

appear to be the greatest wisdom at length, and not to spend your lives in getting honours or pleasures, or screwing yourselves into the favour of great personages. It is commonly said of a man that hath gotten an estate, that he hath spent his time well ; but the apostle commands, Eph. v. 15, 16, 'See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.' Those other are the worst fools, who make no provision for the future ; they part with jewels for trifles.

SERMON XII.

Looking for that blessed hope, &c.—TITUS ii. 13.

I OBSERVED—(1.) The teacher, 'The grace of God ;' (2.) The lesson, the whole duty of our heavenly calling, 'To deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly,' &c. ; (3.) I come to the third general branch, the encouragements to learning ; here are two—eternal life, and Christ's death. There are two great principles of obedience—gratitude and hope. Gratitude, or thankfulness, because of the obligation that is left upon us from Christ's death ; and then hope, because of the glorious reward that is set before us. So that whether we look backward or forward, we meet with obligations to obedience. Backward, there is an excellent merit : ver. 14, 'Who gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity,' &c. Forward, there is a glorious hope : 'Looking for that blessed hope,' &c. There is nothing lost by God's service. The Lord might deal with us out of sovereignty, and rule us with a rod of iron, but he is pleased to 'draw us with the cords of a man, and with bands of love,' Hosea xi. 3 ; to indent with us and propound rewards, as if we were altogether free before the contract. Men do not use to covenant with their slaves ; we are bound to serve him whether there had been any reward or no ; but the Lord will not leave us without an encouragement. We are apt to have hard thoughts of God, and to think him harsh and austere, requiring work but not giving wages. But consider, we have the highest motives as well as the noblest work ; we are not only 'to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world,' but 'to look to the blessed hope.' Life and immortality is brought to light by the gospel. There is no such encouragement to virtuous living anywhere as in the gospel. Lactantius saith of the heathens, *Virtutis vim non sentiunt, cujus premium ignorant*—They do not feel the force and transforming power of virtue, because they are ignorant of the reward of virtue. The heathens had no such encouragement as immortality and eternal life, and the happy enjoyment of God and Christ for evermore.

But to handle the words a little more distinctly. We have here—(1.) The reward itself, called a 'blessed hope ;' then (2.) The time when it shall be accomplished to the full, at the 'coming of the Lord.' Both these things you must look for. Christians, as often as you think

of eternal life, you must also think of Christ's appearing. Before we enter into glory we must first give an account. Carnal men fancy a heaven without a day of judgment; they would be saved, but they would not be called to an audit and reckoning with God. Many can brook sitting upon the throne with Christ, but not coming before his tribunal; but they that would live holily must look for both the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of Christ. Many points may be observed out of this verse.

Doct. 1. That looking for the blessed hope conduceth much to the advancement of the spiritual life.

1. What this looking is.

2. What influence and power it hath to work us to the spiritual life.

I. What this looking is. It implies patience, but chiefly hope.

1. Patience in waiting God's leisure. Patience is a grace very needful in our pilgrimage, where we are exercised with so many difficulties: Heb. x. 36, 'For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.' You do not only need holiness, but patience. It is long before we can bring our hearts to do the will of God; but after that is done, you have need of patience, that you may wait God's leisure for your reward; for the reward is not given till there be time for labour and exercise, and troubles coming on make time seem very long. Whatever grace we may spare, we cannot spare patience if we would persist in well-doing, for we are to wait for the blessed hope. The good ground 'bringeth forth fruit with patience,' Luke viii. 15. Look, as the ground endures the plough, the harrow, the cold, the frost, that in due time the seed may spring up, so we have need of patience that we may wait upon God for the blessed hope. And as patience is very needful in the present life, so it is inseparable from hope; 1 Thes. i. 3, it is called 'the patience of hope.' To every grace he gives a proper action; there is 'the work of faith, the labour of love, and the patience of hope.' Faith propounds work, love makes us to labour and sweat at it, and hope makes us wait with patience for our reward and recompense: Rom. viii. 25, 'But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.' What we hope for we wait with patience for; between hope and having there is an intervening time to exercise patience. There is want of the thing desired, and delays are troublesome. Now to keep looking is a work of patience.

2. It chiefly implies hope. This looking for is the formal act of hope, an actual expectation of blessedness to come. Now, because there is a bastard and blind hope, and there is a regular and good hope—2 Thes. ii. 16, 'Who hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace'—therefore let me tell you—(1.) What this expectation is not; (2.) What it is.

[1.] Negatively, what it is not.

(1.) It is not a blind hope, such a hope as is found in men ignorant and presumptuous, that regard not what they do. Presumption is a child of darkness, as hope is a child of light; presumption is the fruit of ignorance and inconsideration. When men are once serious, they find it the hardest matter in the world to hope; for guilty nature in itself is more presageous of evil, more inclinable to fear and sorrow, than

to joy and hope. But yet a blind confidence is very common, because men do not consider what they do, but hand-over-head make a full account that they shall go to heaven, without warrant and without evidence. And therefore you shall find it is one of the first things God works by the word, to break down our former carnal hopes, and make men see they are out of the way, lost and undone creatures. Paul in his presumptuous state thought he had as much to show for heaven as any man in the world: Rom. vii. 9, 'I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.' The commandment coming in full conviction upon his heart, he began to be serious, and then he found himself lost and obnoxious to God's judgment. The excellency of hope doth not lie in the strength of confidence, but in the clearness of your ground and warrant. In Mat. vii. latter end, the scripture takes notice of two builders, the foolish and the wise; there was no difference in the building itself; both might raise a structure equally fair; but the difference lay in the groundwork and foundation; the one built upon the sand, the other upon a rock: therefore you are not to look so much to the strength of your hope, as to the evidence, the ground, the foundation of it. Do you know what you do when you so confidently believe your salvation? Presumption grows upon men they know not how; it is not an act of advice and consideration, and therefore will leave us to shame. A man had need have good grounds for his hope. True hope is a serious act, arising from grace, longing after its perfection; and therefore we are said 'to be begotten to a lively hope,' 1 Peter i. 3. Seed desireth growth; everything aimeth at perfection. When grace is infused, presently there is a tendency and motion this way. Others may have strength of confidence, though a weak foundation whereon to build it, therefore their hope comes to nothing but shame and the greater confusion. Job viii. 14, the hope of the hypocrite is compared to a spider's web. Oh! what a curious web doth she spin out of her own bowels! But as soon as the besom comes, down goes the spider and the web too; both are swept away and trodden under foot. So it is with hypocrites; they spin a fine web out of their own bowels, conceive rash but strong hope, a hope of their own forming and making; but when death comes, the man dies, and his hopes die with him. So Prov. xi. 7, 'When a wicked man dies, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of the unjust man perisheth.' It is not meant only of his worldly expectations, though that is true; he that aspired to be great, and to feather his nest, and excel in the world, when he dies, all his plots and projects die with him; but it is meant of his heavenly hopes; when they come to enter upon their everlasting state, then they are sensible of their mistake. We are more sensible of what is near at hand than what is at a distance. Men grow wise when they come to die. Eternity is near at hand, and men begin to awake as out of their dream, and lose all their confidence; and when they thought they were full, they find themselves hungry. Again, the hope of the hypocrite is compared to the giving up of the ghost: Job xi. 20, 'Their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.' When the frame of nature is dissolved, it is done with bitter gripes and pain; the soul in a moment takes an everlasting farewell of the body; so all the hopes of the wicked vanish and are lost in an instant, and they are full

of horror and sad despair. It is the greatest evil that can befall you, to lose all your hopes in an instant. Well, then, this looking for the blessed hope is not a slender imagination, an unadvised rash confidence, such as is lost whenever we begin to be serious, either by the conviction of the word or the approaches of death.

(2.) It is not some glances upon heaven, such as are found in worldly and sensual persons. Sometimes worldly men have their *lucida intervala*, their good moods, and now and then have some sober thoughts of heaven that rush into their mind. Balaam had his wishes: Num. xxiii. 10, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.' And the apostle speaks of some that had a taste, Heb. vi. 4, snatch now and then some savour of the sweetness of heaven and spiritual comforts. A wretched worldling, in whose fancy the world plays all the day, riseth with him, goeth to bed with him, yet now and then hath his wishes, and some sudden raptures of soul, some flashes and motions; but alas! this is not the looking for the blessed hope, for that is a constant viewing of happiness to come. Sudden motions are not operative; they come but now and then, and leave no warmth upon the soul, as fruit is not ripened that hath but a glance of the sun; and you know a sudden light rather blinds a man than shows him his way; so these sudden flashes, enlightenings, and heavenly thoughts vanish, and leave a man never the better.

(3.) It is not a loose hope, a possible salvation, that can have such an efficacy upon the soul to urge and incline it to the spiritual life: James i. 8, 'A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.' When a man is double-minded, divided and distracted between hopes and fears, there will be much irregularity and unevenness in his conversation; he will be off and on with God. As their hearts are up and down and divided, because the success is doubtful, so also is their care of strictness weakened and broken: 1 Cor. ix. 26, 'I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.' He alludes to the Isthmian games. In an ordinary race a man might run and be outstripped; the event was very uncertain, he might miss of the goal; if the other sensibly got ground, then he was discouraged, and began to slack his pace out of hope; but, saith the apostle, 'I run not as one that is uncertain.' Here we are all sure to obtain, though we cannot keep pace with the foremost; and this is that which quickens industry, and stirs up those holy endeavours. The surer your hope is, the greater strength you find, and the greater power upon your conversation. Thus it is not a blind hope, or some glances upon heaven and the blessed things to come, that rush into the mind of a cursed worldling, nor a loose hope and bare conjecture; a possible salvation hath not such efficacy and power upon the soul.

[2.] Positively, what this expectation is of blessedness to come. It is an earnest and lively hope, a solid expectation of blessedness to come; and it bewrays itself by three things—serious thoughts, earnest groans, and lively tastes.

(1.) By frequent and serious thoughts. Thoughts are the spies and messengers of hope sent into the promised land to bring the soul tidings of what is to come. It is impossible for a man to hope for anything, but his mind will run upon it, and he will be thinking of it. We

find it in all earthly matters, that hope sets the mind on work; and so we preoccupy and forestall the contentments that we expect; we enjoy them before they come by serious contemplation, feasting the soul with images and suppositions of the happiness we shall have when we come to fruition. Contemplation of heaven is the feast of the soul. Hope brings in the image and suppositions of what is to come as if it were already present. Certainly wherever the treasure is, the heart, the thoughts will be there. Hope carries the mind above the clouds, in the midst of the glory of the world to come, as if we did see Christ upon his white throne, and Paul with his crown of righteousness, and all the faithful ones in Abraham's bosom. If a beggar were adopted into the succession of a crown, would he not please himself in forethinking of the happiness, honour, and pleasure of the kingly state? So we vile creatures, that are adopted to be co-heirs with Christ, if we did hope to be heirs of the kingdom of heaven, heaven would have more of our thoughts, and take up more of the musings of our souls. We should still observe what we muse upon most. Carnal thoughts, and carnal projects discover a carnal heart; when we are always thinking of plucking down barns and building greater, advancing our families and providing worldly increase; when we are talking to ourselves, as Luke xii. 18, 'He thought within himself, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do, I will pull down my barns, and build greater,' &c. The word *διελογίζετο* signifies he was framing dialogues with himself of bestowing his goods; this shows a carnal heart. So James iv. 13, 'To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain.' It is usual with men to live upon the reversion of their hopes, and feed themselves with the pleasure thereof. As young heirs spend upon their hopes, and run out their estates ere they possess them, so doth the soul, either in matters carnal or heavenly, still feed upon its hopes. And therefore if there be such an earnest hope, you will be entertaining your spirits with suppositions of heaven, and framing images of the glory of the world to come.

(2.) It bewrays itself by hearty sighs, and groanings, and longings after this happiness: Rom. viii. 23, 'And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption of our body.' They that have once tasted of the clusters of Canaan, that have the first-fruits of the Spirit, have tasted of the goodness and sweetness of God in Christ, think they can never be soon enough with him in heaven. When shall it once be? They are still looking out; and the nearer they come to enjoyment, the more impatient they are of the want. As natural motions are swiftest in the end—a stone, the nearer it is to the centre, it moves the faster—so the longer a christian lives in Christ, the more he sends forth his desires and heart after his happiness, and therefore groans, waiting for the revelation of the sons of God, and for this blessed hope. The apostle says, 'The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God,' Rom. viii. 19. The word *ἀποκαρδοκία* signifies a lifting up of the head, as we are wont to put out our head to see if we can spy a thing a great way off; as Judges v. 28, Sisera's mother and the ladies 'looked

out at the window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming?' as if they would spy him afar off. So the soul is still looking out: When will the change come? when will it once be? They would have a fuller draught of the consolations of the Spirit, more freedom from sin, and a more entire love of God: they have had some taste already, therefore they long for the increase and full perfection of it.

(3.) By lively tastes and feelings. It is said of a believer, 'He hath eternal life,' John iii. 36; that is, in the beginnings of it; he hath some taste here upon earth. Hope is called not only living, but 'lively hope,' 1 Peter i. 3, because it quickens the heart, and fills it with a solid spiritual joy; and Rom. v. 2, 'We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' It is a joy that is for enjoyment and possession. In worldly things there is pain and travail, and burdensome expectation till we come to enjoy a thing; but a christian rejoiceth in his hopes. So 1 Peter i. 8, 'In whom believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.' It is true all feel it not in such a degree; it depends on a sense of grace, which all believers have not always; but all believers, whenever they meditate upon heaven, they find sweetness shed abroad in their hearts when they think what is provided for them by Christ. Worldly hope is only as a dream of a shadow; there is pain and travail in expectation, and there is no satisfaction when we come to fruition; but our hopes in Christ fill the soul with this lively joy. Look, as the patriarchs that waited for the coming of Christ, the consolation of Israel, they hugged the promises: oh! here is a sweet promise that will yield a Messiah at length, that shall save the world! Thus they rejoiced in what they foresaw concerning Christ in vision, type, and figure. So christians that wait for happiness and blessedness to come, how do they find a great deal of sweetness shed abroad in their hearts by meditating upon their hope.

II. To show the influence it hath upon the spiritual life.

1. It purgeth the heart from lusts and the filthiness of sin; 1 John iii. 3, 'Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.' How doth this hope make him purify himself? Thus; the things we look for are all holy and pure; it is a great part of our portion in heaven to be freed from sin, to be consorts of the immaculate Lamb. Now the soul will say thus, Do I look upon this as my happiness? Do I hope to be like Christ hereafter, and be freed from the burden of corruption, and can indulge and allow these lusts in my heart? A man hopes for nothing *de futuro* which he would not presently compass were it in his power. We do not look for a sensual paradise, but for a pure and blissful estate, that is made up of sinlessness and purity; and therefore, whoever hath set his heart upon the hopes of christianity, the vision of God, and fruition of Christ, he must needs begin here, especially since God hath required preparation; here we are to be made meet, seasoned and qualified, to accomplish the months of our purification, to prepare ourselves more and more for these glorious hopes.

2. It withdraws our hearts from present things: Phil. iii. 20, 'Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.' A christian lives in the earth as if he were in the

midst of the angels. We are weaned from the world by looking for better things, and so the world is outshined. As a man that hath looked upon the sun, his eyes are dazzled, and cannot see an object less glorious, so when we look within the veil upon our blessed hopes, the glory of the world is obscured. The apostle renders this as a reason why Abraham was a stranger in the promised land, there where he had most right, yet he dwelt in tents: Heb. xi. 9, 10, 'For he looked for a city which hath foundations.' Abraham had other expectations; he did not look upon the walled cities of the Amorites, but upon heaven that was founded by God himself; he had other thoughts. They that live to the world and to the flesh never tasted what eternal life means. Look, as the Israelites longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt before they had tasted the clusters of Canaan, so here the heart is carried out after better things. The soul must have some oblectation and delight, for love cannot be idle; it is carried out to present things if we know no better. See how fitly they are joined together in the text: 'Denying worldly lusts, and looking for the blessed hope;' thereby do we come to deny worldly lusts, by looking for the blessed hope. We should soon return to worldly lusts if we do not often look up and consider what God hath provided for us in heaven. A man whose heart is much in heaven, his affections are pre-engaged, and therefore the world doth him little hurt. Birds are seldom taken in their flight, but when they pitch and rest. Oh! if we had more of these heavenly flights; if the soul did mount upward more, it would better escape the snares of worldly things.

3. It urgeth to care, diligence, and constancy in obedience. Hope is the great spring that sets the wheels a-going: Phil. iii. 13, 14, 'Forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forward towards those things that are before, I press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ.' What is the reason Paul was so earnest that a little grace would not content him, but he was striving for more so earnestly and zealously? He was called to enjoy a high prize, a glorious reward. There is an excellent glory set before us; this race is not for trifles. Christians are the more cold and careless in the spiritual life because they do not oftener think of heaven. The end quickens to the use of means; as it is the measure of the means, so it sweetens the means, notwithstanding all difficulty. Why? Because it will bring us to such an end: 1 Cor. xv. 58, 'Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as you know your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.' You can never do enough for the Lord. Why? 'Your labour is not in vain in the Lord.' This will make you to be instant and earnest, and to hold out to the end in the midst of difficulties; heaven will pay for all. You have no cause to begrudge God any service; though it put the body to pains and labours, do not spare it; Christ will honour it sufficiently. The apostle hath an expression, 2 Thes. i. 10, 'That Christ will be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.' The soul will remember the body as Pharaoh's butler did Joseph. How? In prayer and fasting and holy exercises. And when Christ comes to raise the body, he will put so much glory and clarity upon it that the angels shall stand wondering what Christ is about to do with a poor creature

that is but newly crept out of dust and rottenness. Before a feast we use to take a walk. There is a world of glory provided for us in heaven. Though the work of God be painful, yet it is very fruitful. God will reward you as much as you can desire; and this makes you to be earnest and zealous, and to labour in the spiritual life. We compare the pains of duty with the pleasure of sin, but the comparison is not rightly made; you should compare the pleasure of sin with the reward. I confess you may compare Christ's worst with the world's best, the pains of duty with the pleasure of sin; the former is more sweet to a gracious heart; but the comparison should rather be made thus: compare the base dreggy pleasures of sin with those pure pleasures that are at God's right hand, and with the happiness that is to come, which we expect in Christ.

4. It maketh us upright and sincere in what we do. That is hypocrisy and guile of spirit to look asquint upon secular rewards. You know the hypocrites that Christ taxeth, when they pray, fast, and do other duties to be seen of men, 'they have their reward,' Mat. vi. 2. They have given God a discharge, they look for no more than they have already. As hired servants must have present wages and pay in hand, they wait not for the inheritance as children do. So carnal affections they look to the rewards here below. If they may have the world, and live in honour and pleasure here, they give God an acquittance for anything else. But now this is sincerity to make God our paymaster to do all we do upon the encouragement of the blessed hope: Col. iii. 24, 'Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ.' You have a master good enough, you need not look elsewhere for your wages. And nothing on this side heaven will satisfy the soul, nothing but these glorious hopes.

5. This blessed hope supports the soul under afflictions and difficulties that do befall us in a course of godliness. We counterbalance what we feel with what we expect. We feel nothing but trouble, yet it is not in vain to serve God. I confess we are apt to think so. Saith David, Ps. lxxiii. 13, 14, 'Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.' My innocency is to no purpose: Mal. iii. 14, 'Ye have said, It is in vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?' It is a usual temptation, for we measure all things by sense and feeling, and sense makes lies of God. Ah! but consider, that which you feel is not worthy to be named the same day with that which you hope for: Rom. viii. 18, 'I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.' Glory is revealed to our ears in the gospel, but it will be revealed in us hereafter: 2 Cor. iv. 17, 'Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' Alas! this light affliction is but the scratch of a pin compared with the weighty massy crown of glory; for, saith the apostle, 'we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.' Christians, what do you make your scope? (for that is the word *σκοπούντων ἡμῶν*). Is it to preserve your interest, to live delicately? Then the blessed hope is not for your turn. But when you have fixed your hopes upon these

things, you will see this is but a small matter in comparison of what God hath provided for you. A christian's blessings are future, his crosses are present ; therefore we need some support. Now hope is of great use in affliction and temptations ; this appears by the comparisons that are used ; it is called an anchor in the stormy gusts of temptations, and a helmet in all spiritual conflicts. There are fightings without and fears within ; here is a helmet, here is an anchor ; hope is the anchor of the soul ; and the apostle reckons up all the properties of a good anchor ; it must be firm, sharp, and enter into good ground ; so saith he, Heb. vi. 19, ' Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.' Here is a sure holdfast, upon good ground ; it is a weighty anchor, which will not bow nor break. Mariners when they have cast out a good anchor, which is fastened to the ship with a strong cable, they sleep quietly ; though the winds blow, and the storms and tempests arise, they know the anchor will keep them from floating and dashing upon the rocks ; so hope is a good anchor. Then it is a helmet : Eph. vi. 19, ' And take the helmet of salvation,' that is, hope ; 1 Thes. v. 8, ' And for an helmet the hope of salvation.' The apostle reckons up all the pieces of the spiritual armour ; faith, that is a shield for the body ; but hope that is a helmet for the head. As long as we can lift up our heads, and look up to heaven, we are safe whatever befalls us ; it will hold out in the midst of all the fiery darts that are cast at us.

6. This looking for the blessed hope is of use to resist temptations. Sin makes many promises, and so prevaieth by carnal hopes. Balaam was moved to curse God's people against his conscience ; but when he boggled and stuck at it, Come, saith Balak, I will give thee gold and silver ; this puts quickening into him. The fool in the gospel promised himself long life : Luke xii. 19, ' Soul, soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years ; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry.' So Jer. xlv. 17, ' We will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem ; for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.' And so the devil comes to Christ, and makes the temptation as strong as he can : Mat. iv. 8, 9, ' He showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them ; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' And Babylon's fornication was presented in a golden cup ; there are baits of honour and preferment to draw them to popery and heresy. Now faith sets promise against promise, and heaven against earth, and the pleasure at God's right hand against carnal delight. As one nail drives out another, so one hope and one promise drives out another. Carnal motions are defeated by spiritual promises, and those motions that are presented to the soul.

SERMON XIII.

Looking for, &c.—TITUS ii. 13.

USE 1. Information.

1. It informs us that we may look for the reward. Those men would be wiser than God that deny us a liberty to make use of the Spirit's motives; they begrudge God's bounty. To what end should God propound rewards but that we should close with them by faith? Graces may be exercised about their proper objects without sin. It requireth some faith to aim at things not seen. The world is drowned in sense and present satisfactions; they are mercenaries that must have pay in hand; their souls droop if they do not meet with credit, applause, and profit; they make man their paymaster; they have the spirit of a servant, that prizes present wages above the inheritance; but it is the work of grace to look for the blessed hope, and a great help to us in our work. It was the comfort of Christ's human soul: Heb. xii. 2, 'Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame.' Christ as man was to have rational comforts and human encouragements. Nothing is sinful but coveting the reward whilst we neglect the work; when we will be *mercenarii*, but not *operarii*; we would receive the reward, but not do our work. We are all born libertines; we would sever the reward from the duty: Hosea x. 11, 'Ephraim is an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn,' but not to break the clods; in treading out the corn there was pleasure and profit, but in breaking the clods pain and labour. Or else we sin in having a carnal notion of heaven; our looking for heaven is like their looking for Christ as the consolation of Israel. Some of the Jews look for a carnal Messiah; so do many christians for a carnal heaven, for base pleasures, fleshly delights. Such hopes debase the heart. It is the privilege of our profession that we have a sublime hope. Or else we sin in looking for the reward as the fruit of merit; if we expect it as wages for work done, we are mercenaries. Sin and death are as work and wages: Rom. vi. 23, 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Eternal life is a donative. What is the reason of this difference? Because wicked men stand upon their own bottom, but Christ hath obtained this privilege for us. Wicked works are ours, merely evil, but the good we do is by God's grace, as a servant tradeth with his master's estate. I am bound to do good, and am forbidden to sin; when I do that which is forbidden, I deserve punishment; but when I do that which is commanded, I do not deserve a reward, because I am bound to do it: Jude 21, 'Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.' It is mercy that we are called, mercy that we are glorified; neither before conversion nor after conversion do we deserve anything. We serve a good master, he hath provided comforts for us, not only against our misery, but our unworthiness; we have not only glory as a reward, but mercy as the cause of it, glory out of the hands of mercy. Thus must you look for the reward, and build your

hopes of it. As you pray, so must you expect. Now you will not pray, Lord! give me heaven, for I deserve it; natural conscience would blush at the immodesty of such a request. Who would not have the title of inheritance rather than of hire? Again, our own happiness must not be our ultimate end. Man was made for a twofold end—to glorify God, and enjoy him for ever; they must both go together; we must desire the enjoyment of God that we may glorify God to all eternity, otherwise interest swayeth us more than duty. First, we love God out of interest, and are drawn with the cords of a man; as first the fire is kindled, and then it sendeth forth much smoke; afterwards we love God out of pure affection; at length, as the new nature gathers strength and perfection, men rejoice in God's glory as much as in their own salvation; it is a simple act of adoration. In heaven it will be so, we shall rejoice in God's glory as much as in our own interest and profit.

2. It informs us of the reason why the world and sin have such a power over men, why they lie under the power of present things; we do not awaken our hopes, and consider blessedness to come so much as we should. It is not only a difference between sinners and saints, but between christian and christian; one is more heavenly than another. As there is a difference between ordinary subjects and courtiers; those that are always in their prince's eye and company are more polite in their manners than others, so the oftener the soul is in God's court, the more holy; our hopes will have an influence upon our practice. It is hope that carries the soul aloft out of the reach of temptation, as birds when flying on high in the air need not fear nets nor snares nor the craft of the fowler. Keep hope alive, and then a christian cannot fail; Heb. iii. 6, 'Whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of hope firm unto the end.' If a man had such a lively hope, and some taste and feeling of heaven and blessedness to come, and a constant groaning after them; if we could but glory in our hopes as much as if we had present possession, then we need not fear miscarrying.

3. It informs us that it is a false hope that doth not urge to practice and strictness of life. Some men make full account to go to heaven, but make no preparation for it; their course is another way; there is not only an unsuitableness to their hopes, but a contrariety. If there were only an unsuitableness, it were enough to discover the cheat, for we are 'to be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,' Col. i. 12, and 'to walk worthy of God, who hath called us to his kingdom and glory,' 1 Thes. ii. 12, and 'to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called,' Eph. iv. 1. There is a suitableness between a man and his great hopes. When David was a shepherd, he spent his time in keeping his father's sheep, and had the heart of a shepherd; but when he was called to be king, then he behaved himself like a king, like a shepherd of the people. So a christian discovers his hopes in his disposition and in his practice, and doth walk as an heir of the grace of life. There may be a slight hope which hath no efficacy, but those serious sighs and hearty groans I speak of, certainly they will work a suitableness in the temper of our hearts and the constitution of our souls, and we shall be more holy; there will be more

worthy walking, more detestation of sin, more contempt of the world, more diligence in the spiritual life. When you walk as if your hopes were altogether in this world, when princes in scarlet embrace a dung-hill, when those that are called to great and glorious hopes live as if their happiness were only here below, heaping up wealth, treasure, and worldly conveniences to themselves, it is a lamentation. If you saw a man labouring in filthy ditches, and sullyng himself as poor men do with mire and dirt, who would believe he were an heir-apparent to a crown, and called to inherit a kingdom? So when we live as men of the world, when there is an unsuitableness between us and our hopes, how do we walk as the heirs of grace? But now, when there is not only an unsuitableness, but an open contrariety in their practice, and yet they think to go to heaven, it is as if a man whose journey lay north should travel just south. Can that man look to be filled up with God when God is not in all his thoughts? Can he long for the company of Christ that slight his ordinances; Can he prize the communion of saints to whom good company is a prison? Can he look for an immaculate and sinless state to whom purity is an eye-sore, and who hates the power of godliness? Yet many such deceive themselves with false hopes, when there is not only unsuitableness, but a plain contrariety.

4. It informs us that an assured interest in heaven is no ground of looseness or laziness. Comfort serves to quicken, but not to slacken our endeavours. The more we look for heaven, the more it engageth us to strictness of life. The apostle, after he had professed his assurance, 'We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord,' 2 Cor. v. 8. What then? ver. 9, 'Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.' Here is a sure recompense; our great care is that we may live and die in his grace, because we are confident we shall live with the Lord when we depart from the body: Jude 21, 'Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.' When God is so gracious in Christ, providing such great things for such unworthy creatures as eternal life, and we come to receive glory out of the hands of mercy, what a mighty engagement is this to make us watch against all decays and coolings of love.

Use 2. To exhort us to this expectation or looking for the blessed hope. The method and way is first to believe, then to apply, then to expect.

1. Believe it, that there is such a happiness reserved for the children of God. Next to God's being we are bound to believe his bounty: Heb. xi. 6, 'He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' These two principles, that God is, and that he is a rewarder, are the fundamental notions that keep up all religion. There is a mist upon eternity to a carnal heart; they are led by sense, and believe no more than they see: Heb. xi. 1, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.' Fancy and nature cannot outsee time and look beyond death. Faith holdeth the candle to hope, and then we are able to look into the other world, and to see a happy state to come. Now because faith is weak in most, and we waver more in the belief of God's bounty than of

his being, his Godhead is manifested by present sensible effects, but we scruple his rewards, which are wholly to come; therefore let us strengthen and help faith as much as we can. The word is clear in this point. Now God hath been true in all things: *Fidelis in omnibus, in ultimo non deficiet*—He that hath been faithful in all things will not fail us at last. The calling of the gentiles, the rejection of the Jews, the sending of the Messiah, these were things as invisible and as much to come as heaven is to us; now all these things have been fulfilled, and why should we not trust God to the last? Experience is wont to beget hope: Rom. v. 4, ‘And patience, experience; and experience, hope.’ Can God lie, or truth itself be false? What need hath God to flatter thee or deceive thee? If we did preach a God that needed the creatures, then you might suspect what we tell you in his name; but he hath no interest to be gratified; his vehement longings are for your good and profit: Deut. v. 29, ‘Oh that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their children for ever.’ God doth not say that it may be well with me, but with them. Again, let reason be heard to speak how suitable it is to God’s nature. Consider, the being of God is infinite and eternal, and so is the reward; the apostle calls it, 2 Cor. iv. 17, ‘a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.’ Araunah gave like a king. God’s gifts are like himself, suitable to his infinite mercy and eternal duration; how likely is it that God will once show himself like himself! And they are suitable to the merit of Christ. Is God at such expense for trifles? The comforts of this world may be bought with gold and silver, but the apostle saith, 1 Peter i. 18, 19, ‘Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, &c., but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.’ Why would God give so great a price out of his own treasury, but to take a debt upon himself, and to oblige his justice to be our friend? If Christ can be in the womb and in the grave, why may not we be in heaven? It is more credible to believe that a creature should be in heaven than a God should be in the grave; and Christ’s abasement (which is first) is more than our advancement. There is not so great a distance between us and happiness as between Christ and misery. Men naturally being made capable of a higher condition of mind and affections, to love and know God, godliness must have a better recompense than is to be had in the world. These are but the offals of providence, enjoyed by God’s enemies; they have the greatest share: Ps. xvii. 14, ‘From men of the world, which have their portion in this life.’ The wiser men are, the more they contemn these things; children are taken with rattles. Grace cannot be satisfied with the world without a higher enjoyment of God. Pleasures are common to us with the beasts; wicked men flow in ease and plenty. A reward there must be; it is impossible a creature should rest in its own action. We see that natural actions that tend to maintain life have a sweetness and pleasure mingled with them, that we may not neglect them, or our own preservation, as eating and drinking, and the like; therefore virtuous actions, much more such as are against the hair and bent of nature, must have a reward, a reward better than the work, or else it would be lost labour. There is a dis-

position and instinct of nature towards eternal happiness. Man's soul like a sponge is thirsty, and seeketh to be satisfied: Ps. iv. 6, 'Who will show us any good?' And every good will not serve their turn. Men at first take up with the creature, because it is next at hand, but it satisfieth not; their sore runneth till they come to enjoy God: Acts xvii. 27, 'That they should seek the Lord, if haply they may feel after him, and find him.' When we have all outward blessings, the soul of man is not filled up; there is something wanting to our peace and quiet. Solomon made experiments, but had no satisfaction. Thus you see there is no such reward so suitable to what is declared of God, of Christ, of the nature of man, of grace, as this blessed hope.

2. Apply it. Besides the truth of the promises, look to the clearing up of your own interest and title. It is a poor comfortless meditation to think of a blessed hope, and the certainty of it, unless we have an interest in these things; this will be but like the gaze of an hungry man upon a feast. The reprobates hereafter are lookers-on, and David speaks of a table spread for him 'in the presence of his enemies,' Ps. xxiii. 5. Hope hath never a more lively influence than when it is founded in property and a sense of our own interest: Job xix. 25, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth;' and 2 Cor. v. 1, 'We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;' 2 Tim. iv. 8, 'Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day.' There is not only an heaven, but for me. Thus are the saints wont to profess their interest and assured hope. But is hope only the fruit of assurance? I answer—It is the fruit of faith, as well as of assurance or experience; but certainly it is very comfortable when we can discern our own interest, and in some sort necessary. Before we can hope for ourselves, our qualification is to be supposed, for that is our evidence. Therefore I shall—(1.) Press you to get this assurance; (2.) Show what kind of application is absolutely required, that you may thus look for the blessed hope.

[1.] Let me press you to get an assured title to heaven. In a matter of such moment, would a man be at an uncertainty? Can he be quiet and not sure of heaven? Not to look after it is a bad sign. A godly man may want it, but a godly man cannot slight it. A man may want it, he may creep to heaven; some are 'scarcely saved,' 1 Peter iv. 18. Others have 'an abundant entrance;' 2 Peter i. 10, 11, 'Give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' For want of this you quite lose your heaven upon earth, which consisteth in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; and you lose much of the influence of hope. Uncertain wavering thoughts have little efficacy. But a good man cannot slight it; it is a breach of a command which requireth diligence. It argueth spiritual security when men can be content to live long, and yet do not know what will become of them. How can you think of the coming of Christ without terror? That which others look for and long for is your fear; as Felix trembled as soon as he heard of judgment to come.

[2.] I shall tell you what application there must be if we cannot attain to assurance. There are three degrees of application beneath assurance—

(1.) Acceptation of God's offer, that is one degree of application: Job v. 27, 'Hear it, and know thou it for thy good.' Put in for these hopes; and take God on his word; stipulate with him, and undertake thy part of the covenant upon a confidence God will not fail thee. As Moses, when the book of the law was read, Exod. xxiv. 6, 'took half the blood and sprinkled it on the altar,' to show that God undertook to bless them; and ver. 8, 'the other half he sprinkled on the people,' by which they were engaged to obey. There must be in all christians 'the answer of a good conscience,' 1 Peter iii. 21.

(2.) Adherence. Stick close to this hope in a course of obedience. If we do God's work, we shall not fail of wages: 1 Cor. ix. 26, 'I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.'

(3.) Affiance, resting, waiting upon God, though with some doubts and fears, for the revelation of this glory. Though you cannot say, It is yours, yet wait with hope till your change come, looking for the mercy of Christ, so that you durst venture your soul in that bottom. This is 'committing our souls to him in well-doing, as to a merciful and faithful Creator,' 1 Peter iv. 19. You put your souls into God's hands that made them.

3. Expect it. This is the formal act of hope which is pressed in the text. This hope and expectation of blessedness is the strength of the inward man. The devils have a faith, but because it is without hope it yieldeth no refreshment: James ii. 19, 'Thou believest that there is one God, thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble.' The word signifies such a trembling as the raging of the sea; it is a light that does not refresh, but scorch. There would be comfort in hell if there could be hope there. It is the duty now in season; here we must expect: Rom. viii. 24, 'We are saved by hope.' In innocency there was little or no use of hope, and in heaven there will be none at all; the object of man's happiness will be present and enjoyed; but now all is to come; we have only a taste and pledge to make us long for more and expect more. Faith by hope maketh them present substance: Heb. xi. 1, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for.' Things of eternal life seem as a shadow and fiction to a carnal heart. This hope is an earnest elevation of the mind to look for what faith counteth real.

Use 3. To direct us how to look for this blessed hope.

1. Consider it. Hope is a temperate ecstasy, a survey of the land of promise. As God said to Abraham, Gen. xiii. 14, 15, 'Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, and eastward and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever;' so Ps. xlviii. 12, 'Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof.' It is a great advantage to think often of heaven, it maketh it present to us. Heaven deserveth our best thoughts. We should always do it; in the morning it were a good preservative to keep us from being under the power of present things: Ps. xvii. 15, 'I shall be satisfied when I

awake with thy likeness.' In some special seasons doth hope set the mind a-work. In times of trouble and present sufferings we enjoy a happy dedolency; the mind is untouched, whatever the body suffereth. When we are summoned to the grave, and bodily sicknesses put you in mind of death, when sense and speech fail, the love of God never fails; this pale horse is sent from Christ to carry us to glory; and though we go down to the grave to converse with worms and skulls, this hope may comfort us, Job xix. 26, 27, 'And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me.'

2. Long for it. Hope cannot be without groans. Every day wind up your affections, for here is nothing but conflicts and sorrows. Love to Christ cannot be without him, it will never be content. Nature desires perfection: Col. iii. 1, 2, 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.' There is our God, our Christ, our rest: 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also,' Mat. vi. 22; not only the mind, but the heart; what we are much thinking of, the desires will be working that way. The new nature cannot be without these desires; everything tendeth thither whence it came: Eph. i. 3, 'Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings *ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς*, in heavenly places.' God sits in heaven that dispenseth grace, Christ that conveyeth it; thence come our mercies, comforts, and joys; therefore it is against the tendency of the new nature not to be tending thither, where Christ is, who is our greatest happiness. There is your father, your elder brother, the best of the family, and your spiritual relations, whom you most valued; the best company is in the other world. Here you have maintenance as in a foreign land, but there is your interest and estate. How unworthy soever we are, there is infinite mercy to give it, there it acts like itself; infinite merit to purchase it, there we receive the full fruits of our redemption; and the present fruits of the Spirit are the earnest of it, as an earnest is something in part of a greater sum.

3. Wait for it. There are groans of expectation as well as of desire. You have a fair charter granted by God the Father, written with the blood of Christ, sealed by the Spirit. To make your expectation more firm, consider—

[1.] Christ's goodness and mercy: 'Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life,' Jude 21. He never discovered any backwardness to thy good, or inclination to thy ruin.

[2.] God's faithfulness: Heb. ix. 18, 19, 'That by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation.' God stands more on his word than on heaven and earth. If an honest man has made a promise of anything, he will make it good; much more may we depend on the faithful God.

[3.] God's power. If our souls were in our own keeping, we might fear; but 'we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation,' 1 Peter i. 5. Abraham, being persuaded of God's power, 'against hope believed in hope,' Rom. iv. 18.

[4.] Christ's merit and intercession: Rom. viii. 34, 'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.' By his merit our right to heaven is purchased, and by his intercession it is maintained for us.

SERMON XIV.

That blessed hope, &c.—TITUS ii. 13.

DOCT. 2. The hope of christians is a blessed hope.

Hope is here put for the thing hoped for; as Col. i. 5, 'For the hope that is laid up for you in heaven,' where hope is put for the object of hope. Now this matter or object of our hope is sometimes called life, sometimes glory, sometimes joy and pleasure. It is a life that never shall be quenched or put out: Jude 21, 'Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.' It is a glory that is eternal for duration; 2 Cor. iv. 17, it is called 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' For the measure of it, it is above our conceit and expression, as much as a creature can bear. It is joy and pleasure without mixture and without end: Ps. xvi. 11, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.' Now this hope is said to be blessed, because it puts us into the fruition of absolute blessedness. We cannot conceive of it now to the full; when we come to enjoy it, we shall find it above all that ever we could conceive or hear of it. As much as we see and know of it showeth it is a blessed thing, but we shall understand it best when we hear the great voice calling us, Come up and see.

But a little to set it before you. In blessedness there must be a removal of all evil, and a coacervation and complete presence of all that is good. As long as the least evil continueth, a man is not blessed, only he is less miserable. If a man had all things that heart could wish for, what would it avail him? as Haman, when he wanted Mordecai's knee, Esther v. 13, 'All this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.' Ahab had the kingdom of Israel, but yet he fell sick for want of Naboth's vineyard. If a man were never so well fitted for a journey, a little gravel in his shoe would founder him. As in carriages of war, though there be a great train, yet if one peg be missing or out of order, all stoppeth; or in the body, if one humour be out of order, or one joint broken, it is enough to make us sick or ill at ease, though all the rest be sound and whole; so if there be the least evil, a man cannot be a complete happy man; complaining will not suit with blessedness. Now—

First, In the hope that we look for there is a removal of all evil. Evil is twofold—either of sin or of punishment; and in heaven there is neither sin nor misery.

1. To begin with sin, that is the worst evil. Affliction is evil, but it is not evil in itself, but only in our sense and feeling; if a man had a dedolency, it is no pain to a benumbed joint to be scourged. But sin is evil, whether we feel it or no, but it is worst when we feel it not. Certainly that is evil which separateth from the chiefest good. Affliction doth not separate from God, it is a means and an occasion to make us draw nigh to him; many had never been acquainted with God but for their afflictions; but sin separateth us from God: Isa. lix. 2, 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.' Let a man be never so loathsome, yet, if he be in a state of grace, he is dear to God, the Lord taketh pleasure in him; though rough-cast with ulcers and sores, and thrown into a prison, yet God will kiss him with the kisses of his mouth. There is nothing so loathsome and odious to God as sin; this grieveth the saints most: Rom. vii. 24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?' If any man had cause to complain of afflictions, Paul had; he was often in perils, whipped, imprisoned, stoned; but he doth not cry out, When shall I be delivered from these afflictions? Oh! but this body of death was worst of all; lusts troubled him more than scourges, and his captivity to the law of sin more than chains and prisons. This is the disposition of the saints; they are weary of the world, because they are sinning here whilst others are glorifying God, not only that they are suffering here whilst others are enjoying God. A beast will forsake the place where he hath neither meat nor rest. Carnal men, when they are beaten out of the world, have a fancy to heaven as a place of retreat; but that which troubles godly men is their sin. Well, but in heaven there is no sin: Eph. v. 27, 'That he might present it to himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.' There is neither spot nor wrinkle upon the face of the glorified saints. Their faces were once as black as yours, but now Christ presenteth them to God as a proof of the cleansing virtue of his blood. And how pure and clean they are, without spot or wrinkle, the apostle's words, 'that he might present it,' imply as if Christ did glory and rejoice in their purity as the fruits of his purchase. There you are freed from all sins. With much ado we mortify one lust, but nature recoileth; as ivy in the wall, if you cut it down, it breaketh out again. It is much here if the dominion of sin be taken away; there the being of it is abolished, in heaven it is not at all; you will displease God no more, and are freed from all the immediate and inseparable consequences of original sin, distraction in duty, and the like. Here is no perfect love, and therefore the soul cannot be fixed in the contemplation of God; that is the reason of wandering thoughts; but there the heart cleaves to God without straggling. In heaven we shall be freed from pride, which lasts as long as life, therefore called 'Pride of life,' 1 John ii. 16. We cannot have a revelation now but we grow proud of it: 2 Cor. xii. 7, 'And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.' Nor

can there be an influence of grace but we are apt to be proud of it; there is a worm in manna; but then we are most high and most humble, because most holy. O christians! is not this a blessed hope that telleth you of a sinless state, of being like Christ in purity and holiness? 1 John iii. 2, 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' What is it that you have struggled with, and groaned under all your lives, but sin? Now that is blotted out when the days of refreshing shall come. And as there is no sin, so there are no temptations. In paradise there was a tempter, but none in heaven; Satan was long since cast out thence, and the saints fill up the vacant rooms of the apostate angels. The world is a place of snares, a valley of temptations; it is the devil's circuit, where did he walk but to and fro in the earth? but in heaven 'nothing entereth that defileth,' Rev. xxi. 27. No serpent can creep in there, though he could into paradise. O christians! lift up your heads, you will get rid of sin, and displease God no more. Here we cry, Lord deliver us from evil; and then our cries are heard to the full. Grace weakeneth sin, but glory abolisheth it, and the old Adam is left in the grave never to rise more.

2. The next evil is the evil of affliction. Whatever is painful and burdensome to nature is a fruit of the fall, a brand and mark of our rebellion against God; therefore affliction must be done away as well as sin if we be completely happy. As in hell there is evil, and only evil, a cup of wrath unmixed, without the least temperament of mercy, so in heaven there is happiness, and only happiness; sorrow is done away as well as sin. It is said, Rev. xxi. 4, 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.' The afflictions of the soul are gone, there are no more doubts of God's love, nor sense of his displeasure; here though we are pardoned, and the wound be cured, yet the scars remain. Absalom could not see the king's face when he was restored. In wise dispensation God sometimes hideth his face from us here upon earth. We need to be dieted, and to taste the vinegar and the gall sometimes, as well as the honey and sweetness, that we may the better relish our christian comforts. The world is a middle place, standing between hell and heaven, and therefore hath something of both. The saints have their mixture of pleasure and sorrow: Job ii. 10, 'Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?' But there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore: Ps. xvi. 11, 'Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence there is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore;' there is no mixture of sorrow. Here we complain that the candle of the Lord doth not shine with a like brightness as in the months that are past; there our sun remaineth in an eternal high noon, without clouds and overcasting; *Nox nulla secuta est*, no night follows. The afflictions of the body are done away. Heaven is a happy air, where none are sick; there is no such thing there as gouts and aches and the grinding pains of the stone. Here it is called 'a vile body,' Phil. iii. 21, as it is the instrument of sin and the subject of diseases. We have the root of diseases in the soul, and that is sin;

and the matter and fuel of them in the body, peccant humours and principles of corruption. As wood is eaten out with worms that breed within itself, so there are in our bodies principles of corruption that do at length destroy them; but there we are wholly incorruptible. Yea, because deformity of the body is a monument of God's displeasure, one of the penal events of sin, introduced by Adam's fall, it is done away. The body riseth in due proportion; whatever was monstrous or misshapen in the first edition is corrected in the second, like the erratas in a second edition. And for violence without, heaven is a quiet place; when there are tumults in the world, God is introduced as sitting in the heavens, a quiet posture: Ps. ii. 4, 'He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh.' There is nothing to discompose those blessed spirits; wicked men cannot molest them nor abuse them. Here the very company of wicked men is a burden; as Lot's righteous soul was 'vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked,' 2 Peter ii. 7. David complains, Ps. cxxx. 5, 'Woe is me that I dwell in Mesch, and sojourn in the tents of Kedar.' But there 'the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity,' Mat. xiii. 41. The wicked shall be bound hand and foot, and cast into utter darkness; as when men will not be ruled, they are sent to prison. Here poor saints are subject to a number of infirmities, labour, thirst, hunger, cold, nakedness, and want, which all cease then. It is a rich inheritance, as well as a glorious one: Eph. i. 18, 'That ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' These distinctions of poor and rich, as they are understood in the world, do not outlive time; we shall have enough of true riches, which is eternal glory, and the full fruition of God. Labour ceaseth, though there be a continual exercise of grace. All things rest when they come to their proper place, so do they that die in the Lord. We still serve God, but without weariness; yea, we are freed from the necessities of nature, eating and drinking and sleeping, to which the greatest potentates are subject; though they are exempted from hard bodily labour, yet they are not exempted from the necessities of nature. But there the use of meats and of the belly and stomach is abolished: 1 Cor. vi. 12, 'Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them.' It is a piece of our misery that our life is patched up of so many creatures; as a torn garment is pieced and patched up with supplies from abroad. The sheep or silkworm supplies us with clothing, the beasts of the earth and fishes of the sea with food, and all to support a ruinous fabric, that is ever ready to drop about our ears. But there we are above meat and drink and apparel; it will be our meat and drink to do our Father's will; nakedness will be no shame, we shall have glory instead of a robe. And the body will not be a clog to the soul, but a help. This mass of flesh we carry about with us is now the prison of the soul, where it looketh out by the windows of the senses; but there it is no longer the prison of the soul, but the temple of it. In short, all that I have to say upon this branch is comprised in Rev. xxi. 4, 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed

away.' There is quite another kind of dispensation, no distraction of business; our whole employment there will be to think of God, and study God, but without weariness, satiety or distraction.

Secondly, In blessedness there is a confluence of all good. To the happiness of the creature it is necessary that his comforts should be full and eternal: Ps. xvi. 11, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore;' 2 Cor. iv. 18, 'The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.' That they may be full for parts, full for the degrees and the manner of enjoyment, and that they should continue for ever; that he may possess this happiness without fear of losing it, let us examine these things.

1. He must enjoy all good for the parts of it; the whole man in all his relations must be blessed; for man being ζῶον πολιτικόν, a sociable creature, is to be happy not only in his person, but in his company and relations; so we hope for an estate when our persons shall be happy, both in body and soul conformed to Christ, and we shall be blessed in our company and relations; we are brought into the presence of God, which is blessedness itself, and into the sight and fellowship of his blessed Son, and into the company of blessed angels and saints.

[1.] The happiness of his person, and there both of his body and his soul.

(1.) Of his body. It is good to consider that. It is now a temple of the Holy Ghost, and he cannot leave his mansion, and quit his ancient dwelling-place, and therefore he raiseth it up, and formeth it again into a complete fashion, like to Christ's glorious body: Phil. iii. 21, 'Who shall change our vile body, that it may be like to his glorious body,' for clarity, agility, strength and incorruption. Solomon's temple was destroyed, but the latter temple was nothing so glorious as the former. Men wept when they saw it: Ezra iii. 12, 'But many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men which had seen the first house, when the foundations of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice.' But it is not so here; what is raised shall be quite another body. For the present there is to be seen a beautiful fabric, wherein God hath showed his workmanship; every member, if it were not so common, would be a miracle, all is so ordered for the service and comeliness of the whole; but now it is a vile body, subject to diseases, fed with meat, humbled with wants, many times mangled with violence, dissolved by death, and crumbled to dust in the grave, like a dry clod of earth. This is the body that we carry about with us, a mass of flesh, dressed up to be a dish for the worms. Men labour with a great deal of do by embalming it with spices to keep it from putrefaction, but all will not serve the turn; it moulders at last. But this vile body shall rise in another manner, like to Christ's glorious body. When the sun appeareth the stars vanish, their lustre is eclipsed and darkened; but the Sun of righteousness, when he appears at the last day, doth not obscure but perfect our glory. But wherein shall our bodies be like to Christ's glorious body? The apostle will tell us that in another place: 1 Cor. xv. 42-44, 'It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour,

it is raised in glory ; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power ; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.' Let me single out three expressions ; it is raised in incorruption, it is raised in glory, it is raised a spiritual body.

(1st.) It is an incorruptible body. Now it yieldeth to the decays of nature, and is exercised with pains and aches, till at length it droppeth down like ripe fruit into the grave ; but hereafter it shall be clothed with immortality, wholly impassible. What a comfort is this to them that are racked with stone and gout, humbled with diseases, or withered with age, to think they shall have a body without aches and without decays, that shall be always in the spring of youth ! The trees of paradise are always green.

(2d.) It is a glorious body. Here it is many times deformed, at least beauty, like a flower, is lost in sickness, withered with age, defaced by the several accidents of life ; but then we shall be glorious like Christ's body. The naked body of man at first was so beautiful that the beasts of the field admired it, and thereupon did homage to Adam ; but we shall not be conformed to the first Adam, but the second Adam. When Christ was transfigured in the Mount, it is said, Mat. xvii. 2, ' His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.' There was such strong emissions of the beams of glory that they could not endure the shining of his garments, but it astonished the disciples ; his garments could not veil, nor their eyes endure those beams of glory. Paul could not endure that light that shined on him when Christ appeared to him from heaven, but was utterly confounded and struck blind : Acts ix. 3, 4, ' And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus ; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven ; and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ?' By this you may guess a little what the glory of our bodies shall be, for we shall be like him. Moses, by conversing with God forty days, the complexion of his face was altered, so that he was forced to put a veil upon it. In this low estate in which we are, we must make use of these hints. If we lose a limb or a joint, he that healed Malchus' ear will restore it again.

(3d.) It is a spiritual body, either for agility, caught up into the air to meet the Lord, not clogged as now ; or rather, because more disposed for spiritual uses, for the enjoyments and employments of grace. Here it is a natural body, a great clog to us ; it is not a dexterous instrument to the soul ; we are not in a capacity to bear the new wine of glory ; there it is made more capacious, as wide vessels, to contain all that God will give out. The disciples fainted at Christ's transfiguration : Mat. xvii. 6, ' And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces, and were sore afraid.' We cannot receive such large diffusions and overflowings of glory as we shall then have ; every strong affection and raised thought doth overset us, and causeth ecstasy and ravishment ; eminent objects overwhelm the faculty. But there it is otherwise ; God maketh out himself to us in a greater latitude, and we are more able to bear it.

(2.) For the blessedness of the soul, which is the heaven of heaven. Our happiness is called ' The inheritance of the saints in light ;' Col. i. 12, ' Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be

partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.' It is not for a man that knows no other heaven but to eat, drink, sleep, and wallow in filthy and gross pleasures; it is an inheritance in light, and for saints, that know how to value intellectual and spiritual delights. But wherein doth the happiness of the soul consist, in knowledge or in love? Divines are divided, but certainly it is in both; our happiness consists in the love and knowledge of God, from whence resulteth union with God and fruition of God. But now, which is to be preferred, to know God, or to love God? that is a question. In one place it is said, John xvii. 3, 'This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;' so that it seemeth to be the heaven of heaven to have the understanding satisfied with the knowledge of God. And Ps. xvii. 15, 'As for me I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.' That is our happiness, we go to heaven to know more of God, and the acts of the understanding are most noble. On the other side, 1 John iv. 16, 'God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.' It is not sight merely that makes us happy, the embrace of the soul is by love, the possession of the soul is by acts of love. One saith, though not modestly enough, *Libentius sine aspectu te diligere, quam te videndo non amarem stella de amore Dei*—I had rather not see thee than not love thee. Here in the world the hatred of God is worse than the ignorance of him, and therefore it should seem love should have the pre-eminence. But we need not make a fraction between these graces; by knowing, we come to love; and by loving, we come to know God; as light is, so is love, and so is enjoyment. Here we love little, because we know little: John iv. 10, 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked, and he would have given thee living water.' And the more we love, the more we know; this is a fire that casts light. But to speak more distinctly—

(1st.) There is the perfection of knowledge. All the faculties must be satisfied before we can be happy, especially the mind, which is the noblest faculty, and that which maketh us men. There is a natural inclination to knowledge, and the soul taketh a great deal of contentment in the contemplation of any truth: Prov. xxiv. 13, 14, 'My son, eat thou honey because it is good, and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste; so shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul, when thou hast found it.' Right and clear thoughts of God breed a rejoicing: Ps. xix. 10, 'More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than the honey and the honeycomb.' A man given to pleasures hath no such choiceness of delight; therefore this is no small part of our happiness in heaven to have more light and knowledge of God and of his ways. We shall know many mysteries of salvation, that now we are ignorant of; as the nature of God: Ps. xvii. 15, 'As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.' The union of the two natures in the person of Christ: John xvii. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.' Our union with Christ, and by Christ with God: John xiv. 20, 'At that day ye shall know that I

am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.' The course of God's decrees and providences for our good: 1 Cor. xiii. 12, 'Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known;' that is, we shall be able to see how the unchangeable counsels of God for our salvation have been carried on, through all the passages of the present life, to bring us safe to the heavenly state. These are the deeps of God, and now there is a darkness on the face of these deeps. The church is but a grammar school; heaven is an university. We shall have better eyes and other light; here prophecy is but in part, but there our intuition is immediate: 1 John iii. 2, 'We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' Now it is *sicut vult*, as he is pleased to reveal himself; then *sicut est*, as he is. Now we see what he is not, not corruptible, not mortal, not changeable, rather than what he is. Now we see him as he is in us, and as he is in other creatures; we track him by the effects of his power, and wisdom, and goodness; but then we shall see him as he is in himself; *ipsum cognoscemus per ipsum*, we shall know him by himself: 1 Cor. xiii. 12, 'Now we see through a glass darkly, then face to face.' In the creatures there are *vestigium*, the tract and foot-print of God; in the law there is *umbra*, the shadow of God; and in the gospel there is *imago*, the image of God, a fair draught of God, as in a picture; but in heaven there is *facies Dei*, the face of God. We shall have excellent books to study, the large manifestations of glory, the majesty of Christ's person, the Lamb's face, who is the bride; we shall be always sitting about the throne, and the Lamb in the midst. There God maketh out himself in the highest manifestations we are capable of.

(2d.) There is complete love. There is a constant cleaving of heart to God, without change and weariness, a love that never ceaseth working without weakness and distractions. If we delight in anything here, we soon grow weary, and have a change of objects; but God in heavenly communion is always fresh and new. Here are distractions and startings aside to the creature; but there is an eternal solace and complacency, a continual sabbath that never groweth weary and burdensome. All the heart and bowels run out after Christ; we shall never want the actual breathings of the Spirit. The Spirit came upon Sampson at times, so it doth upon us here; we have several motions and fleetings, but there Jesus Christ is a more lovely object, and the delights of the soul are carried out to him without satiety; we shall have a sweet complacency in and liking of him. Also outward things clog the appetite; as soon as we have them we despise them, because our desires are restless; we sip of them as the bee doth of the flower, and then we must have change, and go to a new flower; but here is an eternal complacency in Christ. Here we are troubled when we want outward comforts, and cloyed when we have them. Curiosity is soon satisfied, and fruition discovereth their imperfection; still the more they are enjoyed the less they are beloved; as Amnon hated Tamar when his lust was satisfied. Imperfections that before lay hid then appear to view, and so our affections are confuted by experience. But there the more we enjoy God, the more his infinite perfections are manifested, and our pleasure is augmented by our enjoyment.

(3d.) There is a complete union with God and fruition of him:

2 Cor. v. 6, 'Knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord;' Phil. i. 23, 'I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ.' Here we are united to Christ by faith, but that is nothing to sight and immediate intuition; we lay hold upon Christ, but have not such an absolute possession of him. He is a head that gives out himself, not by necessity, but choice and pleasure, therefore our communion with Christ is not so perpetual and familiar as it shall be then. As an iron that lieth long in the fire seemeth to be changed into the nature of it, so we are then more conformed and changed into the likeness of Christ: Ps. xvi. 11, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.' All comforts in this life we enjoy in God's absence, and have them at the second, third, and fourth hand, by the ministration of the creatures, sun, moon, and stars, or by the ministry of men. Now these are not vessels capacious enough to convey so much of God to us as we shall receive when God is all in all immediately: 1 Cor. xv. 28, 'And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.' There is no temple nor ordinances in heaven, but the Lamb is the light thereof. We shall enjoy God without means or intervention of ordinances. We are fed among the lilies, but it is but till the day break and the shadows flee away: Cant. ii. 16, 17, 'My beloved is mine, and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies, until the day break and the shadows flee away: turn my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or young hart upon the mountains of Bether.'

[2.] The happiness of his relations and society. In our company we shall be blessed, God and Christ, and saints and angels: Heb. xii. 22-24, 'But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant,' &c. We shall see God in Christ. The bodily eye, that cannot look upon the sun, shall be perfectly glorified and strengthened; though it cannot see the essence of God, yet it shall see greater manifestations of his glory than it is able to behold here. How will the Father welcome us as he welcomed Christ! Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' So he will say to us, as Mat. xxv. 21, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' We shall not come into his presence with shame. Sin causeth shame, and maketh us shy of God; but as the eye cannot endure the light if it be wronged, so a wronged conscience makes us afraid of the presence of God; but when we shall be perfectly sanctified, and sin shall be done away, we shall be able to stand in the presence of God. So as to Christ; he cannot be contented without your company, and you should not be satisfied without his: John xiv. 3, 'And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and take you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.' Oh! what a

joyful meeting will there be between us and our Redeemer ! it will be much sweeter than the interview between Jacob and Joseph. Christ longeth for the blessed hour as you do. The wise men came from far to see him in a manger ; Zaccheus climbed up the tree to see him riding to Jerusalem. There will be another manner of sight of Christ in heaven than there was of him in the days of his flesh. When Joseph discovered himself to his brethren, and said, Gen. xlv. 4, ' I am Joseph, your brother,' what rejoicing was there ? Much more will there be joy in heaven when Christ shall say, I am Jesus, your brother, your Saviour, your Redeemer ; when he shall lead us to God in a full troop and goodly company, and say, ' Behold, I and the children which thou hast given me,' Heb. ii. 13. What a blessed sight will that be ! Then as to the angels, what welcome will there be between you and them ! When Christ entered into heaven, they entertained him with their applauses and acclamations : Ps. xxiv. 11, ' Lift up your heads, O ye gates ; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in ; ' so will they welcome the saints to heaven with acclamations. They delight in the good of men, in their creation, redemption, conversion, so surely will they delight in the glorification of a sinner. And as to the saints your acquaintance, with whom ye have prayed, suffered, and familiarly conversed, memory is not abolished in heaven, but perfected ; those whom we knew here, we shall know again. A minister shall see his crown, and the fruit of his labours : 1 Thes. ii. 19, ' You are our crown and our joy.' And those which have been relieved by us shall welcome us into heaven, who therefore are said to ' receive us into everlasting habitations,' Luke xvi. 9. Yea, we shall know those that we never saw ; why else is it made a part of our privilege ' to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven ? ' Mat. viii. 11. As Adam knew Eve as soon as he saw her, and in the transfiguration Peter knew Moses and Elias, who were dead many hundred years before, so shall we know one another ; certainly we shall not go to a strange people where we know nobody. As men at a feast are free and familiar with one another, we shall be discoursing of God's wisdom, mercy, and justice in the work of redemption. So did Moses and Elias talk with Christ : Luke ix. 30, 31, ' Behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.' Of the wonderful providence of God in conducting us to glory, as travellers in their inn take pleasure in discoursing with one another of the dirtiness and dangers of the way. The saints are clothed with majesty and glory, more lovely object than ever they were upon earth ; and here is an innumerable company of them. With what joy were the disciples rapt when they saw but these two prophets, Moses and Elias ! Mat. xvii. 4. Heaven is called not only a palace, but a city, a world to come, where there is a multitude which no man can number. This for the parts of this happiness.

2. For the manner and degree of enjoying, it is full. We are filled with the fulness of God, and shall eternally lose ourselves in an ocean of sweetness ; the soul is more capable, stretched out to the greatest capacity of a creature, yet God filleth it. Here we have but a few

drops, there we shall be filled up to the brim, and have as much as we can hold: Ps. xvii. 15, 'I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.' There shall be complete joy and satisfaction; all want, sorrow, and sin shall be done away; we shall enter into our master's joy. We do not say the sea entereth into a bucket or cup, or a river into a man. In heaven the soul is so full of joy and glory as is inexpressible.

3. For the duration of it, it is eternal. Our happiness is immortal, we can never lose it, which doubleth the joy and contentment of that state. God's love is everlasting, and so shall our happiness be; there will be no fear of losing it: Rev. xxii. 5, 'They shall reign for ever and ever.' We shall never lay aside our diadem of glory, it is a garland that shall not wither. It is not only a certain and eternal state, but a state of actual delights. Christ's manifestations are not lessened by enjoyment, but they are like the widow's barrel of meal and cruse of oil, never spent; but we shall always have the actual comfort of his presence.

SERMON XV.

That blessed hope, &c.—TITUS ii. 13.

USE 1. For information in seven particulars—

1. That the children of God are not so miserable as they appear; they have other hopes and enjoyments than are seen, a large estate that lies in an invisible country; it is not *terra incognita*, a land unknown, but it is a land unseen. Pearls and precious things lie out of sight, so doth the glory and blessedness of a christian. Our happiness is a mystery to a carnal heart; it lieth in another world: 1 John iii. 2, 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be.' Here we have a right, but the children of God are subject to the chances and accidents of the present world as well as others. Our happiness is only to be seen with a spiritual eye and with spiritual light: Eph. i. 18, 'The eyes of your understanding being opened, that ye may know what is the hope of your calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' However christians seem in the eye of the world, mean, afflicted, despicable, yet they are blessed creatures. Look, as beasts know not the excellency of a man, so carnal men know not the excellency of the saints. The whore of Babylon, the corrupt church, is set out in her glorious outside with a golden cup, so carnal men, saith the apostle, 'make a fair show in the flesh,' Gal. vi. 12; that is, excel in pomp and worldly splendour; but a christian's glory and blessedness is under a veil and disguise, which shall not be fully taken off till the day of judgment: Col. iii. 3, 4, 'Your life is hid with Christ in God: when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.' Look, as in a dark lantern the light is hid, till the cover be removed little of the brightness of the light is seen, so there is an eclipse upon

the christian's glory ; now it is covered and veiled, and therefore now the christian passeth under censures and reproaches ; thus was Christ in the world and we must be like him, but then all shall be discovered. A garden and a field differ little in winter, so doth a christian and other men till the great imperial day of Christ, then shall we put on our best robes. Yea, this happiness in a great part is hidden from ourselves. If we hearken to sense and present experience, there is not such a miserable sort of people in the world as God's dearest servants are : 1 Cor. xv. 19, ' If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.' It is true by the perspective of faith we may have a glimpse now and then. Holy meditation strikes out and opens a window into the new Jerusalem, and we have some sight of it. A young heir doth not know the particulars of his estate, neither do we exactly know the happiness of our portion and inheritance in light.

2. It informs us what cause we have, not only to be patient, but to be thankful during the time of our pilgrimage here, while we are liable to sin and sorrow ; we may bless God aforehand. That is one reason why God hath revealed these things before we come to enjoy them, that we may give thanks for our hopes. Abraham, when he had only a grant and a promise of Canaan, not a foot of land actually possessed, there he built an altar, and offered sacrifice and praise, Gen. xiii. 17, 18 ; so this is one effect of the certainty of faith, it beginneth the life and work of heaven, and can praise God before enjoyment. Though we be subject to sin and misery here, yet, in despite of sense, faith will praise God and rejoice in him before we enjoy him. Thus the apostle blesseth God for his hopes : 1 Peter i. 3, 4, ' Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.' Certainly we may bless God where God blesseth us ; our blessing is but the echo of his : Eph. i. 3, ' Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.' And therefore we have cause to bless him for our hopes as well as our enjoyments, for the best of our portion is to come ; therefore, whenever we think of eternity, we should presently fall a blessing of God, however it be with us for the present.

To this end let me show you how much we expect, and how much we are engaged to every person of the Godhead.

[1.] How much we do expect. There is freedom from eternal torments, and possession of eternal glory : 2 Thes. i. 10, ' Even Jesus, who hath delivered us from wrath to come.' Wrath present is nothing to wrath to come. Now God manageth all things by creatures, and no creature is sufficient to manifest all God's wrath. Those everlasting flames that are the portion of the damned, this is that from which we are delivered. We tremble at the name of hell ; what should we do at the sense of these torments that are without end and ease ? The grips of conscience for an hour, how terrible are they. Then what is it to lie under the wrath of God for ever and ever ? We were involved in the same guilt, in the same polluted mass with others, therefore we might be bound up in the same bundle, to be cast into hell as well as

they. Why are we taken and others left to perish? Oh! bless God for this, that we are as brands plucked out of the burning; we are bound up in the same guilt and misery: Zech. iii. 2, 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?' Though you feel the smart of the rod upon your backs, remember this is nothing to hell, damnation, and wrath to come; and this is given to prevent that: 1 Cor. xi. 32, 'When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.' What cause have we to bless God, that we may think of hell as a danger that we have escaped by Christ. But then for heaven, the positive part of this blessedness, you have a right, though not an actual enjoyment. Sometimes heaven is said to be kept for us, and sometimes we are said to be kept for heaven: 1 Peter i. 5, 'Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.' Christ holds heaven in our right, in our stead, and in our names, and we are kept by the power of God for heaven. Again, heaven is prepared for us: Mat. xxv. 34, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit a kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' And we are prepared for heaven: Rom. ix. 23, 'And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory.'

[2.] The greatness of your engagement to all the persons of the Godhead.

(1.) To God the Father. Admire the love of God, that poor worms should be so exalted, that a clod of earth should shine as the sun, that those dark and impure souls of ours should be purified and glorified. God could not satisfy himself with temporal kindness, with loving us for a while, but he must love us for ever: Ps. ciii. 17, 'The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear him.' From eternity to eternity God is God and our God. Nay, and small things would not content him, but we must be interested in a complete blessedness: 1 John iii. 1, 2, 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! Beloved, now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' Oh! we should often work this upon our hearts, the great love of God in predestinating us to such a glory. There is a great deal of mercy laid out upon us during our pilgrimage, but more laid up for us: Ps. xxxi. 19, 'Oh! how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!' Oh! the greatness of love. Infinite mercy sets itself a-work, to see what it can do for man, a poor wretched creature, a thing of yesterday, a rebel, an enemy to God. Think of it we may, but we cannot express it to the full. The least of God's mercies is more than we can acknowledge, and deserves praise; much more this full portion, for here God sets himself to make a creature as happy as it is capable. The Lord hath gone to the utmost in nothing but his love; he never showed so much of his wisdom and power, but he could show more; but he hath no greater thing to give us than himself and his Christ, he cannot love us more; there can be no more done, there can be no higher happiness than the eternal enjoyment of himself. All the promises of the word come short of what you shall enjoy. That which Paul saw and heard in heaven

in his ecstasy, were ἀρρήτα ῥήματα, 'words that could not be uttered,' 2 Cor. xii. 4. The scriptures, that are sufficient to make the man of God perfect here, profess an insufficiency, weakness, and imperfection when they come to speak of heaven and the glory of it: 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 'For we know in part, and we prophesy in part,' is spoken with respect to heaven and happiness to come; there the scripture can speak but in part, there are no words nor notions in the world sufficient to express what God hath provided, and we have not ears to hear it. All the notions now we have of things must be taken from what is obvious to sense and present apprehension; and therefore certainly, because heaven surpasseth all that hath been, we cannot apprehend the glory of it. The scripture leaves it rather to be admired in silence; there are joys unspeakable; there is no language intelligible to us that is fit to represent heaven. Oh! then, admire the love of God the Father, that hath provided such great things for us.

(2.) Consider how deeply we are engaged to Jesus Christ. To deliver us from wrath to come, he himself was made a curse, and tasted the vinegar and gall: Gal. iii. 13, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.' Something he suffered that answered wrath to come. In hell there is *pœna damni*, and *pœna sensus*, the loss, the pain and sense of God's wrath. The Lord Christ had for a while the suspension of the joys and actual consolation of his divine nature, a loss that cannot be imagined: Mat. xxiii. 46, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' there is his loss. Then he had an actual feeling of the wrath of God; therefore he saith, Mat. xxvii. 38, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;' there was his sense of pain. He was forsaken that we might not be separated from God for ever, and his soul was heavy to the death that we might not be cast into eternal burnings. Then for the positive part, that we might have everlasting glory, Christ left his heaven that we might enjoy ours; he came from heaven, and is gone to heaven again, and will come from heaven the second time, and all to bring us thither with the more triumph; so that going and coming, coming and going, he is still ours. He came at first out of the bosom of God, to establish the merit, and pay the price for our glory. God sold it not at an easy rate; the blood and agonies and shame of the Son of God must go for our glory; it was no easy matter to bring sinful creatures so near to God. The Lord would not so much as treat with apostate angels; when once they were sinners, they were no more to remain in his presence, nor to come near him, but they were cast out of heaven. The door was shut against sinning creatures, but Christ came to open it. Christ came to open paradise that was guarded with a flaming sword; he caught the blow, that we might have communion with God, and therefore he sueth it out as the fruit of his sufferings. When Christ was about to die, he made his last will and testament. Heaven was his by purchase, to bestow upon all his heirs. He had bought it at a dear rate, therefore now he shows what he would do with it: John xvii. 24, 'Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me may be where I am, that they may behold my glory.' And then he is gone to heaven again as our harbinger, to prepare a place for us: John xiv. 2, 'I go to prepare a place for you,' to take up mansions and rooms for us in his Father's

palace. He is gone as a guardian or feoffee in trust, to seize upon heaven in our right, to keep it during our nonage, and he will come again in person, as the husband of the church, to bring us into his Father's house with triumph; therefore it is said, Rev. iv. 10, that the elders did 'cast their crowns before the throne,' not as despising their glory, but as professing their homage and dependence; and Rev. v. 8, 9, 'The four beasts and four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, &c., saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.' His abasement was for our preferment; and therefore even here upon earth may we bless God (for the elders represent the church upon earth) for his great mercy to us in Christ.

(3.) Consider how much we are engaged to God the Spirit, who fits and prepares us for this happy state, and seals up our interest to us; therefore it is called 'the earnest of the Spirit:' 'Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given to us the earnest of the Spirit,' 2 Cor. v. 5. The Holy Ghost shapes and fashions all the vessels of glory, fits and prepares them for heaven. It is the Spirit of God dwelling in us that wrought us and fits us for this great and blessed hope; therefore whenever you think of it, your hearts should be raised in thanksgiving. It is not only their duty to praise God that are in actual possession of glory, but ours also to whom these hopes are revealed. Rev. v. 8, there was a mixture of 'harps and vials full of odours, which are the prayers of all saints.' Compare this with ver. 11, 'And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and elders.' Not only angels and blessed spirits, but saints on earth; all join in concert, praising the Lamb. We must praise the Lord in the time of our pilgrimage, for this great estate reserved for us in heaven.

3. It informs us how desperately wicked the hearts of sinful men are, that can run the hazard of eternal death, and forfeit this blessed hope of eternal life, for a little carnal satisfaction. Survey all the temptations of the world, how much they come short of it! If the heart were not desperately wicked we would not be carried out to these things. What is vainglory to eternal glory? What are a few dreggy delights to those pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore? What are the riches of the world to our glorious inheritance? You would count him a mad gamester that would throw away whole lordships and manors at every cast. A sinner forfeits a blessed hope that is above all the kingdoms and possessions of the world. It is for this you will be the scorn of angels at the last day: Ps. lii. 7, 'Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.' This will make you ashamed in the great congregation, that you were so foolishly bent to your own ruin. Nay, this will torment you for ever. Nothing torments men more than their foolish choice. Conscience will for ever tell them with what disadvantage they have forsaken God for a thing of nought. Disappointment to a reasonable creature is the worst vexation; and what disappointment is more than to be disappointed of our glorious hopes, and that for trifles and a little carnal satisfaction? This will be our shame and torment to all eternity, We may guess at

the gnawings of conscience in the damned by the horrors of carnal men when they come to die. Oh! then how do they bewail the folly of their choice. Oh! that they had been as mindful to serve God as to provide for the world, as careful to satisfy the motions of the Holy Ghost as to satisfy a lust and carnal desire! When they are on a deathbed and upon the confines of eternity, then all worldly comforts cease, and there is a real confutation of the folly of their choice, a sting then begins that never ceaseth: Jer. xvii. 11, 'At his end he shall be a fool.' When he comes to die, his conscience will rage and call him fool, beast, and madman, for hazarding such eternal joys for a trifle.

4. It informs us of the excellency of the gospel or christian profession. Wisdom should be justified by her children. And all that do profess religion should see the excellency of it, what there is in their beloved more than in another beloved, Cant. v. 9. This there is in the christian religion; there are purity of precepts: Ps. xix. 7, 8, 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.' Then there is sureness of principles, of trust and dependence established between us and God, that we may depend upon God with comfort and satisfaction; there do you find rest for the soul: Jer. vi. 16, 'Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Then there are no such rewards anywhere as in the christian profession: 2 Tim. i. 10, 'Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel.' The heathens had dreams of Elysian fields, and Mahomet tells his followers of a sensual paradise; but life and immortality is a revelation proper and peculiar only to the gospel. The heathens were at a loss for the reward of virtue. Austin out of Varro gives us an account of two hundred and eighty-eight opinions concerning happiness and the chief good of man; but now here is all brought to light; we may look beyond the grave now, and there is not such a mist and darkness upon things to come, God having acquainted us with the gospel. Nay, there is more revealed than was in the time of the law. If God had still kept this secret in his own bosom, what a support should we have wanted in our trouble, what encouragement to the practice of holiness! Oh! therefore prize the gospel, it is the charter of your blessed hope.

5. It informs us what little cause we have to be slack in God's work, or to begrudge the pains of his service: 1 Cor. xv. 58, 'Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour will not be in vain in the Lord.' The children of God are wont to think they can never do enough for God, that hath found out such a reward for them in Christ. A thousand years' service will not deserve one hour's enjoyment of this blessed hope, much less eternal happiness. When we come to see what shall be bestowed upon us, we shall be ashamed that we have done no more work for God, having so much wages, and such excellent encouragement. Mat. xxv. 37, the saints are brought in there saying, 'Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?' being

ashamed. Ah! Lord, this is nothing; what have we done? At the day of judgment there will be the highest exaltation of the saints, and yet the lowest self-abasement; they will wonder even to admiration of angels. There will be Christ's owning them, and they disclaiming their own services and all their works, and Christ rewarding them. And therefore grudge not if you have the strictest precepts of any religion; remember you have the noblest and highest reward.

6. It informs us what cause we have to contemn all earthly things, though they be never so great and glorious, because of this blessed hope. There are two considerations that will make us contemn the world, and they are suited to the two essential parts of man, and we should ever think of them. We carry about us a mortal body and an immortal soul; the body lasts but for a while, and the soul survives and outlives the body's happiness. Now we toil ourselves in gathering sticks to our nest, when to-morrow we must be gone. Alas! here 'we dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth,' Job iv. 19. Our estate in this world is represented by a tabernacle, which is a movable habitation; but our estate in heaven is represented by a temple. Here it is but a tabernacle, and that of clay, that will be crumbled into dust; nay, we are said to be crushed before the moth, and a moth is but a little enlivened dust, and so is man. The world is but a house of potters' vessels, that will be soon broken; and shall we, for the conveniences of a temporal life, prejudice and run the hazard and loss of our eternal hopes? Shall we injure the soul to gratify the body? that is the way to destroy both for ever. Our great care should be for that place where we live longest; in the other world we have the longest life and the most glorious possession, therefore our great care should be for that.

7. It informs us what little cause we have to envy carnal men; the hope of your profession is a blessed hope. This was David's preservative; he was daily in danger of his life, and his enemies were fat, and shining in the pomp of the world, and how doth he comfort himself? Ps. xvii. 15, 'When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness;' as if he had said, Alas! their felicity is but a sorry thing; they are filled, and I shall be filled too. David sums up their happiness under two heads. Whatever here we have, it is either for personal use or for our posterity. A worldly state is only valuable upon these two grounds, what we may use for the present, and what we may transmit to our children. Now, what a sorry happiness is this to what I expect?

[1.] For personal use, ver. 14, 'Their bellies are filled with thy hid treasure;' that is, with the rarest dishes and best meats which God's storehouse doth afford. By 'hidden treasures,' is meant food and other worldly comforts, therefore called 'hidden treasures' because it doth not lie within every one's grasp and reach; they are not vulgar and common delights. The meaner sort their hand will not attain to it. Lo! here is all that which God allows them for their portion, the filling of the belly; and alas! this is but the happiness of beasts, who eat with less remorse: yet all their happiness is to fill their belly with better food than the poorer sort, which indeed is a misery rather than a happiness, for what doth this but nourish sensual lusts, and strengthen and hearten our enemy. And gorgeous apparel is but a supply from creatures

beneath us; it is but *stercus in volutum*, dung neatly wrapped up. Here is the sum of all a carnal man's happiness, that which God allows him for his portion. But a christian hath better fare; if he goes into the sanctuary, there is enough; but if he goes into heaven, there is a great deal more. David defeats the temptation by this, Ps. lxxiii. 16, 17, 'When I sought to know this, it was too hard for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God,' to enjoy God in his ordinances, and the present glimpses of God's face. Present communion with God is far to be preferred above all the dainties in the world. But that is not all; we shall be satisfied for ever. We may go into heaven as well as into the sanctuary and behold God's righteousness: 'When I awake,' that is, out of the dust, 'I shall be satisfied with thy likeness.' A child of God hath his content and happiness to the full when he comes to die. A carnal man's back hath been richly clothed and his belly filled, but when he comes to die he hath a sad doom: 'Son, remember thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus his evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented,' Luke xvi. 25; it was said to Dives, who fared deliciously every day, and was clothed in purple and fine linen. Well, you have your portion, and must look for no more; you give God a discharge for aught else. But for God's children, then their happiness begins, they are going down to sleep in the grave, and when they awake they shall be filled; they have not only God's favour here, but eternal felicity hereafter. They that are called to a feast will not fill themselves at home with coarser fare. The rich glutton, who had his belly full of hid treasure here, was shut out, but Lazarus is carried into Abraham's bosom and feasted there; for this was their table-gesture to lie in one another's bosoms. Christians, reserve your appetite a little; you will be satisfied; it is but staying a little longer for a better meal. We expect to be like angels, let others be like beasts whose happiness lieth in feeding.

[2.] Then, for the other part, the transmission of honour and ample revenues to posterity. It is true, man is much carried out this way; he would fain advance his house, and live gloriously in his posterity. Posterity is a shadow of eternity; children are but the father multiplied; when the father's thread is spun out, then the knot is kuit: his name and memory is continued in the world by his children; therefore men would live in their posterity, and have their families great. But this is a sad exchange to forfeit heaven that our children may enjoy the world; as many times it falls out that the father goes to hell for getting an estate, and the son goes to hell for spending it. Though they have an ample patrimony, yet they know not who shall enjoy it; 'Who knows whether he shall be a wise man or a fool?' Eccles. ii. 19. A man hath no knowledge of future events, nor no power of them. So that you see still we have no cause to envy worldly men even in this happiness. We are better provided for, having a covenant interest that countervails all: 'I am thy God, and the God of thy seed.' Though we cannot leave them gold, land, and ample estate, yet you leave them a God in covenant, who hath undertaken for you and yours. And many times they have temporal blessings for their father's sake, the blessings of Ishmael, if not of Isaac.

Use 2. Direction, that we may not seek blessedness elsewhere. Some

seek it in a wrong way. Carnal men think that there is no such happiness as in letting loose the reins to carnal lusts, and living as they list. This is the basest bondage that can be: 2 Peter ii. 19, 'While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage.' The work is drudgery, and the reward is death; they are entangled in snares and held in chains; and is this an happy life? This doth but increase our misery, and make way for more shame. Yet carnal men are much taken with this kind of life; they wonder how men can abjure the pleasure and contentment which they fancy: 1 Peter iv. 4, 'Wherein they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot.' They think themselves very wise in following the counsels of their own hearts, and doing as others do that are like themselves. You do but make yourselves more responsible to God's justice. Worldly comforts cannot make us happy; it appeareth by our many inventions: Eccles. vii. 29, 'God made man upright, but he hath sought out many inventions.' Every sinner hath his wanderings. Man, being off from God, never cometh on again of himself, but wandereth infinitely, and beats out himself with his own inventions. As a wayfaring man, who hath once lost his direction, turneth up and down, and knoweth not where to pitch, so are all endeavours fruitless till God direct us. We are to follow God's counsel, not the counsel of the ungodly: Ps. lxxiii. 24, 'Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and after receive me to glory;' as a clock runs at random when the balance is once out. The Lord is willing to direct us: Ps. xxv. 8, 'Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way.' He is too wise to be deceived, and too good to deceive. O sinners! learn the upright way. When we are weary of wandering, and willing to be directed, such as submit themselves to God shall never want a guide. Creatures cannot make us happy; such is the restlessness of the soul, that we must have shift and change. Envying one another showeth the narrowness of our comforts. Gripes of conscience spoil all; as Belshazzar in his cups was affrighted with an handwriting upon the wall. Says the young man in the gospel, Mat. xix. 16, 'Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?' What lack I yet? saith the moralist. In false worship men are unsatisfied: Micah vi. 6, 'Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord? and bow myself before the high God?' It is not a loose profession of the gospel that will make us happy: Mat. xi. 29, 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Nothing can make us happy but what is a full relief from sin and misery. Here is rest for our souls; the foundation is laid in justification and sanctification. Here is our reconciliation with God, hereafter is our advancement.

Use 3. It is an invitation to the practice of holiness. Blessedness is a great motive; David begins the book of Psalms with it, and Christ his sermons; there is enough in it to allay the sorrows of the present life, and fill up the desires of the life to come. All would be blessed and happy, but we must take the right course; say, as Christ's hearers, John vi. 34, 'Lord, evermore give us this bread;' as Balaam, Num. xxiii. 10, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end

be like his.' Be not content, as Balaam, with a vision of Jacob's happy seats: Num. xxiv. 5, 'How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!' As the nobleman that saw the plenty of Israel but did not eat thereof: 2 Kings vii. 20, 'And so it fell out unto him, for the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died.' The damned at the last day are lookers-on, but not partakers of the blessedness of the righteous: Luke xiii. 28, 'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.'

Use 4. Exhortation to those that have an interest in this blessed hope. Behave yourselves as those that are called thereunto; think of it often, discourse of it often, and live suitably to it.

1. Often meditate of the happiness that is laid up for you, and warm yourselves with the thoughts of it. The mind ruminateth on happiness. Your minds should be there: Col. iii. 2, 'Set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth.'

2. Confer of it often: 1 Thes. iv. 18, 'Comfort one another with these words,' against all the changes and dangers of this life. Alas! how carnal and flat is our discourse! 'He that is of the earth is earthy, and speaketh of the earth,' John iii. 31.

3. Live more suitably to it: 1 Thes. ii. 11, 12, 'As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.' Make eternity your scope: 2 Cor. iv. 18, 'Looking not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are not seen,' σκοπούντων ἡμῶν. There should be a greater proportion between your hopes and your lives. Behave yourselves as those that are interested in this blessed hope. Be not dejected with every cross, nor overcome with every bait and temptation, nor live in a base and low manner; this is not becoming your hopes. Show your interest herein by the heavenliness and courage of your spirits.

SERMON XVI.

And the glorious appearing, &c.—TITUS ii. 13.

IN the encouragement to the duty of our heavenly calling we have the substance of our hopes, and the seasons when we shall come to enjoy them to the full.

1. The substance of our hopes, 'Looking for the blessed hope.'

2. The time when our enjoyment shall be full, when body and soul shall be glorified, that is, at the time of Christ's appearing, 'At the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.' Every one would have the blessed hope, but first there is a glorious appearing.

In this second branch there is the person that must appear, and the kind or manner of his appearing.

1. The person who must appear, Jesus Christ, described by a name of power, 'the great God,' and a name of mercy, 'and our Saviour;' as usually such kind of attributes are mingled in scripture, power and goodness.

2. The kind or manner of his appearing, it is glorious; *επιφανειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ*, the appearance of the glory of the great God. The apostle opposed the second coming of Christ to the first; then it was an humble mean appearance, now it is full of glory. But what is meant by this glorious appearing? Some dream of his personal reign before his coming to judgment, but that is a fancy. The scripture only acknowledgeth two comings of Christ: Heb. ix. 28, 'He shall appear the second time without sin to salvation.' There is only his first and his second appearing. After he had once offered himself, and ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God, there is no more corporal presence of Christ upon earth. But will there not be at least a glimpse? Will he not come in the clouds for a while to convert the Jews, and set things to rights in the world? Will he not appear for a very little while, and so vanish again as he appeared to Paul at his conversion, Acts ix. 3. So some think, and therefore distinguish between his appearing and his coming, but without warrant from scripture; for these two, appearing and coming, are all one; and the expressions are promiscuously used in scripture: Col. iii. 4, 'When Christ, who is our life shall appear;' 1 John iii. 2, 'When he shall appear we shall be like him.' So that this appearing is his coming to judgment; this is that we must look for. And therefore the point I shall first observe is this—

Doct. That it is the duty and property of God's children to look for Christ's second coming to judgment.

There are two choice scriptures that do describe the communion of the church with Christ, and the dispensations of Christ to the church, and they both conclude with a desire of his coming. In the Canticles, where the church's communion with Christ is described, this is the last, the swan-like note which the church sings, 'Come, Lord!' And so in the Revelations, where God's providences to the church are described, this is the last note, the swan-like song, 'Even so, come Lord Jesus.' Compare Cant. viii. 14 with Rev. xxii. 20. In the former it is said, Cant. viii. 14, 'Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.' Christ is not slack, but the church's affections are very strong and vehement; all the seeming delay is occasioned by the earnestness of our desire. A harlot would have her husband defer his coming; but the church, like a chaste spouse, thinks he can never come soon enough. Those that go a-whoring after the world neither desire Christ's coming nor love his appearing; but those that are faithful (as the spouse is to Christ) this is the desire of their souls, 'Make haste, my beloved.' So Rev. xxii. 20, Christ saith, 'Surely I come quickly;' and the church, like a quick echo, takes the words out of Christ's mouth, 'Even so, come Lord Jesus.' There is the same spirit in the church that was in Christ; the spirit of the head is in all his members, and therefore they speak the same thing, and long for the same thing. Christ speaks in a way proper to himself, 'Surely I come;' and the church speaks in a

way proper to herself, 'Even so, come Lord Jesus.' He by way of promise, and we by way of supplication. Christ's voice and the church's voice are unisons. Here is his proclamation, 'Surely, I come;' and here is the church's acclamation, 'Even so, come Lord Jesus.' Christ says, 'I come,' as desiring our company; the church says, 'Lord, come,' as desiring his company. And thus we are taught to pray in the Lord's prayer, 'Thy kingdom come,' that we may always keep those desires afoot, that Christ's kingdom, in the whole flux, from the beginning to the last period, may come. The day of judgment is the most imperial act of Christ's kingly office, and therefore we do not only pray for the beginnings here, but also for the consummation hereafter. And mark, we that live in the latter ages of the world have an advantage of the church in the primitive time. It was the solemn prayer of the church heretofore (as Tertullian showeth us), *pro mora finis*, for the delay of Christ's coming, that his designs and decrees might be accomplished in the world, that the kingdom of grace might be spread far and near. And we that live in the dregs of time pray for the hastening of Christ's coming, for the embracing of our great and glorious hopes, that the name of God may be no longer dishonoured, that the kingdom of sin, Satan, and antichrist, may have an end. They expected the revelation of antichrist, and we his destruction. Thus the saints are described to be those that look for a Saviour: Phil. iii. 20, 'For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.' Paul speaks in his own name, and in the name of all that were like himself, 'We look,' &c. The saints here are a company of expectants, always waiting for the good hour of their preferment when Christ will come, that he may conduct them to everlasting glory. And they not only looked for it, but longed for it; and therefore it is said, 'they love his appearing,' 2 Tim. iv. 8. It is notable Paul doth not mention there other marks and characters; not for me only, but all that believe and faithfully serve and obey Christ; but he describes them by this, which is an essential character of the saints, for it notes the disposition of their hearts, 'Not for me only, but for all those that love his appearing.'

There are several reasons may be given why this is the duty and property of the children of God still to look for Christ's glorious appearing. Look upon their temper, their relation, their privileges, and the profit they gain by this expectation.

1. Look upon the temper of the saints. Within them there is the Spirit, faith, love and hope, and all these put them upon this desire. There is the Spirit: Rev. xxii. 17, 'The Spirit and the bride' (that is, the Spirit in the bride) 'say, Come,' The Holy Ghost breeds and stirs up desires, and begets those holy motions in their hearts, and the church answereth his motions. This is a disposition above nature, carnal nature saith, Stay; but the Spirit saith, Come. If it might go by voices in the world, whether Christ should come or no, do you think carnal men would give their vote this way for Christ's coming? The voice of corrupt nature is, Depart: Job xxii. 14, 'Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways;' that is the language of their hearts. Carnal men are of the mind of the devil. When Christ wrought a miracle in casting out a

devil, and discovered somewhat of his divine power, the devils were afraid, as if he were coming to judgment already: Mat. viii. 29, 'Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?' The devil cannot endure to hear of Christ's coming; no more can carnal men, for they are of his mind. If thieves and malefactors might have the liberty to choose whether there should be assizes, yea or nay, do you think they would look for and long for the judge's coming and the day of his approach? So corrupt nature hath no desire of this day. It is the Spirit in the bride that says, Come; as soon as the Spirit of grace works in us, there is a bent and inclination this way; 1 Peter i. 3, 'Who hath begotten us again unto a lively hope.' Spiritual desires come from heaven, and thither they tend. As soon as the Spirit works grace in the heart, it looks out this way; the heart is bent thither from whence it receives all it hath, as all creatures love the place of their original. The great work of the Spirit is to bring us and Christ together. The Spirit comes from the Father and the Son, to bring us to the Father by the Son; and therefore the Spirit stirs up those holy groans in us, When will he come? They look upon the graces of a christian; there is faith, love, and hope. (1.) Faith: The ground of this looking is the promise; now faith stands waiting for the promise as if it were already begun to be accomplished. Look, as Rebecca espied Isaac afar off, so faith espies Christ afar off. Faith is the evidence of things not seen, and looks upon Christ as if he were already on his way, and so makes the soul stand ready to meet and receive him. As a loving wife stands upon the shore, and looks for the return of her husband, and the sight of every ship makes her to realise by an active and loving fancy the sweetness of an interview, so faith stands waiting for the coming of Christ and the approaches he makes towards the church. (2.) Love: 1 Peter i. 8, 'Whom having not seen ye love.' The saints love Christ whom they never saw. We know Christ by hearsay here in the church, not by sight; he woos us, as princes use to do, by picture; therefore they long for his appearing. Whosoever is a friend to Christ will find his heart long for Christ, of whom he had so often heard in the word, and so often tasted in the supper. Love is an affection of union; it desires to meet the party loved; so is love to Christ; it is not satisfied with the present state, but it cries out, Come, come; why is his chariot so long a coming? It longs to see him whom it hath heard of so often and so much, and of whose sweetness it hath already tasted; for this love is not only kindled by the knowledge we have of him by hearsay, but by experience. Christ first comes in the heart by grace, and then the soul, having tasted the sweetness of it, longs for another coming. When will he come in the clouds, that we may see him as he is? And as love to Christ, so also love to the saints enkindles this desire. We have not all our company here in the world; and till we all meet together we shall never be satisfied. (3.) Hope, that is another grace, God fitteth us with graces as well as happiness. The Lord doth not only provide a glorious estate for us, but grace to expect it, and stirs up affections in us suitable thereunto. As in the privative part of salvation, Christ doth not only deliver us from the hurt of death, but from the bondage and fear of death. Despair is the beginning of hell. So in the positive part of salvation, the Lord doth

not only provide heaven and happiness for us, but hope that we may look for this happiness: 'We are begotten again to a lively hope,' 1 Peter i. 3; 'And to wait for his Son from heaven,' 1 Thes. i. 10. Hope was made on purpose for this thing, that we may expect our full and future happiness. When the affection of hope is elsewhere placed, and turned to carnal things, it is like a member out of joint. It was made and framed on purpose that we might look for this glorious appearing of Jesus Christ.

2. Look upon their relation to Christ. There are two relations the scripture usually takes notice of with respect unto the day of judgment—Christ is our master and our husband. As he is our master, we must look for him. It is the property of a good servant to wait for his master's coming: Mat. xxiv. 46, 'Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.' Here we have only present maintenance, but hereafter we shall receive our wages: Rev. xxii. 12, 'Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me.' A servant of God should remember that when Christ comes he will not come empty-handed; he is your good and bounteous master. Here you have but an earnest, as when you hire a man, you give him earnest. But now, because God would not have our affections to be servile, therefore there is a sweeter relation; we are to look for him not only as a lord and master, but as an husband; and therefore it is the 'bride that saith, Come,' Rev. xxii. 17. Here we are only contracted to Christ, he hath passed his promise to us, but the day of judgment is the day of solemn espousals: Hosea ii. 19, 'I will betroth thee unto me for ever.' Here in the covenant of grace Christ doth pass a promise to the church; here he comes to give us a pledge and take a pledge from us. As Tertullian saith, Christ took from us the token and pledge of our flesh, and is gone to heaven to make all things ready; and he hath left with us the token of his own Spirit, that so we might long for the time when he shall come again for the consummation of this happy and glorious marriage that is between him and us. We are to wait for glory, as a servant for his master, and as a bride or virgin betrothed doth wait for the coming of him that hath promised marriage to her.

3. Look upon a christian's privileges which we shall then enjoy, and certainly christians must needs desire Christ's coming. The day of judgment is the day of manifestation, the day of perfection, the day of congregation, and the day of glorification.

[1.] It is called a day of manifestation of the sons of God: Rom. viii. 19, 'The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.' All now is under a veil; your Christ, your life, your glory is hid. Our persons are hid under obscurity and abasement: Col. iii. 3, 4, 'Your life is hid with Christ in God; but when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.' Look, as Moses told those rebels, when they would level the officers of the church, Num. xvi. 5, 'To-morrow the Lord will show who are his,' so when once the night of death is passed over, to-morrow, when we awake out of the dust of the grave, then Christ the natural Son will appear in all his royalty and glory, as the great God and Saviour of the world, and then also the adopted sons shall be manifested; we shall put on our best robes, and be apparelled with glory,

even as Christ is. In winter the tree appears not what it is, the life and sap is hid in the root; but when summer comes, all is discovered; so now a christian, he is under a veil, but in this great day all shall be manifested.

[2.] It is a day of perfection. Everything tends to its perfect state, and so doth grace. We see the little seed that lies under ground breaks through the clods and works its way farther, because it is not come to the flower and perfection; so grace still tends and longs for perfection; then we shall have perfect holiness and perfect freedom; Christ to the glorified saints will be a perfect Saviour. Death, which is a fruit of sin, is still continued upon the body, therefore Christ is but a Saviour in part to the spirits of just men made perfect; but then the body and soul shall be united and perfectly glorified, that we might praise God in the heavens. Christ's coming is to make an end of his redemption, of what he hath begun. At first he came to redeem our souls and break the power of sin, but then he comes to redeem our bodies from the hand of the grave and from the power of corruption; the one is done by humiliation and abasement, the other by power. The scripture speaks as if all our privileges in Christ were imperfect till that day. Regeneration, adoption, union with Christ, they suffer a kind of imperfection till then. Regeneration, the day of judgment is called by that name: Mat. xix. 28, 'In the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory.' Then all things are made new; heaven and earth is new, bodies new, souls new. Then adoption is perfect: Rom. viii. 23, 'Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies.' What is the meaning of the apostle's expression? As soon as we are planted into Christ are we not the sons of God? Yes; now we are sons, but the heir is handled as a servant during his nonage: 1 John iii. 2, 'Beloved, now we are the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be;' we wait for the adoption. Justification that is perfect then: Acts iii. 19, 'Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.' Then our pardon shall be proclaimed in the ears of all the world, and we shall have absolution out of Christ's own mouth; then shall we come to understand what it is that the Lord saith, 'I will remember your sins no more, and your iniquity shall be blotted out.' Then for redemption: Eph. iv. 30, 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption;' Luke xxi. 28, 'Look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.' Oh! how doth the captive long for his liberty; so should we long for that day, for it is the day of our redemption. Now the body is a captive, and when the soul is set at liberty the body is held under the chains of death. Ay! but then Christ comes to loosen the bands and shackles of the grave, and free the bodies of the saints. Look, as the butler was not afraid when he was sent for by Pharaoh, because Joseph had assured him he should be set at liberty, so Christ comes to set you fully at liberty, not only the soul, but the body; therefore to think and speak of that day with horror doth ill become them that expect such perfection of privileges, to be acquitted before all the world, and to be crowned with Christ's own hands.

[3.] It is a day of congregation or gathering together. The saints are now scattered, they live in divers countries, towns, and houses, and

cannot have the comfort of one another's society. But then all shall meet in one assembly and congregation. It is said, Ps. i. 5, 'The ungodly shall not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.' There will be a time when Christ's church shall be gathered all together into one place. As the stars do not shine in a cluster, but are dispersed throughout the firmament for the comfort and light of the world, so are the saints scattered up and down in the world according as they may be useful for God; but then, when the four winds shall give up their dead, and the saints shall be gathered from all the corners of the world, this shall be the great rendezvous. Look, as the wicked shall be herded together, as straw and sticks are bound in a bundle, that they may set one another a-fire, drunkards with drunkards, adulterers with adulterers, and thieves with thieves: Mat. xiii. 40-42, 'As therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.' The wicked shall be sorted with men like themselves, and so increase one another's torment; so shall all the world of the godly meet in one assembly and congregation, and never separate more. In this life we cannot enjoy one another's fellowship for divers reasons; God hath service for us in divers countries; but such a happy time shall come when we shall all make but one body; therefore the saints are still groaning and longing for that happy day, we for them, and they for us; not only the saints upon earth that are left to conflict with sin and misery, but the saints in heaven are still groaning, as the souls under the altar: Rev. vi. 9, 10, 'How long, O Lord! holy and true.' Look as those in a shipwreck that have gotten to the shore stand longing and looking for their companions, so glorified saints that have gotten safe to shore, still they are longing and looking when the body of Christ shall be made perfect, and all the saints shall meet in one solemn assembly. This is the communion between us and the saints departed, they long for our company, as we do for theirs. Here the tares are mingled with the wheat; and besides the persecutions of the wicked, their very company is a burden. Jacob's cattle and Laban's are together, but then they shall be separated, and the saints shall be gathered together, and sit as judges of them, giving their vote with Christ in their condemnation.

[4.] It is a day of glorification to Christ, and therefore the saints long for it; a day when Christ shall be honoured, and get to himself a glorious name. God got himself a great name when he drowned Pharaoh and the Egyptians in the sea; oh! what will it be when he shall cast all the wicked into hell! Now Christ will come to show the fulness of his majesty, the terror of his wrath, and to glorify his justice upon wicked men. Christ showeth his majesty every day, but we have not eyes to see it; our eyes are dazzled with worldly splendour, but then all mists shall vanish. The saints, that love the glory of God, must needs long for that time when Christ shall be seen in all his glory, when God shall be dishonoured no more, and the kingdom of sin and Satan have an end, and wicked men shut up under their everlasting state. And then from the saints, God hath perfect glory in them and from

them : here God hath not his perfect glory from us nor in us. This is the comfort of God's children, that God is glorified in their glory, that they may live to praise him for ever, without weakness and distraction : and that is the reason of those expressions, 'To whom be glory for ever and ever.' They delight in their own glorious estate, because they shall ever be in a capacity to bring glory to God. Nay, then, God shall be glorified in all his counsels and decrees, in the wisdom of his providence, and in the course of his judgments ; for in the day of judgment the full history of the world shall be brought before the saints, whereas now we see it but by pieces.

4. Why the saints look for Christ's appearing, is the profit of this expectation which they shall receive ; partly as it engageth to a heavenly conversation : Phil. iii. 20, 'Our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for a saviour.' Where should we converse most but where Christ is ? Now where is Christ but in heaven ? And therefore our minds should be ever running upon it, our eyes ever looking that way, and our hearts ever longing for him. Partly as it engageth us to faithfulness in our relations ; there is a day coming when we shall give an account for the duties of our relations, because that is the particular sphere of our activity : 2 Tim. iv. 1, 'I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom.' Paul there presseth Timothy to discharge the duty of a minister, and so for a master of a family, and for a servant, Your relations are not things of chance, but they fall under the special care of God's providence, and therefore you must be accountable for them. Here God hath confined you by the wisdom of his providence to serve the great ends of your creation ; therefore, whatever is omitted, you are to give an account of your relations ; magistrates, ministers, masters, servants, all of their several relations. Partly as it calms the heart against the injuries and molestations of the present life : 1 Peter ii. 23, our Lord Christ 'when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously ;' so you must learn of him ; when you meet with trouble and hard usage, and unworthy dealing in the world, commit yourselves to God ; the judge is at the door, and he will review all things again. Look, as Paschalis, a minister of the Albigenes, when he was burnt at Rome, cited the pope and his cardinals before the tribunal of the Lamb, thus do you. Partly as it engageth to perseverance. If a man hath followed a distressed and afflicted party for a long time, if nothing comes of it, he tires ; but remember, if we follow Christ here, all our pains will be recompensed to us : 1 John ii. 28, 'Abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.' Christ will come, and that with salvation to them that look for him ; therefore let me be faithful in my duty.

Object. 1. But how can we look for it, when we know there are some signs that precede the coming of Christ ? Therefore certainly he is not like to come in our days. Will he alter the prefixed time of his approach, and change the *jacets* of that great journey.

Ans. (1.) Though Christ keepeth his pace, yet it is good for us to alter ours ; though we cannot hasten his coming, yet let us be always

ready : 2 Peter iii. 12, ' Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God.' It is good for us to get ground upon our fears and our sins, and to declare our readiness to meet with Christ. Every day we live in the world is a day lost in heaven. (2.) If any age had cause to think Christ would come, certainly we have. It was not far off in the apostles' days ; they were called the last days ; but ours are the very dregs of time. When we see an old man weak and feeble, aches and diseases of the present life increase upon him, we say, Certainly he cannot live long ; so if we look upon the temper of the world, sure it cannot endure long ; Christ will come to set all things at rights. One forerunner of Christ's coming are the dreams and delusions that are abroad. *Mundus senescens patitur phantasias*—As the world grows old, it is much given to fancies, as old men are to dotage and dreams. (3.) If Christ come not in our days, yet death is at hand : Heb. ix. 27, ' It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment.' Every man's particular judgment follows upon his departure out of the world, and then the general judgment follows, as death finds him, either among the sheep or goats. Judas died sixteen hundred years ago, yet as he died so shall he be found. After death there is no change of state ; therefore your business is always to be ready to depart in peace, and hasten to an eternal state.

Object. 2. How can this be the property of God's children to desire his coming ? Are they always in this temper and frame ? Many weak ones tremble at the thought of it for want of assurance of God's love ; it is the terror and bondage of their lives to think of Christ's coming ; and sometimes the saints do not actually feel such an inclination and strength of desire.

Ans. (1.) The meanest saint hath some inclination this way. Can a man desire that Christ may come into his heart, and will there not be such desires that he may come to judgment, since comfort and reward is more naturally embraced than duty ? The very first work of grace is to raise and beget this hope : 1 Peter i. 3, ' Who hath begotten us again unto a lively hope.' (2.) There may be sometimes a drowsiness and indisposition when their lamps are not kept burning : Luke xii. 36, ' And be ye always ready, as those that wait for their Lord.' When they are fallen asleep, they may for the present wish that Christ may not come and take them in this condition ; as the wise virgins slept as well as the foolish ; so God's own children many times find themselves indisposed for his coming. Careless carriage weakens their hope and the remissness of their watch, yet in all there is a spirit this way, which beginneth with the new birth. A wife desires her husband's coming home, but it may be all things are not ready and in so good order as they should ; so all christians desire the coming of Christ, but sometimes they are not so exact and watchful, and therefore their affections are not so lively. Drowsiness creeps upon their hearts, and then God rouseth them by afflictions.

Object. 3. But is this the property of God's children, when we see carnal men, sometimes out of weariness of the present life and trouble of the world, will even long for his coming, and wish for death ?

Ans. That is an offer of nature after ease, this is a desire stirred up by the Spirit. Sometimes God's children in their passions desire to be

taken out of the world; as Jonah: chap. iv. 8, 'He fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live;' and Elijah: 1 Kings xix. 4, 'He requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough, now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.' But this is but a shameful retreat from duty, and the heat and burden of the day, and the labours of the present life; these are froward thoughts, not sanctified desires, words of a feverish distemper, not of affection, but it comes from the sickness and weakness of their souls. But this I speak of is a solid looking for, desire, and longing for the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ.

Use 1. It showeth what they are who wish that it may never come. Some would be glad in their hearts to hear such news, that Christ's coming would never be; it is their burden and torment to think of it; as Felix trembled when he heard of judgment to come. These men have the spirit of the devil in them; if they had the Spirit of God in them, would it be so? surely no. A carnal man cannot say the Lord's prayer, for he is afraid he shall be heard. *Optas ut veniat, quem times ne adveniat?* saith Austin. How canst thou say, Thy Kingdom come, when thou art afraid lest God should come?

Use 2. To press us to this earnest looking. Christ looketh, he is not slack: 2 Peter iii. 9, 'The Lord is not slack concerning his promise.' If all things were ready, he would come presently. Before he came in the flesh, his delights were with us: Prov. viii. 31, 'Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.' And he longeth now he is in heaven: Rev. xxii. 12, 'Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me.' The angels expect it; they would not be found liars, they told us of it: Acts i. 11, 'This same Jesus that is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.' The saints groan, 'How long, O Lord? how long?' Devils tremble at the thought of it: Mat. viii. 29, 'Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?' The creatures expect it in their kind: Rom. viii. 19, 'For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.' All things by a natural instinct are carried to their perfection. Evil men cannot endure to think of it, as Felix trembled at the thoughts of judgment to come. Let not the saints stand out, but expect it earnestly. How much was the first coming of Christ wished for and desired! Abraham rejoiced at the thoughts of it: John viii. 56, 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.' Kings and prophets desired to see these things: Luke x. 24, 'For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.' Old Simeon, Luke ii. 25, 'was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel;' yet then he was a child in the cradle, now in glory riding on the clouds, then he came in the similitude of sinful flesh: Rom. viii. 3, 'God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh;' but now he shall appear without sin: Heb. ix. 28, 'Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.' This earnest looking implieth strong faith, longing desires, frequent thoughts.

1. Strong faith. Reason saith it may be, faith saith it shall be.

Divine justice must have a solemn triumph ; conscience is afraid of it. Our reward may be delayed, but it cannot stand with the justice of God that it should be abolished and taken away. There is confusion in the world. Dives flowed with ease and plenty when Lazarus was rough-cast with sores. We need to be awed with shame as well as fear. Faith saith he will come ; we have his word for it ; as unlikely things have come to pass that have been foretold. Were the old believers deceived that expected his coming in the flesh ? That a few fishermen should preach the gospel to all nations ? this is already done. Christ is contracted with us now, he will come to marry us ; he went not away upon discontent. He that loved us so as to come from heaven to earth to take our nature, will he not come in glory ? We have of his Spirit, and we enjoy his ordinances as a memorial till he comes, and we have many love-tokens sent us as a pledge that he will come.

2. Longing desires. Our hearts should even spring and leap within us when we hear of Christ's coming. Thus the believers of the old testament, how did they rejoice to hear of a Messiah to come : John viii. 56, 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.' Abraham rejoiced to think that a son should come of his loins in whom all the world should be blessed : Heb. xi. 13, 'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them.' How did the patriarchs hug the promises ! Oh, sweet promise ! this will yield a Messiah, a Christ to the world.

3. There should be frequent thoughts of his coming, as if you always heard the trumpet. Every time thou lookest to heaven, think, I have a Christ there, a rich jewel kept safe ; and whenever you see the clouds, think of Christ's coming and going. These clouds were chariots by which Christ went triumphing into heaven, and in like manner he will come again : Dan. vi. 10, 'Daniel went into his house, and his windows being opened towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks unto his God.' Daniel had reason to look towards the temple, though ruined, because of the promise of God to his people that prayed towards the temple ; so now and then we should look up to heaven ; there is Christ above within the heavens. We are called often to lift up our hearts to God, and our eyes to heaven, from whence we look for a saviour ; there is our treasure and our Jesus.

Use 3. Of trial. It is good to see how we stand affected towards this appearing. Nothing can content true christians in the world. Do we look beyond it ? Whither is the bent of our hearts ? How is it with them ?

1. If there were this looking, there would be preparing. A man that expecteth the coming of a king to his house, he will furnish his house accordingly, and make all things ready. Surely you look for nobody when you do not suit and prepare yourselves to entertain them. When the house is sluttish, and the kitchen cold, do you look for great guests ? What are we to do to prepare ourselves for Christ's coming ?

[1.] Judge yourselves : 2 Cor. xiii. 5, 'Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith ; prove your own selves : know ye not your own-

selves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except you be reprobates.' By judging yourselves God's act is anticipated.

[2.] Get into Christ: Rom. viii. 1, 'There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.' They that are in Christ need not fear God's judgment; you may set Christ's righteousness against Christ's judgment. Guilty felons desire not the judge's presence. Art thou in the case wherein thou wouldst be found of him? 2 Peter iii. 14, 'Be diligent, that you may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.'

[3.] Walk strictly. We are between the two comings of Christ, his first and his second coming; let us live soberly, righteously, and godly. When a man is providing matter of condemnation for himself, can he be said to look for Christ's coming?

2. How do you entertain Christ for the present in your hearts and in his ordinances? Can a man slight ordinances, and expect Christ's second coming? A woman that never careth to hear from her husband cannot be said to desire his coming; so if Christ has often knocked at the door of our hearts, and we will not give him entrance, how can we be said to look for his appearing?

SERMON XVII.

And the glorious appearing, &c.—TITUS ii. 13.

I PROCEED to the manner of his appearance—the glorious appearing. The note is—

Doct. 2. That Christ's second coming to judgment will be very glorious.

Here I shall show—(1.) How glorious it will be; (2.) Why it will be so glorious.

I. How glorious it will be. You may conceive of it if you consider the preparation for his approach, the appearance itself, and the consequences of it.

First, It will be glorious in regard of the preparation for his approach. The scripture mentions two—the trumpet of the archangel, and the sign of the Son of man.

1. There is that great noise of the voice of the Lord, that begets a terror in the world, which is ministerially managed by an archangel, though the power and success be of God. That great noise startles the dead in their graves, and summons all the world to appear before Christ's tribunal. There is much spoken of this in scripture: 1 Thes. iv. 16, 'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;' Mat. xxiv. 31, 'He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' Some expound this trumpet analogically, some literally. Analogically; some think it only signifies the power

and virtue of Christ, by which all the dead are awakened out of their sleep, and forced to appear before his tribunal; and they say it is therefore expressed by a trumpet, because the solemn assemblies of Israel were wont to be summoned by the sound of a trumpet. But why may we not take it literally for the audible sound of a trumpet? Look, as at the giving the law, the voice of the trumpet was exceeding loud, so such an audible voice, like the voice of a trumpet, is there when Christ comes to judgment, to require an account of the performance of the law, which is, as it were, a terrible summons to all the world, and a near sign of his coming. Look, as at his first coming Christ had his forerunner and harbinger, John the Baptist, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'The kingdom of God is at hand,' so at his second coming Christ hath his forerunner, an archangel, that shall sound a trumpet, which maketh his coming glorious, because it shall awaken and startle all the world. This sound shall be heard all the world over by the dead; as the prophet speaks, Ezek. xxxvii. 7, 8, of a noise and clattering among the bones, and bone ran to bone, and then they were clothed with flesh and sinews, so such a noise shall there be among the bones when Christ comes to judgment. Here in the church God speaks in a stiller voice, but it is not regarded; he speaks by his angels and messengers; they sound the trumpet to the spiritual battle; they pipe, but few dance, till by his mighty power he raiseth sinners from the dead. So at the last day God hath his messengers; there is the archangel that is to manage the ministerial excitation, and the mighty power of God accompanies it to make the dead live and awaken out of sleep.

2. There is a sign of the Son of man; that is spoken of Mat. xxiv. 30, 'Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.' What it is we cannot certainly tell, until experience manifests; sure we are it must be such a sign as shall make the world sensible of his approach. Some think it shall be some strange star, such as there was at his first coming; the wise men were conducted to Christ by a star: this is but a mere conjecture. Others suppose it shall be the sign of the cross which shall appear in the heavens, because that is Christ's badge, by which he was known here in the world. The great subject of the gospel is Christ crucified, therefore it is called the 'word of the cross;' and so they think the sign of the cross shall be impressed upon the heavens in the sight of all the world. To confirm the conjecture, they urge the appearance that was made to Constantine in his war against Maxentius, the tyrant and persecutor of the church; he saw the sign of the cross, say they, with this inscription, *ἐν τούτῳ νικήσεις* — By this shalt thou overcome. But Eusebius describes it otherwise, as an X, the first initial letter of Christ's name. But many of the ancient writers went this way, they thought that this way the scandal of Christ is best taken away; the cross, which is now the scandal and offence the world takes at Christ, then shall be his ensign and royal standard, which shall be impressed upon the heavens. Look, as kings when they make a triumphant approach, have their banner carried before them, so Jesus Christ shall have his cross, which is the sign of the Son of man; but in

such a point I dare not thus peremptorily dogmatise. Others more probably (and to which I incline) interpret it of some forerunning beams of majesty and glory, which shall darken the great luminaries of the world, the sun and moon, and so strike terror into the hearts of men. The glory of Christ, which is described to pass through the heavens like lightning, shall be like those morning beams and streaks of light before the body of the sun be risen; as Paul was struck blind with the sight of Christ, 'he saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about him,' Acts xxvi. 13. Certainly some sign there shall be that shall make the world fall a-mourning. And it is notable that these preparations and beams of majesty are sometimes expressed by light, and sometimes by fire; by light, to note the comfortableness of it to the godly; it is as the light of the sun, which doth not scorch, but refresh and revive, and cheer the heart: light is comfortable. But then at other times it is represented by fire: 2 Thes. i. 8, it is said, 'The Son of man shall come in flaming fire,' or, as the apostle's word is, *ἐν πυρὶ φλογὸς*, in fire all a-flame, to show the dreadfulness of his appearance to the wicked. Look, as Joseph told the butler and the baker what Pharaoh would do to them, hang the one and exalt the other, therefore when the messenger comes for them, the butler's heart leaps for joy he was to be preferred, but the baker thought of nothing but dreadful execution that was pre-signified; just thus shall it be with the wicked and the godly; the sign of the Son of man shall be comfortable to the godly, but it shall be as a flame of fire and devouring burnings, dreadful and formidable to the wicked, whose execution and final judgment now draws near. So much for the preparation.

Secondly, The appearance itself. And there you must consider Christ's personal glory, his attendance, and his work.

1. His personal glory. Certainly that must be exceeding great, if you consider the dignity both of his person and employment.

[1.] The dignity of his person. Mat. xxiv. 30, it is said, he shall come 'in great glory;' at other times, 'in the glory of his Father,' Mat. xvi. 27; that is, he shall come as God's own natural Son, with such a glory as cannot be communicated to any creature. His first coming is like the carpenter's son, mean and despicable; but his second coming is like God's Son. Now, that you may conceive of this glory, you must guess at it by several hints. There shall be great glory put upon the saints: 'Then shall the righteous shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of the Father,' Mat. xiii. 43; and Christ will be 'glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe,' 2 Thes. i. 10. But we do not come in the glory of the Father; when we are glorified, we are not deified; yet our glory shall be so great that men and angels shall stand wondering what God hath done to us. But now Christ is God-man in one person, and that mystery is now to be discovered to the uttermost, the union of the two natures in his person; and therefore he must have such a glory as never creature was capable of, nor can be. He doth not only appear in the text as 'our Saviour,' but as 'the great God.' Guess at it again we may by other appearances of God. When Christ came to give the law, his voice shook Mount Sinai, that Moses trembled and quaked at the hearing of it: Heb. xii. 21, 'So terrible

was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.' Guess at it by the light at Christ's birth, that came from heaven, and shone round about the shepherds, so that they were exceedingly afraid: Luke ii. 9, 'The glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.' Guess at it by the glimpse of his divine glory which Christ gave us in his transfiguration: Mat. xvii. 2, 'His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light,' when his disciples fell upon their faces, and could not endure the shining of his garments. So by the appearance of Christ to Paul that was struck blind for three days: Acts ix. 3, 'And suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven.' And by the terror the prophet Isaiah felt when he saw God in vision: Isa. vi. 5, 'Woe is me, I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.' Because of some relics of corruption, therefore was it terrible and formidable to him. But this glory, though it shall be very great, yet it shall be comfortable to the saints, for sin and weakness shall be done away.

[2.] Especially if you consider his office. He is a judge of all the world, and therefore he shall come with all things that are becoming such a judge. He shall sit upon a visible throne, where he may be seen and heard of all. You know, in earthly judicatories, when great malefactors are brought to trial, the whole majesty and glory of the nation is brought forth; the judge comes in gorgeous apparel, accompanied with the flower of the country, nobles and gentlemen, and a great conflux of people, to make it the more magnificent. So here Christ, the judge of all the world, comes becoming the judge of the world that sits upon a throne of glory and majesty: Mat. xxv. 31, 32, 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with them, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations.' All the world shall be summoned before him. Thus for his personal glory.

2. In regard of his attendants, who are angels and saints, this appearance must needs be very glorious.

[1.] There are angels, multitudes of them, that come with Christ, and with such a glory as cannot be conceived of: Mat. xxv. 31, 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him.' Mark the emphasis of the expression, 'All the holy angels shall come with him.' When a prince removes, the whole court removes with him; so when Christ removes out of heaven, the whole court of heaven removes with him. As Chrysostom saith, Heaven now shall be left void; all the angels shall come out with Christ, that they may be present at this great act. Those blessed mansions shall be forsaken for a while, that they may be present with the judge of the world. Look, as the angels were present at the giving of the law, so also will they be present when the sentence of the law comes to be executed. Thrones, principalities, powers, and dominions, angels, however distinguished, were all made by Christ; he is their head, and they are given to Christ by his Father, as he is Mediator, to be his servants in the mediatory office. And therefore Christ always useth angels. In his conception the angel Gabriel came to Mary. At his nativity, an host of angels came down to acquaint us with the glad tidings of

salvation. In his passion, he was comforted by an angel; at his resurrection, there were angels at his grave; at his ascension, he was carried to heaven by angels; and in the government of the church, in the present dispensation, Christ useth angels more than we are aware of. These principalities and powers are conversant about and in the church; and in the last day's act he shall come with his holy angels. Whether these angels shall then visibly appear, I dispute not; certainly their attendance upon Christ is partly as a train, to make his appearance more full of majesty, and partly because Christ hath a ministry and service for them. Partly as a train to Christ, and to make his appearance more full of majesty. They that waited upon Christ at his ascension will now come to wait upon him at his coming to judgment. Public ministers of justice are made formidable by their attendance and officers. Christ will come like a royal king in the midst of his nobles; and partly because they have also a ministry and service at that day; they are to 'gather the elect from the four winds,' Mat. xxiv. 31. The angels love to be conversant about the saints. They that carried their souls to heaven shall now be employed to bring their bodies out of the grave. The holy angels shall conduct the souls of those that die in the Lord to heaven: Luke xvi. 22, 'The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.' So also those angels shall now be employed in bringing their bodies out of the grave. They are still serviceable to the saints, and this is the last office of love they can perform to them, therefore they do it cheerfully. And to the wicked, their office is to force them into Christ's presence, and to bind them up in bundles, as tares for the fire, Mat. xiii. 40, 41. Also, the angels have this ministry and service, to be employed as witnesses; they attend now upon the congregation, to observe your behaviour; therefore the apostle disputes concerning unseemly gestures: 1 Cor. xi. 10, 'For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head, because of the angels.' They are privy to our conversations, and able to give an account of our lives. In the assemblies there are more meet than are visible; devils meet, and good angels likewise, to observe your carriage, that they may give account to God. And no sooner shall the sentence be pronounced, but it shall be executed. In a condescension to our capacity, God is pleased to represent the work as done by the ministry of angels. We can understand better the operations of an angel than the operations of Almighty God, because they are nearer to us in being, and are of an essence finite and limited.

[2.] The saints, they are his attendants too. Some shall come from heaven with Christ, others shall be 'caught up in the air to meet the Lord,' 1 Thes. iv. 17. Certainly the wicked shall be left still to tread upon the earth. And this contributes much to the glory of the day, because when Christ appears we appear with him in glory; we shall be like him, we shall suddenly attain to that fulness of glory that their hearts could never conceive of. Oh! what a glorious day must that needs be when so many suns shall meet together! Every one of the elect shall shine more than the sun. Then our spiritual empire and dominion begins; we come to share with Christ in the glory of his kingdom, to be associated with him in judging of the world. Do not then please yourselves with fancies of temporal happiness. 'The

upright shall have dominion over them in the morning,' Ps. xlix. 14. When is that? After they have slept their sleep of death, then God's saints and servants, that are now scorned, censured, and persecuted, in the morning of the resurrection, when they awake to meet with Christ, then doth our glory begin. We are all for a while to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. But look upon all the draughts of the last judgment, and you shall find this method; sentence begins with the godly, but execution begins with the wicked. The books are opened, the godly are called, and they are first acquitted, that afterwards they may join with Christ to judge the world: 1 Cor. vi. 2, 'Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world.' The first process is with the godly, that their faith may be found to praise; but first the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment: Mat. xxv. 46, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal;' that by others' misery they may be more apprehensive of their own felicity.

3. Another thing that makes the day glorious is his work and powerful executing the work of the day. Jesus Christ is to gather the wicked together, dragging them out of their graves with horror; then to extend and enlarge their consciences, that all their doings may come to remembrance; and then to cast them into eternal darkness, to chase them with the glory of his presence into hell, dragging them out of their graves with terror: Rev. vi. 16, 'They said to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' They are ashamed to look Christ in the face, whom they have slighted, despised, neglected in the world. Then they shall be ashamed to see the godly preferred; as Haman did fret to see Mordecai put upon the king's horse, and led through the city with triumph, so they are envious to see the preferment of God's children. Then they are cursed out of Christ's presence, and go away yelling and howling, and are led away to their final state, as Haman's face was covered, and then led away to execution. Now Christ hath the most glorious conquest over his enemies that ever he had; now he shows himself like a king, in punishing his enemies and rewarding his friends. In punishing his enemies, stubborn knees shall bow to him; it is not done fully till now. Isa. xlv. 23, there is a decree, 'I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear.' It is a prediction of Christ's sovereignty, and it is ratified with an oath; all God's holiness and glory is laid at stake that it shall be accomplished. Now this prophecy is twice alleged in the New Testament: Phil. ii. 10, 11, 'At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue shall confess.' There it is made the fruit of Christ's ascension; what is *swear* in the prophet, there is *confess*; they are both acts of worship, and given to Christ. Presently God gave him this power upon his ascension, for his ascension was his solemn inauguration into the kingly office. Christ was a chosen king, and anointed from all eternity. While he was here in the world he was a king, but when he ascended up on high, then he was a crowned king, and God undertook to make

good this prophecy, 'That every knee should bow to him;' as David was anointed by Samuel, but crowned at Hebron. But some will say, We do not see that all things are put under him; there are damned spirits that resist his counsels, and there are wicked men that rebel against his laws; every knee doth not bow, and every tongue doth not call him Lord. But wait a little, the work is a-doing. Christ's royal office receiveth several accessions of glory and degrees of perfection, till the day of judgment, and then it is discovered in a most imperial manner. The apostle quoteth this place to prove the day of judgment: Rom. xiv. 10, 11, 'Why dost thou judge thy brother? and why dost thou set at nought thy brother? We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.' How doth he prove that? 'For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God;' implying that at the day of judgment this promise shall be fully made good. This is the consummate act of his regal office; then devils and wicked men shall all be made to stoop to Christ. Christ's kingdom is a growing kingdom: Isa. ix. 7, 'Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.' Not only of his government, but of the increase of his government; then it is at its full strength. Therefore it is called 'the day of the Lord;' 2 Peter iii. 10, 'The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night.' Then Christ discovereth himself as Lord in all his royalties and greatness, and makes his enemies shake before him. Then also he shows himself to be a king to his people: Mat. xxv. 34, 'Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand.' Mark the special title that is given to Christ when he invites the saints into his bosom; then we come to receive from Christ the most royal donative and highest fruit of his kingly office.

Thirdly, The consequents of that day. I shall name three—sending of persons judged to their everlasting state, giving up the kingdom to his Father, and burning the world.

1. The sending of persons judged to their everlasting state, the elect into glory, and the wicked into torments. For the elect: Mat. xxv. 34, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' Oh! you have been too long absent; Come, blessed children, come into my bosom; come, possess that which was prepared for you before you had a being in the world. And then for the wicked, by a terrible ban and proscription they are excommunicated and cast out of the presence of the Lord: ver. 31, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' A terrible ban and proscription! As Haman's face was covered when the king was angry, and so he was led away to execution, so the wicked banished from Christ's presence are accursed to all eternity, and so enter into their eternal state. Now from this sentence, either of absolution or condemnation, there is no appeal; it is pronounced by Christ as God-man. On earth many times God's sentence is repealed. God may speak of the ruin of a nation, but free grace may interpose: Jer. xviii 7, 8, 'At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to

do unto them.' *Deus mutat sententiam, non decretum*—In the world, though God doth not change his decrees, yet he changeth his sentence many times; the sentence shows what might be, the decree shows what shall be. But now this sentence shall never be reversed. Now is the day of patience, then of recompense; the day of patience is past. It is said, Luke ii. 14, 'Peace upon earth.' God may proclaim war against a soul or people, that he may awaken them to look after their peace; but this is a sentence that shall never be changed. The execution is speedy. Here many times the sentence is passed, but 'not speedily executed against an evil work,' Eccles. viii. 11; but here Christ's sentence presently begins, and the wicked in the very sight of the godly are thrust into hell: Mat. xiii. 30, 'Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn;' which doth awaken the grief and envy of the wicked, when they shall see others gathered into the great congregation, and themselves thrust out. And then the godly have a deeper sense of their own condition. When contraries are put together, they do mutually illustrate one another; so when we see the misery of the wicked, this matures our apprehensions, and makes us have larger thoughts of our deliverance by Christ. And then the sentence is accomplished upon the whole person, and that for ever. Upon the whole man, 'Go ye cursed,' and, 'Come, ye blessed;' both body and soul share in the reward and punishment. And then the sentence is eternal; it remains for ever. Why? For the reward is built upon an infinite merit. The Lord Christ's blood is of an infinite value; the virtue of it lasts to all eternity to secure heaven to us. And the punishment is eternal, because an infinite majesty is offended. In short, God is never weary of blessing the godly, and never weary of cursing the wicked, and accomplishing his judgment and displeasure against them.

2. The next consequent is the resigning and giving up of the kingdom to the Father. You have it described, 1 Cor. xv. 24-28. I suppose this giving up of the kingdom is not taken for the resigning of his kingly office; for Christ still holds the government, and wears the crown of honour to be the head of the church. But *kingdom* here is put for 'the subjects of the kingdom.' He shall finish the present manner of dispensation, and present all the elect to God, and give them up as a prey snatched out of the mouth of the lion; and this is called presenting his spouse to God: Eph. v. 27, 'That he might present it to himself a glorious church.' Christ hath shed his blood, and washed her clean, and decked her with all the jewels of the covenant; and then he shall present her to God; and the form of surrender you have, Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold I and the children God hath given me.' Behold, here I am, and all thou hast given me; there is not one wanting. Oh! what a glorious sight will this be to see the great shepherd of the sheep leading his flock into their everlasting folds, and all the elect following Christ with their crowns of glory upon their heads, singing to the praise of the Lamb, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' &c. To see them with harps in their hands, triumphing thus in the salvation of God, all enemies gone, and the church lodged in everlasting habitations! Besides, consider the acclamation and

applause of the angels. Oh! how should we strive to be one of this number!

3. The next consequent is the burning of the world; that is described at large, 2 Peter iii. 10-12, how that fire shall come out from God, and burn and devour all things, and melt the very firmament. Certainly that fire is to be taken literally, for it is opposed to water, the first water by which the world was destroyed. Now by this fire I conceive the world shall not be consumed, but renewed and purged, because in the everlasting state God will have all things new. He will not only have the bodies and souls of the saints new, but will have new heavens and new earth; for it is 'a deliverance from the bondage of corruption,' Rom. viii. 21. If the world shall be no more the habitation of the saints, yet God will renew the world, that it may be a continual monument of his power. Now this burning of the world some place it in preparation before the day of judgment; but I conceive it is a consequent, for it seemeth to be an instrument of vengeance on the wicked. I will not say, with the schoolmen, the feculent and drossy part of this fire is reserved for the torment of the wicked in hell, but in general it shall be the instrument of God's vengeance upon them; so much is asserted, 2 Peter iii. 7, 'The heavens and earth that now are, by the same word are kept in store, and reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and the perdition of ungodly men.' There are some that say this fire shall begin the day of judgment. *Et causam dicent in flammis*—The wicked shall plead their cause in flames; but this were to execute before the sentence. Sodom's fire was dreadful, but nothing to this burning. It was a dreadful sight when God rained hell out of heaven, and the poor tormented creatures ran screeching and yelling to and fro because of those flakes of fire and brimstone; but this fire shall come out of the throne of the Lord: Dan. vii. 10, 'A fiery stream issued and came out from before him,' to consume his adversaries, and to remain in hell with them for evermore, which will be much more dreadful. God hath *diluvium ignis*, as well as *aquæ*, a deluge of fire as well as of water. As one saith very wittily, As at the first he drowned the world *propter ardorem libidinis*, because of the heat of lust, so in the end he will kindle a fire to burn the world *propter teporem charitatis*, because of the coldness of love. The object of your adulteries will be burnt; God will have nothing impure in the everlasting state, the world shall be purged with fire. Thus you have seen how the appearance of Christ will be glorious.

II. Why the appearance of Christ will be so glorious.

1. To recompense his own abasement. His first coming was in humility; he came riding upon the foal of an ass, but now on the clouds; they are as it were his royal chariot. Then he came with fishermen, a few apostles to be his messengers, but now he comes with angels. Then he came in the form of a servant to be judged; now he comes as the Son of God, to be the judge of all the world. When the day of judgment is spoken of, Christ is called the Son of man: Mat. xxv. 31, 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory;' Mat. xxvi. 64, 'Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven;' and Dan.

vii. 13, 'Behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.' Why so? He that was the Son of man, that came in such a mean condition at first, shall then be glorious, and so it taketh off the scandal of his present estate. He that appeared in so low a condition, that was betrayed, crucified, spat upon, pierced, dead, buried, then shall be crowned with glory and honour. When he came to teach us righteousness, he came as the Son of man: but when he comes to reward righteousness, then he comes as the Son of God.

2. That he might show himself to be fully discharged of sin. The glory bestowed upon his human nature by God the Father noteth his plenary absolution as our surety. We hear that he is taken up into glory, that God hath acquitted him, that 'he was taken from prison and from judgment,' Isa. liiii. 8; but then we shall see it with our eyes, when the Father sends him from heaven with power and great glory. At the first Christ came like a man, charged with sin, in the garb of a sinner; therefore it is said, Rom. viii. 3, 'God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh;' but then, Heb. ix. 28, 'He shall appear the second time without sin.' The first time the world looked upon him as one that was forsaken, stricken, and smitten of God; but then he comes as one that is honoured of God: his second coming shall make it evident that he is discharged of the debt which he took upon himself. The apostle doth not say, Those that look for him shall be without sin, but he shall be without sin. The discharge of our surety is enough; it is a sign the debt is paid.

3. He comes in great glory, that he may be as a pledge and pattern and cause of our glory. Christ's coming is still suited to his work. There is his first coming, and that is in humility, for we fell by pride; he came to redeem us, therefore he comes humbly and lowly, in the form of a servant, as one that came to suffer, not to ruffle it in the world, and tread upon the necks of kings. Then there is his spiritual coming into the heart to sanctify it; this coming is invisible; it is with great power, but hidden. But when he comes to glorify us, his coming is suitable to his work, that is visible in power and great glory; therefore it is said, Col. iii. 3, 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.' Christ is to have all first, and we at secondhand, when he comes in grace: John xvii. 10, 'For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth.' So we must be glorified at secondhand; first Christ, and then we.

4. Christ comes not simply to glorify us, but to bring the saints to heaven with the more state. O christians! remember Christ thinks he can never do you honour enough. Christ doth not send for us, but he will come in person: John xiv. 3, 'I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.' Look, as the bridegroom comes with the youth and flower of the city, to bring in his bride in state, so Christ brings the flower of heaven, all his holy angels, to conduct us in state to our everlasting mansions.

5. He comes in glory, that all creatures might see his glory to the full. Men and angels were made for this spectacle, that they might behold the glory of Christ. It was evidenced in part at the resurrection:

Rom. i. 4, 'And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.' But that was but a private and more covert declaration to the Jews; and when it was published to the world in the gospel, many believed not. We have the spiritual evidences of it to faith, but not to sense and sight. But now the personal union shall fully and undeniably appear, which before appeared but in part; he is now declared to be the great God.

6. His appearing shall be glorious, because then Christ shall have the full conquest over all his enemies. Some of his enemies are still let alone for our exercise; Satan is not destroyed. The infernal spirits are held with the chains of an irresistible providence, and shall then be brought trembling into the presence of Christ: Jude 16, 'The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, to the judgment of the great day.' They are now in expectation of greater doom and terror: Mat. viii. 29, 'Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?' The good angels come forth as Christ's companions, the evil angels as his prisoners. The saints shall judge angels as well as men: 1 Cor. vi. 3, 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?' Christ will have his people come and set their feet upon the necks of their enemies; for the present God hath a ministry for them; but though the devils now tempt, trouble, and molest the saints for their exercise, yet then the saints shall triumph over them, when they shall be brought like captives into Christ's presence.

Use 1. For information in two things—

1. That humility is the way to glory. This lesson we learn from the two comings of Christ, first in an humble manner, and then in a glorious manner. The devils aspired after greatness; they would be great and not good. The fallen angels set us an ill copy, but Christ came to set us a better. He came not from heaven to teach us to make worlds and work miracles, but to teach us to be humble and lowly: Mat. xi. 29, 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.' The way to spiritual preferment is to be low and vile in our own eyes; as the ball that is beaten down riseth the higher.

2. We learn what cause we have to be patient under present abasement. Jesus Christ is contented for a while to lie hid, and not to show himself in all his glory till the end of the world. In the days of his flesh he was trampled upon by wicked men; and now he is in heaven, he is despised in his gospel, in his cause, and in his servants, though his person be above abuse; but he is content to tarry till the day of manifestation, when he will appear in all his glory; so should we.

Use 2.

1. Here is comfort to the godly. To you Christ's appearance is glorious, but not terrible; it is as light, but not as fire; the trumpet sounds, but it summons you to be crowned. The sign of the Son of man shows your Lord is come; it is as the shadow of the husband before his person appeareth: this is your Jesus. Certainly they that have an interest in him will not be afraid of him; for his angels are your guardians, his saints your companions; his appearance is to pro-

nounce your pardon ; a crown shall be set upon your heads in the face of all the world. That which is so formidable and dreadful to our thoughts in itself is all comfortable to a child of God. Christ comes as God, but still in the human nature, as your brother. If he be glorious it is for your sakes, that you might be like him ; he comes as a pattern of your glory.

2. Here is terror to them that lie in their sins. How can they hear of these things without astonishment ? You that despise the still voice when God speaks to you by the angel of the church, what will you do when you hear the great trump which will be an alarm to death and execution ? Your avenger is come. Christ's sign is not light, but terror to you. If you tremble not, you are worse than Felix, an heathen, for Felix's heart trembled when he heard of judgment to come, Acts xxiv. 25 ; he had a more tender conscience. Nay, such as do not, they are worse than Satan ; for the devils fear and tremble, James ii. 19. Loose and carnal persons scoff at that at which devils tremble. It is storied of a king that wept when his brother came to him : being asked the reason, Oh ! saith he, I that judge others must be judged myself ! Shall not I tremble at the great trumpet that shall awaken the dead ? Oh ! take sanctuary in grace.

3. Here is advice to all. It is a good check to sin ; it stays the boiling of the pot. Remember, when thou art in the career and heat of thy lusts, 'for all these things God will bring thee to judgment,' Eccles. xi. 9. Whenever thou sinnest, thou art entering into the lists with Christ, as if thou wert stronger than he. But man, canst thou grapple with him ? Then it is an engagement to repentance. When Jacob heard Esau was coming with a great power and force against him, he sends to make peace with him. You have heard that Christ comes in a glorious manner, and will be terrible to his enemies. Let us compromise all difference between us and God. Oh ! go and make peace with him. It is Christ's own advice : Luke xiv. 32, 'Or else while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desireth conditions of peace.' And repent, saith the apostle, 'that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord,' Acts iii. 19. Then it is of use to make you constant in walking in the fear of the Lord : Eccles. xii. 13, 14, 'Fear God, and keep his commandments ; for this is the whole duty of man : for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.' Especially it is an engagement to faithfulness in your calling, especially ministers : 2 Cor. v. 9, 'Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.' Again, it urgeth you to keep the commandments ; Christ will bear you out : 'Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,' 1 Tim. vi. 14. And then he presseth to diligence ; he comes with crowns in his hands to reward all that are faithful to him : 1 Peter v. 4, 'And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away ;' 2 Tim. iv. 1, 'I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearance, and his kingdom ;' 1 Thes. ii. 19, 'For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing ? are not even ye in

the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?' The day of judgment respects our callings, especially as ministers; Christ's officers must give an account; and in whatever condition God hath set us in, wherein he expects a trial of our faithfulness, we are to consider what we must do.

SERMON XVIII.

Of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.—TITUS ii. 13.

I COME to the description of the person who shall appear, who is described by a title of power and a title of mercy and love, because in Christ's person there is greatness and goodness mixed; for he is called 'the great God;' there is his attribute of power and majesty; and then there is a comfortable name and title, 'Our Saviour.' That both these titles do belong to the same person, the fathers have abundantly, proved against the Arians. In the original there is but one article, τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, 'that great God and our Saviour.' We have just such another expression, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 'He shall deliver up the kingdom to that God and Father,' τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρὶ; that is, to God even the Father. So here 'the great God and Saviour,' that is, the God that is the Saviour. Besides, there is another argument that the words must be referred to the same person, because it is never said anywhere the Father doth appear, but only Jesus Christ, and therefore the appearance of the great God must needs be applied to Jesus Christ.

I shall handle these titles conjunctly and severally.

I. Look upon them conjunctly and together, and there you may observe the mingling of words of power and words of goodness and mercy in Christ's style and title. I observe it the rather because it is often found in scripture. But for what reasons are these titles of mercy and power thus mingled and coupled together?

1. For the comfort of the saints, to show that Christ in all his glory will not forget himself to be a Saviour. At the day of judgment, when he comes forth like the great God with all his heavenly train, then he will own us, and will be as tender of us as he was upon the cross. The butler in his advancement, when he was at court and well at ease, forgot Joseph in prison; but Christ in his advancement doth not grow shy and stately. We may have boldness in the great day, for he will not only come as 'the great God,' but also as 'our Saviour.' We have the like expression, Heb. viii. 1, 2, 'We have such an high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of majesty in the heavens.' And what follows? 'A minister of the sanctuary.' Jesus Christ certainly had a gracious welcome into heaven, and was exalted by the Father; but even now he is our faithful agent in heaven. This is made to be the excellency and height of his condescension, that he came in the form of a servant, in the fashion of an ordinary man, poor and despice-

able. Then he came to do the church service, and now he is gone to heaven in all his glory; still he is there as a servant, as one that is to negotiate with God for holy things, to tender our prayers to the Lord, and to pass our blessings to us; this is Christ's employment in heaven.

2. To show the mystery of Christ's person, in whom the two natures meet; there is not only the majesty of the Godhead, but also the human nature by which he claims kin of us. I observe it because the scripture takes notice of it: Isa. ix. 6, 'To us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.' What a mixture of titles is here! He is called 'a child,' yet 'the everlasting Father;' 'Wonderful,' yet the 'Counsellor;' one that is intimate with his people, he gives sweet counsel to them. He is called 'the mighty God,' and then presently 'the Prince of Peace.' Christ's person is the greatest mystery and riddle in the world; he is God and yet man. He is, as the apostle saith, Heb. vii. 3, 'Without father and without mother,' as Melchizedec; yet he had both father and mother, a father in heaven, and a mother upon earth. He was without mother as to his divinity, and without father as to his manhood. Another place where the same method is observed: Zech. xiii. 7, 'Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my fellow.' He is called 'the Man,' but yet God calls him 'his fellow;' our brother, and God's son. There are so many mysteries that meet in Christ's person, that under the law he could not be figured and represented by one sacrifice, Lev. xvi. 15, 21. There were two sacrifices chosen to represent Christ; there was the goat to be slain for the sin-offering, and then the scape-goat; one was not enough, because there are in Christ two natures—a God that could not die, and a man that could not overcome death. The goat that was slain showed he was crucified in the flesh, and the goat that was let go showed that he did yet live by the power of God: 2 Cor. xiii. 4, 'For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God.' Or as another apostle hath it: 1 Peter iii. 18, 'Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.' There was his human nature as he was man, that he might die to answer the goat that was slain; then his divine nature that he might live and overcome death.

3. To compare his two comings, and to show that Christ doth not forget his old work. His first coming was in humility, to save, not to judge: John xii. 47, 'I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.' So 1 John iv. 14, 'We have seen and do testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world.' But then his second coming is in more majesty; then he comes as a God to judge. To consider him as a severe judge, that would make our heart tremble; but to consider him as a Saviour, that is comfortable; then he remembers his old relation for the elect's sake. In short, he is 'the great God, and our Saviour,' to show his double work and office at the last day; he is 'a Saviour' to his own people when he comes to show himself to be 'the great God,' to punish the wicked that would not accept of grace and salvation.

4. To give us a taste and pledge both of his willingness and ability to do us good. He is a mighty God, and yet a Saviour: certainly

there is a difference between God and man. If we pardon and do good, it is out of need, because we dare not do otherwise; but Jesus Christ is the mighty God, strong enough to revenge, yet our Saviour, gracious enough to save and pardon. The coupling of these words shows that Christ is not a Saviour out of necessity, but good-will. Men forbear their enemies out of policy, not pity: 2 Sam. iii. 19, 'These men the sons of Zeruiah are too hard for me.' Power makes us cruel. Who finds his enemy, and slays him not? 'If a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away?' 1 Sam. xxiv. 19. Among men observe it, and you will find the weakest are most pitiful and merciful. Why? Because they need pity and commiseration themselves from others. But now Jesus Christ, that hath the greatest power, hath also the greatest mercy and the greatest love. He is the mighty God, but yet the Prince of Peace. He will be a mighty God rather in saving than in destroying; though he hath all power in his hands, yet he will exercise it in acts of mercy. We abuse our power to acts of oppression and violence. Oh! when shall we learn of Christ to be mighty and yet saving; there cannot be a happier conjunction than when greatness and goodness, power and good-will, are met together. Remember, power is only given us to do good with it; and to do good is some resemblance of Christ. What a comfort is this to the faithful, that Christ is 'the great God,' and also 'a Saviour,' both able and willing to do them good, and to bestow abundance of grace upon them!

5. To show what Christ is to the saints. Whenever he shows himself a Saviour, there he doth also show himself to be a mighty God. Together with acts of grace and favour there are issued out acts of power and strength; there is a concomitant operation of power, together with an act of pardon and grace. I find the scripture speaking of this; he pardoneth as a strong God: Micah vii. 18, 'Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity?' &c. In the original, who is **לשׁ** which signifies a strong God like unto thee: and so Junius renders it. So Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, 'The Lord, the Lord God,' **לשׁ**, the strong God, 'merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.' Moses plainly alludes to it: Num. xiv. 17, 18, 'Now I beseech thee let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression.' Whenever God shows grace in pardoning sin, he shows power also in subduing sin. So Ps. lxii. 11, 'God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongs to God.' And presently, ver. 12, 'Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy.' Both these are dispensed together. Those that come to God for relief are under a double trouble—distempered affections as well as a guilty conscience; therefore know for your comfort, mercy and power belong to God, and in the dispensation they usually go together: 2 Peter i. 3, 'According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness.' Christians, if you go to God aright, you go to him not only for life, that you may be respited from destruction, but for godliness; not only for acts of grace, but for acts of power; as wrath and power are suited to the reprobate, so mercy and power to the godly.

6. To show that Christ is not only a desirable friend, but a dreadful

adversary. You must close with him as a Saviour, or else you shall find him to your cost to be a mighty God. You must submit to him or be destroyed; you must accept of mercy or feel the power of his wrath. And thus in scripture Christ is represented with a golden sceptre and with an iron mace, to dash his enemies in pieces like a potter's vessel. You must touch his golden sceptre, or feel the weight of his iron rod. He that saveth can punish, and crush as well as comfort. Again, we read of a banner of love and of a flying roll of curses; and therefore, as there is mercy and sweetness in Christ, so he is represented as a dreadful adversary. Usually we presume on God's mercy and fear man's power, but this should not be so. Oh! observe the counsel the Lord gives: Isa. xxvii. 5, 'Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me.' Blessed God! who is able to grapple and deal with thee in thy strength? but we overcome by yielding. Let us humble ourselves betimes; that is taking hold of his strength, and making power our friend. It is an allusion, not to a wrestler, for so how can our hands be strong and our hearts endure in the day he shall deal with us? but to a suppliant; when a parent or master is ready to strike, the child takes hold of his arm, and seeks terms of peace, and entreats him to pacify his wrath; so saith the Lord, Make strength your friend, then his power, which otherwise would be your enemy is engaged to you.

7. To preserve that mixed affection which best becomes the present state we are in. Our state is mixed, and we act best under a mixed affection. God would have us not only love him, but fear him; and therefore he is represented as a mighty God as well as a gracious Saviour, that we may come to him with reverence, and yet with confidence. That is the proper temper of a gracious spirit in all our addresses to God: Ps. ii. 10, 'Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.' Fear mixed and tempered with love is most regular, so is love that is guided with fear; therefore, when you pray to him, and worship him, and serve him, remember he is the 'great God;' but lest that should breed bondage and dejection in your spirits, remember he is also 'our Saviour.' How sweet would this be, if we could but make use of both these titles whenever we have to do with him! Our affections should be mixed as Christ's titles are. It is said of the church, Acts ix. 31, 'They walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.' This doth well together—fear God and rejoice in God. Do not dally with a Saviour, and please yourselves in cherishing a loose comfort, when you neglect duty, and are touched with no awe of God; and then do not indulge a legal dejection; the 'great God,' whom you dread and reverence is your 'Saviour.' Therefore are the titles of Christ mixed, to beget a sweet temperature of fear and love. So much for the conjunct consideration of the words.

II. Let us come to handle them apart particularly, but briefly—

First, Of the style of his power, 'The great God.' Here is a pregnant testimony of the deity of Christ.

Doct. That Jesus Christ, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, is the great God.

He is called 'the great God,' partly in opposition to those *λεγόμενοι θεοί*, that are only called gods, the vanities of the gentiles. There are

many that are called gods: 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6, 'For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.' And partly in opposition to the gods of man's making; so the devil is gotten to be a god: 'The god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them which believe not,' 2 Cor. iv. 4. So we read of those 'whose god is their belly,' Phil. iii. 19. As the strength of men's desires run out, so they set up many gods, either Mammon or Bacchus. And partly in opposition to those representative gods, magistrates, who are called gods: Ps. lxxxii. 6, 'I said ye are gods.' They resemble God in their power and sovereignty, and administration of justice, and large opportunity of doing good. But the chief reason why Christ is called 'the great God' is to show that he is not inferior to the Father; to remove the scandal of his abasement; he is not a God by courtesy or grant, but by nature, equal in power, and majesty, and glory, to God the Father.

To confirm this I shall prove—(1.) That considering his work, he ought to be God; no inferior mediator could serve the turn; (2.) That he is God, and able to perform this work.

First, Consider his work, and so he ought to be God. The work of the Mediator could be despatched by no inferior agent. Consider the Mediator in all his offices, as prophet, priest, and king.

1. For his prophetic office. As a prophet, he was to be greater than all prophets and apostles. It is above man's capacity to be the great doctor of the church. In regard of his outward work, the discovery of the gospel, and of the riches of God's grace, it could be made by none but he that was in the bosom of the Father: John i. 18, 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.' None could tell us what bowels, what affections, what purposes of grace the Father had concerning sinners, but Christ that was in his bosom: Mat. xi. 27, 'No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.' As an external lawgiver in the gospel, Christ, the great doctor of the church, ought to be authentic, a lawgiver from whose sentence there is no appeal, a lord in his own house: Heb. iii. 4-6, 'For every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house.' Moses was but a servant, who received the external law from Christ upon Mount Sinai; it was Christ whose voice shook the mount, Heb. xii. 26. But chiefly in regard of his inward work, as he is to be a fountain of wisdom to all the elect: 1 Cor. i. 30, 'But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom.' Men may teach the ear, but Christ must teach the heart. Blind men cannot see the sun though it shine ever so clearly. Light has come into the world, but darkness comprehends it not; we must have eyes as well as light, now it is only divine power can open the eye of our understanding, and give us spiritual illumination.

2. As for his kingly office a finite power would never suffice for that. Christ is to break the force of enemies, to raise the dead, to pour

out the Spirit, to bestow grace and glory ; all these are Christ's donatives as king of the church. As a king he is to be an original fountain of life to all the elect : ' As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me,' John vi. 57. All these things are the glory of God, which he will not give to another, and they cannot be performed by any but God. The creatures are limited ; they have not such a vastness in them, that out of their fulness we might receive grace for grace, as we do from Christ : John i. 16, ' Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace.'

3. For his priestly office, this shows he ought to be God. Of this there be two acts—his oblation and intercession.

[1.] For his oblation and sacrifice, he must offer up himself, one for all, and that but once, and that to expiate sin, and procure the favour of God for ever ; now who could do this but God ? He must offer up himself ; he must be priest as well as sacrifice, therefore must have a power over his own life, to lay it down, and take it up ; and that no creature hath ; for whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. And thus had Jesus Christ an absolute power of life and death over that nature he assumed ; therefore it is said, Heb. ix. 14, ' Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.' Then one must be offered for all : 2 Cor. v. 14, ' If one died for all, then were all dead.' Therefore that person which suffered was to be virtually all those for whom he suffered, that is, infinitely as good and better than all. Look, as they said to David, Thou art better than ten thousand of us, so Jesus Christ, that was given one for all, must be such a person as is better than all men. A general given in ransom will redeem thousands of private soldiers ; so the worth of Christ's person made him equivalent in dignity to the worth of all those whose persons he sustained. In all ages his death is a standing remedy ; God had more satisfaction than if angels and men had been made a sacrifice. And mark, it was done but once. The wages of sin was eternal death ; now something there must be to recompense and countervail the eternity of the punishment, and nothing could counterpoise this but the infiniteness and excellency of Christ's person ; therefore we are said to be redeemed by the blood of God : Acts xx. 28, ' Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood ;' that is, with the blood of that person that was God. It was necessary he should come out of his sufferings, for if he were always suffering we could have no assurance that God was satisfied. If our surety were not taken from prison and judgment, how should we know the debt was paid ? Isa. liii. 8. How shall this be reconciled, that he is to suffer but once, and but a while, and yet to do that which should countervail eternity ? It was because of the value of his person, as a payment in gold takes up lesser room than if paid in silver. Then his aim in all was to expiate sin, and nothing but an infinite good could remedy an infinite evil. The person wronged is infinite, so is the person suffering ; and then he was not only *ἀντίλυτρον*, a ransom to redeem us from hell, but *ἀντάλλαγμα*, a price given to God, to purchase for us heaven and eternal glory. An ordinary surety, if he pays the debt, he frees the debtor from bonds, and hath done his work ; but Jesus Christ was no ordinary surety ; he was to bring us to grace and favour with God, and to merit heaven for

us; now such a person as could lay an obligation upon God must needs be infinite.

[2.] Then for intercession, the other act of his priesthood. He that intercedes with God must be God, to know our wants and necessities. As the high priest had the names of the twelve tribes upon his breast and shoulders, Exod. xxxix. 8-14, so Jesus Christ hath the names of all the elect; he knows their desires, wants, conflicts; he is to negotiate with God in behalf of all believers, that he may despatch blessings suitable to their state. Now who can do this but God, who knows the hearts and tries the reins? Who could know our needs, our wants, our thoughts, sins, prayers, groans, desires, purposes, throughout all the world? Who can wait upon our business day and night, and continually interpose, that wrath do not break out upon us, but such an all-sufficient Saviour as he is?

Secondly, That he is God, and so fitted for this work. In times of delusion it is good to settle foundations, and give you grounds of faith. It may be a discourse upon the godhead of Christ men may think unnecessary: 1 John v. 20, 'This is the true God and eternal life;' Isa. ix. 6, 'The mighty God;' and here in the text he is called 'the great God;' Rom. ix. 5, 'God blessed for ever.' These proofs are so pregnant that they need no illustration. And certainly he is not God by grant or courtesy, but it doth unavoidably follow, if he be God, he must be so by nature, for the Lord will not give his glory to another. Nay, Col. ii. 9, 'In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,' that is, essentially; not only divine qualities, such as are infused into us, but the whole essence of the Godhead was in him as in its proper residence. Again, Phil. ii. 6, 'Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.' It was not a usurpation of another's right. And you know this doctrine Christ himself preached: John v. 18, 'Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.' Certainly when Christ said God was his Father, he did not mean it in an ordinary sense, as he is our God and Father, but as his eternal everlasting Son. Thus Christ is the great God.

Use 1. Let us observe the love of Christ in becoming man, and let us improve it.

1. Observe it. Men show love when they have another's picture about their necks. What love did Christ show when he took our natures! To see the great God in the form of a servant, hanging upon the cross, this is wonderful condescension. Christ's incarnation was a glorious contrivance: 1 Tim. iii. 16, 'Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh.' If God had not revealed it, it would have been blasphemy for us to think it. Angels stoop to see it, the prophets studied it again, how should the saints admire it! Among the friars they count it a mighty honour done to their order if a great prince, when he is weary of the world, cometh and taketh their habit, and dieth in their habit. Certainly it is a mighty honour to mankind that the Son of God should take upon him the nature of man, and die in our nature, and that the Word should not only be made flesh, but be made sin, and made a curse for us.

2. Improve it.

[1.] Let us be desirous to be made partakers of his nature, as he is of our nature : 2 Peter i. 4, ' Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye may be partakers of the divine nature.' Christ's partaking of our nature was his abasement ; the sun of righteousness went backward ; but our partaking of the divine nature is our preferment.

[2.] Let us use ourselves more honourably for Christ's sake. The Philistines would no more tread on that threshold on which their idol Dagon fell, 1 Sam. v. 5. Shall we defile that nature which the Son of God assumed? Certainly 'every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour,' 1 Thes. iv. 4.

Use 2. Here is an invitation to press us to come to Christ, or by Christ to God, Christ is worth a thousand of us. We are to seek a match for our master's Son. Our way to win you is to tell you what he is, that those who have given up their names to him may keep themselves as pure virgins till his coming : 2 Cor. xi. 2, ' I am jealous over you with godly jealousy ; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin unto Christ.' Now, that you may be wrought upon, I will tell you what he is. He is God-man in one person ; he is man, that you may not be afraid of him ; and God, that he may do you good. He is the Lord of lords, the King of kings, the heir of all things, the Saviour of the world, a proper object for your faith : 1 Peter i. 21, ' Who by him do believe in God, who raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.' He knows your wants, and is able to supply them ; yea, ' he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him ;' Heb. vii. 25. Though we are unworthy, yet he needeth no portion with us ; we can bring nothing to him, but he hath enough in himself, I am God all-sufficient ; as Esther had all things for her purification given her at the king's cost. Nay, it is danger to neglect him : Heb. xii. 25, ' See that ye refuse not him that speaketh ; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.' It is God woeth you ; he will take you with nothing ; you bring him nothing but necessity, but he will pay all your debts. Nay, nothing can hurt you as long as he is on your side : Rom. viii. 31, ' If God be for us, who can be against us ?' Do not leave, then, till you can say as Thomas, John xx. 28, ' My Lord and my God.' Take him, but give him the honour of a God, adoration, invocation, faith, and love.

Use 3. Direction.

1. If we would see God, let us look on Christ as we look on the sun in a bason of water. Christ is the character of his Father's person : Heb. i. 3, ' Who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.'

2. If we would see sin without horror and despair, let us look on Christ ; all the heavenly powers could not bring us into favour with God again.

Secondly, For the title of mercy and love. Christ is a Saviour as well as the great God. How is Christ the Saviour? Take it thus, positively as well as privatively ; he doth not only free us from misery, but gives us all spiritual blessings : Eph. i. 3, ' Blessed be the God and

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.' As he frees us from misery, so he gives us everlasting life: John iii. 16, 'That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Then he is a saviour, not only by way of deliverance, but by way of prevention; he doth not only break the snare, but keeps our feet from falling; he not only cures our diseases, as a physician when we are sick, but he leads, guides, and keeps us as a shepherd. We do not take notice of preventive mercy. How many times might we fall if we had not a saviour? Prevention is better than escape; better never meet with danger than be delivered out of danger. There is an invisible guard; we are not sensible of it, but the devil knows and is sensible of it: Job i. 10, 'Thou hast made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side.' Again, he is a saviour by way of merit and by way of power; not only to rescue us from Satan, but to redeem us to God. If a man would deliver a condemned person, it is not enough to take him by force out of the executioner's hands, but he must satisfy the judge. Thus hath Christ done, not only delivered us from the power of darkness, but God in Christ is well-pleased; he hath satisfied his Father's wrath. Again, before his exaltation he redeemed us, then he deserved our salvation, and afterwards he works our salvation. When he was upon earth he was a saviour by merit, therefore it is said we have salvation by his death: 1 Thes. v. 9, 'God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us.' And after his exaltation he works out our salvation, and so we are saved by his life: Rom. v. 10, 'Much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.' Living and dying he is ours, that so living and dying we might be his. Again, he saves not only for a while, so as we might be lost afterwards, but for ever; therefore it is called eternal salvation: Heb. v. 9, 'And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.' He saves us not only from temporal misery, but from hell and damnation; he saves not only the body, but the soul. Nay, he saves not only from hell, but the very fear of it: Heb. ii. 15, 'And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.' He not only delivers us from the hurt of death, but the fear of it. He doth not only give us heaven, but hope, and frees us from bondage and despair. He not only saves us from the evils after sin, but from the evil of sin. So Mat. i. 21, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins;' and there is the chief point of his salvation. In short, he not only saves us in part, but to the utmost: Heb. vii. 25, 'Wherefore he is able also to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him.' He not only gives us grace at first, but all things that are necessary to life and godliness.

Use 1. Bless God for Christ, that he hath taken the care of our salvation into his own hands. He would not trust an angel with it, none was fit for it but him: Isa. lix. 16, 'He saw, and there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his arm brought salvation unto him, and his righteousness it sustained him.' Christ did as it were look down from heaven, and say, Alas! there are poor creatures like to perish for want of a saviour; I will go down and

help them myself. Look, as when Jonah saw the storm, he said, 'Take me up, and cast me into the sea, and then shall the sea be calm to you,' Jonah i. 12; so when the Lord Christ saw the tempest raised, he said, Cast me into the sea. 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,' Heb. x. 9. The storm was raised for Jonah's sake, but we raised the storm, and yet Christ would be cast in to appease it; therefore bless God for Christ.

Use 2. Get an interest in him. Oh! be not quiet till you are able to say, Our Saviour. You can take no comfort in the great God until the next title follows, and you can call Christ your Saviour; but that is matter of joy and comfort: Luke i. 46, 47, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.'

But what shall we do that we may apply this?

1. Reject all other saviours: 'Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,' Acts iv. 12. Mark, when God threatened a deluge to sweep away the old world, there was no safety but in the ark; if the world had devised other ships, yet they would not hold out against the flood; so whatever you do, unless you close with Christ, and are grafted and implanted into Christ, as members of his body (for he is only the saviour of his body), you are not safe. But especially take heed of making a saviour of self, that we are wont to set up instead of Christ, of setting up the merit of thy works, and the power of thy nature; the one renounceth the humiliation of Christ, the other his exaltation. Be at a loss till you close with Christ, for Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. The sinking disciples cried, 'Lord, save us, we perish,' Mat. viii. 25. It is long ere God bringeth us to this. We never look after Christ till we are ready to perish and be undone. Why should we make choice of a saviour but in case of danger? Faith necessarily implies this, a renouncing ourselves, not in words, but in the temper and frame of our hearts. You cannot practise swimming on shore or on the firm land, but then we strive to swim when we are ready to perish in the flood; so when you are utterly lost in yourselves, then you will look after Christ.

2. Be earnest with God for an interest in Christ, and for the manifestation of it. Cry out with David, Ps. xxxv. 3, 'Say to my soul, I am thy salvation.' You must choose Christ as a Saviour. Faith is a consent to take Christ as God offers him; you must consent to the articles of the covenant of grace, that you will have no other Saviour but Christ: Lam. iii. 24, 'The Lord is my portion, saith my soul.' And go to God that he would ratify your choice by his consent; desire God that he would say, Amen, that Christ might be thy Saviour. You had better be a beast than a man if you have not an interest in this salvation. The death of a beast is the end of his woe and labour, but then yours begins. The greatest part of salvation is to be delivered from evil to come; therefore be earnest with God, that your interest in this salvation might be cleared up.
