

2. To condemn the unprofitable lives of many; they live as if they had only their souls for salt to keep their bodies from stinking; cumber the ground, Luke xiii. 7; do not good in their relations, are neither comfortable to the bodies nor souls of others. Certainly how mean and low soever you be in the world, you may be useful. Dorcas made coats for the poor. Servants may adorn the gospel, Titus ii. 10.

3. If sins of omission be so dangerous, we may cry out with David, Ps. xix., 'Who can understand his errors?' The children of God offend in these kind of sins oftener than in the other kind. They are not guilty of drunkenness or uncleanness, but of omission of good duties, or slight performance of them. Paul complaineth, Rom. vii. 18, 19, 'For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not; for the good that I would, I do not.' And should not you complain likewise? A child is not counted dutiful because he doth not wrong and beat his father; he must also give him that reverence that is due to him. Alas! how many duties are required of us to God and men, the neglect of which we should humble ourselves before God for!

SERMON XVIII.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.—MAT. XXV. 31–33.

THIS latter paragraph I cannot call a parable, but a scheme and draught or a delineation of the last judgment, intermingled with many passages that are plainly parabolical; as that Christ setteth forth himself as a king sitting upon the throne of his glory, and as a shepherd dividing his flock; that he compareth the godly to sheep and the wicked to goats. Those allegations and dialogues between Christ and the righteous, Christ and the wicked, 'When saw we thee an hungry?' &c., have much of the nature of a parable in them. In these three verses we have described—

1. The appearance, or sitting down of the judge.

2. The presenting the parties to be judged. The former is in ver. 31, the latter in ver. 32, 33. In ver. 31 we have—

[1.] The person who shall be the judge, *the Son of man.*

[2.] The manner of his coming; it shall be august and glorious.

Where note—

(1.) His personal glory, *he shall come in his glory.*

(2.) His royal attendance, *and all the holy angels with him.*

(3.) His seat and throne, *then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.*

First, The person is designed by this character and appellation,

'the Son of man.' He is called so to show that he is true man, and descended of the present race of men. He might have been true man if God had framed his substance out of nothing, as he did Adam out of the dust of the ground. And this title is given him here, as in many other places, when the last judgment is spoken of, as I shall show you by and by—

1. Partly to recompense his foregoing humiliation, or despicable appearance at his first coming.

2. Partly because of his second coming: he shall appear visibly in that nature as he went from us: Acts i. 11, 'In like manner,' &c. Christ shall come in the form of a man, but not in the same humble and mean appearance as now when he spake these things to them; for it is added for the manner—

[1.] For his personal glory, 'He shall come in his glory.' Not in the form of a servant, but becoming his present state. All infirmities shall be removed from his soul and body. It is not a borrowed glory, but he shall come in his own glory. It is said, Mat. xvi. 27, 'The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father.' Here, in his own glory. The Son of man and the son of God is only one person; and his glory as God and his Father's glory is the same. So that he 'shall come in his glory,' noteth either—(1.) His divine power and majesty, which shall then conspicuously shine forth; or (2.) The glory put upon the human nature; and so it will note his plenary absolution as our surety. The Father sendeth him from heaven in power and great glory: 'He appeareth without sin,' Heb. ix. 28. He doth not say, 'They that look for him shall be without sin;' but 'He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation;' that is, fully discharged of our debt. First, he came *in carnem*; he showed himself in the nature of man to be judged: then, *in carne*; he shall show himself in the nature of man to judge the world. At his first coming he was holy, yet in the garb of a sinner; we judged him as one forsaken of God: his second coming shall make it evident that he is discharged of the debt he took upon himself.

[2.] His royal attendance. The angels shall attend him, both to honour him and to be employed by him.

[3.] His royal posture, he shall 'sit upon the throne of his glory.' A glorious throne, beseeing the Son of God and the judge of the quick and the dead, shall be erected for him in the clouds, such as none can imagine how glorious it shall be till they see it.

Secondly, The next thing that is offered in these words is the presenting of the parties to be judged; and there you may take notice—

1. Of their congregation, *and before him shall be gathered all nations.*

2. Their segregation, *and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.* In the segregation we have—

[1.] The ordering them into two several ranks and companies, sheep and goats, ver. 32.

[2.] As to posture and place, ver. 33, 'And he shall set his sheep on the right hand and the goats on his left.' Not only a separation as to Christ's knowledge and discerning them, but a separation in place.

I begin with the first branch, the appearance and sitting down of the judge.

Two points I shall observe:—

Doct. 1. That the judge of this world is Jesus Christ.

Doct. 2. That Christ's appearance for the judgment of the world shall be glorious and full of majesty.

For the first point, that Jesus Christ is the world's judge—

1. Here I shall inquire why he is judge.

2. In what nature he doth act or exercise this judgment, whether as God or man, or both.

First, Let us inquire how Christ cometh to be the world's judge, and with what conveniency and agreeableness to reason this honour is put upon him? To a judge there belongeth these four things—(1.) Wisdom; (2.) Justice; (3.) Power; and (4.) Authority.

1. Wisdom and understanding, by which he is able to judge all persons and causes that come before him, according to the rules and laws by which that judgment is to proceed; for no man can give sentence in a cause wherein he hath not skill, both as to matter of right and wrong, and sufficient evidence and knowledge as to matter of fact. Therefore, in ordinary judicatures, a prudent and discerning person is chosen.

2. Justice is required, or a constant and unbiassed will to determine and pass sentence, *ex æquo, et bono*, as right and truth shall require. He that giveth wrong judgment because he doth not accurately understand a thing is imprudent, which in this business is a great fault; but he that doth rightly understand a matter, and yet is biassed by perverse affections and aims, and giveth wrong judgment in the cause brought before him, that is highly impious and flagitious; therefore, the judge must be just and incorrupt.

3. Power is necessary that he may compel the parties judged to stand to his judgment, and the offenders may receive their due punishment; for otherwise all is but precarious and arbitrary, and the judgment given will be but a vain and solemn pageantry.

4. There is required authority; for otherwise, if a man should obtrude himself of his own accord, they may say to him, 'Who made thee a judge over us?' Or if he by mere force should assume this power to himself, the parties impleaded have a pretence of right to decline his tribunal, and appeal from him. Certainly he that rewards must be superior, and much more he that punisheth; for he that punisheth another bringeth some notable evil and damage upon him; but for one to bring evil upon another, unless he hath right to do it, is unjust; therefore good authority is required in him that acts the part of a judge. These things, as they stand upon evident reason, and are necessary in all judicial proceedings between man and man, so much more in this great and solemn transaction of the last judgment; for this will be the greatest court that ever was kept both in respect, of the persons to be judged, which shall be all men and evil angels, high and low, small and great, rich and poor, princes and subjects; and in respect of the causes that shall be produced, the whole business of the world for six thousand years, or thereabouts; or the retributions made, which shall be punishments and rewards of the highest nature

and degree, because everlasting. And therefore there must be a judge sought out that is exactly knowing not only of laws, but of all persons and causes: 'That all things should be naked, and open to him with whom we have to do,' Heb. iv. 12, 13, and 1 John iii. 20. Again, exceeding just, without the least spot and blemish of wrong dealing: Gen. xviii. 25, 'Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?' and Rom. iii. 5, 6, 'Is God unrighteous, that taketh vengeance? God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?' It cannot be that the universal and final judgment of all the world should be committed to him that hath or can do anything wrongful and amiss. And then, that power is necessary both to summon offenders, and make them appear, and stand to the judgment which he shall award, without any hope of escaping or resisting, will as easily appear; because the offenders are many, and they would fain hide their guilty heads, and shun this tribunal, if it were possible: Rev. vi. 16, 'Say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' But that must not, cannot be: Ps. xc. 11, 'Who knoweth the power of thine anger? According to thy fear, so is thy wrath.' Authority is necessary also, or a right to govern and to dispose of the persons judged into their everlasting estate; which being all the world, belongeth only to the universal king, who hath made all things, and preserveth all things, and governeth and disposeth all things for his own glory. Legislation and execution both belong to the same power. Judgment is a part of government. Laws are but shadows if no execution follow. Now, let us particularly see how all this belongeth to Christ.

[1.] For wisdom and understanding. It is in Christ twofold—divine and human; for each nature hath its particular and proper wisdom belonging to it. As God, it is infinite: Ps. cxlvii. 15, 'His understanding is infinite.' And so by one infinite view, or by one act of understanding, he knoweth all things that are, have been, or shall be, yea, or may be, by his divine power and all-sufficiency. They are all before his eyes, as if naked and cut down by the chine-bone. We know things successively, as a man readeth a book, line after line, and page after page; but God at one view. Now his human wisdom cannot be equal to this. A finite nature cannot be capable of an infinite understanding, but yet it is such as it doth far exceed the knowledge of all men and all angels. When Christ was upon earth, though the forms of things could not but successively come into his mind or understanding, because of the limited nature of that mind and understanding, yet then he could know whatever he would, and to whatsoever thing he would apply his mind, he did presently understand it; and in a moment, by the light of the divinity, all things were presented to him; so that he accurately knew the nature of whatever he had a mind to know. And therefore then he was not ignorant of those things that were in the hearts of men, and were done so secretly as they were thought only to be known to God himself. Thus he knew the secret touch of the woman, when the multitude thronged upon him, Luke viii. 45, 46. So Mat. ix. 3, 4, 'When certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth: Jesus knowing their thoughts, said, Why think ye evil in your hearts?' He discerneth

the inward thoughts, and turneth out the inside of the scribes' minds. So Mat. xii. 24, 25, Jesus knew their thoughts when they imagined that 'by Beelzebub the prince of the devils he cast out devils.' But most fully, see John ii. 24, 25, 'He committed not himself to them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man.' It may be they knew not themselves, but he knew what kind of belief it was, such as would not hold out in time of temptation. We cannot infallibly discern professors before they discover themselves; yet all hypocrites are seen and known of him, even long before they show their hypocrisy, not by a conjectural, but a certain knowledge, as being from and by himself, as God. He doth infallibly know what is most secret and hidden in man. Now, if he were endowed with such an admirable understanding even in the days of his flesh, while he grew in wisdom and stature, Luke ii., and his human capacity enlarged by degrees, what shall we think of him in that state in which he is now glorious in heaven? Therefore, to exercise this judgment, he shall bring incomparable knowledge, so far exceeding the manner and measure of all creatures, even as he is man; but his infinite knowledge as God shall chiefly shine forth in this work. Therefore he is a fit judge, able to bring forth the secret things of darkness and counsels of the heart into open and manifest light, 1 Cor. iv. 5, and disprove sinners in their pretences and excuses, and pluck off their disguises from them.

[2.] For justice and righteousness. An incorrupt judge, that neither doth nor can err in judgment, must be our judge. As there is a double knowledge in Christ, so there is a double righteousness; one that belongeth to him as God, the other as man; and both are exact and immutably perfect. His divine nature is holiness itself: 'In him is light, and no darkness at all.' The least shadow of injustice cannot be imagined there. All virtues in God are his being, not superadded qualities. God's holiness may be resembled to a vessel of pure gold, where the substance and lustre is the same; but ours is like a vessel of wood or earth gilded, where the substance and gilding is not the same. Our holiness is a superadded quality. We cannot call a wise man, Wisdom; or a righteous man, Righteousness. We use the concrete of man, but the abstract of God. He is love, he is light, he is holiness itself; which noteth the inseparability of the attribute from God. It is himself; God cannot deny himself: his act is his rule. Take Peter Martyr's similitude: A carpenter chopping a piece of wood by a line or square, may sometimes chop right and sometimes wrong; he cannot carry his hand so evenly; but if we could suppose that a carpenter's hand were his rule, he could not chop amiss. Christ's human nature was so sanctified, that upon earth he could not sin, much more now glorified in heaven. And there will be use of both righteousnesses in the last judgment; but chiefly of the righteousness that belongeth to the divine nature; for all the operations of Christ are theandrical; neither nature ceaseth to work in them. As in all the works of men, the body and the soul do both conspire and concur in that way which is proper to either; only, as in the works of his humiliation his human nature did more appear, so in the works that belong to his exaltation and glorified estate, his divine nature

appeareth most ; especially in this solemn action, wherein Christ is to discover himself to the world with the greatest majesty and glory.

[3.] For power. A divine power is plainly necessary, that none may withdraw themselves from this judgment, or resist or hinder the execution of this sentence ; for otherwise it would be passed in vain : Titus ii. 13, ‘ Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.’ Christ is then to show himself the great and powerful God. His power is seen in raising the dead, in bringing them together in one place, in opening their consciences, in casting them into hell : Mat. xxiv. 30, ‘ The Son of man shall come from heaven with power and great glory.’

[4.] For authority. I shall the longer insist on this, because the main hinge of all lieth here, and this doth bring the matter home. That Jesus Christ, and none but Jesus Christ, shall be the world’s judge. By the law of nature, the wronged party and the supreme power hath right to require satisfaction for the wrong done. Where no power is publicly constituted, possibly the wronged party hath power to require it ; but where things are better constituted, lest the wronged party should indulge his revenge and passion too far, it rests in the supreme power, and those appointed by it, to judge the matter, and to make amends to those that are wronged in their body, goods, or good name. Now, to God both these things concur.

(1.) He is the wronged party, and offended with the sins of men. Not that we can lessen his happiness by anything that we can do ; for our good and evil reacheth not unto him ; his essential glory is still the same, whether we obey or disobey, please or displease, honour or dishonour him. That which is eternal and immutable neither is lessened nor increased by anything that we can do. He is out of the reach of all the darts that we can cast at him. Hurt us they may, but reach him they cannot. But sin, it is a wrong to his declarative glory as sovereign lord and lawgiver, as it is a breach of his law. There was hurt done to Bathsheba and Uriah, Ps. li. 4, but the sin and obliquity of the action was against God and his sovereign authority. If the injury done to the creature could be severed from the offence done to God, it were not so great. God is the author of the light of nature, and that order which begetteth a sense of good and evil in our hearts. God is the author of the law given by Moses, and the gospel revealed by his Son. Therefore, whatever things are committed against the law of nature, or the law of Moses, or the gospel, certainly it is a wrong to the justice of God, as being a breach of that order which he hath established : 1 John iii. 4, ‘ He that committeth sin, transgresseth also the law ; for sin is a transgression of the law.’ Laws cannot be despised, but the majesty of the lawgiver is contemned, disparaged, and slighted. Therefore upon this right God might come in as a very proper judge. But, indeed, God doth not punish merely as offended, or as a private man revengeth himself, where there is no power publicly constituted to do him right ; but he properly judgeth.

(2.) A supreme and sovereign lord, and governor of the world, to whom it belongeth, for the common good, to see that it be well with them that do well, and ill with them that do evil, and that no compassion be showed but where the case is compassionate, according to

that declaration he hath made of himself to the creatures. To declare this more plainly, we shall see how this right accrue to God. It may be supposed to accrue to him two ways—either because of the excellency of his being, or because of his benefits which he hath bestowed upon mankind.

(1st.) The excellency of his being. This is according to the light of nature, that those that excel should be above others; as it is clear in man, who is above the brute creatures; he is made to have dominion over them, because he hath a more excellent nature than they. And when God said, 'Let us make man after our own image,' he presently upon that account gave him dominion over the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air, and fishes of the sea. So God, being infinite, and far above all finite things, hath a power over the creatures, angels or men, who are as nothing to him, and therefore to be governed by him. But chiefly—

(2d.) By virtue of the benefits bestowed by him; for great benefits received from another do necessarily beget a power over him that receiveth them; as parents have a power and authority over their children, who are a means under God to give them life and education; the most barbarous people would acknowledge this. How much greater, then, is the right of God, who hath given us life, and breath, and being, and well-being, and all things! He created us out of nothing; and being created, he preserveth us, and giveth us all the good things which we enjoy. And therefore we are obliged to be subject to him, and to obey his holy laws, and to be accountable to him for the breach of them. Therefore, let us state it thus: As the excellency of his nature giveth him a fitness and a sufficiency for the government of mankind, his creation, preservation, and other benefits give him a full right to make what laws he pleaseth, and to call man to an account whether he hath kept them, yea or no. His right is greater than parents can have over their children; for in natural generation they are but instruments of his providence, acting only the power which God giveth them; and the parents propagate nothing to the children but the body, and those things that belong to the body; called, therefore, 'The fathers of our flesh,' Heb. xii. 9. Yea, in framing the body God hath a greater hand than they; for they cannot tell whether the child will be male or female, beautiful or deformed. They know not the number and posture of the bones, and veins, and arteries, and sinews; but God doth not only concur to all these things, but 'form the spirit of man in him,' Zech. xii. 1. And all the care and providence of our parents cometh to nothing, unless the Lord directeth it, and secondeth it with his blessing. Therefore God naturally is the governor and judge of all creatures, visible and invisible; so that, from his empire and jurisdiction they neither can nor ought to exempt themselves. So that to be God and judge of the world is one and the same thing expressed in divers terms.

Well, then, you will ask, Why is Christ the judge of the world, rather than the Father and the Spirit, who made us, and gave the law to us? I answer—

1. That we have gone a good step to prove that it is the peculiar right of God, common to the three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; 'for these three are one,' 1 John v. 7. They have one

common nature, and the operations that are with the divine essence are common to them all. So that as the creation of all things is equally attributed to all, so also the right of this act of judging the world doth alike agree to all. So that as yet the thing is not explained enough, unless we should grant that it shall be exercised by all, or can prove out of the scriptures that one person of these three is ordained, and by mutual consent chosen out by the rest to exercise it for himself and for the other. Indeed, at the first, when the doctrine of the Trinity was not as yet openly revealed, it was not needful to inquire more diligently after it; but this general truth sufficed, that God is the judge of the world. As when Enoch said, Jude 14., 'Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints;' and as David, Ps. lxxiv. 2, 'Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth;' and Ps. l. 6, 'God is judge himself;' and in many other places. It was enough to understand it of one only and true God, without distinction of the persons; but when that mystery was clearly manifested, then the question was necessary, which of the persons should be judge of the world?

2. As there is an order among the persons of the blessed Trinity in the manner of subsisting, so there is also a certain order and economy according to which all their operations are produced and brought forth to the creature; according to which order their power of judging fell partly to the Father, and partly to the Son.

[1.] In the business of redemption. The act of judging, which was to be exercised upon our surety, who was substituted in our room and place, and offered himself not only for our good, *in bonum nostrum*, but *loco et vice nostri*, to bear our punishment, and to procure favour to us; there the act of judging belongeth to the Father, to whom the satisfaction is tendered, 1 John ii. 1; the advocate is to plead before the judge. But—

[2.] As to the judgment to be exercised upon us, who either partake of that salvation which was purchased by that surety, or have lost it by our negligence and unbelief; there the Son, or second person, is our judge. In the former, the Son could not be judge, because in a sense he made himself a party for our good, and in our room and place; and the same person cannot be both judge and party too; give and take the satisfaction both; that cannot be. Well, then, in this other judgment the Holy Ghost cannot be conveniently the judge; for in this mystery he hath another part, function, and office prepared; and being the third person in the order of subsisting, the Son was not to be passed over, but it fell to him.

[3.] In the Son there is a double relation or consideration—one as he is God, the other as he is mediator; the one natural and eternal, and shall endure for ever; the other of mediator, which as he took upon himself in time, so in the consummation of time he shall at length lay aside: in this latter respect, as mediator, he is judge by deputation. The primitive sovereign and judge is God; and the king and judge by derivation is Jesus Christ the mediator, in his manhood, united to the second person in the Godhead; and so the judgment of the world is put upon him. In regard of the creatures, his authority is absolute and supreme, for there can be no appeal from his judgment; but in regard of God, it is deputed. He is ordained; so it is said,

Joha v. 27, 'The Father hath given him authority also to exercise judgment, because he is the Son of man.' He hath the power of life and death, to condemn and to absolve. So Acts x. 42, 'He is ordained of God to be the judge of the quick and the dead;' and Acts xvii. 31, 'He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.' In all which he acts as the Father's vicegerent; and after he hath judged, 'He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father,' 1 Cor. xv. 24. So that the right of Christ as mediator is not that which befallerth him immediately from the right of creation; but is derivative, and subordinate to that kingdom which is essential to him, common to the Father, Son, and Spirit.

[4.] This power which belongeth to Christ as mediator is given to him partly as a recompense of his humiliation; of which I shall speak in the second point. But chiefly—

(1.) Because it belongeth to the fulness of his mediatory office; and therefore, being appointed king by the Father, his last function as a king was to judge the world. The Mediator was not only to pay a price to divine justice, and to separate the redeemed from the world, by his Spirit converting them to God, but also to judge the devil, and all those enemies out of whose hands he had freed the Church. He was to fight against the blind world, and triumph over them; and when the world is ended, to judge them, and cast them into eternal torments.

(2.) His office is not full till this be done. It is a part of his administration as mediator. The last act of conquest is overcoming his enemies, and glorifying and redressing injuries and wrongs of his saints.

Secondly, In what nature he doth act and exercise the judgment, as God, or man, or both.

I answer—In both. Christ is the person, as God-man; yet the judgment is acted visibly by him in the human nature, sitting upon a visible throne, that he may be seen of all, and heard. Therefore Christ is so often designed by this expresion, 'Son of man;' as in the text, and Mat. xvi. 27, and Acts xvii. 31, and Mat. xxvi. 64, 'Ye shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds, with power and great glory;' John v. 27. The Son of man is the visible actor and judge. Because the judgment must be visible, therefore the judge must be such as may be seen with bodily eyes. The Godhead puts forth itself by the human nature, in which all these great works are acted.

Use. You see what need there is to get in with Christ: Rom. viii. 1, 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ;' 1 John ii. 28, 'And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.' Oh! what a comfort will it be to have our Redeemer in our nature to be our judge! Then we shall see our *goel*, our kinsman, whom we have heard so much of, whom we have loved, and longed for. But the contemners of his mercy will find the Lamb's face terrible: Rev. vi. 16, 'And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' But believers will find their advocate their judge, to reward those that trust in him, Ps. ii. 12. He that

hath so often pleaded with God for us, he is to pass sentence upon us. Would a man be afraid to be judged by his dearest friend, or think his sentence would be terrible? If the devil were our judge, or wicked men, we might be sad; but it is your dear Lord Jesus; therefore let us comfort ourselves with the thoughts of it. David's followers were afraid; but when he came to be crowned at Hebron, then he dignified and rewarded them. Christ's followers are now despised; but when he shall come in his glory, they shall be invited into his kingdom: 'Come, ye blessed of my Father.'

SERMON XIX.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.
—MAT. XXV. 31.

I COME now to the second point:—

Doct. 2. That Christ's appearance for the judgment of the world shall be glorious and full of majesty.

I shall prove it by opening the circumstances of the text. Three things are offered here:—

1. His personal glory.
2. His royal attendance.
3. His glorious seat and throne.

First, His personal glory. Let us see what it is, and why he will come in such an appearance.

First, What it will be. We cannot fully know till we see it; but certain we are this glory must be exceeding great, if we consider—

1. The dignity of his person. He is God-man; and now that mystery is to be discovered to the utmost; therefore he must needs have such a glory as never creature was capable of, nor can be; but at that day the creatures are capable of great glory; for it is said, Mat. xiii. 43, 'The righteous shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of the Father.' And if it be thus with the saints, how shall it be with Christ? The saints are but creatures; they are not deified when they are glorified; but he is God-man in one person. The saints are but members of the mystical body, but Christ is the head; and therefore he must needs far excel the glory of all the creatures. Ours is but a derived ray; the body of light is in himself. We read, 2 Thes. i. 10, that 'he will be admired in the saints;' that is, in the glory he puts upon them. All the spectators shall stand admiring at the honour he puts upon them, that are but newly crept out of dust and rottenness. But how much more may he be admired for his own personal glory!

2. The quality of his office. He is the judge of the world, who now cometh to appear upon the throne, to be seen of all; therefore there must be a glory suitable. We read, Acts xxv. 23, that Agrippa and Bernice came to the judgment-seat, *μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας*, with a great deal of pomp and state. And we see in earthly judicatures, when great malefactors are to be tried, the whole majesty and glory of

a nation is brought forth; the judge in gorgeous apparel, accompanied with nobles and gentry and officers, and a great conflux of people, to make it more magnificent and terrible. So here is a conflux of the whole world, angels, devils, men from all corners of the earth; all the men that ever were and ever shall be; and Christ cometh forth in his greatest glory.

3. Consider the greatness of his work, and that will show that his glory must needs be discovered. His work is, on the one side, to gather together, to convince, to judge, and punish creatures opposite and rebellious; and to honour and reward his servants, on the other. There is not such a union and confederation of miracles in any one point and article of faith, so much as there is in this of the general judgment. The mighty power and dominion of God is seen in dissolving the elements, in raising the dead bodies, and giving every dust its own flesh, and bringing them together that they may be arraigned and judged; and then in separating them into their several ranks, in which his omniscieny and wisdom is seen, that not one of the reprobate shall lie hid among the elect. In judging them his justice cannot be eluded; he that seeth all things in the light of the Godhead cannot want evidence. Then one of the books that is opened is in the parties' custody; and yet they cannot deface it, or blot it out. And then for execution, the majesty of his person and presence will be enough to confound a wicked man. How will the wolves tremble at the sight of the pure and unspotted Lamb! Rev. vi. 16. Oh! it will be a piercing sight to them to see him whom they have despised upon the throne! That Jesus whose word they have scorned, whose ordinances they have neglected or corrupted, whose servants they have molested! When Joseph, who was so great and high in Egypt, discovered himself to his brethren,—‘I am Joseph,’—they were abashed and confounded because of the injury they had done him; much more shall sinners be confounded when he shall tell them, ‘I am Jesus,’ and that he is come on purpose to be revenged on all the abusers and despisers of his grace, and the troublers of his people. How can they then look him in the face? We read, that when they came to attack Christ, John xviii. 6, as soon as he had told them, ‘I am he,’ they went backward, and fell to the ground. He would convince his enemies in the midst of his greatest abasement how full of majesty and terror his presence is, if he should let out the glory of it upon them. If the Lamb's voice be so terrible, how dreadful will he be when he roareth as a lion! And if then, when he was taken and led to be judged, you may guess how glorious his presence will be when he cometh in all his glory to judge others. And by this you may understand the apostle's expression, 2 Thes. i. 9, ‘That the wicked shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.’ *From* there is as much as *by*; it doth not signify there the kind of the punishment, the *pœna dūmni*, but the cause. The majesty of Christ is the cause of their torments; and his look and face will be terror enough to sinners. And as he cometh in glory to shame and punish those that despised him, so to comfort and reward his people who have trusted in him, and served him, and suffered for him. He shall come from heaven in

state to lead them into those blessed mansions with honour: 1 Peter iv. 13, 'Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.' They have seen him in his worst, and now in his best also. The glory of Christ's appearing is sometimes expressed by fire, and sometimes by light. To the saints it is as light, and as a comfortable sunshine; but to the wicked it is a dreadful fire, *ἐν πυρὶ φλογός*: 2 Thes. ii. 8, 'And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.'

4. If you consider some foregoing appearances of Christ. As for instance, at the giving of the law, it was the second person that managed that appearance; for it is said, Acts vii. 38, that it was 'an angel that appeared in Mount Sinai, and spoke to our fathers;' that is, the angel of the covenant, Jesus Christ; for it is clearly said, Heb. xii. 26, that 'the voice of Christ then shook the earth.' Now, what a dreadful appearance was that! The earth shook, the mountain trembled, and out of the midst of the thunders, and lightnings, and a thick cloud, was the sound of the trumpet heard, so that the people trembled; yea, Moses himself, a meek man, that had done great service in the church, did exceedingly quake and tremble, Heb. xii. 18-21. When he gave the law, he is represented as a terrible judge, ready to overcome his adversaries with the tempest of his wrath; much more when he cometh to execute the sentence of the law; as execution is always more terrible than promulgation. Or you may guess at it by the prophet Isaiah's terror when he saw God in vision, Isa. vi. 5. Into what an agony it drove that holy prophet! 'Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts.' Adam fled from the presence of God walking in the garden, though God came to him in no terrible appearance, and though he had sinned, yet was not cut off from all hope of reconciliation. How will wicked men abide the presence of Christ when he cometh to show forth his glory, and they are excluded by his final sentence from all hope of pardon? Or you may set it forth by the glory of Christ's transfiguration, the glory that was seen then; for that was a glimpse of this glory of the Father, in which he shall appear at that day: Mat. xvii. 2, 'And he was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.' And then arose a bright cloud, and a voice out of the bright cloud: 'And when the disciples heard it, they were sore afraid.' There was a glorious shining brightness, breaking through skin and garment, overwhelming the disciples, that they were not able to stand before his majesty, though it were in mercy revealed to them. Or by that appearance of the angel, described Mat. xxviii. 3, 4, 'His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment as white as snow; and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.' Or by the appearance of Christ to Paul, Acts ix., when he was blind for seven¹ days, when the Lord Jesus showed himself to him from heaven. These instances will give us a guess, a taste of it. But—

¹ Three.—ED.

Secondly, Why he will come in this great glory? I answer—

I. To take off the scandal and ignominy of the cross, and to recompense him for his humiliation. He that was once despised in the world for his outward and despicable estate will then be glorious, when he shall declare his power in raising the dead by his voice, and all the elements burning about him, and all the saints and angels attending him, every one as bright as the sun; a glorious high throne set in the air for him, and all the creatures presented before him, and bowing to him. Ransacking the consciences of sinners, and bringing forth the story of all his administrations in the world. Then there will be a full recompense for all his sufferings. To make this evident, let us compare the two comings of Christ. Christ's first coming was so obscure, that it was scarce observed and understood by the world. The second will be so conspicuous and glorious as to be seen of all. In the former, he came in the form of a servant, and the contemptible appearance of a mean man; in the second, he cometh as the Lord and heir of all things, clothed with splendour and glory as with a garment. At his first coming he had a forerunner, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness;' in the second he hath a forerunner also; there the Baptist, here an archangel with his trumpet, 1 Thes. iv. 10. In his first coming he was accompanied with a few poor fishermen, twelve disciples, persons of mean condition and rank in the world; now with legions of angels, and with his holy ten thousands of his saints, Jude 14. Heretofore he raised three to life; now all the dead. Then he was scorned, buffeted, spit upon; now crowned with glory and honour. In the former he was to act the part of a minister of the circumcision, to preach the gospel to the people of Israel; in the latter he shall act as the judge of all the world. In the former he invited men to repentance, and offered remission of sins to those that received him as a redeemer; but in the latter he shall cut off all hope of pardon for evermore from them that received him not, and neglected their day of grace. At first he came to bear the sins of many; but now he shall come without sin, Heb. ix. 28, not bearing a burden, but bringing a discharge; not as a surety, but as a paymaster; not as a sufferer, but as a conqueror; triumphing over death, and hell, and the devil. He cometh, no more to go from us, but to take us from all misery unto himself. In the former state he was God-man; but he did as it were hide his godhead under the infirmities of his flesh; sometimes it peeped out through the veil in a miracle, but yet mostly obscuring himself; but in the latter he shall discover himself with an unspeakable brightness and majesty, and there will be no need of miracles to prove the divinity of his person and office; for then it shall be a matter of sense; all shall see it, and feel it; some with joy, others with trembling. In the former state he presented himself to suffer death; but then he shall tread death under his feet. In the former he was judged and condemned by men to an ignominious death, the death of the cross; but in the latter he will judge, and with his own mouth pronounce sentence upon all men, on all kings, emperors, and judges, as well as poor peasants, sitting upon a glorious throne and tribunal. Then he judged no man: John iii. 17, 'For God sent not his Son to condemn the world, but that the world through him might

be saved.' His work then was to hold out the way of life, or to open the way of salvation to lost man, as a meek saviour and mediator. So John xii. 47, 'If any man hear my words, and believe them not, I judge him not, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.' 'I judge not,' that is, as yet. He laid aside the person of a judge then, and took on him the office of a Saviour, to offer and purchase mercy; that was his proper errand when he came first into the world. So Luke ix. 56, 'The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.' And to comply with that end, he cast a veil upon his glory, and endured the enmity and contradiction of the world; but now it is otherwise, so that the scandal of his first estate is fully taken off.

2. He appeareth in this great glory to beget a greater reverence and fear in the hearts of all those that shall be judged by him. He telleth them beforehand, that 'the Son of man will come in great glory and majesty;' to daunt and quell the haughty minds and proud conceits of the potentates, oppressors, and great ones of the earth, who often abuse their power to wrong and violence: Eccles. v. 8, 'If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and the violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they.' Here is swaying and swaggering, and bearing high upon the thought of their title and greatness; but there they and all their greatness and power shall meet with a judge that is able by the breath of his mouth to consume them. What meaneth the insolency of the mighty, the pride of the great heroes of the earth, that swell and grow haughty with their greatness, to look and speak so big? Nothing is so profitable to allay the excesses of power, or to fortify us against the fears of it, as the consideration of this mighty judge, who will review all matters, and cause the great men of the earth to tremble. Power is an unwieldy thing, apt to degenerate, and to put men upon unwarrantable practices; therefore, it needeth to be allayed and balanced with the consideration of a greater power. Alas! all the power and glory of the world is but a fancy, a vain pageantry, compared to Christ's power and glory. What is their authority to his, their splendour to his, their guard to his? Nothing can excuse them; this judgment must and shall pass upon them.

3. For the comfort of his people; for Christ is a pledge and pattern of what shall be done in them; in all things he must first it, Rom. viii. 29; and we are made conformable to his image and likeness. All privileges come to us not only from Christ but through Christ: he as mediator is the first possessor. Are we elected? he was elected first: 'My elect servant,' Isa. xlii. 1. Are we justified? so was he as our surety: 1 Tim. iii. 16, 'Justified in the Spirit.' Are we sanctified? first he received the Spirit of holiness. Are we glorified? so was he: Col. iii. 4, 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory;' 1 John iii. 2, 'We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' There will be a manifestation of the sons of God, Rom. viii. 19; first the first-born, then all the rest of the brethren. Yea, we participate of his judicial power: the saints shall not only be judged, but the judges, 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. The evil spirits a long time

ago had their punishment, but then their solemn doom. The saints shall sit down with him as justices upon the bench. Here the saints judge the world by their doctrine and conversation, there by their vote and suffrage. There is the relation between Christ and the church of wife and husband; *uxor fulget radiis mariti*; as the husband riseth in honour so doth the wife: of head and members, when the head is crowned all the members are clothed with honour. His mystical body shares with him, that there may be a proportion in the body. He is the captain of our salvation, and he will dignify and reward his soldiers, Heb. ii. 10. David, when he was crowned at Hebron, his followers were made captains of thousands, captains of hundreds, and captains of fifties. Masters and servants: 'My servant shall be where I am.' He will put marks of honour and favour upon all his servants. Here they were disgraced with him, suffered with him, slighted with him; then they shall be glorified with him, for still there is a likeness. We must be contented to lie hid till he be publicly manifested to the world, for we have all our blessings at secondhand. So much for the first thing, his personal glory.

Secondly, His royal attendance, 'And all the holy angels with him.' Chrysostom saith the whole court of heaven removeth with him; surely there are many of them: Jude 14, 'The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment on all, to convince all that are ungodly.' It is likely these angels will put on some visible shape, for the greater glory and majesty of Christ's appearing; for as he will appear in a body upon his glorious throne, so will his legions round about him; whose order, power, and formidable hosts must some way or other be seen of the wicked for their greater terror. Their attendance upon Christ seemeth to be for these reasons:—

1. Partly for a train, to make his appearance the more full of majesty. We find angels waiting upon Christ at his ascension, and so at his return to judgment. Public ministers of justice are made formidable by their attendance, and Christ will come as a royal king in the midst of his nobles. And—

2. Partly that by their ministry the work of the day may be the more speedily and powerfully despatched. They are to 'gather the elect from the four winds,' Mat. xxiv. 31. The angels that carried their souls to heaven shall be employed in bringing their bodies out of the graves: Luke xvi. 22, 'Carried by angels into Abraham's bosom.' They are still serviceable about the saints; this is the last office they perform to them; they are as it were, under Christ, guardians of their bones and dust. Now, to the wicked, they are to bind the tares in bundles, Mat. xiii. 41, that they may be burnt in the fire. They force and present wicked men before the judge, be they never so obstinate. They are witnesses; they attend upon congregations, 1 Cor. xi. 10. In assemblies there is more company meets than is visible; devils and angels meet there; the devils to divert your minds as soon as they begin to be serious, to catch the good word out of your heart; and angels observing you; here should be no indecency. So in your ordinary conversations they are conversant about you. And then for execution, no sooner is sentence pronounced but executed; as Haman's face was covered, and he led away to execution as soon as the king

had but said the word. Thus the scripture, in a condescension to our capacity, representeth to us the ministry of angels in that great and terrible day. We can better understand the operations of angels than of God himself; they being nearer to us in being, and of an essence finite and limited, their acts are more comprehensible.

3. There may be a third reason imagined why the angels should come to this judgment, which will give us an occasion for handling a question, Whether they shall be judged, yea or no?

I answer—For the good angels, I think not; for the bad, the scripture is express and plain.

[1.] For the good angels, it is clear, by what hath been said already, that they shall be present at this action, not to be judged, but to bring others to judgment; as officers, not as parties. I suppose this, if men had continued in their innocency and integrity of their creation, such a day of universal judgment had been needless, for then there had been none to be condemned, because none had sinned; the covenant of God would have been enough to have secured their happiness: so the good angels continuing in that state wherein they were created, there is nothing doubtful about them that needeth any judiciary debate and discussion; and being already confirmed in the full fruition of God and happiness as to their whole nature, their estate is not to be put to any trial: whereas good men, though their souls be in heaven, yet their bodies are not admitted there; some part of them as yet lieth under the effects of sin, and their glorification is private, and God's goodness as yet hath not been manifested to them in the eyes of all the world, nor their uprightness sufficiently vindicated; therefore a judgment needeth for them, but not for the angels, who were never as yet censured and traduced in the world, and they in their whole nature and person enjoy most absolute felicity in God's heavenly sanctuary: no such great change will happen to them after the judgment as happeneth to the saints when their whole persons are taken into glory. It is true they have a charge and ministry about the saints, Heb. i. 14; but of that ministry and charge they give an account daily in the sight of God, to whom they do approve themselves in it; so that there is no cause for further inquisition concerning that thing, there being no necessity of judgment concerning them; I think they shall not be judged.

[2.] For the evil angels, the scripture is express: 1 Cor. vi. 3, 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?' that is, as evil men, so evil angels. So 2 Peter ii. 4, 'God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved to the judgment of the great day.' Though they are imprisoned in the pit of hell, yet reserved for further judgments. God's irresistible power and terrible justice overruleth, tormenteth, and restraineth them for the present. These are the chains of darkness; yet there is a more high measure of wrath that shall light upon them at the day of judgment. Where any accession or considerable increase shall be made either to the happiness or punishment of any creature, there that creature shall be judged. Now, there is no such considerable alteration or increase of happiness to good angels as to men; and on the other side, there is a considerable alteration as to wicked angels: Mat. viii. 20, 'Art thou come to torment us before the time?' They

know there is a time coming when they shall be tormented more than they are yet. And besides, God's justice was never publicly manifested, and by any solemn act glorified, as to the punishment of the evil angels for their rebellion against him, but was reserved for this time. Besides, as God would now receive into glory the good and holy among men, and therefore would first begin with their head, which is Christ, sending him in power and great glory, so, on the other side, when God would punish the disobedient, he would begin with condemning their head, who is the devil, and is first cast into hell as a pledge of what should light upon all those that follow him, and are seduced by him. I could say more, but I forbear.

Thirdly, There remaineth one circumstance in the text, and that is, Christ's throne of glory; which, because it is wholly to come, and not elsewhere explained in scripture, we must rest in the general expression. The cloud in which he cometh possibly shall be his throne; or, if you will have it further explained, you may take that of the prophecy of Daniel, chap. vii. 9, 10, 'I beheld all the thrones were cast down, and the ancient of days did sit; whose raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from him: thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The judgment was set, and the books were opened.' I cannot say this prophecy is intended of the day of judgment; but as they said of the blind man, John ix. 9, 'Either it is he, or it is very like him,' so this is it, or very like it. And in the general you see it describeth that which is very glorious. Or you may conceive of it by the description of Solomon's throne: 1 Kings x. 18-20, 'Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold: the throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind; and there were stays on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood behind the stays: and twelve lions stood on the one side, and on the other, upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom.' It was high and dreadful, but not worthy to be a footstool to this tribunal.

The *Use* of all is exhortation. To press you to propound this truth—(1.) To your faith; (2.) To your fear and caution; (3.) To your love; (4.) To your patience; (5.) To your hope. That all these graces may be the more exercised upon this occasion, that you may believe it, and consider it—

1. Propound it to your faith; be persuaded of it. We are so occupied in present things, that we forget or do not mind the future; and men that are in love with their lusts and errors love to be ignorant of those truths, the knowledge whereof might disquiet them in following those lusts: 2 Peter iii. 5, 'This they are willingly ignorant of.' But we had need to call upon you again and again to believe these things, that the Lord Jesus shall come in his glory with his angels. They that are slaves to their lusts strongly desire an eternal enjoyment of the present world, and labour to banish out of their hearts the thoughts of the day of judgment. The sound belief of it is not so much encountered with doubts of the understanding, as the lusts and inclinations of their carnal and perverse hearts. But, beloved, I hope

it will not be tedious to you to tell you again and again of these things, and to press you to rest your hearts upon them; to you that have set your hearts to love Christ, and to wait for his coming; to you that know there is no such powerful help to the mortification of your lusts as to consider the day of judgment, no such special encouragement in your difficulties as the comfort, glory, and sweetness of it. Oh! therefore, press your hearts with this truth: Hath not the mouth of truth averred it? Would Jesus Christ assure us of that which shall never be? He that hath been so punctual on his word in lesser truths, would he deceive us in this main article? Sure it should be no hard thing to persuade you that are assured of his fidelity and love that what he hath spoken will come to pass. If it were not so, he would never have told you so. You will find no less than he hath promised. If we did deceive you with sugared and golden words, it were another matter. Expect not that I should bring arguments from nature to prove it to you: God's word is sufficient. Faith is built upon God's testimony, and nothing else. Though other arguments have their use, and at other times I have produced them, now I shall forbear: only, because there are godless mockers, who suspect all, and do not so much reason against this article of our christian faith, as scoff at it, and you may meet with some of those, I think it not amiss to answer their cavils. A carnal and devilish wit will find out so many reasons, plausible to themselves and others like themselves; otherwise it were enough to reject them as blasphemies with detestation. But, because they please themselves in their atheistical conceits, you shall see they make rather against them than for them.

[1.] If they should urge that reason in the apostles' days, when blasphemy was not grown so bold and witty: 2 Peter iii. 3, 4, 'All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation;' we might answer, as, the apostle did, that it is fit that things should keep one constant course in the day of the Lord's patience and mercy; but 'the day of the Lord will come as a thief.' Shall there never be a change because the preparations are not presently visible? This is a manifest lie. Particular judgments on some wicked men do prove that there shall be a general judgment on all; for seeing some are justly punished, and others deserving no less are spared, he who is immutably good and impartially just must have a day for punishing these afterwards; and God hath fire in store as well as water, to burn up as well as to drown the object of their lusts and pleasure.

[2.] Their great argument is the blemish of providence in their eyes, the seeming neglect of the good, and evil done amongst men. I answer—That will prove it which they bring to disprove it; for the apostle telleth us, 'This is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God,' 2 Thes. i. 5. What! even the calamity of good men? Solomon made another the quite contrary use of it: Ecces. iii. 16, 17, 'Moreover, I saw the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there: I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for there is a time for every purpose and for every work.' The wicked prosper, and destroy the just. You make it an argument for your infidelity; but it is an argument against it. Stay till the assizes come. It followeth

not there is no government because the thief and murderer is not hanged as soon as he hath done the fact. God's day will come, and then they go to prison. When you see malefactors drinking, dancing, frolicking in prison, will you say, I see there is no government in this kingdom?

[3.] Many think this is a state-engine to keep the world in better order and government. But I answer—Needeth there a lie to establish so great a benefit to mankind? It cannot be. Doth interest or virtue govern the world? If mere interest, what a confusion would there be of all things? Then men might commit all villany, take away men's lives and goods at pleasure, when it is their interest, when they could do it safely and secretly; then servants might poison their masters, if they could do it without discovery; and we might prey one upon another if it were in the power of our hands, and so live like wild and ravenous beasts; and by this rule, catch he that catch can here would be the best, and vice and impiety would be the greatest wisdom. But if virtue govern the world, it is a clear case virtue cannot be supported without thoughts of the world to come; and can we imagine that God would make a world that cannot be governed but by falsehood and deceit, as you suppose the opinion of judgment to come is?

2. Propound it to your fear and caution. Great ones, that are most powerful and unruly, there is a power above them: Jer. v. 5, 'I went to the great ones, that had altogether broken the yoke.' They should tremble now at this glorious coming, to prevent trembling then, Ps. ii. 10–12. It is your wisdom to observe the Son, not to oppress his truth, interest, and people. Take heed of living in opposition to Christ: he will come in great power and great glory. If you neglect, if you stumble upon the rock you should build upon, and reject your own mercies, perish for want of a little care, you shall see the excellency of Christ, but have no benefit by it; see the happiness of the saints with your eyes, but shall not taste thereof, 2 Kings vii. 19; as Haman was forced to be Mordecai's lacquey, and cry before him, 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king will honour.'

3. Propound it to your love, that you may long for it. The saints are described to be those 'that love his appearing,' 2 Tim. iv. 8. And the apostle biddeth them 'hasten to the coming of the day of the Lord,' 2 Peter iii. 12. These will be days of refreshing to the saints. Send forth your wishes after it. 'The Spirit in the bride saith, Come,' Rev. xxii. 17. Nature saith not, Come, but, Tarry still. If it might go by voices whether Christ should come, yea or no, would carnal men give their voice this way? No; the voice of corrupt nature is, Depart, Job xxii. 14. They are of the devils' mind, cannot endure to hear of it, Mat. viii. 24. If malefactors were to choose whether there should be assizes, yea or no, there would never be none. But you, my beloved, should desire to see him whom you have heard so much of. When Christ took his leave of us, his heart was upon meeting and fellowship again, John xiv. 2. So should we be affected towards his appearing.

4. Propound it to your patience, fortitude, and self-denial. Have no cause to think shame of Christ's service, though you suffer disgrace for it; he will appear worthy of all the respect you show to his person and ways. He is disgraced indeed that is refused by Christ when he

cometh in great glory. The judgment of the blind world is not to be regarded. The Lord will show who are his condemned in the world on purpose to try you, though now you are accounted the scurf and offscouring of all things. I know it is a great temptation to persons of honour and quality; but Christ suffered greater indignities: therefore let us resolve to be more vile for the Lord. Chiefly consider the glory reserved for us in the life to come, 1 John iii. 2. Then is the day of the manifestation of the sons of God. Christ is contented for a while to lie hid, and will not show himself in his full glory till the end of the world. In the days of his flesh his person was trampled upon by wicked men; and now he is in heaven, he is despised in his cause and servants: his person is above abuse and contempt, but not his members. Christ came in disguise to try the world. Satan would not have had the boldness to encounter him, the Jews to reject him, carnal christians to neglect him, nor the faith of the elect found to such praise and honour, if all were honourable, glorious, and safe here in the world. But the day of manifestation is hereafter. Let us be patient therefore, and bear all the harsh usage we meet with. There will be honour: 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall meet with him in glory.'

5. Propound it to your hope, and stand ready to meet with him and wait for him; and comfort yourselves with the hopeful expectation, This will be when all things are ready. And you should look every day and long every day for his appearing. I have a Saviour in heaven, that will come again, with all his saints with him: 'Even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.'

SERMON XX.

And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.—MAT. XXV. 32, 33.

WE now come to the second general, the presenting the parties to be judged; and there we have—

1. The congregation, *and all nations shall be gathered before him.*

2. A segregation.

[1.] As to company, *he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.*

[2.] As to place and posture, *and he shall set the sheep on the right hand, and the goats on the left.*

First, The congregation. All the dead shall rise, and being risen, shall be gathered together into one place or great rendezvous. According to the analogy of faith we may gather this point:—

Doct. That in the general judgment, all that have lived from the beginning of the world unto that day shall without exception, from the least to the greatest, appear before the tribunal of Christ.

This point will be best illustrated and set forth to you by considering the several distinctions of mankind.

1. The most obvious distinction of mankind is of grown persons and infants; and if all these are presented to the judgment, it will go far in the decision of the point that we have in hand. Grown persons are those whose life is continued to that age wherein they come to the full use of reason; infants are those that die before they are in an ordinary way capable of the doctrine of life. Now for grown persons, the scripture is written purposely for them, and showeth that they shall be judged according to the dispensation they are under; as to infants or lesser children, the case is more difficult and obscure. It is likely that all shall rise in the stature and condition of grown persons, that is to say, in such a state of body and mind as they may see and hear and understand the judge. When they were born, they were born with a rational soul, which though according to ordinary course lieth idle for a while, and doth not discover itself in any human and rational actions till the organs be fitted and matured, yet that it should be still buried in the body, and perpetually sleep, as being hindered by its organs or instruments of operation, reason will not permit us to conceive, because it is contrary to its natural aptness and disposition, as also the end of its creation. We cannot conceive that God should form the spirit in man, which is immortal, in a body in vain and to no purpose; therefore children shall rise again: we know God hath made a difference between infants. The scripture seemeth to extend the merit of Christ's death to his church, Eph. v. 26, 27; and that infants of believers are born members of the church is out of question. To be sure, the covenant taketh in our children together with us: Gen. xxii. 7, 'I am thy God, and the God of thy seed.' And those that never lived to disinherit themselves of that blessing, we have no reason to trouble ourselves about them: God is their God, and knoweth how to instate them in the privileges of the covenant. Look, as we judge of the slip according to the stock upon which it groweth, till it live to bring forth fruit of its own, so we judge of children according to the parents' covenant, till they come to years of discretion to choose their own way, and declare what have been God's counsels concerning them. The parents' sprinkling the blood on the door-posts saved the whole family. It is very reasonable therefore to think that infants, born in the church, dying infants, obtain remission of original sin by Christ, whatever become of others; for what reason have we to judge them that are without? 1 Cor. v. 12. And if God vouchsafe some the remission of that sin which they have, out of his mercy and grace in Christ, they must in the resurrection be in that state, that they may enjoy eternal felicity. The sum of the whole matter is, that in this great congregation children shall appear as well as parents. But children, dying children, are reckoned to their parents as a part of them, or as an appendage and accession to them, whose condition is likely to be the same with theirs as to glorification and acceptance to life. And with the condition of others we meddle not, but leave them to God. The scripture is sparing of speaking of them to whom it speaketh not. God speaketh more fully to grown persons, as those with whom he dealeth and treateth in the gospel. He is not bound to give us an

account how he will proceed with others; yet for godly parents' comfort, he hath more fully revealed his mind concerning their children than the children of infidels or wicked and open enemies to his truth. What he may do to them as to their original sin we cannot easily pronounce, as to their condemnation or absolution. Many allege, indeed, that they have an evil heart, and a nature that they would despise the gospel, if they had lived to receive the offer of it. I answer—It is true they are by nature children of wrath, as all are, Eph. ii. 3; and the gospel telleth us who are the serpentine brood of a transgressing stock; but how far God may show grace to them we know not. But for what they would do afterwards, that can make no argument in this case; for God being a most just and most equal judge, doth not judge his creature for what is possible and future, but only for things that are past and actually committed. He punisheth nothing but sins; but things that are not, cannot be sins. We crush serpents for their venomous nature before they have actually done us any harm; so may God destroy children; but that he doth not always do it, plain experience manifesteth.

2. The next distinction is of those whom Christ shall find dead or alive at his coming. Those that are dead shall be raised out of their graves, and have the spirit of life restored to them, that they may come to judgment. Those that are alive shall undergo a change like death: 1 Cor. xv. 51, 'We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.' These bodies, as thus qualified, cannot brook the state of the other world. Now, there will be found both good and bad alive at Christ's coming. If all the faithful were dead before, there would be some time when God would have no church upon earth. Now, it is foretold in the scriptures that the kingdom of Christ, which consists in the church, shall endure for ever, and that of his government there shall be no end; as no intermission, so no interruption. That therefore it may not be interrupted, some believers there must be, even in the very last times, by whom the kingdom of Christ may be continued in this world, and come to join with the other part of Christ's kingdom that is in the other world. Therefore the apostle telleth us, 1 Thes. iv. 16, 17, 'The dead in Christ shall rise first, and then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, and meet the Lord in the air; and so for ever be with the Lord.' On the other side, all the wicked shall not die; for the man of sin is to be consumed with the brightness of his coming. Now, how shall the brightness of his coming consume him if he were already abolished, with all his adherents and followers?

3. The third distinction is of good and bad. Both sorts shall come to receive their sentence; only the one come to the judgment of condemnation, the other to the judgment of absolution: John v. 28, 29, 'They which are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation.' The word is clear in this point, that both the godly and wicked shall live again, that they may receive a full recompense according to their ways. None of the godly will be lost, but shall all meet in that general assembly; nor shall any of the wicked shift or shun this day of appear-

ance, but both shall at the call of Christ be brought before his judgment-seat; the godly rejoicing to meet their Redeemer, and the wicked forced into the presence of their judge, who could otherwise wish that hills and mountains might cover them. So Acts xxiv. 15, 'I believe the resurrection of the just and unjust;' not *æquabiliter boni*; for Mat. v. 45, 'He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain upon the just and unjust.' Let us answer some places for the good: John iii. 18, 'He that believeth in him, *οὐ κρινεται*, is not judged;' that is, with the judgment of condemnation; so we render it; and *εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται*: John v. 24, 'He that believeth on him shall not come into condemnation.' Yet for absolution they come. On the other side, some of the ancients denied the wicked's entering into judgment: Ps. i. 5, 'The ungodly shall not stand in judgment' (the latter clause expounds it), 'nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.' This is the great bridle upon the wicked when they are serious; they fear more the resurrection from the dead than death itself.

4. The next distinction of men whom Christ shall judge are believers and unbelievers. To believers we reckon all those that lived not only in the clear sunshine of the gospel, but those also to whom the object of faith was but more obscurely propounded; to those that lived before the flood and after the flood, as well as those that lived in Christ's time, and after the pouring out of the Spirit. Abel and Enoch and Noah are mentioned in the chronicle and history of faith, Heb xi., as well as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and believers of a later stamp and edition. And among unbelievers are reckoned all those that through their own obstinate incredulity rejected the divine revelation made to them, as well those that neglected the great salvation spoken by the Lord himself, as the world of ungodly in Noah's time, 1 Peter iii. 20, who were disobedient when Noah preached righteousness to them, or laid open the way of life and salvation to them. Indeed, it concerneth most those that have the gospel clearly preached to them, but others are not excused. In short, this distinction will bring in several ranks of men.

[1.] Some that have heard of Christ, and of the grace of God dispensed by him. These shall be judged by the gospel tenor and dispensation, which clearly sets forth all men to be sinners, and therefore to have deserved eternal death; and that 'there is no name under heaven whereby men can be saved, but by the name of Jesus,' Acts iv. 12. And the great question propounded to them is, whether they have believed in Christ, yea or no? Mark xvi. 16, 'They that believe not shall be damned.' They are condemned upon a double account—partly by the law, and partly by the gospel. Partly by the law, because they, being under the wrath and curse of God, would not embrace the remedy. Besides, the sentence of the law standeth in full force against a man if he cometh not to Christ to get it repealed: John iii. 18, 'He that believeth not is condemned already;' and the sentence is ratified in the gospel: John iii. 36, 'He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.' To their other sins they added unbelief, which is a heinous crime; yea, the great damning sin, 1 John v. 10. Those that say they believe are to prove the truth of their faith by the power it hath upon their hearts and

practice, James ii. 6-8, Rev. xx. 21; if that hath drawn off their hearts from worldly vanities and fleshly lusts, and engaged them to live unto God in the new and heavenly life.

[2.] All that have heard of Christ have not the gospel alike clearly made known unto them. To some he is preached clearly and purely, and without any mixture of errors that have any considerable influence upon the main of religion. Others are in that communion in which those doctrines are as yet taught that are indeed necessary to salvation, but many things are added which are indeed pernicious and dangerous in their own nature; so that if a man should possibly be saved in that profession, 'he is saved as by fire,' 1 Cor. iii. 13. And it is a strange escape; as if one had poison mingled among his meat, the goodness of his digestion and strength of nature might work it out, but the man runneth a great hazard. As the Papists acknowledge Christ for the redeemer and mediator between God and men; they own his two natures and satisfaction, though they mingle doctrines that strangely weaken these foundations. The Turks deny not Christ to be a great prophet, but they deny him to be the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, and the Redeemer of mankind, and wickedly prefer their false prophet before him. The Jews confess there was a Jesus the son of Mary, that gave out himself in their country of Judea to be the Messiah, and gathered disciples, who from him are called christians; but they call him an impostor, question all the miracles done by him, as done by the power of the devil. Now, all these shall be judged by the gospel, which is so proudly and obstinately rejected by them: 'The Spirit shall convince the world of sin, because they believe not in me,' John xvi. 9. He hath so proved himself to be the Christ, the Son of God, the great prophet, and true Messiah, that their rejecting and not believing in him and his testimony will be found to be a great and damning sin, both in itself and as it bindeth their other sins upon them; however, their judgment shall be lighter or heavier, according to the diversity of their offence, and the invincible prejudices they lie under. The corrupters of the christian religion, because they have perverted the truth of the gospel to serve their interests (ambition, avarice, or any human passion), their doom will be exceeding great: 2 Thes. ii. 10-12, 'And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.' To poison fountains was the highest way of murder; to royle the waters of the sanctuary, to mangle Christ's ordinances, is a crime of a high nature. The Jews that rejected Christ in so clear light of miracles, John viii. 24, Christ saith, 'If you believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins;' it maketh the judgment the more heavy upon them. Others to whom Christ is less perspicuously revealed shall have a more tolerable judgment; for the clearer the revelation of the truth is, the more culpable is the rejection or contempt of it. For there is no man that heareth of Christ's coming into the world, suffering for sinners, and rising again from the dead, and ascending into heaven, but is bound more diligently

to inquire into it, and to receive and embrace this truth. Carnal christians, their profession condemneth them; they are inexcusable; they deny in works what in word they seem to acknowledge.

[3.] Some lived under the legal administration of the covenant of grace, to whom two things are propounded:—(1.) The duty of the law; (2.) Some strictures and obscure beginnings of the gospel. They shall be judged according to that administration they are under; either for violating the law, or neglecting the gospel, or those first dawns of grace which God offered to their view and study. Indeed the law was more manifest, but the gospel was not so obscure but they might have understood it. Therefore God will call them to an account about keeping his law, by which who can be justified? Or whether by true repentance they have fled to the mercy of God, which by divers ways was then revealed to them, and have owned the Messiah in his types? Ps. cxliii. 2, 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified;' Ps. cxxx. 3, 4, 'If thou shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.' Which, if not clear, they shall be condemned not only for not keeping the law, but also for neglect of grace. Though their unbelief and impenitency be not so odious as theirs is that lived under a clearer revelation, yet a grievous sin it was, which will bring judgment upon them.

[4.] There are some that have no other discovery of God but what they could make from the courses of nature and some instincts of conscience, as mere pagans. The apostle having told us of the righteous judgment of God, Rom. ii. 5, and how managed, ver. 6-8, and how aggravated, the Jew first, and then the Gentile; he then concludeth, ver. 12, 'For as many as have sinned without the law, shall perish without the law; but as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law;' that is, the Jews, as the other is to be understood of the Gentiles, to whose notice no fame of Christ or the law of Moses could possibly come. To perish without the law is to be punished, and punishment followeth upon condemnation, and condemnation is in this judgment. Therefore pagans and heathens, that lived most remote from the tidings of the gospel and divine revelation, must appear before Christ's tribunal to be judged. But by what rule? He telleth us, ver. 14, 15, 'For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law; these having not a law, are a law to themselves: which show the work of the law written upon their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or excusing one another.' They knew themselves to have sinned by that rule, by the natural knowledge of God, and some sense of their duty impressed upon their hearts; nature itself told them what was well or ill done; the law of nature taught them their duty, and had some affinity with the law of Moses; and the course of God's providence taught that God was placable, which hath some affinity with these gospel rudiments and first strictures. Therefore the goodness and long-suffering of God should lead them to repentance, Rom. ii. 4. Surely, then, the impenitency of the Jews will meet with a heavy condemnation, according to the proportion of clearness in their revelation.

[5.] Men of all conditions, high and low, rich and poor, mighty and powerful, or weak and oppressed, kings, subjects: Rev. xx. 12, 'I saw the dead, both small and great, stand before God.' No rank or degree in the world can exempt us. These distinctions do not outlive time; they cease at the grave's mouth; there all stand upon the same level, and are of the same mould. To bridle the excesses of power, the scripture often telleth us of the day of judgment, how the great men of the earth shall tremble, and the hearts of the powerful then be appalled, Rev. vi. 15-17. They shall then understand the distance between God and the creature, when his wrath and terror is in its perfection. Who can stand when he is angry? Ps. lxxvi. 7. It is a wonder men will live in a way of controversy with him, and are so little moved at it. No wrath so considerable as the wrath of the Lamb. When their mediator is their enemy, none in heaven or earth can befriend them. Those that, in the thoughts of men, are most secure, ringleaders to others in sin, that swear and swagger, and bear down all before them, and persist in their opposition to Christ with the greatest confidence, will be found the greatest and most desperate cowards then. Now these gallants ruffle it as if they would bid defiance to Christ and his ways. Oh! how pusillanimous and fearful then! Appear they must, though they cannot abide it. What torture do they endure between these two, the necessity of appearing, and the impossibility of enduring! Oh! the great ones then would gladly change power¹ with the meanest saint. Then they know what an excellent thing it is to have the favour of God, and of what worth and value godliness is, and how much a good conscience exceedeth all the glory of the world, and what an advantage it is to have peace made with God.

[6.] Not only some of all sorts, or of all nations, but every individual person. In one place the apostle saith, 'All of us,' *collectivè*, 2 Cor. v. 10; in another place, *distributivè*, 'Every one of us,' Rom. xiv. 12; not only all, but every one; not all, shuffled together in gross, but every one, severally and apart, is to give an account of his ways and actions to God.

Use. If these things be so, that all places shall give up their dead, and all those nations that differ so much one from another in tongues, rites, and customs of living, and distance of habitation, shall be gathered together into one place, and not left scattered up and down the world;—there are many ways to shift men's courts and tribunals (they may fly the country, or bribe the judge), but there is no shunning the bar of Christ;—oh! then, let the thought of this make us more watchful and serious.

1. In this judgment there is no exemption; for all are summoned, small and great; and whether they will or no, they shall be gathered together. The faithful shall willingly come, as to absolution; the wicked shall be violently haled, as to condemnation.

2. There is no appearing by a proctor or attorney; but every one in his own person must give an account of himself to God.

3. No denying; for the books shall be opened, Rev. xx. 12.

4. No excusing or extenuating; for Christ will 'judge the world in righteousness,' Acts xvii. 31, according to terms of strict justice.

¹ Qu. 'place'?—Ed.

5. No appealing; for this is the last judgment. No suing out of pardon, or no time of showing favour; for this is too late; the day of grace is past; sinners are *in termino*; their work is over, and now come to receive their wages. Oh! then, now let us take care that this day may be comfortable to us. God's children have more cause to look and long for it than to dread it.

Secondly, We now come to the segregation; and there—

First, as to company, 'He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd divideth between the sheep and the goats.' In these words there is—

1. A point intimated and implied, that Christ is represented as a shepherd and the godly as sheep, but the wicked as goats.

2. There is a second point expressed, that though there be a confusion of the godly and wicked now, yet at the day of judgment there will be a perfect separation.

For the first of these, that Christ is represented to us under the notion of a shepherd, so he is called, Zech. xiii. 7, 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd: I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered;' and 1 Peter ii. 25, 'But are now returned to the shepherd and bishop of your souls.'

1. A shepherd among men is one that is not lord of the flock, but a servant to take care of them and charge of them. This holdeth good of Christ as mediator; for he is God's elect servant, the servant of his decrees: the flock are his, not in point of dominion, right, and original interest, but in point of trust and charge. So Christ is lord of the faithful as God; but as mediator he hath an office and service about them, and is to give an account of them to God, when he bringeth them home, and leadeth them into their everlasting fold, John vi. 37–40, with 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25; Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold I and the children which God hath given me;' Jude 24, 'Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory;' and Col. i. 22, 'To present you holy, and unblamable, and unprovable in his sight.'

2. The work of the shepherd is to keep the flock from straying, to choose fit pasture and good lair for them; yea, not only to fodder the sheep, but to drive away the wolf. To defend the flock is a part of his office; as David fought with the lion and the bear, and slew them for the flock's sake. All these concur in Christ, as you may see, Ps. xxiii. 1–4, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' There is guarding, and feeding, and defending. So John x., there is leading, ver. 3, 4; then there is feeding them, ver. 9; and defending them, ver. 12, 27–29.

3. Christ is not an ordinary shepherd: he is *ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός*, 'The good shepherd,' John x. 11; and Heb. xiii. 20, *ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων τὸν μέγαν*, 'The great shepherd of the sheep;' and 1 Peter v. 4, *ἀρχιποίμενος*, 'The chief shepherd;' 'When the chief shepherd shall appear,' &c.

[1.] He is the good shepherd. Other shepherds are said to be good when they perform their office well, or quit themselves faithfully in the discharge of their trust. But besides the resemblance in these

qualities, there are certain singularities in Christ's office that denominate him the good shepherd.

(1.) A good shepherd is known by his care and vigilance; if he know the state of his flock, Prov. xxvii. 23. This resemblance holdeth good in Christ: he hath a particular care and inspection of every soul that belongeth to his flock: 'Calleth his sheep by name,' John x. 3. He hath a particular exact knowledge of every one of them, their persons, their state, their condition, their place, their country, their conflicts, temptations, and diseases: 2 Tim. ii. 19, 'The Lord knoweth who are his;' John xiii. 18, 'I know whom I have chosen.' Though there be so many thousands of them scattered up and down in the world, yet he is acquainted with every individual person, every single believer, and all their necessities; John, James, Thomas. As the high priest carried the names of the tribes upon his bosom, so hath Christ the names of every one that belongeth to God's flock engraven upon his heart, though they may be despicable in the world, mean servants, employed in the lower offices of the family: Ps. xxxiv. 6, 'This poor man cried unto the Lord.' Poor soul! he lieth under such temptations, encumbered with such troubles, employed in such a hard task and service: My Father gave me a charge of him; I must look to him. Luke xv. we read, that when one was missing, he left all to look after the stray lamb. His knowledge is infinite.

(2.) The goodness of a shepherd lieth in his pity and wisdom to deal tenderly with the flock as their state doth require; so is Christ a good shepherd by reason of his tender respect and gentle conduct: Isa. xl. 11, 'He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom; and shall gently lead those that are with young.' He guideth his people with dispensations suitable to them. In his lifetime he taught them, *καθὸς ἠδύναντο ἀκούειν*, 'He spake the word unto them as they were able to hear it,' Mark iv. 33; as Jacob drove as the little ones and cattle were able to bear, Gen. xxxiii. 14. He calleth to work and suffering according as he giveth grace and strength, 1 Cor. x. 13. Proportioneth their temptations according to their growth and experience. He sendeth great trials after large assurances, Heb. x. 32. As castles are victualled before they are suffered to be besieged. There is a sweet condescension in all his dispensations to every one's state and condition.

(3.) The goodness of a shepherd lieth in a constant performing all parts of a shepherd to them: Ezek. xxxiv. 15, 16, 'I will seek that which was lost, bring back that which was driven away, bind up that which was broken, strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them with judgment.' There is all necessary attendance and accommodation conducing to the safety and welfare of the flock; to protect them from violence from without, to prevent diseases within, to keep them from straying by the inspirations of his Spirit and the fence of his providence ('Blessed be God, that sent thee to meet me this day,' saith holy David), and to reclaim and reduce them when strayed. It were endless to instance in all.

(4.) There is this particularity in this good shepherd, of which there is no resemblance found in others: John x. 11, 'I am the good shepherd, that giveth my life for the sheep.' He doth not only give life to

them, but his own life for them, by way of ransom. This is a flock purchased by the blood of God, Acts xx. 28. He came from heaven to find out lost sheep; left a palace for the wilderness, and the throne for the fold. David was called from the sheep-hook to the sceptre; but Christ from the sceptre to the sheep-hook. Lost man had never been found if Christ had not come from heaven to seek him. We were forfeited, and therefore to be ransomed; and no price would serve but Christ's own blood.

(5.) There is this peculiar in this good shepherd, that he maketh us become the flock of his pasture, and sheep of his fold, Ps. c. 3. When other shepherds have the sheep delivered into their hands, he searcheth up and down for them in the woods and deserts; wherever they are scattered abroad, a lamb here and a lamb there; free grace findeth them out; Ezek. xxxiv. 4, 'I will search out my sheep, and seek them out;' Zeph. iii. 10, 'I will look after my dispersed from beyond the river of Ethiopia.' In the farthermost and unknown countries in every land, Christ knoweth where his work lieth, though it may be but one in a village, in the midst of wolves and swine. He maketh them to be what they are not by nature; turneth and changeth swine into sheep and wolves into lambs.

[2.] He is the great shepherd. (1.) Great in his person, the Son of God. *Dominus exercituum fit pastor ovium*, saith Bernard—the Lord of hosts is become the shepherd of the flock. He needed us not; if he had delighted in multitudes of flocks and herds, there are ten thousand times ten thousand angels that stand about the throne. He needed not leave his throne and die for angels as for us. And (2.) He is great in regard of the excellency of his gifts and qualifications: he is king, priest, and prophet. In the pastoral relation he manifesteth all his offices; he feedeth them as a prophet, dieth for them as a priest, defendeth them as a king; never sheep had better shepherd. *Redimit preciose, pascit caute, ducit solícite, collegit secure*. Jacob was very careful, yet some of his flock were lost, or torn, or stolen, or driven away; but it cannot be so with Christ's flock; we are safe as long as he is upon the throne. (3.) Great in regard of his flock: he is the shepherd of souls; millions of them are committed to his charge, and one soul is more worth than all the world.

[3.] He is the chief shepherd. Though he doth employ the ministry of men to feed his flock under him, yet doth he keep the place and state of arch-shepherd and prince of pastors, as the chief ruler and feeder of his flock, from whom all the under-shepherds have their charge and commission, Mat. xxviii. 19, 20, their furniture and gifts, Eph. iv. 8, 11; upon whose concurrence dependeth the efficacy and blessing of the ordinances dispensed by them, 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7; and to him they give an account, Heb. xiii. 17, as he doth to God. Now this is a great comfort, that Christ taketh the prime charge of the flock. Some thrust in themselves, but he will require his flock at their hands.

Use. Let all this encourage you to look for your supplies by Christ. He professeth by special office to take charge of you; and you may be confident of his care and fidelity. Besides his love to the flock, he is bound as God's shepherd. By distrust you carry it so as if Christ were unfaithful in his charge and office. When you come to the ordinances,

you do directly cast yourselves upon Christ's pastoral care to feed you to everlasting life; and he will give you strength and refreshing. Only be not lean in Christ's pasture, nor faint, as Hagar, near a fountain.

Secondly, The godly are as sheep.

1. Sheep are *animalia gregalia*, such kind of creatures as naturally gather themselves together and unite themselves in a flock. Other creatures we know, especially beasts of prey, live singly and apart; but sheep are never well but when they come together and live in a flock. Such are christians, and such as are partakers of a heavenly calling. It is unnatural for them to live alone: they feed in flocks, Heb. x. 25. Man by nature is ζῶον πολιτικόν; he hath a nature that is apt to make him gather into a community and society. We are social, not only upon interest, as weak without others, but upon natural inclination. We have a desire to dwell and live together, Eccles. iv. 10. The voice of nature saith, it is not good to be alone; so it is true of the new nature; there is a spirit of communion that inclineth them to some other, and to join with them.

2. Sheep, they are innocent and harmless creatures. They that belong to Christ are not bears and tigers and wolves, but sheep, that often receive harm, but do none. Christ was holy and harmless, Heb. vii. 26, and so are they.

3. Sheep are obedient to the shepherd. The meek and obedient followers of Christ are like sheep in this, who are docile and sequacious: John x. 4, 'He goeth before them, and they know his voice;' and ver. 16, 'Other sheep must I bring in also, and they shall hear my voice;' and ver. 27, 'My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me.' All Christ's comforts,¹ in all places and all ages, have the same properties and the same impression.

4. They are poor dependent creatures. They are ever attendant on the shepherd, or the shepherd on them.

[1.] Because of their erring property. They are creatures pliant to stray; but being strayed, do not easily return. Swine will run about all day and find their way home at night. *Domine, errare per me potui, redire non potuissem*, saith Austin. Christ bringeth home the stray lamb upon his own shoulders, Luke xv.; and Ps. cxix. 176, 'All we like sheep have gone astray.' If God leave us to ourselves, we still shall do so.

[2.] Because of their weakness. They are weak and shiftless creatures, unable to make resistance. Other creatures are armed with policy, skill, or courage to safeguard themselves; but sheep are able to do little for themselves; they are wholly kept in dependence upon their shepherd for protection and provision. All their happiness lieth in the good wisdom, care, and power of the shepherd. Wolves, lions, and leopards need none to watch over them. Briars and thorns grow alone; but the noble vine is a tender thing, and must be supported, pruned, and dressed. The higher the being the more necessitous, and the more kept in dependence. There needs more care to preserve a plant than a stone; a stone can easily aggregate and gather moss to itself. There needeth more supplies for a beast than a plant, and more supplies to a man than to a beast.

¹ Qu. 'consorts'?—ED.

Thirdly, The wicked are as goats. They are as goats both for their unruliness and uncleanness. Unruliness: they have not the meekness of sheep, are ready to break through all fence and restraint; so a wicked man is yokeless. They are also wanton and loathsome; it is a baser sort of animal than the sheep; therefore chosen to set forth a wicked and ungodly man.

The second point expressed is this, that though now there is a confusion of godly and wicked, as of goats and sheep in the same field, yet then there shall be a perfect separation.

There will not then be one of one sort in company with the other: Ps. l. 5, 'He will gather his saints together;' and Ezek. xxxiv. 17, 'I will judge between cattle and cattle, the sheep and the goats;' Ps. i. 5, 'The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.' When the saints meet in a general assembly, not one bad shall be found among them. Though now they live together in the same kingdom, in the same village, in the same visible church, in the same family, yet then a perfect separation.

The reasons are briefly these two—(1.) The judge's wisdom and perspicuity; (2.) His justice. They that will not endure them now shall not then abide with them in the same fellowship.

Use 1. Here is comfort to them that mourn under the degenerate and corrupted state of christianity. The good and the bad are mixed together; many times they live in the same herd and flock. It is a trouble to the godly that all are not as they are; and we feel the inconveniency, for the carnal seed will malign the spiritual, Gal. iv. 29. But God will distinguish between cattle and cattle. Discipline indeed is required in the church to keep the sound from being infected, and the neglect of it is matter of grief. But the work is never perfectly done till then; then there is a perfect separation, and a perpetual separation, never to mix more.

Use 2. This may serve to alarm hypocrites. Many hide the matter from the world and themselves, but Christ shall perfectly discover them, and bring them to light, and show themselves to themselves and all the world. All their shifts will not serve the turn. Here are mixed together the sheep and the goats, the chaff and the solid grain, tares and wheat, thorns and roses, vessels of honour and dishonour. Many do halt between God and Baal. A man cannot say, They are sheep or goats; neither do they themselves know it. Therefore it calleth upon us to make our estate more explicit. Yea, many that seemed sheep shall be found goats. Then it will appear whether they are regenerated to the image of Christ, or destitute of the spirit of sanctification, yea or no; whether they loved God above all, or continued serving the flesh, making it their end and scope.

Use 3. Are we sheep or goats? There is no neutral or middle estate. Is there a sensible distinction between us and others? Then we shall have the fruit and comfort of it at that day: 1 Peter ii. 25, 'Ye were as sheep going astray; but now are returned to the bishop and shepherd of your souls.' We all should look back upon our former courses, betaking ourselves to Jesus Christ, seeking to enjoy his favour and fellowship, submitting to him as our ruler and guide, resigning up ourselves to be at his disposal, both for condition of life and choice

of way and course. I say, when by his powerful grace we are thus brought back from our sinful way and course, and made to follow him as our Lord, we are his flock, and he will mind us. Time was when you did run wild, according to your former fancies and the bent of your unruly hearts, and were wholly strangers to God, and could spend days, nights, and weeks, and months, and yet never mind communion with him; but now the business of your souls is to give up yourselves to him, or take the way which he hath prescribed to everlasting glory. Resolve no longer to live to yourselves, but to be under his discipline.

Secondly, As to place, 'He shall set the sheep upon the right hand, and the goats upon the left.'

In the right hand there is greater strength and ability, and fitness for all kind of operations; therefore that place is counted more honourable. So Christ himself is said to 'sit down at the right hand of God the Father;' that is to say, hath obtained the highest place of dignity and power, above all angels and men, in bliss, honour, and dominion.

Doct. The godly shall be placed honourably at the day of judgment, when the wicked shall have the place of least respect.

A type and figure of this we have in Moses his division of the tribes. Some were to stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people, some on Mount Ebal to curse; those born of Jacob's wives put upon Mount Gerizim, those of his servants on Mount Ebal, Reuben excepted, who went into his father's bed. The saints, in their measure, enjoy all the privileges that Christ doth. Now the Father saith to the Son, Ps. cx. 1, 'Sit thou at my right hand.' So they have chosen the best blessings. It is said, Ps. xvi. 11, 'At thy right hand are pleasures for evermore;' and Prov. iii. 16, 'Length of days is in her right hand.' They love God, and are beloved of him; they honour God in the world: 1 Sam. ii. 30, 'They that honour me I will honour.'

Use. Let us then encourage ourselves when we are counted the scurf and offscouring of all things. We shall not always be in this condition, but Christ will put honour upon us in sight of all the world.

SERMON XXI.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.—MAT. XXV. 34.

WE have considered in the former verses—(1.) The sitting down of the judge; (2.) The presenting the parties to be judged. Now (3.) The sentence.

First, Of absolution, in these blessed words which I have now read to you. Observe in them—(1.) The preface; (2.) The sentence itself.

1. The preface showeth the person by whom the sentence is pronounced, *then shall the King say.*

2. The parties whom it concerneth, *to them on the right hand.*