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THREE SERMONS ON HEB. I. 1, 2.

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### SERMON I.

*God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.*  
—HEB. I. 1, 2.

I will not spend much time to shew who is the author of this Epistle, which indeed among divines is doubtful; our translation hath prefixed Paul's name to it, being most probable that it is his. And though the author of it be not certainly known, yet it is not to be excluded from the canon, for there are other books of Scripture that the authors of them are not known, or at least not prefixed by themselves; as the Epistles of John, his name is not mentioned in them; prefixed it is by the church, from one age to another, known by the style that it is his. The reason why I chose to speak out of this epistle is, because it doth mention and speak of Christ and of his offices, but especially of his priesthood, more than any other book of Scripture I know. I will not profess an exact handling of all things therein contained, but raise here and there some observations and meditations.

The scope of the apostle may appear, if we consider to whom he wrote; he wrote to the Hebrews, which were\* Jews. He did not write to the Hebrews not yet converted, as may appear by all the passages in the whole Epistle. But he spake to those that had been already enlightened and knew Christ, that had entertained the doctrine of the gospel. And this we may observe, that no book of the Scripture was written to any other but professors, believers, not to unbelievers. Now the Jews did stick most to the law, ceremonies, and legal sacrifices, all which were but types of Christ, and they were ignorant of the true excellency, nature, worth, and prerogative of Christ revealed to them, and especially of his priesthood and sacrifice which he offered up above all the rest.

The apostle's scope is to set up the gospel above the law, to raise up their hearts to a high esteem of Christ, to shew that Christ was the end of the ceremonial law; so that all types should now cease. And because he wrote to the Jews in that regard, whatsoever he doth speak he doth prove out of

\* That is, 'who once were,' or 'who had been.'—ED.

the Old Testament through the whole book, and it is quoted upon all occasions ; because the Old Testament had authority with the Jews, and he doth make everywhere now and then a short use of the doctrinal points he doth deliver. He doth spend this chapter to prove that the Lord Jesus Christ was God as well as man, and he doth make this short use of it, chap. ii., ver. 1, 'Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard.'

The first chapter doth prove that the Lord Jesus Christ is more than a man ; though he speaks something of him in this first chapter, which belongs to him only as God, yet all the rest that he speaks of him as mediator doth argue him to be more than a man. The second chapter proves him to be man, so that as you have the scope of the two first chapters, so of the whole epistle.

In the first verse he breaks in upon the argument of the whole epistle, being to advance the gospel, and Christ and the doctrine of the gospel, before the doctrine of the law, and that by reason of Christ revealed in it, and Christ revealing it.

He makes a comparison between the times of the law and the time of the gospel, and he prefers the time of the gospel before the time of the law ; 'God spake unto the fathers by the prophets, but unto us by his Son.' Now look, how much the Son of God doth exceed the prophets, so much the doctrine of the gospel the doctrine of the law ; and look, how much the sun, which is the fountain of light, doth exceed the stars, and the light of the sun the light of the stars, so much doth the light that Christ hath brought us in the gospel exceed the light of the law.

Secondly, he spake to the fathers but by degrees, *πολυμέρως*, 'by parcels ;' they had a little light now, and anon a little more light, but they had not all at once. But in the time of the gospel all is poured out to you at once.

Thirdly, under the time of the law the Lord did speak by several ways and manners, but now ye have but one way, and that a plain way. Before, in the Old Testament, he revealed himself obscurely, he was fain to mould his speech into many forms. As men, when they have notions that are something obscure, are fain to use several expressions to make them plain, so the law being dark and obscure, God was fain to deliver it several manner of ways, as in a riddle, by Urim and Thummim, by the prophets, &c. ; 'but now he speaks,' plainly and clearly, 'by his Son ;' therefore he is called 'the brightness of his glory,' the image, the character, and lively expression of God.

*Obs. 1.* The same God that spake in the Old Testament speaks in the New ; he that spake to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he speaks to you now ; that God that spake by the prophets, speaks now by his Son ; therefore certainly the faith of the fathers is not contradictory to the faith of us. Heb. xiii., 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and the same for ever ;' the same Christ from the beginning of the world, the same God that spake ; therefore all the promises that are in the Old Testament, ye may apply them all now. Why ? Because it is the same God which spake to them, and speaks now to us ; that God that heard the prayers of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Old Testament, and granted their petitions, with whom they were so familiar ; we may have fellowship with the same God. That promise that was made to Joshua in particular, 'I will not leave thee nor forsake thee,' chap. i. the apostle, Heb. xi., doth apply to all believers ; and it is founded upon this, that the same God which spake in the Old Testament, speaks in the New. Look over all the Old Testament, and look

what a God you find him there, the same God you shall find him in the New. Look what punishments he brought on them of the old world, the same he will now. And look how he dealt with his servants, as he was angry with Moses for a small sin, so in the same manner he will deal with you, if you walk in the same ways. And as he pardoned men under the Old Testament, so also will he under the New. And as we have the same God, so we have the same faith, 2 Cor. iv. 13, 'We have the spirit of faith,' &c.

*Obs. 2.* Our great God doth not speak immediately unto men, but mediately by others. Before, he spake to men by his prophets, but now by his Son, who took our nature upon him, that he might be a fit speaker. As we cannot see God and live, so we cannot hear God and live. The Lord, when he delivered his law, began first to speak himself, and the people hear his own voice, Deut. xviii. 15, 16, Exod. xx., but the people could not hear God's voice, for they said to Moses, 'Speak thou with us and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.' They being sinners, as we are, they were not able to hear God from heaven, for his voice speaks thunder, and striketh dead. Upon this request that the people made to Moses, see what God says, Deut. xviii. 17, 'They have well spoken that which they have spoken. Therefore what will he do? I will raise them up a prophet from amongst their brethren,' &c. See his mercy; upon their request he takes an advantage of promising the Messiah, being one of the clearest promises that they had till now. It is true, he would send many prophets before, as forerunners of Christ, but in the end he would send Christ, which should be a prophet like unto Moses, to speak unto them, &c. God doth take advantages to make promises, when the poor people did shiver and quake, because God spake to them. What doth he promise? He promises Christ. Thus the Lord takes a small occasion to make the greatest promise of Christ.

*Use 1.* Therefore, seeing the Lord, when he doth speak, doth speak by others, and there is a great deal of reason for it, because it is your own request, let not God fare the worse in delivering his word; do not contemn it because men are fain to deliver it to you, for it is your own request. If he should speak himself, he would strike you dead at every word; therefore do not take advantage because God doth not back it with thunder, but receive the word as the word of God; for God himself would speak to you, if you were able to bear him; but because you are not, therefore he speaks by others.

*Use 2.* It should teach ministers not to abuse God's voice; they should take heed that they speak nothing but what God hath revealed. Though false prophets speak what is contrary to God's will, and God bear for a while and doth not manifest his wrath (for he can for a while dispense with himself), yet the time will come when God's wrath shall wax hot against them. They are not to abuse the people in venting their own thoughts instead of God's. For see what God says of such, Deut. xviii. 20, 'That prophet that shall presume to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, even that prophet shall die.'

*Obs. 3.* God spake in his prophets; we translate it *by* them, but the original is in them, *ἐν προφήταις*. A king, though he be never so far off, and is not by to back it, yet he may be said to speak *by*, though not *in* the ambassador; but when the Lord speaks by his faithful ministers, he doth not only sit in heaven, and speaks by them, but he speaks in them, assisting them; he is in their hearts, and upon their tongue, and goes along with the word into the hearts of the hearers.

*Use.* Let ministers therefore labour to get the Holy Ghost into their own hearts, that he may not only speak by them (for so he doth by wicked men), but in them, that that Spirit which takes possession of them as saints may speak in them as ministers, that so the word which they deliver may be the administration of the Spirit to the hearts of those that hear them.

*Obs.* 4. We come to the manner how God spake to them of old, he spake *πολυμερῶς*, by parcels, by piecemeal, by many parts, for so the word signifies. *Ec. gr.* The Lord at first brought in but one promise, and that obscure; he let drop but one word to Adam in paradise of the promised seed. He gave only an intimation, a hint that there should a Messiah come. Then he went on further, and when he came to Abraham he renewed that promise, and added a little more, Heb. vi. 13, he added an oath; and he shewed to Abraham, not only that he should be a man, but that he should come of his seed, and that 'in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed;' thus he enlarged the former promise. But all this while there was no sacrament; here was a promise and an oath, but no sacrament; then he goes on and gives Abraham circumcision, which answers to our baptism; afterwards he adds the passover, which answers to the supper of the Lord; and then he reveals to Moses divers types of the ceremonial law. Then he reveals more clearly to David the resurrection and ascension of Christ; then to Isaiah, that he should be born of a virgin, chap. liii.,\* that he should be circumcised, that he should bear our sorrows, and be a 'man of sorrows,' and 'pour out his soul even unto death.' Unto Zechariah he revealed his poverty, and unto Malachi his forerunner. Thus by piecemeals he reveals, not all at once. The old world began with a little knowledge; they had the worship of God and the sacrifices, and they knew the day of judgment, as Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied of it. They knew some fundamental truths, the grounds of faith, but they knew Christ by piecemeal. They knew something of themselves, because Adam fell but the other day; but they knew little of Christ, that was revealed unto them by piecemeal.

Thus the Lord doth use to reveal himself; he hath done thus with the church in general. Although he did reveal all, for the matter contained in the New Testament, that shall be revealed to the end of the world, yet in regard of the light whereby this is discerned, God hath gone on by piecemeal. Consider the recovery of the light of the gospel from under popery, how it was by piecemeal. Men at first knew but a little, their hearts were only set against images and popery, they knew but a few pieces of the truth; but Wickliffe and John Huss went further. In Luther's time they knew justification by faith, and then popery fell down about Luther's ears, and he said, if they would grant that he would go on† further; but when God had unreaved all the tiles, that popery was ready to be pulled down, then Calvin comes in, and more was revealed.

Thus God doth go on, *πολυμερῶς*, to reveal himself; and as he dealt with the people of the Jews in regard of the matter, and as with us for the manner (for the Jews had the matter revealed to them by piecemeal, but we had the matter given at once, but the light whereby we discern this is, *πολυμερῶς*), so with particular Christians, he doth discover to them first themselves, and then they think that at their first conversion they see a great deal in their hearts; yet he goes on further to reveal more corruption unto them, and then he reveals Christ and his electing love to them, he

\* Perhaps alluding to the expression, 'A root out of a dry ground.'—ED.

† Qu. 'no' ?—ED.

leads them like scholars through several forms; and though at first in the centre, they know all that is necessary to salvation, yet things are beaten out afterwards unto a circumference. They know enough of Christ at first to save them, and of themselves enough to humble them; yet God suffers the wheel to go over them again and again. In reading the Scripture, observe it; read a chapter to-day, and when a man getteth his heart into a spiritual frame he will see many truths; let him read it the next day, and he will see something more, &c.: the reason is because God reveals himself by piecemeal.

*Reason.* Because indeed men are incapable of all at once, John xvi. 12. Our Saviour, though he came to reveal all fulness, yet how incapable were the apostles to apprehend it. He was fain to deliver over some of them to the Comforter. Paul, when he came to preach to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. iii. 2, he had many truths which he could not reveal unto them, for so long as they were carnal they were not capable of all truths, but as the flesh is emptying out of a man, so knowledge grows; so Isa. xxviii. 13, he was fain to speak by piecemeal, 'line upon line, and precept upon precept;' as ye teach young children a little now and a little then, for they cannot endure to be held long to their books; so is God fain to do with his. And as in teaching young scholars, what do tutors? They do read over first a compendium, some short grounds of logic, and then another book which is a *systema*, and then direct them to such commentaries that do enlarge truths. So God doth teach first by catechisms, which contain short fundamental truths, and then he goes over many truths in a larger manner in their hearts. A painter draws at the first but a few lines with a black coal; he will draw the shape of a man's face, but afterwards he goeth over it with colours and oil; so God doth with his church, and with private men, even as a master doth with his apprentice, he will not teach him all his knowledge at first, but he reserves something, that happily he will not teach him before he be to go out of his trade, he teacheth him by degrees; so God hath bound himself by covenant to teach you to know him; but something ye shall not know till you are to go from under his tuition.

And this he doth, *first*, to humble his people; he will have them know but in part. Though young converts have but a little knowledge, how proud are they! Much more if they had all at once.

And likewise, *secondly*, to shew the treasures in himself. In Christ are treasures that will hold digging to the end of the world; men would be weary if they had the same light still, therefore God goes on to discover, though the same truth, yet with new and diverse lights. Thus God reveals himself by piecemeals.

*Use 1.* Let us labour to grow in knowledge; God reveals himself by piecemeal, do not therefore stick in the first principles of religion; it is the apostle's exhortation to the Hebrews, chap. vi. There is a great deal of ignorance, therefore labour to go on to perfection, and grow in Christ; he reveals himself by piecemeal, not as if he had already obtained; therefore there is more knowledge to be had; the greatest part of that you know is the least part of what you know not.

*Use 2.* It may teach ministers to raise the age that they live in, in knowledge, though of the same truths, in a clearer manner, Mat. xiii. 52. It is said he that is a right scribe, that is fit to do service in the church of God, is like a householder, which bringeth forth things new and old; there is no man but God discovereth to him *more*, or the *same* by a further light, than to another.

*Use 3.* It may humble young Christians, that think, when they are first converted, that they have all knowledge, and therefore take upon them to censure men that have been long in Christ; and out of their own experience they will frame opinions, comparing but a few notes together. Alas, ye know but a piece of what you shall know! When you have been in Christ ten or twenty years, then speak; then those opinions which you have now will fall off, and experience will shew them to be false. They think themselves as Paul, that nothing can be added unto them; but what says Paul, 1 Cor. xiii. 11? 'When I was a child,' &c. He takes a comparison from a child, as being a man, but raised up to his spiritual estate, and thou also wilt then 'put away childish things.'

*Use 4.* If God in former ages did reveal himself but by piecemeal, and if that piecemeal knowledge, which they had by inch and inch, did make them holy; for how holy was Enoch and Abraham that had but one promise; then how much more holy should we be, that have had so full a discovery! If one promise wrought so much on their hearts, how much more should so many promises on ours!

*Use 5.* Here we see that God doth work on men by degrees. It is Solomon's comparison, that righteousness shineth as the dawning of the day, till it come to perfect day. Conversion out of the state of nature into the state of grace is called coming 'out of darkness into light.' Now light comes into the world by degrees. A man that sitteth up in the night, when the first break of day is he cannot discern; but half, or a quarter of an hour after he begins to see light. Thus it is with many poor souls; they have light break in upon them; they can tell that they were in darkness, but the instant when this light brake in they know not, because God reveals himself by degrees.

I am now to shew how God reveals himself, *πολυτροπως*. He did cast himself and his revelations into several moulds and shapes, into several ways of expressing himself, that so he might reveal himself to the people. As Ulysses is called *πολυτροπος*, because he had *ingenium versatile*, and was able to cast himself into several moulds in his several dealings with men, so likewise God hath revealed himself *πολυτροπως*, after several ways.

Thus he did under the Old Testament. In Hos. xii. 10 it is said, that he 'multiplied visions,' because he was various in it; he used divers likenesses and expressions of himself while he spake by the prophets. We have it more plain in Num. xii. 6, 'If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known to him in a vision, and will speak to him in a dream.' Thus you see that there are several ways that God did speak to men by, by visions and dreams, and in dark speeches; but when he came to Moses, who was a type of Christ (for he is said to be a type in this particular, when it is said, 'I will raise up a prophet like unto thee'), it is said, that he spake to him 'mouth to mouth, as a man speaks to his friend,' Num. xii. 8, he speaks to him in an apparent manner; but by all the prophets he did speak in dark speeches, in riddles. So in the vision of the great eagle, Ezek. xvii. 2, it is called a riddle. He spake sometimes by visions and sometimes by dreams; yet the visions were more clear things than speaking by dreams; therefore it is said, 'The young men shall see visions, and the old men shall dream dreams;' the young men had more acute parts, and therefore they had more clear revelation. Thus God revealed himself to Joseph in dreams, and therefore he is called the dreamer, of his brethren; yet it is called the 'word of God,' Ps. cv. 19. So a hint in prayer, when it comes in with evidence, it is the word of God, as that

was to Joseph. He did reveal himself by dreams, to shew, *first*, that he can do that which no other teacher in the world can ; for no teacher else can teach their scholar when they are asleep, but so the Lord did, and so he can still do. *Secondly*, he did it, to shew that, in revealing his message, reason should be asleep, and that should be subject to the revelation of God. He revealed himself likewise by visions, and in that regard the prophets are called *Seers* ; and he revealed himself likewise by *Urim* and *Thummim* : only those revelations were not for matter of doctrine, but of practice, when they were to deal in such and such a business. He revealed himself likewise by types ; all the ceremonial law was but types of things to come. All these several ways did the Lord reveal himself to men in former times, *πολυτρόπως*.

The reasons of it are these.

*Reason 1.* Because he would shew forth, as the apostle in another case, Eph. iii. 10, 'his manifold wisdom.' It is the property and ability of a wise man to be able to represent himself several ways, and God hath always delighted so to do when he would reveal himself. He went two ways to work revealing himself : *First*, in the work of creation, Rom. i. 20, it is said, that the invisible things of God are seen clearly, being understood by the things that are made, &c. ; yet this light is but a dark light. And therefore, *secondly*, he revealed himself in the law, wherein the image of his holiness, justice, and wisdom appeared. And these two things are the angels' catechisms (as I may so call them), which they and the old world have studied a long time ; and in the end there came out another edition of himself, and all that is in him, and that is the gospel ; and the text saith that he hath done this, to shew forth his manifold wisdom. Thus God hath more ways than one to represent himself to the people.

*Reason 2.* Secondly, because there are varieties of apprehensions ; one man will be more taken by one way of revealing, and another by another. Thus the wise men were led to Christ by a star, God working on them according to their apprehensions. So the apostles, being fishermen, when they had caught a great draught of fish, Christ spake to them in their own language, and said, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.' Now there are several gifts in the church, which are but so many several ways of God's revealing himself ; and as in ministers there are several gifts, so in the hearers there are several apprehensions ; some love a rousing ministry, others a more rational. As men's apprehensions are, so do they favour and relish men's gifts ; and because men have several apprehensions, therefore hath he appointed several gifts. Thus God doth in converting men ; he converts one man by affliction, another man he converts by his word, another man by the good example that he sees in another : 1 Pet. iii. 1, 'That they may, without the word, be won by the chaste conversation,' &c. So that the Lord hath several ways to bring his work about, revealing himself, *πολυτρόπως*, therefore. So God lets man fall into manifold temptations, temptations of several sorts. God's dealings are exceeding various ; some men he humbles with afflictions, others he overcomes with mercies ; sometimes he deals in one way, and sometimes in another, so that if God hath given Christ to thee, thou mayest not stand to think at what door thou enterest in, what wind blew thee into heaven, for God hath many ways to bring thee in.

*Use.* It should teach ministers thus much, to mould truths into several forms and shapes, because they have several apprehensions to speak to. *Idem potest variè dici, et verè dici.* God himself used variety of similitudes



by his prophets, to this end, that he might speak to the people's apprehension. Thus we are to do, for God did it, *πολυτροπως*. Christ used many parables to the same purpose, expressing faith to us under several expressions, as sometimes 'coming to Christ,' by 'eating of his flesh, and drinking of his blood;' sometimes by 'trusting on him,' and 'believing in him;' and why? Because in believers there are several apprehensions. 'Receiving Christ,' is the notion that expresseth the work of faith in one man; in another, 'coming to Christ,' is the notion that expresseth his faith; in another, 'eating Christ' savours with his apprehension. Thus Christ hath moulded it into several ways to suit several believers.

Again, it is said 'he spake by the prophets to the fathers.' Those under the Old Testament are called fathers, because they were 'first in Christ,' as Eph. i. 12. It is an honour now to be an old convert, and therefore he puts it in, 'who first trusted in Christ'; therefore they are renowned, and their memory is everlasting. The saints under the New Testament, since the apostles' time, many or most of them, their memory is quite gone; but because these were they that first believed, we have a record of all the old worthies to the end of the world; and they are called fathers. And therefore it is an honour to be first in Christ, that so we may be patterns and examples to others; and it is a great motive to turn and to come into Christ soon, for it is said, 'They obtained a good report through their faith,' Heb. xi.; for to begin to believe first, when there were few examples and encouragements before them, is a great honour to faith, and it gives faith a good report. Thus Adam believed, having but one promise; and Abraham, being called out of a heathenish country, and having but few promises, he being the first example of all that believed, he is called 'the father of the faithful;' God honoured him for it. But these, though they are called fathers, yet in comparison of the times of the gospel, are called but children; it is the apostle's expression, Gal. iv. 3. The privileges of men under the gospel are exceeding far above theirs; though they were fathers, yet those things are revealed unto us which were not unto them. It is said in 1 Pet. i. 11, 12, that 'they ministered unto us;' so likewise, though those that did live many of them more near the primitive times than we that live in these times, though we honour their memories and call them fathers, yet we may truly say that there is more of the glory of the gospel revealed to us, in the days of Reformation, than was to them. Though they were fathers, and saw afar, yet we being set upon their backs, see further, though children.

And he mentions the fathers, because the Jews did so stick to the religion of their fathers; because Moses's law was given to their fathers, and was their religion. The apostle therefore, to take away this, because they stuck to religion simply because it was the religion of their fathers, says that 'God spake to them by the prophets, but to us by his Son.' That may be revealed unto the children which was not unto the fathers; so we that live in these days have a greater and clearer light than our fathers had, that lived under popery.

SERMON II.

*God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.*  
 HEB. I. 1, 2.

To come now to the other part of the words, 'in the last days he hath revealed himself unto us by his Son,' &c. The first thing we may observe hence is, why they should be called 'the last days'? These times of the gospel are called the last days;—

*First*, That which is last implies more than one period to have gone before, for where there is *ultimus* there must be *primus et medius* at least; and therefore there were more periods than one that went before the revealing of the gospel; there were two eminent ones. The first was from the creation to Moses, when the law was given on mount Sinai, and the word committed to writing; the second was from Moses to Christ. These are days that are first and middle, and in comparison of those he calls these days 'the last days.'

*Secondly*, These are called 'the last days,' because 'upon us the ends of the world are come;' as 1 Cor. x. 11. All these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the perfection of the world is come. All the days that went before were but types, and all the passages were but types; and those things that have been done in the times of the gospel have been the perfection of those things that went before. Was there wickedness before in the world? These last times shall be the perfection of the world in regard of wickedness; all the sins that were committed in the old world are but the *præludiums* to that villany that shall be hereafter. Was there grace stirring in the world before? It is but a type of that grace which shall be in the new world, in these last times. This is the last time, because it is the perfection of the other. So did God send judgment upon sin and sinners, they were types of what more eminent judgments he would bring upon men in these days. It is the harvest of the world; all that went before was but the sowing, this the ripening both of wickedness and grace. As the last act that is in a tragedy hath more in it than all the acts that went before, then comes in all the killing and butchering, and the plot doth then unfold itself; so all the other scenes that were upon the stage of the world make all way, to unfold this last; then comes in the bloody persecutions and heresies, and then comes sin and likewise grace to be at their full ripeness; and therefore the apostle saith, 'I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last,' &c. He doth allude to the last of the play, when they used at Rome their fence playing, they that came up last died for it; they went not off till one had killed the other. Now, saith he, 'I think that God,' &c., for the last time is the time wherein heresies and persecutions abound; then come in all the butchering, and all that went before was but a *præludium* of what was to come. Therefore ye shall find that the Revelation, which writes of the state of the church under the New Testament, alludes to passages in the Old, to shew that the Old was but a type of what was to be done under the New. As they had an Egypt and a Sodom, so we have a worse Egypt and Sodom, 'which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt.' And as they had a Babylon that oppressed the church,

so we have a worse Babylon, viz., Rome, that persecuted the saints. They which are acquainted with the blessed book (as 'blessed is he that readeth it') shall find this to be true. Again, the time of Noah is but a type of what shall be before the world endeth: men shall eat and drink, and be given in marriage;' and as the flood came upon them, so fire and brimstone shall come upon men's heads in the end. Thus the last days are the perfection of time. These are perilous times, where men are most wicked; and as they are the worst days, so they are the best days in those that are good. Take them therefore which way you will, and they are the perfection of days.

*Thirdly*, They are called the last days, because we must not look for any more alteration or change of things in the world, in regard of God's revealing himself. When the law was given there was an alteration made, there being a covenant made under types; but when Christ comes, he tells us, Heb. xii. 26, 27, 'Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.' The apostle speaks it in regard of an alteration of doctrine that our Saviour Christ was to bring into the world; he was to abolish the former types, and to bring in new forms, new sacraments, spiritual worship. He shook the heavens, whose voice shook the earth when he gave the law. 'And this word, *yet once more*, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made.' He pulled the world of the ceremonial law about the Jews' ears, and shook it all down, 'That those things which cannot be shaken may remain.' That religion which is now established in the church, and those truths which are revealed to us, there will be no alteration in them; the gospel is eternal, and it will eternally remain.

*Fourthly*, They are called the last days, because in the end he will shew us that these last days shall have an end. He puts his people in comfort with this, for they are not called the last days, because the day of judgment shall presently come, for it is 1600 years ago since he called them the last days; but to shew that these days in the end will have an end, these days, I say, of sin and wickedness, and oppression of the church. The angel in the Revelation swears that 'time shall be no more.' The time will come when 'the heavens shall be no more;' and if not the heavens, which are the measure of time, that spins out time, much less time.

*Use 1.* 'Lift up your heads, therefore, for your redemption draweth nigh.' It is 'nigher than when ye first believed;' these days will have an end, and the longer you live, and the more you grow in grace, the nigher you are to the end. The apostle useth this as an encouragement, we shall not always stay for the day of judgment, every day spends\* upon it. Those that have been in heaven, as Abel, that have been there for so many thousand years, have stayed a long time for the day of judgment; but our redemption is nigh, we are fallen into the last days.

*Use 2.* We should provoke one another so much the more, because these are the last days: Heb. x. 25, Exhort one another to be more faithful in the word, because they are the last days. The devil, the shorter his time is, the more he rages, and therefore seeing these are the last days, the nigher the day approacheth, the more shall we endeavour to do God service. And we that live in these last days, are so much the more engaged to do this, because God, out of the riches of his patience, hath suffered this wicked world, that is lost unto him, to stand so long, that we in these last times might be brought forth; he hath built a world, and before that we came on it there were many stages removed. He hath borne with many

\* Qu. 'speeds'?—ED.

wicked men before us, that at the last these last days may come, wherein he hath still a people to bring home unto himself. A man that goes to a fair or market, and hath set up a shop, and took little for the whole day, desires and expects customers to come in at last; he hath been at the pains to stand there all the while, and he expecteth something at last. So God hath built this world, and hath set up his shop (for Christ is said to set up his shop), and he hath invited men to come in and deal with him, to receive him and salvation; but he hath had but little custom in the world, and he hath suffered the world to stand still till these last days, and now he expects the more to come in.

*Use 3.* If they be the last days, look for perilous days, look for more opposition of godliness, worser enemies than the Pharisees were, if worser can be; look for as bloody persecutions as there have been, as damnable heresies. As there hath been Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, so there shall be the spawn of these in those days, for those are the last days. And as in the kennel, the lower it is the more dirt is swept down into it, so all the sins of our forefathers are swept down to us. The world is now more wicked, they are the last days, and more perilous; and therefore look for such times, though in the end there are great promises of great prosperity to the church. For therefore the apostle saith, that 'in the last days he hath spoken to us by his Son;' for all the promises by the prophets ran into the latter days, and therefore the apostle mentions it; and happily in the latter of the last days, there may be better times, wherein the Lord may more fully reveal and discover himself to the church, though not with so great an alteration as Christ when he came. There are better days coming, for the last days are the perfection of the former days, they are the perfection as of sins and wickedness, so of grace and godliness, and happily of peace and prosperity. What God hath to do in the end we know not; there are great promises made of making 'a new heaven and a new earth,' which signifieth the bringing in of the Jews and Gentiles; these things are to be done in the last days, and these we are to expect.

Having thus explained what is meant by the last days, I am now to give the reasons why the coming of Christ was deferred to those last days.

*First:* Christ was to come last, after all the prophets, because he was the great promise.

*Secondly;* As also to convince the world the more; as it is in the parable in Matthew, 'The Lord of the vineyard sent forth his servants to the husbandmen: them they slew; then he sent forth other servants, more than the former' (for God will increase means to convince a people): 'and last of all he sent his son.'

*Thirdly;* When all other wisdom failed, then Christ came, there being but one remedy, to magnify it; it was fit that all other means should be tried first, therefore for 4000 years God let them try what philosophy could do, and natural conscience, and the law. 'When the world in wisdom knew not God,' then he sent 'the foolishness of preaching,' 1 Cor. i. 21, the subject of which is, Christ crucified, ver. 23, 'When we were without strength, Christ died for the ungodly,' Rom. v. 6; the world was without strength before, but God would have them know it fully, and then was a fit time for Christ to come.

*Fourthly;* To shew God's faithfulness: Rom. iii. 25, 'Whom God hath set forth a propitiation, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.' The meaning is this: God hath pardoned many a sin under the Old Testament, through his for-

bearance, for as yet he had received no satisfaction, but was long out of purse, and trusted Christ upon his bare word 4000 years; therefore Christ came, 'in the fulness of time,' to shew his own faithfulness, God having trusted him so long, and his Father's faithfulness also, having promised his Son so long.

*Fifthly*, and lastly; Because the last revelations are always the clearest; so God deals with particular men. Upon your deathbed it may be God will speak more to you, by his Son and Spirit, than in all your life before. God revealed himself more fully to St Paul than to all the rest, because he came last; God's last works put down his former: 'They shall remember no longer their deliverance out of Egypt, but of the north country;' '88 was a great deliverance,\* but the gunpowder treason was a greater.

*He hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.* The general observation from hence is this,—

That our condition under the New Testament is much better than theirs under the Old.

So that though they be here called fathers, yet they are elsewhere called children: Gal. iv., 'Blessed are the eyes that see the things,' &c.; therefore our times are better.

*First*, In regard of the things revealed, they are more and more excellent.

*Secondly*, The things revealed to them were not so clearly revealed, neither did they so clearly understand them, 1 Peter i. 10, 12. The prophets are there said to inquire by prayer, search by reading, &c., concerning the glory which should follow upon the sufferings of Christ; when many glorious truths were to be revealed unto the church, and all that they could get after their inquiry was this, 'that not unto them, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported,' &c.; that is, they in their own writings did reveal many things unto us which they themselves did not understand, therefore, Mat. xiii. 3, 5, it is said that 'Christ taught things which had been kept secret from the beginning of the world.'

*Thirdly*, As in regard of knowledge, so in regard of grace, our times are more excellent, there being a greater dispensation of grace now than there was under the Old Testament: Zech. xii. 8, 'The feeble shall be as David;' that is, so great an improvement there shall be when Christ shall come, that the feeble under the New shall be as those that were strongest under the Old.

*Use 1.* Labour then to make this good in your lives. Look unto the holy men in the Old Testament, and consider there is more grace expected of you, as there is more grace promised to you, than there was to them, therefore labour to shew it in your lives.

*Use 2.* If your condition be better in regard of knowledge and grace, then we may well content ourselves, though it be outwardly worse. Many of them had great prosperity joined with their profession of the truth, as we see in Abraham and David; though we want this and suffer persecution, yet let us be content, because our spiritual condition makes us amends, even as times of the gospel hath brought forth more grace and knowledge, so more persecutions, than ever were in the time of the law, as † butcherings in the primitive times.

Now we will shew wherein our condition is better than theirs; and it is better in three regards, as it is implied by the opposition in the text.

*First*, Under the Old Testament God spake by the prophets, now by his Son.

\* From the Spanish Armada 1588.—ED.

† Qu. 'or'?—ED.

*Secondly*, Under the Old Testament he spake by *piecemeal*, now he hath spoken all at once.

*Thirdly*, He did it *obscurely* divers ways, but now he hath done it *plainly* and clearly; therefore our condition is better.

1. *First*, under the Old Testament he did it by *piecemeal*, now but once; therefore Jude ver. 3 calls it 'the faith *once* revealed unto the saints.' Under the Old Testament the fathers received truths by retail, but we by whole-sale; yours is a new edition of truths come forth in folio. John i., the apostle, comparing Christ and Moses, saith, 'The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ;' that is, yours is as much grace, so much truth, that Moses revealed not, that hath been since brought to light, which the corrupt church of the Samaritans had no inkling of, John iv. 25, where though the woman was ignorant of many things, yet she referred it to the times of the Messias, who, 'when he comes, would tell them all things.' 'In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,' Col. ii. 3, which treasures were then brought forth. False teachers would have drawn them away by the knowledge of angels and philosophy, &c. No, saith the apostle; study Christ, 'for in him you are complete;' nothing can be added to the knowledge of him, 'in whom are hid the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.' John xv. 15, 'Whatsoever I have heard of my Father,' &c. You have now the original copy; the prophets were but transcripts out of Christ, now a leaf and then a leaf; but saith he, I am the original copy, and 'whatever I have heard of my Father,' necessary to salvation, 'I have delivered unto you.'

*Use 1.* Adore then and admire the doctrine of the gospel, and the perfection thereof; for it is delivered but once, not as it is with the papists; this truth discovered in one pope's days, another in another; but he hath done it once. The Scripture is said to make the man of God perfect, which cannot be said of any science in the world. There is not philosophy enough in all men's books to make a man a perfect philosopher, but there is Scripture enough to make a man a perfect divine.

*Secondly*, Contend for it, for it was but once delivered. St Jude exhorts to contend for it upon this ground: if all, both magistrates and ministers and people sell the truth, it is gone, for it is as in a lease in which three have share; if one will not consent, it is not sold; so if any of these hold the truth it shall not depart; therefore contend for it; if you lose it, you will never have it again, for it was given but once, as Esau when he sold his birthright.

*Thirdly*, Study the word, let it dwell plentifully in you, for it is the word of Christ: Ps. cxix. 96, 'The law is exceeding broad,' but the gospel is much broader; the vast treasures of wisdom and knowledge are laid up in it. St Paul had abundance of that knowledge, it is all hid in the word. Christ had a world of knowledge: he hath hid it in the word; therefore never think you have knowledge enough; study the word more fully, for there is no truth laid up in it but shall be revealed in it before the day of judgment. 'No man lights a candle and puts it under a busbel.'

2. In the time of the gospel he hath revealed himself one way; before, he did it by visions and dreams and types, &c., which were very obscure; for thus we have the things and see them fulfilled, yet how hard are they for us to understand them; and if we do not, who have all fulfilled before our eyes, much less they; but God hath laid all these ways aside, and hath revealed himself only by the word and sacrament unto the hearts of men; and this he hath done clearly, 1 Cor. ii. 13, 'Suiting spiritual things with

spiritual ;' that is, we speak to them plainly in their own notions ; we do not give them riddles, but speak of things in their own expressions, suitable to them, 2 Cor. iii. The ministry of the law was a veil over Moses's face, which argues his ministry was very dark ; but under the gospel we with open face behold the glory of the Lord. There are two ways to represent a man, one by his picture, another in a glass ; that under the law was a representation of Christ by pictures, but in the gospel by a glass. In the law there were but shadows of Christ, but now the shadows are gone, and we see his person in a glass ; they saw him through a veil, we with open face ; the veil being taken away, we look with a broad eye upon Christ, God having betaken himself to one ordinance, thereby to reveal himself to the sons of men.

*Use 1.* Ministers should endeavour therefore to speak plainly to the people, because ye are ministers of the gospel, 2 Cor. iii., ' Seeing we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech,' and 2 Cor. iv. 3, we speak so plainly, saith the apostle, that if any man perish through ignorance, it is because he is a lost creature.

*Use. 2.* This condemns all ignorance likewise, for under the gospel we have no cloak for it, Christ having spoken so plainly, as he hath in comparison to what he did under the law.

3. He speaks now by his Son, whereas he spake then only by the prophets ; then the stars shined only, but the Sun of righteousness shining, he hath put all the stars down ; hence we will shew,

*First,* How he speaks.

*Secondly,* Why he speaks by his Son.

*First,* How he speaks ; he is said to speak by his Son.

First, as Christ is the matter itself delivered, therefore, Rom. i., it is called ' the gospel of Christ,' because he is the subject of it ; whereas the prophets were not the matter of what they delivered.

Secondly, Christ himself is the immediate speaker ; he came from heaven on purpose to preach the gospel ; we had never had it else ; and though he be not here bodily present, yet he is said to preach unto this day, Eph. ii., though he never preached at Ephesus in person, for he was not sent, that is, to preach, ' but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel ;' yet he preached peace not only to the Jews that were near, but also to the Gentiles that were afar off. And that,

(First.) Because he brought the gospel which we deliver to light ; it was spoken first by the Lord, Heb. ii. ; and we in his stead, 1 Cor. v. 20.

(Secondly.) Because he is with us ministers in delivering of it to the end of the world ; yea, Jesus Christ hath his pulpit in heaven to this day ; therefore it is said, ' Refuse not him that speaks from heaven,' Heb. xii. 25.

*Secondly,* Why God speaks by his Son ?

First, Because he is the Word of his Father, John i. 1, therefore he is a fit messenger to interpret his Father's mind ; as Christ was his Word in the creation of the old world, for by him were all things made, so it was necessary he should be his Word likewise in the creation of the new.

Secondly, He is the Wisdom of the Father ; and we all desire to have wise speakers, as kings in parliament choose able speakers ; therefore God chose Christ, his own Wisdom, to express his mind, that there might be no mistake, but that he might express it as fully as he himself would do.

Thirdly, He is the idea and platform of all truths. Moses saw all in the mount, and according to the pattern he was to frame all things ; herein he was a type of that prophet that was to be raised up like himself, who had

a pattern of all in heaven, John iii. 11, 13. Whatever Christ speaks, he speaks by experience, for he speaks nothing but what he hath seen, which no man could have said, for he must have had them at second-hand; but Christ had them immediately, for he knew all the counsels of his Father, being in his bosom: 'No man hath ascended up into heaven but he that came down;' that is, why do I tell you of heavenly things, but because I came down from heaven, which no man else could have done.

Fourthly, Because Christ is next the Father, though the Holy Ghost see all things in the Father, yet Christ must teach; this reason is given by our Saviour saying, 'When the Spirit is come, he shall lead them into all truths, for he shall not speak of himself, but shall take of mine and shall shew it unto them.' Christ being next the Father, therefore came first himself and set all truths abroad; and then he tells them that the Holy Ghost shall come and more clearly reveal to them what he had said.

Fifthly, Because God would have his Son all in all, therefore there is no office to be borne but he must bear it, not only to be our king and priest, but to be our prophet also; and that not to sit in heaven only and give out truths, but to come down and preach them to us.

*Use 1.* If God now speaks by his Son, then hear him: 'This is my beloved Son, hear him.' If a king send his son ambassador, shall he not be heard? God hath now sent the heir at last, saying, 'Surely they will reverence my Son;' let us not therefore send Christ away without his errand, refuse not him that speaks from heaven.

*Use 2.* We see then the calling of the ministry is an honourable calling; Christ himself took it upon him to be the minister of the circumcision. Gentlemen's sons scorn to be ministers, but Christ the Son of God did not.

*Use 3.* If God speaks by his Son, and his speaking is better than of all the prophets, then never rest till you hear Christ speak to you; you may hear the minister long enough, but labour to get Christ to speak to your hearts.

*Use 4.* Seeing God speaks by his Son, then call no man *Rabbi* upon earth; addict yourself to no man's opinion because of the high esteem you have of his learning or grace; let it be the doctrine of Christ before you entertain it, Mat. xxiii. 10. Upon this ground Christ bids them call no man *Rabbi*.

*Use 5.* Seeing God hath spoken in the last days by his Son, therefore let your last works be better than your first, Rev. ii. 13. If God will be daily a better master unto you, be you better servants unto him.

*Use 6.* God speaking in the last days by his Son; we see that the more God reveals himself in Christ, the more clear it is; under the Old Testament they knew as much of God's attributes as we, but to know all these over again in Christ, that he is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, &c., this is the excellent knowledge. The world before Christ knew God in his attributes and in his creatures so fully, that philosophy hath not been more perfected ever since: yea, Aristotle revealed that to the world then that they have been studying ever since. Labour therefore to know God in Christ. What is the reason we have more grace than they? But because we know more of Christ who reveals the Father; the knowledge of God the Father simply, doth not raise a soul so much as knowing of him in Christ, therefore he is said to speak in a glass by his Son (that is) clearly, 2 Cor. iii. 18.



## SERMON III.

*God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.*—HEB. i. 1, 2.

*Whom he hath appointed heir of all things.* Having mentioned Christ, he falls into a large encomium of him : first, that which was first, as mediator, to wit, his Father's appointing him to be heir of all things ; for it is not spoken of him as the second person in the trinity, but as he is mediator, because he is said to be *appointed* an heir, but not as God. He needed no appointing, he had it *φύσει*, not *θέσει* ; and as the natural Son of God, he could not properly be called an heir, for an heir is to succeed another in a right transmitted to him ; but so Christ did not as the Son, therefore it is spoken of him as mediator, and so he is appointed heir of all things, himself coming within the decree of predestination.

*First ;* One is said to be an heir in regard of some good to possess. A poor man may be said to have many sons, but not an heir, because he hath nothing to leave them ; for possessions and an heir are relations, and the greater the possessions the greater heir.

*Secondly ;* An heir hath relation to succession ; therefore we use to say, 'unto him and his heirs.' Another hath the primary right, but the heir hath it derived to him ; thus Christ may be said to be heir, not as God, for so he hath equal right with his Father, but as mediator, and so he may be said to succeed his Father.

In the state of innocency, God the Father did govern the world immediately, and the covenant made with Adam was made immediately, by the hands of no mediator ; and though Christ was Lord of all then, yet the Father exercised jurisdiction ; but man falling, Christ comes to be an heir, the Father lays down the government, and Christ undertakes the shattered condition of the world ; and therefore in John v. 22, 'The Father judgeth no man,' &c. Before, the Father judged and ruled immediately, came and preached to Adam himself, and judged him, till he had made the promise of this heir ; and then Christ came to govern the world, of which we have a type, Exod. xxxiii., compared with the 23d chapter and 3d verse, 'I will not,' saith God, 'go up in the middle of them, for I shall destroy them ;' that is, if I go according to my rules which I observed in my government in the state of man's innocency, having given them a law, viz., if they transgressed it, I must of necessity destroy them ; but chap. xxiii. 20, saith the Lord, 'I will send mine angel before you, but I care of him, and obey his voice, for my name is in him,' that is, mine attributes ; according to the rule of his government he may shew mercy, but I cannot. Thus Christ is an heir, because he governs by succession.

*Thirdly ;* He is said to be an heir, to shew that he is Lord of all things, for heirs\* and dominions are all one in the civil law ; the heir is said to be heir† of all, Gal. iii. 1, 2, which is all one with the phrase, 'Him hath God made Lord and Christ,' Acts ii. 36.

*Fourthly ;* To shew that he is the first-born, he hath the primary title, and we are heirs in him, therefore called co-heirs ; therefore it is said in the Psalms, 'I will make my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.'

\* Qu. 'heritages' ?—ED.

† Qu. 'lord' ?—ED.

His inheritance is founded upon this, that he was the first-born in the womb of God's predestination.

*Fifthly*; Because he shall never be put by it, for it is an inheritance, and that is for ever. Foolish men, that can give their goods but for a while, yet they write, 'to him and to his heirs for ever;' but Christ's inheritance is perpetual, he will be heir of two worlds when this is burned, and the writing of it will never be burned, for it is written within the record of God's decree in heaven.

Why did God appoint him thus heir of all things? Was it for himself? No; for he had a natural right to all; but he was so appointed, that he might be able to overrule all things for your salvation, therefore life and death cannot separate between them and him, because he is 'heir of all things,' John xvii. 2. What an infinite mercy is this, that he should not only possess all things, but that Christ should possess all for your sakes; therefore the kingdom of Christ is said to be a spiritual kingdom, because it is to possess and rule all things for spiritual ends, for the good of his elect; Eph. i. 22, he hath given him to be head of all, that he might be head to the church.

*Christ differs from other heirs.* *First*; Because he is heir of all the other sons; other heirs, their brethren, are not put into their inheritance, but Christ doth inherit all things; his brethren are given unto him for his inheritance: 'I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance.'

*Secondly*; Other heirs do not make the land or build the houses they do inherit, but Christ hath built the house he is heir of. Heb. iii. 6, &c.

*Thirdly*; He hath purchased it likewise. What a man hath by purchase, we say he hath it not by inheritance; but Christ he bought heaven and all the glory of the saints, and the saints themselves; therefore, Rev. v., it is said, 'Thou art worthy of all honour and glory,' &c. And yet, though he bought all so dear, yet he must ask for it before he can have it: 'Ask of me, and I will give thee,' Ps. ii. So Isa. liii. speaking of his death, 'He will appoint him his portion with the great.'

*Fourthly*; He doth inherit all things while his Father is alive. Other heirs may have something made over to them, and the rest after their death; but the Father, who ever lives, hath laid down his government, and committed all judgment to the Son.

*Fifthly*; He is such an heir, that all his brethren are heirs with him. In other places, the elder brother runs away with all, and the rest are beggars. But though he hath *primum jus*, and our title come in by him, yet being co-heirs, he inheriting, we may inherit all things with him.

*Use 1.* Labour therefore to be one with Christ, for he is a great heir; he hath unchangeable riches laid up in him, Eph. i., he is heir of three kingdoms, heaven, earth, and hell; and to move you to it, consider you shall not only inherit all things by him, but the heir himself shall be your inheritance, Deut. x. 9, you shall be heirs of him, who shall be heirs\* of all things; not that we should be lords of Christ, yet he will serve us, not only here, as when he came in the form of a servant, but in heaven. It is said, 'He will gird himself and serve us.'

*Use 2.* Think thou what infinite love he shewed when he came down into the world, and dispossessed himself of all, had not a hole to lay his head in, by way of a temporal right; he did not only forbear the use of all, reserving the right, but he did *abdicate jus*, in respect of a temporal right; therefore the apostle saith, 'He became poor, that we might become rich.'

\* Qu. 'heir'?—ED.

*Use 3.* In that he, that was heir of all things, should come here as a prince disguised, it should teach us humility. Here the heir was under tutors and governors, subject to his parents, to the government of the world, paid tribute to Cæsar, &c. Though he possessed all things, and had an assurance immediately before, John xiii., yet he arose and took a towel, and washed his disciples' feet, saying, 'If I your Lord and master,' &c., that is, though he then actually considered that he was Lord of all, yet he would shew them an act of humility, that they might thereby learn to serve one another through love.

*Use 4.* If Christ be Lord of all, then he will certainly uphold a ministry to call his elect home; for he hath all power given him to that end, that he might give them eternal life, Mat. xxviii. 18, 19; therefore ministers also should teach boldly and plainly, because he is heir of all things.

*Use 5.* See then how our right comes in; that great charter that God hath given us is gone, because the seal is broken, which was the image of God; therefore now our right comes in by Christ, and no man hath right to anything, but either as a son or a servant. Wicked men serve him, therefore he gives them for their wages the good things of this life; yet all the right is in him. If therefore you would have the right of sons, get into Christ, 'all things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's;' he hath the prime right, and hath appointed Christ to be heir of all things; and you being in Christ, all things come to be yours. Indeed, you may have the right of servants, and not be in him; neither will Christ call wicked men into question, simply for having the things of this life; but servants abide not in the house always; if therefore you would have an inheritance perpetual, immortal, and not be cast out in the end, labour to be one with Christ.

It follows, to shew why he is said to be an heir *appointed*, not only *hærenatus*, but *constitutus*. All heirs are either born, or so appointed; so by will Christ is both: as the Son of God he is *born* an heir, and so he comes not under the decree of predestination, which is an act of God's will; but as mediator he is *appointed* heir; therefore when the apostle saith, 'By him he made the world,' he speaks of him as the Son; but when he saith, 'He was appointed heir of all things,' he speaks of him as mediator; therefore he speaks of it as a distinct thing, and saith also, 'By whom he made the world.'

There is a twofold right Christ hath to all things.

*First*, By nature, or birth.

*Secondly*, By an economical dispensatory right; and so Christ is said to be predestinated, 1 Peter i. 20.

*First*, As the Son of God he is not predestinated, for generation is an act of God's nature, and he did it necessarily; but predestination is an act of his will.

*Secondly*, That this second person should subsist in a human nature, comes within the compass of his decree, by virtue of which he becomes heir of all things; therefore in Heb. x. 5, it is said, that Christ should have a body, was written in the volume of the book, that is, it comes under the decree of God, for he might have taken the nature of angels, as appears, Heb. ii., where it is said, 'He took not the nature of angels;' it implies, he might have done it.

*Thirdly*, That he took that particular nature, this came within the compass of God's appointment, for it was only by grace, *gratia unionis*; therefore Augustine saith, What could that nature deserve to be taken into fellow-

ship more than any other? It was Nestorius his error, that Christ was first mere man, and merited to be united, not considering that all merit flows from the union, and doth not precede it.

*Fourthly*, All the offices of Christ come within the compass of God's decree.

First, His kingly office : Ps. ii., ' I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.' Acts ii. 36, ' Which God hath made Lord and King.'

Secondly, His priestly office : Heb. iii. 1, 2, it is said, ' He was faithful in it unto him that appointed him.'

Thirdly, His prophetic office : Deut. xviii. 18, ' God will raise up a prophet of their brethren like unto me.'

Fourthly, Though his human nature be united, yet according to that he is not his adopted Son, but his natural Son, for it is *persona* that is *objectum filiationis* ; and not the divine and human nature ; therefore it is said, ' That which is born of thee shall be called the Son of God ;' yet all the glory that he hath, though it be a consequent of his union, yet it is given him. John xvii. 5, he saith, ' Glorify me,' claiming it as his due, yet he begs it, as given. So Phil. ii., though ' he thought it no robbery to be equal with God,' yet it is said, ' God gave him a name above every name.' Though it was his inheritance by nature, yet it was given him ; and the reason is this, because, when he took upon him the office of a mediatorship, he laid down his glory, gave up the right he formerly had, and took it anew from his Father, as if a son, who is joint purchaser with his father, should give up his right, and take it again of his will ; and this he did,

(First.) That he might make over all things unto us. If he had been an heir born only, and possessed it by that title, he could never have made over that to us ; but the right that we had by appointment, that he made over unto us, that we might be heirs with him. As an heir born, he is in the bosom of the Father ; but he sits at the right hand of his Father, as an heir appointed.

(Secondly.) He will be an heir appointed, that God may be glorified in all the glory that he hath. It might be said, the Son holds of him, for as mediator he holds all by that great charter he hath of his Father ; therefore, Phil. ii., ' He gave him a name above every name, &c., to the glory of God the Father.'

*Use 1.* If Christ were appointed heir of all things, if his human nature could not merit to be assumed, but his predestination was merely of grace, then surely it is ours likewise.

*Use 2.* This sets forth the love of Christ to us, in that he would lay down and take it by a new right. Why should not we then lay down all at his feet, seeing we shall have all in a better right, *scil.* a spiritual, we shall be put into Christ's title, and be heirs as well as he. Neither is Christ heir only, but ' heir of all things ;' there is nothing but he hath a right to ; he is an heir of the angels, therefore they are said to be our ' fellow-servants,' Rev. xix. 10, and xxii. 9. The reason is only this, because Christ is the Lord of them also ; therefore he sends them forth for the good of his elect, for which cause they are called ' ministering spirits.' While we stood in innocency, it is a question whether they should have been ministering spirits to us, yea or no ; but now being Christ's servants, they are ours also. He is heir also of the devils, to overrule them ; they could not go into the swine without his leave ; yea, all the wicked men in the world are his servants, therefore they are said to ' deny the Lord that

bought them.' 'The elder shall serve the younger,' was spoken of Esau, who being Christ's servant, was Jacob's likewise. Yea, 'he is heir of all things;' the wind shall not blow on thee but with his leave; yea, all passages of things, both present and to come, all afflictions he is heir of, so of all the creatures; therefore he will new hang his house one day, and they shall be restored again to a glorious liberty; therefore, Ps. xcvi. 10, 11, it is said, 'Let the earth rejoice, because Christ is king.' Yea, all godly men are heirs with him, yet he is heir of the heirs themselves.

For the opening of the point, consider,

*First, Heir of all things* is more than *king of all things*; for inheritance implies right to every parcel of goods in his dominions. He is not only a king to overrule all, but he is heir of more worlds than one, as appears, ver. 3, and he hath a right to every parcel therein.

*Secondly, He is heir of all things*, because he is the end of all things; 'All things were made for him.' He was first appointed an heir, then God made worlds for him to inherit. God did not, as Abraham did, lay up goods, and not know who should enjoy them; but he designed them for Christ; therefore it is said, 'All things were made for him,' Col. i., they are all to set out Christ. The devils, to shew his power, for it was fit so great a king should have potent enemies; the angels, his pursuivants, &c., and the reason is, because indeed he is all things himself, taking upon him our nature; man being an index of all the creatures, therefore it is said, 'Preach the gospel to every creature.'

*Thirdly, The right that Christ hath to all things*, as heir, is not a worldly right, 'My kingdom is not of this world;' therefore, though he be heir of all things, he will put you by nothing; but his title is spiritual, for spiritual ends. For look, what use men are to put things to, such is their title to them; because men are to put the creature to worldly uses, therefore their right is worldly; but Christ being to overrule all things for the good of his elect, his title is spiritual: John xvii. 2, 'All power was given him, that he might give eternal life to them that were given him.' That nothing might hinder their salvation, he hath made himself heir of all things.

*Use 1.* If Christ be heir of all things, then those that are his fellow-heirs need fear nothing, for all things are Christ's. He is the heir of all occurrences in the world, that he might give them eternal life; therefore all things shall work together for that end.

*Use 2.* If Christ be heir of all things, then learn to employ all for Christ. It is reason all should be employed for the good of the heir; administrators, while the heir is under age, are to give an account. All the gifts you have, you are but administrators of them, therefore labour to improve them for the good of the heir.

*Use 3.* Therefore in the end you will find all things tend to the glory of Christ, when all accounts are cast up, and those his enemies, who would not give him glory, shall find that they have done it whether they would or no; for he is a good husband, and will improve his father's goods to the utmost. When God was like to lose all his glory, he undertook the shattered condition of things, and promised that all his glory should come in another way; and it will be found one day, that God had as much glory out of the sinful condition of man, and more, than if he had stood in the state of innocency.

*Use 4.* Though Christ be heir of all things, yet he acknowledges no worldly title. He paid it to Cæsar; therefore let the saints content themselves with a spiritual right. Indeed, Christ might come as king, and challenge

all things presently ; but he lets here wicked men run away with all, and so should his people be content, as he was.

*By whom also he made the world.* Here is a description of Christ in regard of his threefold office.

*First,* His prophetic office ; it is said, ‘ God spake by him.’

*Secondly,* His kingly office ; for it is said, ‘ He is heir of all things, by whom he made the world.’

*Thirdly,* His priestly office ; ‘ When he had purged our sins,’ &c. All that is said of him (as being the Son, as that he was heir of all things, that he created the world, &c.), tend only to this, to shew that he was able to take away our sins. He had said before that he was heir of all things ; and that he might well be, for he made the worlds. The word *αἰῶνας* he used, is nowhere else to be found used in all the Scriptures, but is proper to this epistle, and signifies ages or generations ; and because things are measured by time, therefore it signifies worlds, which are measured by time, for so it is plain in Heb. xi. 1, 3, *numerus numerans* being taken for *numerato*. Time, which is the measure of all things, is put for the world itself ; so Mat. xxiv., ‘ This generation shall not pass,’ is spoken of the Jews, who were then to enter into a great eclipse, so that men would have thought they should have been all worn out ; but, saith Christ, ‘ This generation shall not pass,’ that is, these men ; there *generation* is put for *men*, as here time is put for *worlds*.

Hence we see that there are worlds made by Christ, a higher and a lower world. Accordingly he hath made two sorts of creatures : first, men, to be lords of the world below ; and angels, chief in the world above ; for God loves variety : therefore, when he made reasonable creatures, he would make two sorts, angels and men. For them he framed two worlds, one for Adam, which he brought him into, another for angels, made in the first day’s creation, so as it is said, the morning stars did shine, Job xxxvi, it is meant, that the heavens were created the first day, and the angels with them. There is also an earthly world in which men live upon the creatures, and therefore are called worldly men. The state of grace also is called a world, they that are put into it are called new creatures : ‘ I make a new heaven and a new earth,’ &c., which promise, though it shall be more fully accomplished when the Jews shall be called, yet it is in part fulfilled before ; for whensoever God calleth a church, he maketh a new world ; for which cause his church in many places is called ‘ the world.’ Therefore Christ making a new world, it is fitting he should have a new Sabbath to commemorate it, which was the reason of the translation of the day ; because as the Father made a world, and rested upon that day, so Christ making a new world, rested upon this day ; which is, and shall be kept to the end of the world.

Again, there is also a ‘ present world, and a world to come,’ both made by Christ, Eph. i. 21. The first day God made the angels, and the heavens that we shall one day live in ; but as it is said of hell, it was ‘ prepared for the devil and his angels,’ that though the angels were first cast into it, yet men were to come after, so it may be said of heaven, though it was prepared for the angels first, yet God meant to bring men hither also ; for there are names to be in the world to come as well as in this world.

*Use 1.* If there be worlds made by Christ, then you that be worldly-minded men, consider, if you will turn to Christ, you shall be possessors of worlds, whereas Adam was heir only of one world. We read of Alexander, that he wept when he heard there was but one world to conquer ; but if

you become the sons of God, open your mouths as wide as you can, and they shall be filled. If one world will not serve you, there are worlds for you; this present world, and all things in it, shall be yours, 1 Cor. iii. 22. Therefore Abraham is called the heir of the world, and so shall you be if you have the faith of Abraham; and when you enjoy another world after the latter day, yet this world shall still be yours, and serve for your estate that are heirs of glory. As noblemen use to have many houses to go unto, so it shall be your glory to have such a world as this of your own to stand empty: 'Love not the world therefore, nor the things of it,' for there is a world to come, and this world is nothing in comparison of it. Care not therefore for a great name here, for there are names in the world to come which are lasting, Eph. i. 21. All the evidences for this world will be burned one day, but heaven is a standing palace. This world is made but a stage for men to act their parts a while, and then to be taken down.

Secondly, All these worlds were made by Christ. The Father indeed is the principal agent, but he doth it by his Son; but not as an instrument by which he made it, as some heretics have affirmed, nor by him as a mediator, as some of the fathers have said, as if Christ were a mediator between him and nothing. But when it is said 'he made the worlds by him,' the meaning is this: in the works of the three persons, what one is said to do the other is said to do, only with this difference, all things are said to be *of* the Father, but *by* the Son; for as he is the second person, so he is the second in working.

In men there are three principles which concur to every action:

First, *Wisdom*, to plot all things.

Secondly, *Will*, to have this or that done.

Thirdly, *Power*, by which all things are executed according to this resolution.

The works of the three persons answer to these three.

First, The Son is the *wisdom* of the Father, the *idea* of all things that were made; therefore it is said, Heb. xi. 3, 'The things that are seen are made\* by the things that do appear.'

Secondly, There is *will*, which is the Father's part; for the motion to have all things done comes from him.

Thirdly, The *power* of the highest, viz., the Holy Ghost, which performs all things; therefore it is said, Gen. i., that in the creation he 'moved upon the waters.'

Use 1. To what end is this brought in here, that the worlds were made by Christ, but only to set forth his ability for the work of redemption, for he that made the world can remake it; so John i., it is said, 'Without him was nothing made.' It was only to shew he was a fit person to undertake the work of redemption; therefore it follows, 'The Word was made flesh;' so Col. i., 'By whom all things were made,' to shew he was a fit person, by whom God should reconcile all things to himself; so here only to shew he only was able to 'purge our sins,' for these things could have been done by none others.

Use 2. Therefore love the Lord Jesus more than a thousand worlds, for he is the maker of worlds; and if worlds could do thee good he would make thee many more.

Use 3. This shews the infinite love of Christ, that he that could make worlds would himself be made flesh; and it had been easier for him to

\* Qu. 'not made'?—ED.

make worlds than been made himself a creature; yet this he was himself for our sake.

*Use 4.* Is it not then pity that Christ, that made the world, should not be known nor loved in the world? This is John's complaint, John i. 10, 'The world was made by him, and the world knew him not.' We scarce hear of his name, but only in these western parts; consider, he is your maker, therefore labour to know him. 'The ass knoweth his owner;' therefore much more should we our Maker. He came into the world, and could not be owned by it; he comes into men's senses, and they will not entertain him, but cast him out again; as we do when we take him not upon his own terms.

*Use 5.* If he be good at making worlds, then if thou wouldst have thy heart mended, go to him, who is maker of worlds and hearts also.

*Use 6.* If the world be naught, and times bad, go to Christ, for he is able to make them anew, to alter things and turn the world upside-down; for he is able to make a new heaven and a new earth. When the Jews and Gentiles shall be called, there shall be a new world; though the same stage stand still, yet he will make many new scenes upon it.

*Who being the brightness of his Father's glory, &c.* There are three expressions to set forth the divinity of Christ: he is called the 'Son,' the 'brightness of his Father's glory,' and the 'character of his person;' because the eternal generation of the Son cannot be expressed by one word, therefore the Holy Ghost useth divers terms. He is called a Son, to shew that he is begotten of him as a Father, and therefore he hath the same essence; for identity in essence the word *Son* implies; yet begotten not in a carnal manner, but as the beams are begotten by the sun; therefore he is called the '*brightness of his glory*,' to shew that he is co-eternal with his Father, as the beams are the same in time with the sun; but the beams are weaker than the sun itself, therefore it is said, 'He is the engraven image of his person,' every way like him. All these expressions are to set forth the eternal generation of the Son. He is called the brightness of his glory, to shew that he begat him; necessarily it is not a voluntary action; 'We are begotten according to the good pleasure of his will,' James i.; but he naturally, as the beams do naturally flow from the sun; and is said to be the character of his person; for *essentia nec generat, nec generatur*, as he is the first person, so he begets a second, but the essence is common to both.

He only therefore is the brightness of his Father's glory; we all are but stars shining with a borrowed light. But as the beams of the sun, such is the glory of Christ, which cannot be said of any creature, he having the same glory with his Father; and so it is said, 'They saw his glory,' John i.

*Use 1.* Is Christ so glorious? What will heaven be, but the seeing of the glory of Christ? If God had created worlds of glorious creatures, they could have never expressed his glory as his Son; therefore heaven is thus expressed, John xvii., 'I will that they be with me, to behold my glory.' Wherein lies therefore that great communion of glory that shall be in heaven? It is in seeing the glory of Christ, who is the image of the invisible God that is worshipped. As God himself was invisible, he hath stamped his glory upon his Son, therefore we are said to 'behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,' 2 Cor. iv. 5, 6. Wherein lies our glory? To be where Christ is. John i., it is said, they 'saw his glory, as the glory of the only-begotten Son of God;' that is, they saw such glory as could be in no other. It is therefore the seeing of Christ that makes



heaven ; wherefore one said, If I were cast into any hole, if I could have but a cranny to see Christ always, it would be heaven enough. But is this all, to see himself ? A beggar may look upon the glory of a king, and yet be never the better for it ; but he that shall see the glory of Christ shall be changed into the same glory ; when we see him we shall be like him ; 1 John iii. 2. ‘ He will change our vile bodies, and make them like to his glorious body.’ As he sanctified himself that he might sanctify us, so he glorified himself that he might glorify us. John xvii. 22, ‘ The glory that thou gavest me, I have given unto them.’ Whereby he makes you far more glorious than they could be under the first covenant ; for this is the highest way by which creatures can be united unto God.

*Use 2.* If Christ be thus glorious, then labour to manifest his glory to the world, shine with his glory and grace, which is glory, 2 Cor. iii. 18. Would you see the brightness of Christ’s glory, which wicked men and devils shall never see ? Labour to get your hearts changed into the image of Christ ; be humble, as he was humble, &c.