

## SERMON III.

Opens the Covenant of Redemption betwixt the Father and the Redeemer.

ISA. liii. 12.

*Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

**I**N this chapter, the gospel seems to be epitomized; the subject-matter of it is the death of Christ, and the glorious issue thereof: by reading of it, the Eunuch of old, and many Jews since, have been converted to Christ. Christ is here considered *absolutely*, and *relatively*; Absolutely, and so his innocency is industriously vindicated, ver. 9. Though he suffered grievous things, yet not for his own sins, “for he had done no violence, neither “was any deceit in his mouth;” but relatively considered in the capacity of a surety for us: so the justice of God is so fully vindicated in his sufferings; ver. 6. “The Lord hath laid upon him the “iniquity of us all.” How he came to sustain this capacity and relation of a surety for us, is in these verses plainly asserted to be by his compact and agreement with his Father,\* before the worlds were made, verse 10, 11, 12.

In this verse we have, 1. His work. 2. His reward. 3. The respect or relation of each to the other. (1.) His work, which was indeed a hard work, *to pour out his soul unto death*, aggravated by the companions, with whom, *being numbered with transgressors*; the capacity in which, bearing all the sins of the elect, “he bare the “sins of many;” and by the manner of his bearing it, *viz.* meekly, and forgivingly, “he made intercession for the transgressors;” This was his work. (2.) The reward or fruit which is promised him for this work, “therefore will I divide him a portion with “the great, and he will divide the spoil with the strong;” wherein is a plain allusion to conquerors in war, for whom are reserved the richest garments, and most honourable captives to follow the

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\* Norton's *Orthodox Evangelist*, p. 41. The call of the Lord Jesus unto office, includes election on the Father's part, and acceptation on the Mediator's part, and is set down after the manner of mutual transaction between God and Christ; whereby he was designed thereunto, as it were by way of covenant. If his soul should set itself an offering for sin, (for so, according to the original, do good authors read the text) “he shall see his seed, prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand,” verse 10.

conqueror, as an addition to his magnificence and triumph; these were wont to come after them in chains, Isa. xlv. 14. see Judges v. 3. (3.) The respect or relation betwixt that work and this triumph: some will have this work to have no other relation to that glory, than a mere antecedent to a consequent: others give it the respect and relation of a meritorious cause to a reward. It is well observed by Dr. Featly, that the Hebrew particle לכן which we render *therefore*, noting order, is not worth so much contention about it, whether it be the order of *casualty*, or mere *antecedency*; neither do I foresee any absurdity in calling Christ's exaltation the reward and fruit of his humiliation: however, it is plain, whether one or other, it is that the Father here agrees and promises to give him, if he will undertake the redemption of the elect, by pouring out his soul unto death; of all which this is the plain result:

Doct. *That the business of man's salvation was transacted upon covenant terms, betwixt the Father and the Son, from all eternity.*

I would not here be mistaken, as though I were now to treat of the covenant of grace, made in Christ betwixt God and us; it is not the covenant of grace, but of redemption, I am now to speak to, which differs from the covenant of grace, in regard of the *federates*; in this, it is God the Father, and Jesus Christ, that mutually covenant; in that, it is God and man: they differ, also in the *preceptive* part; in this it is required of Christ that he should shed his blood, in that it is required of us that we believe. They also differ in their *promises*; in this, God promises to Christ a name above every name, ample dominion from sea to sea; in that, to us, grace and glory: so that these are two distinct covenants.\*

The substance of this covenant of redemption is, dialogue-wise, expressed to us in Isa. xlix. † where, (as divines have well observed) Christ begins, at the first and second verses, and shews his commission, telling his Father, how he had both called, and prepared him for the work of redemption; *The Lord hath called me from the womb—he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword, and made me a polished shaft*, &c. *q. d.* by reason of that superabundant measure of the spirit of wisdom and power wherewith I am anointed and filled; my doctrine shall, as a sword, pierce the hearts of sinners; yea, like an arrow, drawn to the head, strike deep into souls standing at a great distance from God and godliness.

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\* The author writes in the popular style of the last age. However, later writers, for very important reasons, have rejected the distinction as not only inaccurate, but as pregnant with consequences highly inimical to the sovereignty of grace. See *Witsius de Oeconomia Fœderum*, *Boston's View of the Covenant of Grace*, and *Gib's Sacred Contemplations*. Editor.

† *Vide Goodwin's Triumph of Faith.*

Having told God how ready, and fit he was for his service, he will know of him what reward he shall have for his work, for he resolves his blood shall not be undervalued; hereupon, verse 3. the Father offers him the elect of Israel for his reward, bidding low at first (as they that make bargains use to do) and only offers him that small remnant, still intending to bid higher: But Christ will not be satisfied with these, he values his blood higher than so: therefore, in verse 4. he is brought in complaining, "I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought," *q. d.* This is but a small reward for so great a suffering, as I must undergo; my blood is much more worth than this comes to, and will be sufficient to redeem all the elect dispersed among the isles of the Gentiles, as well as the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Hereupon the Father comes up higher, and tells him, he intends to reward him better than so; and therefore, verse 6. says, "It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth." Thus is the treaty carried on betwixt them, transacting it after the manner of men.

Now, to open this great point, we will here consider, (1.) The persons transacting one with another. (2.) The business transacted. (3.) The quality and manner of the transaction, which is federal. (4.) The articles to which they agree. (5.) How each person performs his engagement to the other. And, *Lastly*, The antiquity or eternity of this covenant transaction.

(1.) The persons transacting and dealing with each other in this covenant; and indeed they are great persons, God the Father, and God the Son; the former as a *Creditor*, and the latter as a *Surety*. The Father stands upon satisfaction, the Son engages to give it. If it be demanded, why the Father and the Spirit might not as well have treated upon our redemption, as the Father and Son! It is answered, Christ is the natural Son of God, and therefore fittest to make us the adopted sons of God. Christ also is the middle person in the Trinity, and therefore fittest to be the mediator and middle person betwixt us and God.\* The Spirit hath another office assigned him, even to apply, as Christ's vicegerent, the redemption designed by the Father, and purchased by the Son for us.

(2.) The business transacted betwixt them; and that was the redemption and recovery of all God's elect: our eternal happiness lay now before them, our dearest and everlasting concerns were now in their hands: the elect (though not yet in being) are here

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\* *Vide* Robert's *Medulla Bib.* p. 1577, et *Lys. Test.* p. 83, 84.

considered as existent, yea, and as fallen, miserable, forlorn creatures: \* How these may again be restored to happiness (*salva justitia Dei*) without prejudice to the honour, justice and truth of God; this, this is the business that lay before them.

(3.) For the manner, or quality of the transaction, it was *federal*, or of the nature of a covenant; it was by mutual engagements and stipulations, each person undertaking to perform his part in order to our recovery.

We find each person undertaking for himself by solemn promise; the Father promiseth that he will “hold his hand, and “keep him,” Isa. xlii. 6. The Son promiseth, he will obey his Father’s call to suffering, and not “be rebellious,” Isa. l. 5. And, having promised, each holds the other to his engagement. The Father stands upon the satisfaction promised him; and, when the payment was making, he will not abate him one farthing, Rom. viii. 32. “God spared not his own Son,” *i. e.* he abated nothing of the full price he was to have at his hands for us.

And as the Father stood strictly upon the terms of the covenant, so did Christ also; John xvii. 45. “I have glorified thee “on earth, (saith he to the Father) I have finished the work “thou gavest me to do; and now, Father, glorify me with thine “own self.” As if he had said, Father, the work is done, now where is the wages I was promised? I call for glory as my due, as much my due as the hire of the labourer is his due, when his work is done.

4. More particularly; we will next consider the articles to which they do both agree; or, what it is that each person doth for himself promise to the other. And, to let us see how much the Father’s heart is engaged in the salvation of poor sinners, there are five things which he promiseth to do for Christ, if he will undertake that work.

*First*, He promiseth to invest him, and anoint him to a three-fold office, answerable to the misery that lay upon the elect as so many bars to all communion with, and enjoyment of God; for, if ever man be restored to that happiness, the blindness of his mind must be cured, the guilt of sin expiated, and his captivity to sin led captive: answerably, Christ must, “of God, be made unto “us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption,” 1 Cor. i. 30. And he is made so to us as our *Prophet, Priest, and*

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\* The external cause of that satisfaction, which the Father decreed, and the Son made, was the miserable state we were in, upon the account of our sins, which justly deserved eternal punishment, and bound us over unto it: we being in this forlorn condition, the God of mercy had compassion on us, and for our sakes, the Son of God underwent all that punishment which we deserved to suffer; in order that we might be restored to our first happiness. *Synop. purior. Theol.* p. 350.

*King*; but he could not put himself into either of these; for if so, he had acted without commission, and consequently all he did had been invalid; Heb. v. 5. "Christ glorified not himself to be made an High-Priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son." A commission therefore to act authoritatively, in these offices, being necessary to our recovery, the Father engages to him to seal him such a threefold commission.

He promiseth to invest him with an eternal and royal Priesthood, Psal. cx. 4. "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec." This Melchisedec being King of Righteousness, and king of *Salem*, that is, *Peace*, had a royal priesthood; and his descent not being reckoned, it had an adumbration of eternity in it, and so was more apt to type and shadow forth the priesthood of Christ than Aaron's was, Heb. vii. 16, 17, 24, 25. as the apostle accommodates them there.

He promiseth moreover to make him a Prophet, and that an extraordinary one, even the Prince of prophets; the chief Shepherd, as much superior to all others, as the sun is to the lesser stars; so you have it, Isa. xlii. 6, 7. "I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes," &c.

And not only so, but to make him king also, and that of the whole empire of the world; so Psal. ii. 6, 7, 8. "Ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost ends of the earth for thy possession." Thus he promiseth to qualify and furnish him completely for the work, by his investiture with this threefold office.

*Secondly*, And forasmuch as he knew it was a hard and difficult work his Son was to undertake, a work that would have broken the backs of all the angels in heaven, and men on earth, had they engaged in it; therefore he promiseth to stand by him, and assist and strengthen him for it: so, Isa. xlii. 5, 6, 7. "I will hold thy hand," or take hold of thee with my hands, for so it may be rendered, \* *i. e.* I will underprop and support thy humanity, when it is even overweighted with the burden that is to come upon it, and ready to sink down under it; for so you know the case stood with him, Mark xiv. 34. and so it was foretold of him, Isa. liii. 7. "He was oppressed," &c. and indeed the humanity needed a prop of no less strength than the infinite power of the Godhead: the same promise you have in the first verse also, "Behold my servant whom I uphold."

*Thirdly*, He promiseth to crown his work with success, and

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\* I, whose power is boundless and infinite, will so befriend and support thee, that all thy enemies shall not be able to hurt thee. *Marlot*, on this place.

bring it to an happy issue, Isa. liii. 10. "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." He shall not begin, and not finish; he shall not shed his invaluable blood upon hazardous terms; but shall see and reap the sweet fruits thereof; as the joyful mother forgets her pangs, when she delightfully embraces and kisses her living child.

*Fourthly*, The Father promiseth to accept him in his work, though millions should certainly perish, Isa. xlix. 4. "Surely (saith he) my work is with the Lord." And, verse 5. "I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord." His faith hath therein respect to this compact and promise. Accordingly, the Father manifests the satisfaction he had in him, and in his work, even while he was about it upon the earth, when there came such a "voice from the excellent glory, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

*Fifthly*, As he engaged to reward him highly for his work, by exalting him to singular and super-eminent glory and honour, when he should have dispatched and finished it. So you read, Psal. ii. 7. "I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." It is spoken of the day of his resurrection, when he had just finished his sufferings. And so the apostle expounds and applies it, Acts xiii. 32, 33. For then did the Lord wipe away the reproach of his cross, and invested him with such glory, that he looked like himself again. As if the Father had said, now thou hast again recovered thy glory, and this day is to thee as a new birth-day.

These are the encouragements and rewards proposed and promised to him by the Father. This was the joy set before him," (as the apostle phraseth it in Heb. xii. 2.) which made him so patiently to "endure the cross, and despise the shame."

And in like manner Jesus Christ restipulates, and gives his engagement to the Father; that, upon these terms, he is content to be made flesh, to divest, as it were, himself of his glory, to come under the obedience and malediction of the law, and not to refuse any, the hardest sufferings it should please his Father to inflict on him. So much is implied in Isa. l. 5, 6, 7. "The Lord hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back; I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that pulled off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting: For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; I have set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." When he saith, I was not rebellious, מריתי he meaneth, I was most heartily willing, and content to

accept the terms; for there is a *Meiosis* in the words, and much more is intended than expressed. And the sense of this place is well delivered to us in other terms, Psal. xl. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. "Then said I, Lo I come, I delight to do thy will, O God, thy law is within my heart." O see with what a full consent the heart of Christ closeth with the Father's offers and proposals; like some echo, that answers your voice twice or thrice over. So doth Christ here answer his Father's call, "I come, I delight to do thy will; yea, thy law is in my heart." And thus you see the articles to which they both subscribed, or the terms they agreed on.

(5.) I will briefly shew how these articles, and agreements were on both parts, performed, and that precisely and punctually. For, (1.) The Son having thus consented, accordingly he applies himself to the discharge of his work. He took a body, in it fulfilled all righteousness, even to a tittle, Matth. iii. 15. And at last his soul was made an offering for sin, so that he could say as it is, John xvii. 4. "Father, I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." He went through all the parts of his active, and passive obedience, cheerfully and faithfully. (2.) The Father made good his engagements to Christ, all along, with no less faithfulness than Christ did his. He promised to *assist, and hold his hand*, and so he did; Luke xxii. 23. "And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him." That was one of the sorest brunts that ever Christ met with; this was seasonable aid and succour. He promised to accept him in his work, and that he should be glorious in his eyes; so he did: for he not only declared it by a voice from heaven, Luke iii. 22. "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:" But it was fully declared in his resurrection and ascension, which were a full discharge and justification of him. He promised him that "He should see his seed," and so he did; for his very birth-dew was as the dew of the morning; and ever since his blood has been fruitful in the world. He promised gloriously to reward and exalt him; and so he hath, Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. and that highly and super-eminently, "giving him a name above every name in heaven and earth." Thus were the articles performed.

(6.) *Lastly*, When was this compact made betwixt the Father and the Son? I answer, it bears date from eternity.\* Before this world was made, then were his delights in us, while as yet we had no existence, but only in the infinite mind and purpose of God,

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\* *Antequam ab omnibus retro seculis tempora fluere inciperent, decrevit Deus hanc nobis salutis gratiam per Christum conferre: i. e.* From all eternity, God decreed to bestow on us the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.

who had decreed this for us in Christ Jesus, as the apostle speaks, 2 Tim. i. 9. What grace was that which was given us in Christ before the world began, but this grace of redemption, which was from everlasting thus contrived and designed for us, in that way which hath been here opened? Then was the council, or consultation of peace betwixt them both, as some take that scripture, Zech. vi. 13.

Next let us apply it to ourselves.

*Use 1.* The first use that offers itself to us from hence, is *the abundant security that God hath given the elect for their salvation, and that not only in respect of the covenant of grace made with them, but also of this covenant of redemption made with Christ for them; which indeed is the foundation of the covenant of grace.* God's single promise is security enough to our faith, his covenant of grace adds, *ex abundantia*, farther security; but both these viewed as the effects and fruits of this covenant of redemption, make all fast and sure. In the covenant of grace, we question not the performance on God's part, but we are often stumbled at the grand defects on our parts. But when we look to the covenant of redemption there is nothing to stagger our faith, both the federates being infinitely able and faithful to perform their parts; so that there is no possibility of a failure there. Happy were it, if puzzled and perplexed Christians would turn their eyes from the defects that are in their obedience, to the fulness and completeness of Christ's obedience; and see themselves complete in him, when most lame and defective in themselves.

*2.* Hence also to be informed, *that God the Father, and God the Son, do mutually rely and trust to one another in the business of our redemption.* The Father relies upon the Son for the performance of his part; as it is, Isa. xlii. 1. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold." *Montanus*\* turns it, on whom I lean or depend. As if the Father had said, behold what a faithful servant I have chosen, in whom my soul is at rest: I know he will go through with his work, I can depend upon him. And, to speak plain, the Father so far trusted Christ, that upon the credit of his promise to come into the world, and in the fulness of time to become a sacrifice for the elect, he saved all the Old-Testament saints, whose faith also respected a Christ to come; with reference whereto, it is said, Heb. xi. 39, 40. "That they received not the promises, God having provided "some better things for us, that they without us should not be "made perfect," *i. e.* without Jesus Christ manifested in the flesh, in our times; though believed on, as to come in the flesh, in their times. And as the Father trusted Christ, so doth Christ, in like manner, depend upon, and trust his Father. For, having per-

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\* אהתמך בו *Innitur in eo.* Montanus.



formed his part, and left the world again, he now trusteth his Father for the accomplishment of that promise made him, Isa. liii. 10. "That he shall see his seed," &c. He depends upon his Father for all the elect that are left behind, yet unregenerated, as well as those already called, that they shall be all preserved unto the heavenly kingdom, according to that, John xvii. 11. "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world; and I come unto thee: holy Father, keep, through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me." And can it be imagined, that the Father will fail in his trust, who every way acquitted himself so punctually to the Son? It cannot be.

*Use 3.* Moreover, hence we infer *the validity and unquestionable success of Christ's intercession in heaven for believers.* You read, Heb. vii. 25. "That he ever lives to make intercession; and, Heb. xii. 24. "That his blood speaks for good things for them." Now, that his blood shall obtain what it pleads in heaven for, is undoubted, and that from the consideration of this covenant of redemption. For here you see that the things he now asks of his Father, are the very same which his Father promised him, and covenanted to give him, before this world was. So that, besides the interest of the person, the very equity of the matter speaks its success, and requires performance. Whatever he asks for us, is as due to him as the wages of the hireling, when the work is ended; if the work be done, and done faithfully, as the Father hath acknowledged it is, then the reward is due, and due immediately; and no doubt but he shall receive it from the hands of a righteous God.

*Use 4.* Hence, in like manner, you may be informed of *the consistency of grace with full satisfaction to the justice of God.* The apostle, 2 Tim. i. 9. tells us, "We are saved according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Jesus Christ before the world began." *i. e.* According to the gracious terms of this covenant of redemption; and yet you see notwithstanding, how strictly God stands upon satisfaction from Christ; so then, grace to us, and satisfaction to justice, are not so inconsistent as the Socinian adversaries would make them; what was debt to Christ, is grace to us: when you hear men cry out, Here is grace indeed! pay me all, and I will forgive you; remember, how all mouths are stopt with that one text, Rom. iii. 24. "Being justified freely by his grace;" and yet he adds, "through the redemption that is in Christ."

*Use 5.* Again, Hence judge of *the antiquity of the love of God to believers!* what an ancient friend he hath been to us; who loved us, provided for us, and contrived all our happiness, before we were, yea, before the world was. We reap the fruits of this covenant now, the seed whereof was sown from eternity; yea, it is

not only ancient, but also most free: no excellencies of ours could engage the love of God; for as yet we were not.

*Use 6.* Hence judge, *How reasonable it is that believers should embrace the hardest terms of obedience unto Christ, who complied with such hard terms for their salvation:* they were hard and difficult terms indeed, on which Christ received you from the Father's hand: it was, as you have heard, to pour out his soul unto death, or not to enjoy a soul of you. Here you may suppose the Father to say, when driving his bargain with Christ for you:

*Father.* My Son, here is a company of poor miserable souls, that have utterly undone themselves, and now lie open to my justice! Justice demands satisfaction for them, or will satisfy itself in the eternal ruin of them: What shall be done for these souls? And thus Christ returns.

*Son.* O my Father, such is my love to, and pity for them, that rather than they shall perish eternally, I will be responsible for them as their Surety; bring in all thy bills, that I may see what they owe thee; Lord, bring them all in, that there may be no after-reckonings with them; at my hand shalt thou require it. I will rather choose to suffer thy wrath than they should suffer it: upon me, my Father, upon me be all their debt.

*Father.* But, my Son, if thou undertake for them, thou must reckon to pay the last mite, expect no abatements; if I spare them, I will not spare thee.

*Son.* Content, Father, let it be so; charge it all upon me, I am able to discharge it: and though it prove a kind of undoing to me, though it impoverish all my riches, empty all my treasures, (for so indeed it did, 2 Cor. viii. 9. "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor") yet I am content to undertake it. Blush, "ungrateful believers, O let shame cover your faces; judge in yourselves now, hath Christ deserved that you should stand with him for trifles, that you should shrink at a few petty difficulties, and complain, this is hard, and that is harsh? O if you knew the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in this his wonderful condescension for you, you could not do it.

*Use 7.* Lastly, *How greatly are we all concerned to make it sure to ourselves, that we are of this number which the Father and the Son agreed for before the world was; that we were comprehended in Christ's engagement and compact with the Father?*

*Obj.* Yea, but you will say, who can know that, there were no witnesses to that agreement.

*Sol.* Yes, We may know, without ascending into heaven, or prying into unrevealed secrets, that our names were in that covenant, if, (1.) You are believers indeed; for all such the Father then gave to Christ, John xvii. 8. "The men that thou gavest me

“ (for of them he spake immediately before) they have believed “ that thou didst send me.” (2.) If you savingly know God in Jesus Christ, such were given him by the Father, John xvii. 6. “ I have manifested thy name unto the men thou gavest me.” By this they are discriminated from the rest, verse 25. “ The world “ hath not known thee, but these have known,” &c. (3.) If you are men and women of another world; John xvii. 16. “ They “ are not of the world, as I am not of the world.” May it be said of you, as of dying men, that you are not men and women for this world, that you are crucified and dead to it, Gal. vi. 14. that you are strangers in it? Heb. xi. 13, 14. (4.) If you keep Christ’s word, John xvii. 6. “ Thine they were, and thou gavest “ them me; and they have kept thy word.” By keeping his word, understand the receiving of the word, in its sanctifying effects and influences into your hearts, and your perseverance in the profession and practice of it to the end, John xvii. 17. “ Sanctify “ them through thy truth, thy word is truth.” John xv. 7. “ If “ ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what “ ye will.” Blessed and happy is that soul upon which these blessed characters appear, which our Lord Jesus hath laid so close together, within the compass of a few verses, in this xvii. chapter of John. These are the persons the Father delivered unto Christ, and he accepted from the Father, in this blessed covenant.

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## SERMON IV.

Opens the admirable love of GOD in giving his own SON for us.

JOHN iii. 16.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.*

**Y**OU have heard of the gracious purpose and design of God, to recover poor sinners to himself by Jesus Christ, and how this design of love was laid and contrived in the covenant of redemption, whereof we last spake.

Now, according to the terms of that covenant, you shall hear from this scripture, how that design was by one degree advanced towards its accomplishment, in God’s actual giving or parting with his own Son for us: “ God so loved the world, that he gave,” &c.

The whole precedent context is spent in discovering the nature and necessity of regeneration, and the necessity thereof is in this