

SERMON UPON GENESIS III. 15.*

It (i.e., the seed of the woman) shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.—GEN. iii. 15.

THESE words are a part of the gospel preached in paradise, or the first promise of grace and life made to mankind, now fallen and dead in sin. As God was cursing the serpent, he draweth out this comfort to our first parents, who were confounded with the sense of sin and their defection from God. Satan's condemnation is our salvation. He did the first mischief, therefore the crushing of his head giveth hope of our deliverance out of that state of misery into which he hath plunged us.

The words are dark in comparison of the larger explications of the grace of God by Jesus Christ which were after delivered to the church. Who would look for a great tree in a little seed? Yet the seminal virtue doth afterward diffuse and dilate itself into all those stately and lofty branches in which the fowls of the air do take up their lodging and shelter. So do these few words contain all the articles and mysteries of the christian faith, which are the fountains of our solid peace and consolation. In the seed of the woman is contained all the doctrine concerning the incarnation of the Son of God; in the bruising of his heel, his death and sufferings; in the crushing of the serpent's head, his glorious victory and conquest. As obscure as the words are, an eagle-eyed and discerning faith could pick a great deal of comfort out of them. The *οἱ πρεσβύτεροι*, 'the elders,' mentioned Heb. xi. 2, the antediluvian fathers, so famous throughout all ages for their faith and confidence in God, had no other gospel to live upon. Abel, that offered a better sacrifice than Cain, Enoch, that walked with God, Noah, that prepared the ark, did all that they did in the strength and upon the encouragement of this promise.

The words are considerable—

1. For the person who speaketh them, the Lord God himself, who was the first preacher of the gospel in paradise. The draught and plot was in his bosom long before, but now it cometh out of his mouth.

2. For the occasion when they were spoken. When God hath been but newly provoked and offended by sin, and man, from his creature and subject, was become his enemy and rebel, the offended God comes with a promise in his mouth. Adam could look for nothing but that God should repeat to him the whole beadroll of curses wherein he had

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involved himself, but God maketh known the great design of his grace. Once more, the Lord God was now cursing the serpent, and in the midst of the curses promiseth the great blessing of the Messiah. Thus doth God 'in wrath remember mercy,' Hab. iii. 2. Yea, man's sentence was not yet pronounced. The Lord God had examined him, ver. 8-10, but before the doom there breaketh out a promise of mercy. Thus mercy gets the start of justice, and triumpheth and rejoiceth over it in our behalf: James ii. 13, 'Mercy rejoiceth against judgment.'

3. They are considerable for their matter, for they intimate a victory over Satan, and that in the nature which was foiled so lately. Man by sin had not only incurred God's wrath, but put himself under the power of the devil, who had a legal power over fallen man, such as the executioner hath from the judge over the condemned person, and a tyrannical power by conquest, man being seduced by him from God. Therefore it is good news to hear of a victory over Satan, and that his power shall be destroyed.

In the former part of the verse you have the combat; in the text the success.

[1.] The conflict and combat: 'And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.' It cannot be understood of the hatred and antipathy between men and serpents, though that be alluded unto. To what end should God thunder curses and condemnation upon the serpent, a brute creature, that understood them not? Therefore it is meant of the war between the devil and mankind, Satan and his instruments; for wicked men are called his seed: John viii. 44, 'Ye are of your father the devil;' and Ignatius calleth Menander and Basilides, τὴν τοῦ κακοῦ ὄφιος παραφύοιδα, 'the spawn of the old serpent.' And on the other side, the seed of the woman, by way of eminency, Christ and his confederates. But I shall not consider the conflict now as carried on between the two seeds, but between the two heads, Christ the prince of life, and the devil 'who hath the power of death,' Heb. ii. 14. It was begun between the serpent and the woman; it is carried on between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent: but the conflict is ended by the destruction of one of the heads; the prince of death is destroyed by the prince of life.

[2.] The success and issue of the combat. Where observe—(1.) What the seed of the woman doth against the serpent, 'He shall bruise thy head;' (2.) What the serpent doth against the seed of the woman, 'Thou shalt bruise his heel.'

(1.) There is something common to both; for the word *bruised* is used promiscuously both of the serpent and the seed of the woman. In this war, as usually in all others, there are wounds given on both sides; the devil bruises Christ, and Christ bruises Satan.

(2.) There is a disparity of the event, 'He shall bruise thy head,' and 'Thou shalt bruise his heel;' where there is a plain allusion to treading upon a serpent. Wounds on the head are deadly to serpents, but wounds in the body are not so grievous and dangerous; and a serpent trod upon, seeketh to do all the mischief it can to the foot by which it is crushed. The wound given to the head is mortal, but the wound given to the heel may be healed. The seed of

the woman may be cured, but Satan's power cannot be restored. The devil cannot reach to the head, but the heel only, which is far from any vital part.

(1st.) For the first clause, 'It shall bruise thy head.' The seed of the woman crushed the serpent's head, whereby is meant the overthrow and destruction of his power and works: John xii. 31, 'Now shall the prince of this world be cast out;' 1 John iii. 8, 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.' The head being bruised, strength and life is perished. His kingdom and strength is his head; that is gone, that *κράτος θανάτου*, 'that power of death,' Heb. ii. 14, the power to deceive and detain captive souls: Col. i. 13, 'Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.'

(2d.) For the other clause, 'Thou shalt bruise his heel.' Where—
(1.) Note the intention of the serpent, who would destroy the kingdom of the Redeemer if he could; but he can only reach the heel, not the head. (2.) The greatness of Christ's sufferings; his heel was bruised, as he endured the painful, shameful, accursed death of the cross.

Doct. That Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman, is at enmity with Satan, and hath entered the lists with him; and though bruised in the conflict, yet he finally overcometh him, and subverteth his kingdom.

I. That Jesus Christ is the seed of the woman. That he is one of her seed is past doubt, since he was born of the Virgin, a daughter of Eve. That he is 'The seed,' the most eminent of all the stock, appeareth by the dignity of his person, God made flesh: John i. 14, 'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;' or, God manifested in the flesh,' 1 Tim. iii. 16. As also by his miraculous conception: Luke i. 35, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' So Mat. i. 23, 'A Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us.' He that was God-man in one person, and thus wonderfully conceived, without a male or company of man, might well be looked upon as the seed of the woman here spoken of. Now, if you ask what necessity there was that the conqueror should be the seed of the woman, because the flesh of Christ is the bread of life, and the food of our faith? I shall a little insist upon the conveniency and agreeableness of it.

1. That thereby he might be made under the law, which was given to the whole nature of man: Gal. iv. 4, 'God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.' He that came to repair our lost condition needed to subject himself to the precepts of God's law, that by obedience he might recover what by disobedience was lost, and might be to us a fountain and pattern of holiness in our nature; and therefore Christ in our nature truly subjected himself, and conformed himself to the law of God, that general and moral law which all men are obliged unto. He performed the duties of the first table: Luke ii. 49, 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' He took all occasions to glorify God. And the duties of the second table, as to his natural and reputed parents: Luke ii. 51, 'He went down with them, and was subject to them.'

2. That he might in the same nature suffer the penalty and curse of

the law, as well as fulfil the duty of it, and so make satisfaction for our sins, which as God he could not do. He was 'made sin for us,' 2 Cor. v. 21, and was 'made a curse for us,' Gal. iii. 13; Phil. ii. 8, 'He became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.' There was a curse denounced against those who yielded not personal obedience; and he came in the sinner's room to undergo it, that the justice of God might be eminently demonstrated, the lawgiver vindicated, and the breach that was made in the frame of government repaired, and God manifested to be holy, and an hater of sin, and yet the sinner saved from destruction.

3. That in the same nature which was foiled he might conquer Satan. As a tempter he conquered him hand to hand in a personal conflict, repelling his temptations, Mat. iv. As a tormentor, and one that had the power of death, so he conquered him by his death on the cross: Heb. ii. 14, 'Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.' Christ would stoop to the greatest indignities to free us from this enemy, and to put mankind again into a condition of safety and happiness, that he having conquered, they might also conquer.

4. That he might take compassion of our infirmities, having experimented them in his own person. Therefore he assumed human nature that he might have assurance of this: Heb. ii. 17, 18, 'Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining unto God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.' We have now assurance that he will pity us, more than one who is a stranger to our blood. He hath had trial of our nature and our miseries and temptations, and will be more sensible of the heart of a tempted man, and will mind and attend upon our business as his own.

5. That he might take possession of heaven for us in our nature: John xiv. 2, 3, 'I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.' The devil comes to depress our nature, and Christ came to exalt it; he endeavoured to make us lose paradise, and Christ gave us heaven. Man fallen is strangely haunted with doubts about the other world. Now he that came to save us and heal us did himself in our nature rise from the dead, that he might give us a visible demonstration of the life to come, which he had promised to us, that we might more regard the offer. He himself hath seized upon it, that the rest of the seed may be possessed of it; and hath carried our nature thither, that in time our persons may be translated.

6. That after he had been a sacrifice for sin, and conquered death by his resurrection, he might also triumph over the devil, and lead captivity captive, and give gifts to men in the very act of his ascension into heaven: Eph. iv. 8, 'Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.' Having foiled his enemies on the cross, it is fit he should triumph over them, to assure the world of his conquest, and give such a measure of his gifts

and graces to his church as might help them to scatter the ranks of the battle. His victory is shown to be complete as to the head; and as to the rest of the seed of the woman, who are all willing to enter into confederacy with him, he hath left ordinances and an almighty Spirit, that they may get to heaven after him.

II. That Christ is at enmity with Satan, and hath entered into the conflict with him.

1. We must state the enmity between Christ and his confederates, and Satan and his instruments. For it is said in the beginning of the verse, 'I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed;' which is principally to be understood of the Lord Christ, and of his confederates in the second place; against Satan in the first place, and his instruments on the other side. There is a double enmity which Christ hath against Satan, and so he undertakes the war against him as contrary to his nature and office.

[1.] There is a perfect enmity between the nature of Christ and the nature of the devil. The nature of Satan is sinful, murderous, and destructive; for it is said, he was 'a liar and murderer from the beginning,' John viii. 44; and 1 John iii. 8, 'He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning: for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil;' again, ver. 12, 'Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother: and wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.' Now the nature of Christ is quite contrary. It is the devil's work to do all the hurt that he can to the bodies and souls of men; and it is Christ's work to do good, and only good: Acts x. 38, 'God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the devil; for God was with him.' Christ did nothing by way of malice and revenge; he used not the power that he had to make men blind or lame, or to kill any; no, not his worst enemies, when he could easily do it, and justly might have done it. No; he went up and down giving sight to the blind, limbs to the lame, health to the sick, life to the dead. He rebuked his disciples when they tempted him to destroy some for their contempt by calling for fire from heaven, telling them they 'know not what manner of spirit they were of; for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them,' Luke ix. 55, 56. It was unlike his spirit and design. All his miracles were acts of relief and favour, not pompous, not destructive; bating only two, the blasting the unfruitful fig-tree, which was an emblematical warning to the Jews, and suffering the devil to enter into the herd of swine, which was a necessary demonstration of the devil's malice and destructive cruelty, who, if he could not afflict and destroy men, would enter into the herd of swine, that the poor creatures might perish in the sea. Thus there was a perfect contrariety of nature between Christ and Satan.

[2.] An enmity proper to his office and design. For he came 'to destroy the works of the devil,' 1 John iii. 8; and was set up to dissolve that sin and misery which he had brought upon the world. The devil sought the misery and destruction of mankind, but Christ sought our salvation. Satan is the great destroyer of the creation, and Christ

is the repairer of it. Now salvation and destruction are diametrically opposite; so are the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan, the function and office of Christ as a saviour, and the purpose and design of the devil as Abaddon, the destroyer. And therefore Christ proveth that he had not the least confederacy with Satan; for 'then his kingdom would be divided against itself, and how could it stand?' Mat. xii. 25, 26. It was impossible the Saviour could befriend the destroyer, or the destroyer the Saviour. No; their ends and designs are perfectly opposite.

Now, as there is such an enmity between Christ and Satan, so there is between the rest of the confederates on either side.

(1.) An enmity or contrariety of nature. The seed of the serpent inherits his venomous qualities; for as these are an estate opposite to God, so they are to the people of God, and seek their destruction by all cruel and bloody means. All people of a false religion, whether infidels, idolaters, or heretics, are of bloody and desperate principles, their minds being efferrated by their false religion, and the influence of their great guide and leader, who is the devil: Jude 11, 'They have gone in the way of Cain.'

Let me instance in antichrist and his abettors and adherents, who is the devil's eldest son. Witness their bloody practices that have been acted on the stage of Christendom for so many years. What a deal of blood hath been sucked by these leeches in England in Queen Mary's days, in Germany, France, and the Netherlands! Witness of late their horrible slaughters in Ireland, Piedmont, and the hellish powder plot, the deliverance from which we commemorate this day; this was a flash of their malice, by which they would have blown up the whole state at once. On the other side, Christ conveyeth his holy, meek, and lamb-like nature to his sincere worshippers and followers. There is indeed a contrariety of nature to the carnal, so as they do not run with them into the same excess of riot, so as their righteous souls are vexed with the impure conversation of the wicked, so as they are grieved to see people go by droves to hell, and list themselves in the devil's service. But there is no destructive enmity. If they hate the wicked, it is with an hatred opposite to the love of complacency, but not with an hatred opposite to the love of good-will. There is an enmity to Satan, and his works, yet a pity to the persons inveigled and deceived by him. The wicked hate that holy disposition which is in the hearts of God's people, and therefore malign and persecute them. But on the other side there is a contrariety of disposition: Prov. xxix. 27, 'An unjust man is an abomination to the just, and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked.' There is *odium offensionis*, but not *inimicitie*; an hatred of offence, but not of enmity. They bear with them with patience, pursue their recovery, strive to rescue poor captives out of the snares of the devil, but aim not at their destruction: 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26, 'In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.'

(2.) There is an enmity of design. As Christ actually employeth any as soldiers to fight under his banner, so they participate of the

enmity of his design and office. Every private christian is one of Christ's soldiers; for we give up our faculties and powers as weapons: Rom. vi. 13, 'Yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments,' or weapons, ὄπλα, of righteousness unto God.' And the graces of the Spirit are called armour of light: Rom. xiii. 12, 'Let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.' And we are bidden 'to put on the whole armour of God, because we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,' Eph. vi. 11, 12. The ministers and those in a public station are leaders under Christ the general, and are by office and employment engaged in this warfare against the kingdom of the devil. And therefore the apostle biddeth Timothy to 'endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ,' 2 Tim. ii. 3; and the apostle says, 2 Cor. x. 4, 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God for the pulling down of strongholds.' They must set themselves against the devil and his kingdom.

2. The enmity being such between the seeds, Christ sets upon his business to destroy Satan's power and works.

[1.] His power. Satan hath a twofold power over fallen man—legal and usurped.

(1.) The legal power is that which the apostle calleth the power of death, and the terrors which follow upon it: Heb. ii. 14, 15, 'That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.' The devil hath no power, as a judge, to condemn sinners: he is not *dominus mortis*, the Lord of death; but *minister mortis*, the minister of death; for, being condemned of God, the poor sinner is put into his hand that he may either terrify or stupefy him, and so more and more involve him in the curse of God's broken law; and also he may hasten his death and everlasting destruction.

(2.) Satan hath a tyrannical usurped power. So the devils are called 'rulers of the darkness of this world,' Eph. vi. 12, the blind, idolatrous, superstitious world; and Satan is called 'The prince of this world,' John xiv. 30, and 'The God of this world,' 2 Cor. iv. 4. God made him an executioner, but we make him a prince, a ruler, and a God. Now Christ, as a priest, disannulleth his legal power by his death and the merit of his sacrifice; and Christ, as a true king, and head both of men and angels, pulls down Satan as an usurper, delivers the poor captive souls out of his power; and as a prophet he discovereth his cheats and delusions.

[2.] His works. There is a twofold work of Satan—the work of the devil without us, or the work of the devil within us.

(1.) The work of the devil without us is a false religion, or those idolatries and superstitions by which Satan's reign and empire is upheld in the world. This is destroyed by the doctrine of the gospel, accompanied with the all-powerful Spirit of God. And therefore, when the gospel was first preached by Christ's messengers, the devil fell from that great and unlimited power which he had before in the world:

Luke x. 18, 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.' It is an allusion to his first fall; as lightning flasheth and vanisheth, and never recollecteth itself again, so 'Now shall the prince of this world be cast out,' John xii. 31. When Christ did first set upon the redemption of mankind, the apostles went abroad to beat the devil, and hunt him out of his territories; and they did it with great effect. Therefore this is made one argument by which the Spirit doth convince us of the truth of the gospel: John xvi. 11, 'He shall convince the world of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.' The silencing of his oracles, the suppressing of his superstitions, the destroying of the kingdom of wickedness and darkness, was an apparent evidence of the truth of the gospel. The old religion, by which the devil's kingdom was supported everywhere, went to wrack, no more the same temples, the same rites, the same gods; all was made to stoop and bow before God as worshipped in Christ.

(2.) There is the work of the devil within us. This concerneth the recovering particular persons out of the snare of the devil, who were taken captive by him at his will and pleasure. Here we must distinguish between the purchase and application. The purchase was made when Christ died: Col. ii. 15, 'Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it;' that is, on his cross. Christ's death was Satan's overthrow; then was the deadly blow given to his power and kingdom. This was the price given for our ransom, and the great means of disannulling all that power Satan had before. The application is begun in our conversion; for then we are said to be turned from Satan unto God: Acts xxvi. 18, 'To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.' Then we are rescued out of the devil's clutches, and adopted into God's family, that, being made children, we may have a child's portion.

III. That in this conflict his heel was wounded, bitten, or bruised by the serpent.

1. Certain it is that Christ was bruised in the enterprise; which showeth how much we should value our salvation, since it costs so dear as the precious blood of the Son of God incarnate: 1 Peter i. 18, 19, 'Forasmuch as ye know that 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.' He thought not his whole humiliation, from first to last, too much for the overthrowing of the devil's kingdom, nor any price too dear to redeem poor captive souls.

2. But how was he bruised by the serpent? Certainly on the one hand Christ's sufferings were the effects of man's sin and God's hatred against sin and his governing justice; for it is said, Isa. liii. 10, 'It pleased the Father to bruise him.' Unless it had pleased the Lord to bruise him, Satan could never have bruised him. On the other side, they were also the effects of the malice and rage of the devil and his instruments, who was now with the sword's-point and closing stroke with Christ, and doing the worst he could against him. In his whole life he endured many outward troubles from Satan's instruments; for all his life long he was a man of sorrows, wounded and bruised by Satan.

and his instruments: John viii. 44, 'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.' But the closing stroke was at last; then did the serpent most eminently bruise his heel. When Judas contrived the plot, it is said, the devil entered into him: Luke xxii. 3, 'Then entered Satan into Judas Iscariot, being one of the twelve.' When the high priest's servants come to take him, he telleth them, Luke xxii. 53, 'This is your hour, and the power of darkness.' The power of darkness at length did prevail so far as to cause his shameful death; this was their day.

3. It was only his heel that was bruised. It could go no further; for though his bodily life was taken away, yet his head and mediatory power was not touched: Acts ii. 36, 'This same Jesus whom ye have crucified, God hath made both Lord and Christ.' Again, his bodily life was taken away but for awhile. God would not leave his soul in the grave: Ps. xvi. 10, 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.' The counsel and purpose of God concerning man's redemption had then been wholly frustrated: 'For if Christ be not risen, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins,' 1 Cor. xv. 17. Once more, though Christ was bruised, yet he was not conquered. When the Jews and Roman soldiers were spoiling him, and parting his garments, then was he spoiling principalities and powers; and when Satan and his instruments were triumphing over the Son of God, then was he triumphing over all the devils in hell, for by death he destroyed him that had the power of death. This was a necessary means of conquest; and Christ must overcome Satan by suffering himself to be overcome visibly by him. The devil doth not conquer Christ by death, but Christ doth conquer him. And still all the temptations of the devil are but the wounding of the heel; the loss is not great to Christ or his members: as Dan is compared to 'a serpent by the way, or an adder in the path, that biteth the horse-heels, so that his rider shall fall backward, Gen. lxix. 17. Such is the craft of Satan; he doth not usually bring temptations before our reason, but they enter in at the backdoor of sensual appetite; but though he bite the heel, the life of grace is secured. Satan prevailed so far against Christ that his wicked instruments brought him to the cross, pursued him to the death there. But, 2 Cor. xiii. 4, 'Though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God;' or, as it is in 1 Peter iii. 18, 'Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.' So for christians, he may divers ways wound and afflict us in our outward interests, but the inner man is safe: 2 Cor. iv. 16, 'Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.' Nay, we may be bruised in the heel by divers temptations and slips into sin; yet the vitals of grace are not hurt, there is no total extinction of our love to God.

I should come now to the fourth branch, that though Christ was bruised in the conflict, yet it endeth in Satan's total overthrow. His heel was bruised, but Satan's head was crushed. But of that anon.

In the meantime, by way of use, let me press you cheerfully to remember and celebrate this victory of Christ. The duty we are

engaging in is an eucharist, and we come to rejoice in God our Saviour. Let me bespeak you, in the psalmist's words, Ps. cxviii. 1, 'O sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvellous things; his right hand and his holy arm have gotten him the victory;' or, Ps. cxviii. 15, 16, 'The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacle of the righteous; the right hand of the Lord doth valiantly; the right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord doth valiantly;' Ps. cvi. 2, 'Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? who can show forth all his praise?'

[1.] The conqueror is the seed of the woman, or the Son of God incarnate. Oh! let us bless God for so great a mercy: Luke i. 68-76, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.' What! shall the Son of God come from heaven to subdue the kingdom of Satan, and to deliver men from this bondage, and we be no more affected with it?

[2.] The manner of overcoming; it is by suffering a shameful, painful, and accursed death: Rev. i. 5, 6, 'Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests to God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.' Again, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing,' Rev. v. 12; and ver. 9, 'For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;' that by a death which he deserved not he should destroy the death which we deserved.

[3.] Who is overcome? The devil: Rev. xiii. 10, 'Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night;' ver. 11, 'And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death;' ver. 12, 'Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them: woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea; for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.' O christians! what will raise your hearts in thanksgiving to God, if not these three arguments which I have plainly mentioned to you? for the matter needeth no descants. The incarnation of the Son of God, who came as the seed of the woman, that he might free mankind from the power the devil had over them by sin. Then the merit and satisfaction of our Saviour, for he was bruised in his heel. And then the dissolution of Satan's power, and the freeing of mankind out of his hands, either as a tempter or a tormentor.

[4.] The effects of the victory when it is applied to us. I shall mention three—

(1.) Our conversion to God, and the destruction of sin in our hearts, or our actual deliverance from Satan: Luke xi. 21, 22, 'When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.' This was our case; all was in a sinful quiet and peace. When wind and tide go together, no wonder if their be a calm. Satan's suggestions and our corruptions suited the one with the other. But blessed be God that this carnal security is disturbed, that the kingdom of God is come upon us; that Christ, by a sacred rescue, hath dispossessed Satan, and destroyed sin. Oh! let us 'give thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son,' Col. i. 12, 13.

(2.) Remission of sins: Acts xxvi. 18, 'To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified, by faith that is in me;' Col. i. 13, 14, 'Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.' Christ's subjects have the privileges of his kingdom. Now 'bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name: bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who pardoneth all thy iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases,' Ps. ciii. 1-3.

(3.) Our own personal victory over Satan's temptations. In part now. We renew that covenant now, wherein we engaged to fight against Satan: 1 John ii. 14, 'I have written unto you young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.' Fully hereafter: Rom. xvi. 20, 'The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.' The God of peace, as pacified in Christ. Now this is matter of thanksgiving: 1 Cor. xv. 57, 'Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ;' that Christ will take us along with him in his triumphant chariot, and help our weak faith and faint hope, and that we may conquer the tempter and accuser.

IV. Though Christ's heel was bruised in the conflict, yet it endeth in Satans final overthrow; for his head was crushed, which noteth the subversion of his power and kingdom.

To explain this, we must consider—(1.) What is the power of Satan; (2.) How far Satan was destroyed by Christ.

First, What is the power of Satan? It lieth in sin. And Christ destroyed him, as he 'made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness, and made reconciliation for iniquities,' Dan. ix. 24; namely, as he reconciled man to God, and restored God's image and life eternal. In short, the power of Satan may be considered either as to single persons, or his interest in the corrupt world, or the sinful race of apostate Adam, who in their degenerate estate make up a confederacy or party, that may be called the kingdom of the devil.

1. As to single and individual persons; all his power over them is by reason of sin, which was introduced by his subtlety and malice.

There are three things in sin—the power, the guilt, the being.

Whilst any of these remain, Satan hath some power; and all these Christ came to dissolve, but by several means and at several times.

[1.] The devil's power lieth in the corruption of our natures; for men continuing in the apostasy from God are of Satan's party: Eph. ii. 1-3, 'And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in time past ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind.' This was the power that Satan had over us, to rule us and govern us by the lusts of the flesh. This was our daily walk and trade, without any remorse for it, or any desire to change our condition. And we are the more confirmed in it by the general and corrupt example of those among whom we live. Now, whilst we follow these sinful motions and suggestions, Satan is our prince and God; the corrupt nature maketh us readily to entertain his motions, and we 'are taken captive by him at his will and pleasure,' 2 Tim. ii. 26.

Now how doth Christ take away this power?

I answer—By converting grace, which is not only a turning from sin to God, but from Satan to God: Acts xxvi. 18, 'To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God;' whereby the reign of sin is broken; for as long as sin reigneth, Satan is in peaceable possession: Luke xi. 21, 'When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace;' and the devil, who hath lost his seat in heaven, hath still a throne in the hearts of men, and lords it over them as his slaves. Now the reign of sin is broken when Christ puts an enmity into your hearts against it: 'I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed;' for sin dieth as your love to it dieth, and is mortified and subdued as your enmity increaseth. Well, then, they that are converted to God are possessed with a spirit of enmity to Satan and his ways, such as they had not before whilst they remained in the degenerate estate. Therefore it is said, Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 'A new heart will I also give to you, and a new spirit will I put within you;' such as none else have till the Redeemer work upon them: 1 Cor. ii. 12, 'We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God.' The spirit which possesseth the generality of men is the worldly spirit that inclineth to earthly and sensual satisfactions; but this Spirit maketh them look after the great things promised by Christ, and the great things required by Christ; in short, a spirit quite opposite to the satanical spirit. The satanical spirit is contrary to God and man. To God: Col. i. 21, 'And you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.' To man: James iv. 5, 'The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy.' But this spirit begetteth in us love to God and man, that we may seek his glory and the good of others. Now till this spirit be planted in us, we have not changed parties and masters. The being of sin is found in all, but the reign only in the unconverted; therefore the reign of sin must be broken by the dwelling of this spirit in us. Sin will put strongly for the throne again, but you must pray earnestly: Ps. cxix. 133, 'Order my steps in thy word;

and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.' And watch constantly, as ever mindful of your baptismal vow and covenant: Rom. vi. 11, 'Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' And then you will find Christ overcoming more and more the satanical spirit, and enlarging you into the liberty of God's children.

[2.] The guilt of sin, which is an obligation to punishment, and ariseth from the sentence of condemnation pronounced by the law against sinners. Our misery ariseth first from the violation of the precept of the law, and then from the sanction and penalty threatened. And so also therein lieth Satan's power, as we are obnoxious to the wrath of God; for therein he is the minister and executioner of death, as God maketh use of all his creatures according to their inclination. And so this wrathful revengeful creature is the instrument of his wrath. He hath an advantage against us by the law of God, the precepts whereof we have broken, and so incurred the penalty; and so Satan cometh on as one that hath the power of death. Those obstinate and careless souls who refuse the government of the Lord's grace and spirit are put into his hands; as 'when the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him,' 1 Sam. xvi. 14. He doth or may terrify and afright the consciences of men with the dreadful expectation of death and the consequences of it, especially the sick and the dying. He that formerly tempted then beginneth to trouble; and he that formerly showed you the pleasant baits of sin will then show you the hook; he who now representeth pardon easy, will then represent it as impossible. And when death cometh, he hath power to hale away the sinner to torments; for as the good angels carry the souls of the faithful to Christ, Luke xvi. 22, 23, so probably the devil hath a power to carry them to hell. Now, as the devil hath this power of death, he bringeth men into sin that he may bring them into terror. Yea, Satan hath a great hand in the troubles of conscience which befall God's children.

Well, then, how is this power destroyed? By satisfying the law, Christ destroyeth the power of the devil. For first, 'he blotted out the handwriting that was against us,' and then 'spoiled principalities and powers,' Col. ii. 14, 15. And when he doth actually justify, we feel the comfort and benefit of it: Rom. viii. 33, 34, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who shall condemn? 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.' Our advocate is more gracious in court than our accuser. Having paid our ransom, and interceding for us and pleading it, what accusation from the law can stand against those who have embraced this gospel?

[3.] The being of sin; for while it remaineth there is somewhat of Satan left which he worketh upon. There is a remnant of his seed in the best: the godly are yet in the way, but not at the end of the journey; and therefore he hath leave to assault them while they are here; but Christ will perfect the conquest which he has begun, and so the very being of sin shall at length be taken away: Jude 24, 'To him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the

presence of his glory ;' and Eph. v. 27, 'That he might present it to himself, a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish.' At death sin is totally disannulled, the physician of our souls will then perfect the cure. As in the first moment of our birth we were sinners, so in the moment of our expiration all sin dieth. Christ taketh that time to finish his work. No sinner can enter into the state of bliss ; but the veil of the flesh being rent, we are immediately admitted into the sight of God, and so made exactly perfect.

2. As to the general case, or his interest in the corrupt world. It is true the kingdom of Satan yet remaineth ; but he doth and shall divide the spoil with the strong : Isa. liii. 12, 'Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.' And though his doctrine and religion meeteth with opposition in the world, yet it doth prevail upon opposition, and against opposition, and by opposition ; when in the seasons of it he cometh to set his kingdom on foot : Rev. vi. 2, 'I saw a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him ; and he went forth conquering and to conquer.' This is an emblematical representation of the rise and progress of Christ's kingdom. Where you may note his furniture, a crown and a bow. The crown noteth his dignity, the bow his armour and strength : Ps. xlv. 3-5, 'Gird on thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty, with thy glory and majesty ; and in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness ; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things : thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies, whereby the people fall under thee.' Christ having the grant of a kingdom over the nations, is every way furnished with power to obtain it, by means proper to the mediatory dispensation, by his word, Spirit, and providence.

[1.] His word, which is called 'The rod of his strength,' Ps. cx. 2 ; 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God,' 2 Cor. x. 4. When Christ will work, the world cannot resist its convincing power ; those that feel it not fear it : John iii. 20, 'Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.'

[2.] His Spirit. Now what can stand before the mighty Spirit of God, convincing men of the truth of his religion ? John xvi. 8-11, 'And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment : of sin, because they believe not on me : of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more : of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.' Showing hereby Christ was the Messiah, and therefore they were guilty of great sin who did not believe on him ; that he was a righteous and innocent person, and no seducer, because Christ rose from the dead and went to the Father ; that he was an exalted prince, above Satan, and whatever things were looked upon as divine powers. Many that were not converted were convinced of this.

[3.] His providence. All judgment was put into Christ's hands, to be improved for the advancement of his mediatory kingdom : John v. 22, 'For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son.' He hath the government of all things, angels, and

all events that fall out in the world. None of the creatures are left to their own arbitrament or uncertain contingences, but under the government of a supreme providence, which is left in Christ's hands. Thus you see, though the devil's interest be held up by the combined interests of the world agreeing together to promote the idolatries and superstitions wherewith he hath inspired them, yet Christ is able to break and dissolve all this force and power.

Secondly, How far was Satan destroyed or his head crushed?

1. Negatively.

[1.] *Non ratione essentie*, not to take away his life and being. No; there is a devil still, and shall be, even when the whole work of Christ's redemption is finished; for then it is said, Rev. xx. 10, 'The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.' So Mat. xxv. 41, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' Then eternal judgment is executed on the head of the wicked state. Sentence was passed before, and the devil feareth it: Mat. viii. 29, 'Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?' He was condemned before, but then it is executed upon him; he is finally punished, and shall for ever remain with the damned.

[2.] *Non ratione malitiæ*, not in regard of malice; for the enmity ever continueth between the two seeds, and Satan will be doing though it be always to loss: 1 John iii. 8, 'The devil sinneth from the beginning.' Therefore he is not so destroyed as if he did no more desire the ruin and destruction of men. He is as malicious as ever. The devil is always at the old trade of destroying souls, and watcheth all advantages, and observeth our motions and inclinations, to make use of them.

2. Affirmatively, it remaineth that it is *ratione potentie*, in regard of his power. But the question returneth, How far is his power destroyed? for he still governeth the wicked, and possesseth a great part of the world. Therefore the devils are called, Eph. vi. 12, 'The rulers of the darkness of this world.' He molesteth the godly, whether considered singly and apart, or in their communities and societies. Singly and apart he may sometimes trouble them and sorely shake them, as wheat is winnowed in a sieve: Luke xxii. 31, 'Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.' And in their communities and societies: Ps. cxxix. 1, 2, 'Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: many a time have they afflicted me from my youth.'

Ans. Though he may afflict and molest the people of God, yet he cannot totally prevail over them.

[1.] There is enough done by way of merit to break the power of Satan, or that whole kingdom of darkness which is united under one head called the devil. The price and ransom is fully paid for captive souls: 'The Lamb of God taketh away the sin of the world,' John i. 29. There need no more to be done by way of merit and satisfaction to bruise the serpent's head and to dissolve that woful work which he hath introduced into the world. Now, not only the comfort of particular believers is ascribed to the death of Christ, but the success of the

gospel over false religions; as 1 Peter i. 18, 'Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ.' He purchased the power of recovering souls out of their apostasy at a dear rate. Therefore, though the superstitions of the world were entailed on people by a long descent, yet when we go forth to preach the gospel in the virtue and value of the blood of Christ, that will work mighty wonders for the destruction of the kingdom of the devil.

[2.] Christ is upon the throne, and we are under his protection; therefore the devil cannot totally prevail as to those who have interest in him. As to single believers: John x. 28, 'None is able to pluck them out of my hand.' Or as to their communities and societies: Mat. xvi. 18, 'Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' The gates of hell signify the power and policy of hell, for there was their armoury and their counsel. Christ expecteth their most subtle and furious assaults, but all should be but as the dashing of waves against a rock, end in foam, and shame to the aggressors and assailants. So that besides his merit on the cross, there is his power in heaven, as now sitting upon the throne.

[3.] The victory is carried on so as that our duty and trials may not be excluded.

(1.) Though Satan's head be crushed, yet still there is room for our duty, that we may use the means for our safety, as good soldiers of Christ, and live as in a continual fight. These are set down, 1 Peter v. 8, 9, 'Be sober and vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist steadfast in the faith.'

(1st.) Sobriety, or an holy moderation as to the comforts and delights of the present life. The devil, the flesh, and the world are in conspiracy. By the baits of the world he enticeth our flesh to a neglect of God and heavenly things; therefore we must use the world as if we used it not, lest our hearts be burdened and depressed, and disabled from seeking after our great end and happiness.

(2d.) Vigilancy and watchfulness is necessary, that we may stand upon our guard, avoiding snares, and forecasting hazards, lest we fall as a ready prey into the mouth of the tempter: 1 Cor. xvi. 13, 'Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men, be strong.' The first point of a christian soldier is to watch; conscience must stand porter at the door, examining what cometh in and what goeth out. The devil watcheth all advantages against us, that he may spy where we are weakest; and if the enemy watch and we sleep, we cannot be safe.

(3d.) Steadfast resistance in the faith. When we are yielding, Satan gets ground; but when we believingly and steadfastly resist, he is discouraged. This steadfast resistance in the faith is—(1.) Adhering to the privileges of the gospel as our happiness; (2.) Persevering in the duties thereof as our work; resolving not to let go our hold, but by patient continuance in well-doing to wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus unto eternal life. Now if Christ should so destroy the devil as to exempt from this duty, the whole gospel would be in vain, and the

promises and precepts of it to no purpose, and all the furniture of grace which Christ hath purchased for us and promised to us be lost and useless. Surely Christ hath not so crushed the serpent's head but that we need to be sober and watchful and steadfast in the faith ; otherwise we were not his soldiers, but his enemies.

(2.) Not to exempt us from trials of our sincerity. God will have all obedience to be tried and honoured by opposition, and sometimes by sharp and grievous opposition : Rev. ii. 10, 'The devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried.' Thus Job was remitted to Satan for his trial : chap. i. 12, 'And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power.' And Paul had his messenger of Satan for his trial, to see what shift he could make, with sufficient internal grace under outward and vexatious evils, 2 Cor. xii. 7-10. Now better undergo the fiery trial than the fiery torment. Tried we are then, but not destroyed. God may let loose the wolf to drive us into the fold, and exercise us with temptations, but not suffer us to be overwhelmed.

[4.] In the external management of the mediatorial kingdom there are many vicissitudes and interchanges of the outward condition of the church. Sometimes God doth notably defeat Satan and his instruments, and the devil's kingdom visibly goeth to wrack ; as at the first promulgation of the gospel, though the world was captivated under Satan, rooted in former superstitions, yet Christ prevailed and got ground by the rod of his strength and the word of his kingdom, though Satan everywhere had his temples wherin he was worshipped and his oracles were resorted to with great reverence. Till the Hebrew child silenced him, he ate the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink-offerings, yea, often the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to him ; yet all of a sudden his strongholds were demolished, the idols broken, whom they and their fathers had worshipped and prayed unto in their distresses and adversities, and blessed in their prosperities ; the temples broken down, the altars polluted and set at nought, and the world turned from these vanities to the living God. But a little while after the fires were kindled, and the professors of the true religion were butchered and slaughtered ; but then 'they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and not loving their lives unto the death,' Rev. xii. 11. So that when the church seemed weakest and her enemies strongest, then she had more for her than against her. When Satan's instruments were killing christians, then they were pulling down Satan's throne and advancing Christ's ; so that it is better to be a simple soldier on Christ's side than commander of a whole army against him. When the persecutors had done, Satan raised up heretics in the church, as worms that bred in the body, and devoured it ; yet Christ confounded them, and in a little time brake each sect in pieces, and those that were the great scourge and vexation of one age were scarce known to the next but by their names and some obscure reports. The light of the gospel did soon scatter these mists as soon as they did arise. Last of all came the great apostasy of antichristianism, whereby the simplicity of the christian doctrine was turned into school niceties, the worship of the gospel into a theatrical pomp and the pageantry of ridiculous ceremonies, and

the discipline of the church into a temporal domination ; and all this supported by the blood of the saints and worldly grandeur, and the combined interests of many popish nations. And here are the ebbs and flows between the two shores of Christ and antichrist amongst us. You know by what a bloody design Hagar the bondwoman, that was cast out, sought to weaken and vaunt it over Sarah ; but the Lord broke the snare, and our foot is escaped.

[5.] If the promised seed had not bruised the serpent's head the world had been in a worse case than it is. There is some conviction and restraint where conversion taketh not place. Consider how Satan reigneth where Christ hath not pursued him with his gospel, or where Christ hath withdrawn his gospel for the ingratitude of men. Surely there is a difference between the places where people live in the dregs of christianity, and there where the devil is worshipped and idolatry set up.

[6.] Though there be not a total destruction of the kingdom of Satan, yet it is in an absolute subjection to the throne of the mediator. The kingdom of sin and Satan are so far destroyed as not to hinder the demonstration of mercy to the elect, and as to be subservient to the demonstration of his justice to others, who neglect or contemn the remedy offered, which is God's great design that the elect may obtain, though the rest be hardened.

[7.] That in time Christ will destroy all opposite reigns and kingdoms. He doth some sooner, others later ; but there will be an universal and absolute subjection to Christ at the day of judgment. Infernal spirits shall then bow the knee to him, Phil. ii. 10, with Rom. xiv. 10, 11, and that with Isa. xlv. 23. Then saints shall judge angels, 1 Cor. vi. 2, and the whole mystery of iniquity will then be finished and come to nothing.

Use 1. Thankfulness and praise to our mediator. The eternal God hath selected a people from the rest of the world to praise him for the mystery of his love here in the assemblies of his people ; for ' God inhabiteth the praises of Israel,' Ps. xxii. 3 ; and hereafter, that he may have the thanks of his glorified saints for ever. Consider to this end how Satan's design is crossed and counterworked in the mystery of our redemption.

1. Satan's design was to dishonour God by a false representation, as if envious of man's happiness : Gen. iii. 5, ' God doth know that in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' And so to weaken the esteem of God's goodness. Now in the work of our redemption God is wonderfully magnified, and represented as amiable to man ; not envying our knowledge and delight, but promoting it by all means, even with great care and cost : 1 John iv. 8, ' God is love.'

2. To depress the nature of man, that in innocency stood so near God. Now that the human nature, so depressed and abased by the malicious suggestions of the devil, should be so elevated and advanced, and be set up far above the angelical nature, and admitted to dwell with God in a personal union, oh ! let us now cheerfully remember and celebrate this victory of Christ. Our praise now is a pledge of our everlasting triumph. This table is spread for us in the sight of our

enemies, and we come to have intimate communion and fellowship with him at his table.

Use. 2. To exhort us to make use of Christ's help for our recovery out of the defection and apostasy of mankind. Oh! let Satan be crushed in you, and the old carnal nature destroyed. He that so willingly entered into the conflict on the cross, though his heel were bruised, will as willingly employ the power of the Spirit to help you; the one was in order to the other. Christ doth not only enter upon the work by conquest, but hath much to do with every individual person before he can settle his kingdom in their hearts. There is a combat between Christ and Satan for the rescue of every sinner, and we are not easily brought to change masters. Now yield to him, suffer him to save you. You look to the outward interest of Christ in the world, and you do well; but it is easier to bring men to own a true religion than to bring them under the power of it. Christ's greatest victory is the overcoming men's corruptions and carnal inclinations, to purify their polluted souls, and to set up Christ's government in the heart, where once Satan ruled. The kingdom of Christ within us is the most excellent kingdom: Luke xi. 20, 'If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.' If once we become Christ's, we will more really care for his interest in the world.

Use 3. To show us the nature of Christ's victory, and wherein it consisteth; not in an exemption from troubles, nor in a total exemption from sin for the present.

1. Not in an exemption from troubles. No; you must expect conflicts. Though Satan's deadly power be taken away, our heel may be crushed. Christ hath delivered us from the present evil world: Gal. i. 4, 'Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from this present evil world.' Not that the world should trouble us no more, but that the world should not be a snare to us. He came not to exempt us from trouble, but 'to save us from our sins,' Mat. i. 21; 'To deliver us from wrath to come,' 1 Thes. i. 10. We have the victory which he purchased for us, if the devil and the world do not hinder the fruition of eternal glory. Our victory over Satan is mostly gotten by patience even to the death; and so those that are killed all the day long are 'more than conquerors through him that loved them,' Rom. viii. 35-37. Satan's main spite is not at your worldly interests, but your souls. God may give him sometimes a power over your worldly and bodily interests, but he doth not give him a power over your souls. Though he get his will over your bodies, yet, if he get not his will over your souls, it is you that conquer, and not Satan; therefore in the christian sense suffering is conquering. If he do not draw you away from God and Christ, though he and his instruments have great power over you, it is your heel only is bruised, but your head is safe.

2. It is not a total exemption from sin. Necessary vital grace is only absolutely secured; you shall receive no deadly wound to destroy your salvation. The godly sometimes may be foiled. Satan stirred up David to number the people: 2 Cor. xi. 2, 3, 'I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ: for I fear lest by any

means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ ;' 1 Cor. vii. 5, 'That Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.' Yea, God may employ Satan in punishing his people ; as when the Israelites murmured, 'he sent evil angels among them,' Ps. lxxviii. 49, and 'they were destroyed of the destroyer,' 1 Cor. x. 10. Because careless souls are apt to fall asleep, God permitteth him to be the executioner of his indignation.

Use 4. To animate and encourage Christ's servants in their war against Satan's kingdom, at home and abroad, within and without: 'Not to give place to the devil,' Eph. iv. 27. Christ whom we serve is more able to save than Satan is to destroy.

1. The devil is a creature, but Christ is the sovereign Lord, who hath power over him and all creatures. The devil's tempting is by leave : Job i. 12, 'And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power ;' Luke xxii. 31, 'And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.' He could not enter into the herd of swine without leave from Christ: Mat. viii. 31, 'So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.' When we are in Satan's hands, Satan is in God's hands.

2. The devil is an usurper, Christ is the heir of all things. Satan is the god of this world by usurpation, but by lawful ordination Jesus is both Lord and Christ: Acts ii. 36, 'Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.'

3. The devil hath only a persuasive force, no constraining efficacy. He cannot change the heart, or create any new principles and habits there, which were not before. But God can 'put his law into our inward parts, and write it in our hearts,' Jer. xxxi. 35. He can only propound alluring baits or objects to the outward senses and fancy, but God worketh immediately on the heart.

4. If the devil be vigilant and assiduous in his temptations, he is matched and overmatched. Christ is always mindful of the affairs of his people ; he doth ever make intercession for us before God : 'And he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep,' Ps. cxxi. 4. Satan daily bloweth the bellows, inflaming our corruptions, suggesting temptations ; but the Spirit is as watchful in our hearts, maintaining his interest there.

5. The devil's malice is restrained, for he is held in chains of darkness : 2 Peter ii. 4, 'If God spared not the angels that fell, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment ;' meaning thereby not only the powerful restraints of providence, but the horror of their own despairing fears. Chains imply restraint, but chains of darkness, horror. He himself believeth and trembleth : James ii. 19, 'Thou believest that there is one God, thou doest well ; the devils also believe and tremble.'

6. The Lord Jesus doth often give out demonstrations of his power and providence. Partly in protecting, strengthening, assisting his people, and prospering their just endeavours for the advancement of his kingdom, so that all the machinations of the wicked against them

come to nought. Partly in making fearful havoc and destruction in Satan's kingdom. In protecting his people, sometimes he destroyeth their enemies: Isa. xxvii. 4, 'Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together.' Sometimes infatuateth their counsels: Job v. 12-14, 'He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise: he taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong. They meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night.' Sometimes he hideth his people in the secret of his presence: Ps. xxxi. 20, 'Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strifes of tongues.' He smiteth his enemies by an invisible curse: Job xx. 26, 'All darkness shall be hid in his secret places; a fire not blown shall consume him; it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle.' He divideth them: 2 Chron. xx. 23, 'The children of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them; and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir every one helped to destroy another.' Christ is the assailant, and makes fearful havoc in the devil's kingdom. The word of truth is come into all the world, and pulleth down idolatrous and false worship: Col. i. 6, 'The word of truth is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day you heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth.'
