness and pleasures then hath he ? On the other side, the highest misery of wicked men is said to be in their being at God’s left hand.

As it implieth the fulness of pleasure, so it importeth *honour and glory*, and a fulness of the participation of that. For that you may take those expressions I gave you before, of Queen Bathsheba being set at Solomon’s right hand ; it was in a way of glory and respect unto her. 1 Kings ii. 19, when Bathsheba came to the king, ‘ the king rose up to meet her, and sat

down upon his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand.' Therefore our Saviour Christ, when they, Matt. xx. 21, desired one to be on his right hand and the other on his left, interpreteth it in ver. 27 to be a desire of being chief; that is the interpretation he himself putteth upon it. He is therefore in that first of the Hebrews, ver. 11, said to be 'set down on the right hand of Majesty,' having imparted to him a God-like and a royal majesty, such as appeareth in no creature. So now, to be set down at God's right hand, which is a second meaning of it, is this, for Jesus to be crowned with glory and honour; 'We see Jesus,' saith he, Heb. ii. 9, 'to be crowned with glory and honour'—that is, he is set down at the right hand of Majesty.

In the third place, to be set down at God's right hand is not only to have a fulness of happiness, to enjoy the Godhead; to have rivers of pleasures from his right hand, and to have glory and majesty to be set above all; but it is to have a real *rule*, and *power*, and *dominion* put into his hands too. Kings oftentimes make no other use of their kingdoms but to enjoy pleasures, and glory, and state; but for their rule they leave it unto others, as Pharaoh did to Joseph. 'In the throne,' saith he, 'I will be above thee.' But now it is otherwise; when Jesus Christ is set down at God's right hand, he hath the rule, the dominion over all things imparted to him, he is invested with it. And this is a different thing from majesty; therefore they are both mentioned in Matt. xxiv. 30, 'Ye shall see,' saith he, 'the Son of man coming in the clouds with power and great glory.' Power is one thing, and glory is another, although it is power that doth make glorious. And hence, therefore, one evangelist calleth it, 'sitting on the right hand of power,' Mark xiv. 62, because that Christ is invested with the power of God, and the right hand is in a more especial manner put for power in Scripture. As, to give you but one place for it, though there be multitudes of them, Exod. xv. 6, 'Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power.' The right hand is still put for power. So that for Christ to sit at God's right hand, is for him to have all power and dominion put into his hands. Therefore both in Ps. cx., where God's placing Christ at his right hand is mentioned, there he is called Lord: 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand.' David was a king, he was one of those principalities and powers that the 21st verse mentioneth, but he acknowledgeth Christ to be over him; nay, David was his father, that is more. Parents that are kings do not call their children lords; but Christ had such a prerogative by sitting at God's right hand that he was the Lord of David. And the apostle Peter interpreteth it, Acts ii., speaking of the exaltation of Christ; 'Being,' saith he, ver. 33, 'by the right hand of God exalted;' and he quoteth David for it too, 'The Lord said unto my Lord,' saith he, 'Sit thou on my right hand.' Now what saith he, ver. 36? 'Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.' So that sitting at God's right hand is interpreted to be making of him Lord, and that is evidently held forth in the text; for he saith that he is over principalities, and powers, and might, and dominion, and whatsoever else is named in heaven or in earth, and he hath them all under his feet. And to shew forth the excellency of Christ, he saith he is over all these; that is, as a ruler, as a lord over all these.

My brethren, what is the reason the Pope is called Antichrist? You cannot call episcopal government antichristian in that sense the Pope is called Antichrist. But the Pope is plainly called that great Antichrist; and what is the reason? Because he doth usurp the very same authority, the very

imitation of it, which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ hath in heaven. For what is that which Christ is invested with? It is to be over all powers, and principalities, and dominions in this world and the world to come; and to sit in heaven, advanced to God's right hand, and to have all these under his feet. Now if you read 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, you shall find the description of that man of sin to be this: 'That man of sin,' saith he, 'the son of perdition, shall be revealed, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God,'—that is, above principalities and powers, above angels themselves, for they have undertaken to command angels,—'so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God;' taking upon him the same power which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ challengeth to himself. Others do take that which God hath given his Church to themselves, and place church power in a subject it ought not to be in; and it may be said they are *antichurchian*, but not *antichristian*. But this is that which makes the Pope Antichrist, that he assumeth to himself, as far as possibly he can, directly, that power that Jesus Christ himself is invested withal.

Then again, in the fourth place, God's calling Christ to sit at his right hand importeth *all those abilities, all those royal, glorious endowments*, which God filled the human nature with when he came first to heaven, to make him fit to be the governor of all the world. That infinite wisdom and power that is in the human nature, and all other prerogatives whereby he is able to manage the government of this world and the world that is to come, and to have all those things run through his hands which all creatures could not do if the wit and power of them all were put together,—that he is able to wield this sceptre, this is a fourth thing which 'sitting at God's right hand' importeth.

This the text holdeth forth unto us; for, if you mark it, he doth not only say, that God did set him at his right hand as a king doth advance his favourite, or as he doth set his son in his throne with him, give him the same authority himself hath, whereas he doth not give ability; but the text speaks of a power that wrought in Christ when he set him at his own right hand, a physical power, as I may so call it, which can be exercised and put forth in nothing but in this. As when God set up Saul to be king, he gave him not only power, but a heart to be a king; so God, as he gave Jesus Christ power over all might and dominion, so he hath given him a heart also. And, my brethren, to take that man Christ Jesus, that carpenter's son, as I may so express him, speaking of him in his meanness and lowness, that sorry man, as the prophet speaks of him, and to fill him with such wisdom and power as that he is fit to govern all the world, to have the power of all the doings in the world in his own hands,—this is that 'which God wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand.'

Now this is a mighty alteration, to fling off all the flesh, and to endow him with all these abilities. As it is said, 1 Cor. xv. 43, our bodies are sown in weakness, but they shall be raised again in power; they are sown a natural, but they shall rise a spiritual body; that is, furnished with all new abilities to make them to be spiritual bodies: so is Jesus Christ furnished with all abilities fit for the managing of all the affairs of the world; that look whatever God meaneth to do, that the man Jesus Christ, joined to the Godhead, is able to do; and look whatever God knoweth concerning the government of the world, that the man Jesus Christ knoweth. Brethren, nor saint nor angel had this.

You shall find this set forth to you in Rev. v.; do but duly weigh that chapter, the scope of it is clearly this. You must know that the Revelation, the general story of which beginneth at the 4th chapter, and so to the end, is the acting over of the story of the world that was to come, and things are set forth to us comedy wise. There is first a stage set up, a throne, and there are the elders about God, that is chap. iv. Then there is a prologue to it, and that beginneth in this 5th chapter; and what is the prologue? It is clearly nothing else but the instalment and coronation of Jesus Christ, as he that should govern the world, and so should be able to give the revelation to John. And although his coronation was a thing past, for it was done when he ascended, yet it is here represented to John, because it was the foundation of all the story that followeth. How is it represented? There is a book held forth with seals upon it; that book containeth God's decrees to be executed, and he that takes the book must undertake to fulfil what is written in the book, and to make it good. There is a proclamation made to all in heaven and in earth, whether any were worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof. It seemeth to be an allusion to the admission of a judge to his place—they give him a roll, or a book; or to the ceremony that is used in the University, when they admit the proctors to their places—they give him a statute. So here, speaking of the instalment of Christ into the government of the world, he alludeth to some such kind of ceremony. Here is a book held forth, and proclamation made that whosoever takes this book must fulfil and make good whatsoever is contained in it. Now, saith he, there was none found either in heaven or in earth that was able to know God's decrees, much less to execute them. None was found worthy to do it but the Lamb. And how cometh the Lamb to be able to do it? He hath 'seven horns and seven eyes.'

There are two things goeth to kingly power: first, knowledge; secondly, power. He hath knowledge answerable to his power, for he hath 'seven eyes;' that is, as it is there interpreted, 'they are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth.' His eyes run to and fro in the earth, he knoweth all that is done, so no angel in heaven can do, he seeth every man's heart. And he hath 'seven horns;' he is as able to perform (for the horn in Scripture phrase still signifieth power) whatsoever he knoweth, whatsoever he meaneth to do. And he takes the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, for he standeth at God's right hand. And upon his taking it, what a song was sung! you may read it at ver. 12. They all fell down before the Lamb, being glad there was found one that was able to administer the affairs of the world; 'and they said with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.'

To open these a little; they are all ensigns of kingly power.

First, He is only worthy to receive *authority* to do it; that is meant by power. 'All power,' saith he, when he ascended, when he was taking his flight to heaven, 'is given unto me in heaven and in earth.'

Secondly, He is only worthy of *riches*, which kings have; he only was worthy to possess all creatures. 'He hath obtained an inheritance,' a better name than the angels, for he is the 'heir of all things.' And as he hath authority, so he is able now, he hath a natural right unto it, to dispose of all creatures as his own proper goods and riches.

Thirdly, He is worthy to receive *strength*; he hath not only authority and power to dispose of all, but he hath strength too. Kings have not strength answerable to their power,—that is, to their authority,—but what they do, they



must do by others. But Jesus Christ hath strength, personal strength, he is able to do it alone.

Fourthly, *Wisdom*; that is as large as all these.

Fifthly, *Honour*. Honour is due to him from all the creatures, they fall all down before him.

Sixthly, *Glory*, from his Father that hath thus joined him in commission, and set him up to be sharer with him in the kingdom. And—

Lastly, *Blessing*, from all his saints, for they only bless him. And this he hath given him by ‘sitting on God’s right hand.’

I will give you but one instance. He was able, when he was set down on God’s right hand, to send the Holy Ghost into men’s hearts. What a mighty ability was this—could any creature do it?—that the Holy Ghost should be his ambassador, to despatch his business here! Yet this is made the fruit of being set at God’s right hand. Acts ii. 33, ‘Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now both see and hear.’ Could any creature have done this? No mere creature could have done it, nor he as mere man could have done it; but he being man joined to God, so he hath right to do it.

You see now what is imported by ‘sitting at God’s right hand.’ This is the substance of it. It importeth—

First, *Fulness of all pleasure*.

Secondly, *A communication of God-like majesty*.

Thirdly, *Power and dominion over all things*.

Fourthly, *Ability to execute that power*.

So much for the substance of it. There are two circumstances that sitting on God’s right hand doth yet imply, to make up this fully:—

First, *That he doth quietly possess all this*. The word *sitting* still implieth quiet possessing. As 1 Kings ii. 38, when Shimei was in Jerusalem quiet and undisturbed, we translate it, ‘he dwelt at Jerusalem;’ the Hebrew word is, ‘he sat at Jerusalem,’ he quietly enjoyed his house; as David is said to ‘sit in his house.’ That same phrase there in Acts iii. 21, which we translate ‘whom the heavens must receive,’ or contain, ‘until the times of restitution of all things;’ it is strange to see how ambiguous the Holy Ghost speaks; the words may be as well read thus, and as clearly, and no man can deny it, ‘who must possess the heavens till the times of the restitution of all things.’ It is as true and as full a sense, and the Lutherans answer us home in that place, for we would bring it against their *ubiquity*, and they say, and say truly, ‘who must possess the heavens till,’ &c. It is a phrase used in Greek and Latin, to *receive the city*, or *receive the kingdom*, speaking of kings or conquerors, when they come to possess a kingdom or a city. David useth the phrase, Ps. lxxv. 2, ‘When I shall receive the congregation, I will judge uprightly;’ that is, when I shall come to possess the kingdom. So Jesus Christ possesseth heaven, he sitteth and quietly enjoyeth his kingdom. This is implied by sitting on the right hand of God.

Secondly, He doth not sit only quietly, but *he sitteth surely*. When his kingdom is mentioned, still you shall find this added, Thy throne is for everlasting; it endureth for ever; it is from generation to generation, &c. And this the word *sitting* implieth. As, Isa. xvi. 5, speaking of the kingdom of Christ, ‘In mercy,’ saith he, ‘shall the throne be established; and he shall sit upon it in truth.’ To have him sit upon it, and to have the throne established, is all one. It implieth the firmness of his kingdom; it is such a kingdom as shall break all kingdoms.

So you have what it is to have Christ sit at God's right hand, as briefly as I could, explained. The uses that this affords are infinite, which the Scripture giveth; but I must not run out into this thing, for I must merely expound.

The *second* thing in the text is, *who it is that set him at his right hand*. I have done with the first; opened the phrase of sitting at God's right hand. I come now to the second, his exalter and advancer. It is God, namely the Father, that set him at his own right hand, and that by his exceeding greatness of power.

You know our Saviour Christ acknowledgeth that all his power is from the Father. 'All power,' saith he, 'is given unto me;' that is his expression, Matt. xxviii. As he is the natural Son of God simply considered, so he doth not sit at God's right hand, and so indeed power is not given to him, for so he hath it by nature. But take him as he is Mediator, and that as he is God and man too,—for he is Mediator in both natures, and so all the power that he hath is given unto him,—and so he is only said to begin to sit at God's right hand after his resurrection; whereas, as he is the natural Son of God, he had power equally with the Father from before the world was. Therefore you know God boasteth of it; 'I have set my king upon mine holy hill.' Other kings are by human institution and creation; but this same Jesus Christ, he is my king, saith he.

Now, my brethren, though the Father did but give it him, let me say this for Christ on the other side, he hath a right to it. So indeed it is carried between the Father and the Son; it is the Father's gift, and so the Father is honoured, but yet it is the Son's due. All power is given unto him; yet he saith plainly in Luke xxii. 29, that he hath power to give a kingdom, he useth the same expression of himself that he doth of his Father. 'I appoint unto you a kingdom,' saith he, 'as my Father hath appointed unto me.' And as the Father quickeneth whom he will, so the Son quickeneth whom he will too, John v. 21. Only there is a reconciliation of free-will; God's will and Christ's never differ, for Jesus Christ exerciseth the highest liberty of will, and not only so, but he exerciseth a sovereignty of will, and it is his right and due so to do; yet he doth nothing but what the Father willeth.

It is his Father that set him at his own right hand. I desire you to observe the difference of these two phrases the Scripture holdeth forth. The exaltation of Christ is not only said to be *at* God's right hand, but it is said to be *with* God's right hand. As in Acts ii. 33 he saith, he was 'by the right hand of God exalted;' and Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour,' &c. So that being at his right hand implieth that he hath all power committed to him; and being exalted *with* the right hand, or *by* the right hand of God, implieth it was an answerable almighty power that raised him up to this.

My brethren, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ did not only live by the power of God while he was here. 'Man liveth not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' I do so, saith he; that is his meaning. But you shall read, that since he is gone to heaven, he liveth by the power of God. It is in 2 Cor. xiii. 4, 'He was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God.' And because that God the Father is he that exalted him, therefore Paul calleth him 'the Father of glory' in the beginning of this prayer in this chapter.

I might enlarge this. You see how the Persons honour one another: the Father's honour, that he doth give him this power; the Son's honour, that he is worthy; and it was fit, and comely, and necessary for his Father to

do it. Consider of it thus: that the Son of God should be chosen (take it so) to be the Mediator of the world, that the Son, that that person should be singled out, it was but an act of choice; though it was comely it should be the Son rather than the Holy Ghost. That the man Christ Jesus, that he was chosen to it, that was merely of God, as much as the choice of us was to eternal life; yet now, when this man Christ Jesus was united to the Son of God, he had right to all this, it was his due. Heb. i. 2, 6, compared together; as he is called in the second verse, the appointed heir of all things, so he is called in the sixth verse the natural heir of all things.

Now, it being his due the first day, what doth Christ? He layeth aside all his glory, takes the form of a servant, voluntarily doth it to honour his Father. What honour doth his Father do to him for it when he cometh to heaven? Have you obscured your glory, saith he, withdrawn it for my sake? I will do as much for you, I will commit all judgment to you; I will not be seen, the eyes and thoughts of all creatures shall be next upon you: 'The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son,' John v. 22, that is, visibly to execute it. So that God did as it were give up the kingdom, as David did to Solomon while he was alive. Because that he glorified God in suffering himself to be made obedient to the death, therefore it was justice for God to glorify him likewise, by withdrawing himself from the affairs of the world; that is, in respect of visible execution of it.

And Jesus Christ had this in his eye when he was to die upon the cross; he suffered for it, as I said in the last discourse. 'You shall see,' saith he, 'the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power.' And 'for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God,' Heb. xii. 2. He had this honour of his in his eye, and therefore as his reward the Father gave it him, and it was comely the Father should give it him; and because that he, while he was here below, was made lower than the angels, much lower, a little lower for the time, but much lower otherwise, therefore God hath set him above the angels. And because while he was here he suffered himself to be insulted on by Satan, to have power on his body to hurry it up and down; and when he came to die, saith he, 'The prince of this world cometh, but he shall find nothing in me,' yet come he did; therefore now he is exalted far above all principalities and powers, &c. And it was his due to have it, it was his reward, it is but his condign reward; and it is yet a reward therefore given by the Father.

*Thirdly,* The next thing in the text that is mentioned is, *who it is that is here exalted.* It is *him.* Whom? Christ. Some would restrain this exaltation of Christ's sitting at God's right hand only to the human nature. For, say they, as he was the Son of God simply considered, he did always sit at God's right hand. But the mistake lieth in this. It is true, take him as he is Son of God, he hath an equal power with the Father from everlasting, but that power is never expressed by sitting at God's right hand, for then the Holy Ghost should be said to sit at God's right hand as well as God the Son, which is never said. But the sitting at God's right hand doth imply that power that is committed to him as Mediator, both God and man,—that is, as he is the Son of God, clothed with man's nature, exalted now in heaven,—so that what is attributed to the one is attributed to the other by communication of properties; as we say that God and man died, though the manhood only did die, yet it is attributed to the whole, it is called the blood of God; and we say God-man rose, though his body only rose, yet it

is attributed to the whole ; *totus Christus*, though not *totum Christi*. Whole Christ rose and whole Christ sitteth at God's right hand ; he exalted him, though not the whole of Christ.

I will not insist longer on this. There is only a scripture or two I will give why not only the manhood is said thus to be exalted, but the Godhead too as considered joined with the manhood. The first, that his Godhead is thus exalted, I mean that the Son of God is exalted, is that Ps. cx. 1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou,' &c. Now, he was David's Lord only as he was Son of God. I mean that the foundation of his being Lord is laid in that ; therefore, Heb. i. 13, the Apostle proveth him to be God from this, because he was bidden to sit down on God's right hand ; 'To which of all the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make,' &c. 'But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,' &c. And then it belongeth to him likewise as man ; that you have a clear place for, John v. And our Saviour putteth it in on purpose. Saith he, at ver. 22, 'All judgment is committed unto the Son ;' and lest that we that know him to be both God and man should take this to be spoken of him in regard of his Godhead, as he was second Person only, he telleth us plainly, ver. 27, 'He hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.' So that take him as he is Son of man, so he hath authority given him to execute judgment ; and he putteth in this to open the prophecy, Dan. vii., for, saith he there, at ver. 14, to the Son of man was given dominion, and glory, and a kingdom which shall not be destroyed, and to this Son of man, saith he, is all judgment given.

Now, you will ask how it is said, take him as he is the Son of God, that he should be exalted, for he is but as he was ?

Yes, my brethren, he is exalted in this sense, because his Godhead was obscured and hidden while he was here below. It was his due to have shined in his manhood instantly as he doth now in heaven, that all men should behold his glory as the glory of the only-begotten Son of God, as the apostles Peter, and James, and John did when he was transfigured. Now he veileth all his glory ; when he cometh to sit at the right hand of God, there he sheweth it ; so that in respect of manifestation he is said to be exalted, for then he was manifested to be the Son of God.

So much for the Person that is exalted, how it is true of him both as God and man.

The *fourth* thing to be explained is, *when it was that he began to be exalted*. The text plainly saith, after his resurrection ; the same power, saith he, 'which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand.'

There are some divines that are mightily mistaken in this, for they would make the sitting at God's right hand to be the prerogative of the hypostatical union, and so would make him to sit on God's right hand when he was in the womb. But, brethren, the Scripture runneth clean otherwise. It was his due indeed then, and his right ; but in respect of its execution, he was but as a king under age, till he rose again and ascended up to heaven. Therefore you shall find, Heb. i. 3, it is expressly said, 'After he had purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.' *After* ; mark that phrase ; it was not till then : so Heb. x. 12, 'After he offered one sacrifice for sin, he sat down on the right hand of God ;' it was after that. He was like one that is born a king, that cometh to act the part of a servant upon a stage ; but when he cometh to such a period he throweth off the form of a servant, and sheweth himself to be a king ; and so doth Jesus

Christ ; therefore you have it, Phil. ii. 9, 'He took on him the form of a servant, and was obedient unto the death ;' and then it was that God exalted him, he did not enter upon this glory till he had suffered death ; so Heb. ii. 9, and in Rev. v. 12, it is said there expressly, he was worthy to receive honour, and glory, and riches, &c., because he was slain. He was first to be slain. It became him first to suffer, and so to enter into his glory. Therefore his sitting at God's right hand was not before God had raised him.—That is the fourth thing.

The *fifth* is, *the place where he sitteth*. It is expressly said, in heaven. The word in the original is not heavenly *places* ; the word *places* is put in ; but, he 'set him at his own right hand in the heavenlies.'

The Lutherans therefore interpret it, 'he sitteth in heavenly things ;' that is, they say, all his power is exercised in things heavenly. But, my brethren, that which followeth confuteth it in part, for he saith he is over 'every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come ;' not only heavenly things, but earthly things ; so that not only heavenly things are meant, though they are not to be excluded, but answerable to the phrase of *sitting* is properly intended *heavenly places*, and so notes out the very place where he thus sits, even in heaven. Heaven is the court of the great God, where his throne is, as you saw out of Acts vii. 49 ; and it is the place where God hath appointed Jesus Christ to be honoured. Only let me say this : when he cometh to judge wicked men, because he will not bring them up to heaven, for none of them shall ever enter into the third heavens, then he cometh down, and bringeth heaven down with him, for all the angels come with him, and he shall come in the clouds with all the glory of his Father, in the greatest glory and majesty that can be. But the proper seat and place of Christ is at God's right hand. 'I see the heavens opened,' saith he, 'and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.'

Therefore still the Scripture calleth us to look up to Christ as sitting at God's right hand in the heavens. The Lutherans would have him everywhere even as man, which is to maintain that opinion of his bodily presence in the bread you eat in the sacrament, which is a mighty gross absurdity, for so he should be as much in the bread you eat every day as in that of the sacrament ; and, accordingly, they further make his ascension into heaven a mere metaphor ; they say he did not remove his place locally, whereas the text saith expressly they saw him ascend up into heaven.

That the sitting of Christ at God's right hand is in heaven, and that that is the place appointed for him, I will give you but one scripture for it. I therefore quote it because I will open it a little unto you ; it is Acts ii. 34. When he would prove that those words in Ps. xvi., 'At thy right hand are pleasures for evermore,' &c., were not meant of David, what expression doth he use ? 'For David,' saith he, 'is not ascended into the heavens : but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou,' &c. My brethren, David was ascended into heaven, for his soul was there. How, then, doth this argument hold ? The truth is, he putteth ascension into heaven to be all one with sitting at God's right hand, because that heaven is the place where God hath appointed to manifest his glory and the glory of Christ ; and therefore, Mark xvi. 19, it is expressly said he was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God. So, in 1 Pet. iii. 22, 'He is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God.' I could give you multitudes of places for it.

It is a wild opinion of the Lutherans, that would have heaven also every-

where, as Christ is everywhere. But the Apostle telleth us plainly, 1 Thess. i. 10, that we expect and wait for Christ from heaven. If Christ were everywhere, and heaven were everywhere, how could we expect to 'meet him in the air,' when he shall descend from heaven, as the Apostle saith, 1 Thess. iv. 17, speaking of the air as a distinct place from heaven?

So you have all these five things opened that belong to this part of the 20th verse. First, What is meant by sitting on God's right hand. Secondly, Who it was that raised him; God the Father. Thirdly, The subject that was thus exalted, both considered as God and man. Fourthly, The time when it was begun; it was when he ascended into heaven after his resurrection. Fifthly, The place where; it is in heaven, in heavenly places.

I will now make a little entrance into the 21st verse, so much indeed as shall give a light into it:—

*Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name, &c.*

Here he expresseth more really what he had said in the other speech more figuratively; there he expresseth the dignity of Christ by sitting on God's right hand, here he speaks more plainly, 'far above all principality,' &c.

There are two general heads of this verse.

Here is, first, *The eminence of Christ's exaltation*; and, secondly, *The universality of it.*

The *eminency* of it is set forth two ways:—

First, For the intention, *the height of it as it is personal in him*; it is not only above, but 'far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion,' &c.

Secondly, It is expressed by *the lowness of the subjection of all things to him*; he is far above, for 'all things are under his feet.'

Then there is the *universality* of it; he instanceth in the chiefest things that are in this world and in the world to come, in might and dominion, in principalities and powers, and in every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.

First, To open unto you *the eminency of this exaltation of Christ.* He is said to be far above, not only above, but far above, not *ἄνω* only, but *ὑπεράνω*, far above; so far that the Apostle knew not how to express it, but, as we use to say, infinitely above. So now that which in Acts ii. 33 is called simply the exaltation of Christ, in Phil. ii. 9 is called superexaltation, so the word is in the original; not only an exalting, but an exalting to the highest, an infinite exalting; and therefore, Heb. vii. 26, we are said to have such a high priest as is 'made higher than the heavens.'

I told you before, that sitting at God's right hand noted out, first, *fulness of pleasure*; secondly, *glory*; thirdly, *power and dominion.* Now, you shall see that in all these Jesus Christ is advanced far above all creatures, and enjoyeth them all in that transcendent manner as no creature doth, either angels or men.

First, *Jesus Christ hath such pleasure as no creature hath.* For that, take Ps. xlv., where he speaks of Christ as exalted at God's right hand, and speaking of his throne, saith he, ver. 6, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.' He speaks of him as installed into his kingdom. What followeth? 'Because thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness, therefore God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.' Here is, you see, an anointing with joy and gladness above his fellows; in this regard, therefore, he is above all principality and power, and all things else. Why? Because he is nearer the foun-

tain than all creatures are, for he is one Person with the Son of God ; and the communication of God, and all the fulness of the Godhead, to him must needs be so much the greater by how much the union is nearer. As he had the nearest union that any creature could have to be one Person with the Godhead, so he hath the joys of God, which none else can have. While he was upon the earth he was a man of sorrows, such as no man had ; so now when he cometh to heaven, as his sorrows abounded, so his joys also abound. As he was the first of many brethren in respect of affliction, so he is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows : for he hath not only the joys of God to be his, but the joys of all his children ; they are also his, therefore he bids them be holy, that my joy may be full, saith he ; I rejoyce in it, saith he—I rejoyce in it, saith he, more than you ; for, as the Apostle saith, ‘ you are my crown and my joy ; ’ so Christ hath joy in all.

Secondly, Take rule and dominion, that is most proper to the text indeed ; *he hath a rule and dominion far above all things.* Rev. iii. 21, ‘ Ye shall sit with me in my throne, even as I also am set down with my Father in his throne.’ What is the meaning of that scripture ? This in a word : As I am glorified, so shall ye be glorified, and I have communicated to you a kind of rule, a kind of suffrage at the day of judgment ; but this is peculiar to the Son, to the Lord Jesus Christ, to sit in the Father’s throne.

So likewise for *glory* ; which is the third thing meant by sitting at God’s right hand. He hath such glory in heaven, that could a man see him sitting in heaven, and all the angels about him, he would say, That is the Son of God, presently. Set a king among his nobles, and you could not know one from another, if he would conceal his outward state ; but set the Person of Christ amongst angels, you would presently say, That is the Son of God. ‘ We saw his glory,’ say they, ‘ as the glory of the only-begotten Son of God,’ when they had but a glimpse of it in his transfiguration. There is such a glory shineth in the person of Jesus Christ as he is far above all angels and men, he is the Sun of righteousness ; therefore he is said to be the ‘ image of the invisible God,’ so as no men or angels are ; and ‘ the brightness of his Father’s glory,’ which they are not ; it is spoken of him as he is man ; for otherwise as he is God, he is as invisible as God himself. Therefore as the actions of the Son of God are higher than the actions of men,—for you see they are of infinite worth, which men’s good works and angels’ are not,—so the glory of God-man, the Son of God, is more than all the glory of angels or the glory of all the sons of men whatsoever ; it is of another kind.

Hence it cometh to pass that our Saviour Christ is to be worshipped, for you see he hath that glory that no creature hath ; take him as he is man sitting at God’s right hand, he is to be worshipped, which no creature is. Saith he, Heb. i. 6, ‘ When he bringeth his Son into the world he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him.’ It is spoken of his second coming, as I could open at large. And Ps. xlv. 11, there the Church is said to stand at Christ’s right hand, and one would think she were mightily exalted ; what followeth ? Ver. 12, ‘ Daughter,’ saith God, ‘ he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.’ You shall find that this is part of Christ’s exaltation in Phil. ii. 10, that all worship that is to be performed unto God should be done in his name. ‘ Wherefore,’ saith he, ‘ hath God highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that in’—it is not *at* the name, but *in*—‘ the name of Jesus every knee should bow ; ’ that is, that all worship should be put up to him in the name of Christ. This is that prerogative which no creature hath or was fit to have ; this glory God would give to none but to

the man Christ exalted in heaven ; yea, let me add this, that this began to be done when he did ascend up into heaven.

I have wondered sometimes at that speech, John xvi. 24 : ' Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name.' When he taught them the Lord's Prayer, one would have thought they should have been taught to make their prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, as we are taught to do by the Apostle ; but he was not then ascended ; this ' at his name every knee shall bow,' he must suffer for it first, and then enter into this glory. Therefore, Rom. viii. 34, you have his sitting at God's right hand and his interceding for us joined together.

This is the reason why Jesus Christ is so jealous that he will not use the mediation of saints in heaven as the Papists do, which is flat idolatry. Why? Because he is in heaven the only Mediator. Here on earth you must indeed speak to men to pray for you, but if you speak to any in heaven to pray for you, Christ is jealous of it ; for it is part of his glory to sit on God's right hand and to be the only Mediator, and that not only in his name should prayers be put up, but that none else should be employed to put up prayers besides. Therefore the worshipping of saints is flat idolatry, because Jesus Christ is in heaven, and it is his only prerogative to intercede for us, it is a part of his right and glory.

These prerogatives are far above what ever any creature hath : and so now I have done with the intention of his exaltation ; ' he is exalted far above all principality,' &c.