

where shall we find engines or buckets to quench it? Rev. xiv. 11. 'And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest night nor day.' Thank original sin for all.

Use 1. What sad thoughts should we have of this primitive original sin, that hath created so many miseries? What honey can be got out of this lion? What grapes can we gather off this thorn? It sets heaven and earth against us: while we chuse this bramble to rule, fire comes out of the bramble to devour us.

2. How are all believers bound to Jesus Christ, who hath freed them from that misery to which sin hath exposed them? Eph. i. 7. 'In whom we have redemption through his blood.' Sin hath brought trouble and a curse into the world: Christ hath sanctified the trouble, and removed the curse. Nay, he hath not only freed believers from misery, but purchased for them a crown of glory and immortality, 1 Pet. v. 4. 'When the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.'

OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

Q. XX. *DID God leave all mankind to perish in this estate of sin and misery?*

Ans. No, he entered into a covenant of grace to deliver the elect out of that estate, and bring them into a state of grace by a Redeemer.

Isa. lv. 3. 'I will make an everlasting covenant with you.' Man being by his fall, plunged into a labyrinth of misery, and having no way left to recover himself, God was pleased to enter into a new covenant with him, and so restore him to life by a Redeemer.

The great proposition I shall go upon is, that there is a new covenant ratified between God and the elect.

Q. What is the new covenant?

Ans. It is a solemn compact and agreement made between God and fallen man, wherein the Lord undertakes to be our God, and to make us his people.

Q. What names are given to the covenant?

Ans. 1. It is called a covenant of peace, Ezek. xxxvii. 26. because it seals up reconciliation between God and humble sinners. Before this covenant there was nothing but enmity: God did not love us; a creature that offends cannot be loved by a holy God: and we did not love him; a God that condemns, cannot be loved by a guilty creature; so that there was war on both sides. But God hath found out a way in the new

covenant to reconcile differing parties, so that it is fitly called a covenant of peace.

2. It is called a covenant of grace, and well it may: For, 1. It was with grace, that, when we had forfeited the first covenant, after we had cast away ourselves. The covenant of grace is *tabula post naufragium*, as a plank after shipwreck. O the free grace of God, that he should parly with sinners, and set his wisdom and mercy a-work to bring rebels into the bond of the covenant.

(2.) It is a covenant of grace, because it is a royal charter, all made up of terms of grace; that 'God will cast our sins behind his back:' that 'he will love us freely,' Hof. xiv. 4. That 'he will give us a will to accept of the mercy of the covenant, and strength to perform the conditions of the covenant,' Ezek. xxxvii. 26. All this is pure grace.

Q. *Why would God make a covenant with us?*

Ans. It is out of indulgence, favour, and respect to us. A tyrant will not enter into a covenant with slaves, he will not shew them such respect. God's entering into covenant with us, to be our God, is a dignity he puts upon us. A covenant is *insigne honoris*, a note of distinction between God's people and heathens, Ezek. xvi. 22. 'I will establish my covenant with thee.' When the Lord told Abraham that he would enter into covenant with him, 'Abraham fell upon his face,' Gen. xvii. 2. as being amazed that the God of glory should bestow such a favour upon him.

2. God makes a covenant with us, to tie us fast to him; it is called in Ezekiel, the 'bond of the covenant.' God knows we have slippery hearts, therefore he will have a covenant to bind us: it is a horrid impiety to go away from God after covenant. If one of the vestal nuns, who had vowed herself to religion, was deflowered, the Romans caused her to be burnt alive. It is perjury to depart from God after solemn covenant.

Q. *How doth the covenant of grace differ from the first covenant made with Adam?*

Ans. 1. *Difference.* The terms of the first covenant were more strict and severe. For, 1. The least failing would have made the covenant with Adam null and void, but many failings do not null the covenant of grace: I grant, the least sin is a trespass upon the 'covenant,' but it doth not make it null and void. There may be many failings in the conjugal relation, but every failing doth not break the marriage-bond. It would be sad, if, as oft as we break covenant with God he should break covenant with us; but God will not take advantage of every failing, but in 'anger remember mercy.'

2. The first covenant being broken, allowed the sinner no remedy, all doors of hope were shut; but the new covenant

allows the sinner a remedy: it leaves room for repentance, it provides a mediator, Heb. xii. 24. 'Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.'

2d Differ. The first covenant did run all upon 'working,' the second upon 'believing,' Rom. iv. 5.

Q. But are not works required in the covenant of grace?

Ans. Yes; Tit. iii. 8. 'This is a faithful saying, that they which believe in God, be careful to maintain good works.' But the covenant of grace doth not require works in the same manner as the covenant of works did. In the first covenant, works were required as the condition of life; in the second, they are required only as the signs of a man that is alive. In the first covenant, works were required as grounds of salvation; in the new covenant, they are required as evidences of our love to God. In the first, they were required to the justification of our persons; in the new, to the testification of our grace.

Q. What is the condition of the covenant of grace?

Ans. The main condition is faith.

Q. But why is faith more the condition of the new covenant than any other grace?

Ans. To exclude all glorying in the creature; faith is an humble grace. If repentance or works were the condition of the covenant, a man would say, It is my righteousness hath saved me: but if it be of faith, where is boasting? Faith fetcheth all from Christ, and gives all the glory to Christ; it is a most humble grace. Hence it is God hath singled out this grace to be the condition of the covenant.

And if faith be the condition of the covenant of grace, it excludes desperate presumptuous sinners from the covenant. They say there is a covenant of grace, and they shall be saved: but did you ever know a bond without a condition? The condition of the covenant is faith, and if thou hast no faith, thou hast no more to do with the covenant than a foreigner or a country farmer with the city charter.

Use 1: Of information. See the amazing goodness of God, to enter into covenant with us: he never entered into covenant with the angels when they fell. It was much condescension in God to enter into covenant with us in a state of innocency, but it was more to enter in a state of enmity. In this covenant of grace, we may see the cream of God's love, and the working of his bowels to sinners. This is a marriage covenant, Jer. iii. 14. 'I am married to you, saith the Lord.' In the new covenant, God makes himself over to us, and what can we give more? And he makes over his promises to us, and what better bond can we have?

Use 2. Of trial. Whether we are in covenant with God. There are three characters.

1. God's covenant-people are an humble people, 1 Pet. v. 5. 'Be ye clothed with humility.' God's people esteem of others better than themselves; they shrink into nothing in their own thoughts, Phil. ii. 3. David cries out, 'I am a worm, and no man,' Psal. xxii. 6. though a faint, though a king, yet a worm. When Moses' face shined, he covered it with a veil: God's people, when they shine most in grace, are covered with 'the veil of humility.' Pride excludes from the covenant; 'God resisteth the proud,' 1 Pet. i. 3. and sure such are not in covenant with God, whom he resists.

2. A people in covenant with God, are a willing people; though they cannot serve God perfectly, they serve him willingly. They do not grudge God a little time spent in his worship; they do not hesitate or murmur at sufferings; they will go through a sea and a wilderness, if God call; Psal. cx. 3. 'Thy people shall be a willing people:' Heb. 'a people of willingness.' This spontaneity and willingness, is from the attractive power of God's Spirit: the Spirit doth not *impellere*, force, but *trahere*, sweetly draw the will; and this willingness in religion, makes all our services accepted. God doth sometimes accept of willingness without the work, but never the work without willingness.

3. God's covenant-people are a consecrated people, they have holiness to the Lord written upon them, Deut. vii. 6. 'Thou art a holy people to the Lord thy God.' God's covenant-people are separated from the world, and sanctified by the Spirit. The priests under the law were not only to wash in the great laver, but were arrayed with glorious apparel, Exod. xxviii. 2. This was typical, to shew God's people are not only washed from gross sins, but adorned with holiness of heart; they bear not only God's name, but image. Tamerlane refused a pot of gold, when he saw it had not his father's stamp upon it but the Roman stamp. Holiness is God's stamp, if he doth not see this stamp upon us, he will not own us for his covenant-people.

Use 3. Of Exhortation. To such as are out of covenant, labour to get into covenant, and have God for your God. How glad would the old world have been of an ark? How industrious should we be to get within the ark of the covenant? Consider, 1. The misery of such as live and die out of the covenant with God. (1.) Such have none to go to in an hour of distress. When conscience accuseth, when sickness approacheth, (which is but an harbinger to bespeak a lodging for death) then what will you do? Whither will you flee? Will you look to Christ for help? He is a mediator only for such as are in covenant. O how will you be filled with horror and despair! and be as Saul, 1 Sam. xxviii. 15. 'The Philistines make war against me, and the Lord is departed.' (2.) Till you are in covenant with

God, there is no mercy. The mercy-seat was placed upon the ark, and the mercy-seat was no larger than the ark; to shew, that the mercy of God reacheth no further than the covenant.

2. The excellency of the covenant of grace; it is a better covenant than the covenant made with Adam. 1st, Because it is more friendly and propitious. Those services which would have been rejected in the first covenant, are accepted in the second. Here God accepts of the will for the deed, 2 Cor. viii. 10. here sincerity is crowned in the covenant of grace, wherein we are weak, God will give strength; and wherein we come short, God will accept of a surety. 2dly, It is a better covenant, because it is surer, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. 'Thou hast made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.' The first covenant was not sure, it stood upon a tottering foundation, works; Adam had no sooner a stock of righteousness to trade with, but he broke: but the covenant of grace is sure; it is confirmed with God's decree, and it rests upon two mighty pillars, the oath of God, and the blood of God. 3dly, It hath better privileges. The covenant of grace brings preferment. Our nature is now more ennobled, we are raised to higher glory than in innocency, we are advanced to sit upon Christ's throne, Rev. iii. 21. We are by virtue of the covenant of grace nearer to Christ than the angels: they are his friends, we his spouse. 3. God is willing to be in covenant with you. Why doth God woo and beseech you by his ambassadors to be reconciled, if he were not willing to be in covenant.

Obj. *I would fain be in covenant with God, but I have been a great sinner, and I fear God will not admit me into covenant.*

Ans. If thou seekest thy sins, and lovest thyself for them, yet God will take thee into covenant, Isa. xliii. 24. 'Thou hast wearied me with thy iniquities, I, even I, am he, that blotteth out thy transgressions.' As the sea covers great rocks, so God's covenant-mercy covers great sins. Some of the Jews that crucified Christ, yet had their sins washed away in his blood.

Obj: *But I am not worthy that ever God should admit me into covenant.*

Ans. It never came into God's thought to make a new covenant upon terms of worthiness. If God should shew mercy to none but such as are worthy, then he must shew mercy to none at all. But it is God's design in the new covenant to advance the riches of grace, to love us freely: and when we have no worthiness of our own, to accept us through Christ's worthiness. Therefore let not unworthiness discourage you; it is not unworthiness excludes any from the covenant, but unwillingness.

Q. *What shall we do that we may be in covenant with God?*

Ans. 1. Seek to God by prayer. *Exige a Domino misericordiam*, Aug. "Lord, be my God in covenant." The Lord hath

made an exprefs promise, that, upon our prayer to him, the covenant should be ratified, he will be our God, and we shall be his people, Zech. xiii. 9. 'They shall call upon my name, and I will hear them; I will say it is my people; and they shall say, the Lord is my God.' Only it must be an importunate prayer; come as earnest suiters, resolve to take no denial.

2. If you would be in covenant with God, break off the covenant with sin; before the marriage covenant there must be a divorce, 1 Sam. vii. 3. 'If ye return to the Lord with all your hearts, put away the strange gods; and they put away Astartoth;' viz. their female gods. Will any King enter into covenant with that man who is in league with his enemies?

3. If you would enter into the bond of the covenant, get faith in the blood of the covenant. Christ's blood is the blood of atonement; believe in this blood, and you are safely arked in God's mercy; Eph. ii. 13. 'Ye are made nigh by the blood of Christ.'

Use 4. Of comfort to such as can make out their covenant-interest in God. (1.) You that are in covenant with God, all your sins are pardoned. Pardon is the crowning mercy, Psalm ciii. 3. 'Who forgiveth thy iniquity, who crowneth thee, &c.' This is a breach of the covenant, Jer. xxxi. 33. 'I will be their God, and I will forgive their iniquity.' Sin being pardoned, all wrath ceaseth. How terrible is it when but a spark of God's wrath flies into a man's conscience? But sin being forgiven, no more wrath. God doth not appear now in the fire or earthquake, but covered with a rain-bow full of mercy.

2. All your temporal mercies are fruits of the covenant. Wicked men have mercies by providence, not by virtue of a covenant; with God's leave, not with his love. But such as are in covenant have their mercies sweetened with God's love, and they swim to them in the blood of Christ. As Naaman said to Gehazi, 2 Kings v. 23. 'Take two talents,' so saith God, to such as are in covenant, take two talents; take health, and take Christ with it: take riches, and take my love with them; take the venison, and take the blessing with it: Take two talents.

(3.) You may upon all occasions, plead the covenant. If you are hunted with temptations, plead the covenant; Lord, thou hast promised to bruise Satan under my feet shortly; wilt thou suffer thy child to be thus worried? Take off the roaring lion. If in want, plead the covenant; Lord, thou hast said, 'I shall want no good thing;' wilt thou save me from hell, and not from want? wilt thou give me a kingdom, and deny me daily bread?

(4.) If in covenant with God all things shall co-operate for your good: *Etiam mala cedunt in bonum*, Psal. xxv. 10. Not

only golden paths, but his bloody paths. Every wind of providence shall blow them nearer heaven. Affliction shall humble and purify, Heb. xii. 10. Out of the bitterest drug, God distills your salvation. Afflictions add to the saints glory. The more the diamond is cut, the more it sparkles; the heavier the saints cross is, the heavier shall be their crown.

(5.) If thou art in covenant once, then for ever in covenant. The text calls it, 'an everlasting covenant.' Such as are in covenant are elected; God's electing love is unchangeable, Jer. xxxii. 40. 'I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them; but I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from me.' God will so love the saints that he will not forsake them: And the saints shall so fear God, that they shall not forsake him. 'Tis a covenant of eternity: It must be so; for who is this covenant made with? Is it not with believers? and have not they coalition and union with Christ? Christ is the head, they are the body, Eph. i. 23. 'This is a near union, much like that union between God the Father and Christ, John xvii. 21. 'As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.' Now the union between Christ and the saints being so inseparable, it can never be dissolved, or the covenant made void; you may die with comfort.

(6.) Thou art in covenant with God, and thou art going to thy God: Behold a death-bed cordial; death breaks the union between the body and the soul, but perfects the union between Christ and the soul. This hath made the saints desire death as the bride the wedding-day, Phil. i. 23. *Cupio dissolvi*, Lead me, Lord, to that glory, (said one) a glimpse whereof I have seen, as in a glass darkly.

Use 5. Of Direction. To shew how you should walk who have tasted of covenant-mercy, live as a people in covenant with God. As you differ from others in respect of dignity, so you must in point of carriage.

1st, You must love this God. God's love to you calls for love. 1. It is *Amor gratiatus*, a free love. Why should God pass by others, and take you into a league of friendship with himself? In the law, God passed by the lion and eagle, and chose the dove: So he passes by the noble and mighty. 2. It is *Amor plenus*, a full love. When God takes you into covenant, you are his *Hephzibah*, Isa. lxii. 5. his delight is in you; he gives you the key of all his treasure, he heaps pearls upon you, he settles heaven and earth upon you; he gives you a bunch of grapes by the way, and saith 'Son, all I have is thine.' And doth not all this call for love? who can tread upon these hot coals, and his heart not burn in love to God.

2dly, Walk holily. The covenant hath made you a royal

nation, therefore be an holy people. Shine as lights in the world; live as earthly angels. God hath taken you into covenant, that you and he may have communion together, and what is it keeps up your communion with God, but holiness;

Sdly, Walk thankfully, Pſal. ciii. 1. God is your God in covenant; he hath done more for you, than if he had made you ride upon the high places of the earth, and given you crowns and ſceptres. O take the cup of falvation, and bleſs the Lord. Eternity will be little enough to praiſe him. Muſicians love to play on their muſic where there is the loudeſt ſound; and God loves to beſtow his mercies where he may have the loudeſt praiſes. You that have angels reward, do angels work. Begin that work of praiſe here, which you hope to be always doing in heaven.



CHRIST THE MEDIATOR OF THE COVENANT.

HEB. xii. 24. *Jeſus the Mediator of the New Covenant, &c.*

JESUS CHRIST is the ſum and quinteſſence of the goſpel; the wonder of angels; the joy and triumph of ſaints. The name of Chriſt is ſweet, it is as muſic in the ear, honey in the mouth, and a cordial at the heart.

I ſhall wave the context, and only ſpeak of that which concerns our preſent purpoſe: having diſcourſed of the covenant of grace, I ſhall ſpeak now of the Mediator of the covenant, and the reſtorer of lapſed finners, ‘Jeſus the mediator of the covenant.’

There are ſeveral names and titles in ſcripture given to Chriſt, as the great reſtorer of mankind: 1. Sometimes he is called a Saviour, Mat. i. 21. ‘His name ſhall be called Jeſus.’ The Hebrew word for JESUS, ſignifies a Saviour, and whom he ſaves from hell, he ſaves from ſin: where Chriſt is a Saviour, he is a ſanctifier, Matth. i. 21. ‘He ſhall ſave his people from their ſins.’ There is no other Saviour, Acts iv. 12. ‘Neither is there falvation in any other.’ As there was but one ark to ſave the world from drowning, ſo there is but one Jeſus to ſave finners from damning. As Naomi ſaid to her daughters-in-law, Ruth i. 11. ‘Are there yet any more ſons in my womb? So hath God any other ſons in the womb of his eternal decree, to be favours to us, beſides Chriſt? Job xxviii. 14. ‘Where ſhall wiſdom be found? the depth ſaith, it is not in me; and the ſea ſaith, it is not in me.’ Let me allude, Where ſhall falvation be found? The angel ſaith, it is not in me; morality ſaith, it is not in me: the ordinance ſaith, it is not in me: