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# FRONTISPIECE



*The Lords Supper* Page 1

THE  
WORKS  
OF  
ISAAC AMBROSE,

SOMETIME

*Minister of Garstang, in Lancashire.*

To which is prefixed,

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE.

REVISED AND CORRECTED.

—  
IN TWO VOLUMES.  
—

VOL. II.

~~~~~  
BY JOHN WESLEY, M. A.

Late Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford.  
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**Manchester,**

Printed by Sowler and Russell,

FOR J. GLEAVE, TOP OF DEANSGATE.

1802.



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TO

*VOL. II.*

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# LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

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## CHAP. II.

SECT. VIII. *Of Calling on Jesus, as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Birth.*

**L**ET us call on Jesus, or on God the Father in and through Jesus. Now this calling on Jesus contains prayer and praise. 1. We must pray that all these transactions of Jesus at his first coming may be ours; and is not here encouragement for our prayers? This very point of Christ's incarnation opens a door of rich entrance into the presence of God: we may call it a blessed portal into heaven. This is that new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. With what boldness may we now enter into the holiest, and draw near unto the throne of grace? Why, Christ is incarnate, God is come down in the flesh, though his Deity may confound us, if we should immediately and solely apply ourselves unto it, yet his humanity comforts our faint and feeble souls. God in his humility animates our souls to come unto him, and to seek of him whatsoever is needful for us. Go then to Christ; away, away, O my soul, to Jesus, or to God the Father in and through Jesus, and desire that the fruit, the benefit of his conception, birth, and of the wonderful union of the two natures of Christ may be all thine. What? dost thou hope in Jesus, and believe thy part in this incarnation of Christ? Why then pray in hope, and pray in faith. What is prayer but the stream and river of faith, an issue of the

desire of that which I joyfully believe? Thou, O Lord God of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house, therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

2. We must praise. This was the special duty practised by all saints and angels at Christ's birth; *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel*, said Zachary, *for he hath visited and redeemed his people*—and *Glory to God in the highest*, said the heavenly host; only one angel hath before brought the news, *Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord*; but immediately after there were many to sing praises; not only six cherubims, as Isaiah saw; not only four and twenty elders, as John saw; but a multitude of angels, like armies, that by their hallelujahs gave glory to God. O my soul, do thou keep concert with those angels: O sing praises! sing praises. Never was the like case since the first creation; never was the wisdom, truth, justice, mercy, and goodness of God so manifest before. I shall never forget that last speech of a dying saint, *Blessed be God for Jesus Christ*. O my soul, living and dying, let this be thought on: What? Christ incarnate for me? Why, bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.

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## SECT. IX.

*Of Conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us conform to Jesus, in reference in this great transaction of his incarnation. Looking to Jesus is the cause of this; the sight of God will make us like to God, and the sight of Christ will make us like to Christ; for as a looking-glass cannot be exposed to the sun but it will shine like the same, so God receives none to contemplate his face but he

transforms them into his own likeness; and Christ hath none that dive into these depths of his glorious incarnation, but they carry along with them sweet impressions of an abiding and transforming nature. Come then, let us once more look on Jesus in his incarnation, that we may conform to Jesus in that respect.

But wherein lies this conformity to Jesus? I answer, in these and the like particulars:

1. Christ was conceived in Mary by the Holy Ghost; so must Christ be conceived in us by the same Holy Ghost. To this purpose is the seed of the word cast in, and principles of grace are by the Holy Ghost infused; *He hath begotten us by the word*, saith the apostle James i. 18. God hath appointed no other means to convey supernatural life, but after this manner. Where no preaching is, there is a worse judgment than that of Egypt, where there was one dead in every family. By the word and spirit the seeds of all grace are sown in the heart, and the heart closing with it, Christ is conceived in the heart.

2. Christ was sanctified in the virgin's womb; so must we be sanctified in ourselves; *Be ye holy as I am holy*. Souls regenerate must be sanctified: *Every man*, saith the apostle, *that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure*. I know our hearts are, as it were seas of corruptions, yet we must daily cleanse them. Christ could not have been a Saviour for us, unless first he had been sanctified; neither can we be fit members unto him, unless we be purged from our sins, and sanctified by his spirit. To this purpose is that of the apostle; *I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God*. In the old testament they did kill beasts, presenting them unto the Lord; now we are to mortify the flesh with the affections and lusts; all our inordinate passions, all our evil affections of anger, love, joy, hatred, are to be cru-

cified, and all that is ours must be given up to God ; there must be no love in us but of God, and in reference to God ; no joy in us, but in God, and in reference to God ; no fear in us but of God, and in reference to God ; and thus of all other the like passions. O that we would look to Jesus, and be like unto Jesus in this thing ! if there be any honour, and happiness, it is in this, we are not for any holy duty, or any religious approach unto God without sanctification. *This is the will of God, saith the apostle, even your sanctification.* All the commands of God tend to this ; and for the comfort of us christians, we have under the gospel, promises of sanctification to be in a larger measure made out unto us : In that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses holiness unto the Lord ; yea, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord. Every vessel under Christ and the gospel, must have written upon it, holiness to the Lord ; thus our spiritual services, figured by the ancient ceremonial services, are set out by a larger measure of holiness than was in old time.

3. Christ the Son of man, is by nature the Son of God ; so we, poor sons of men, must, by grace, become the sons of God, even of the same God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ : “ For this end God sent his own Son made of a woman, that he might receive the adoption of Son.—Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son ; and, if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” This intimates that what relation Christ hath unto the Father by nature, we should have the same by grace :—By nature, “ He is the only begotten Son of the Father : And as many as received him, (saith John) to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

4. Christ the Son of God, was yet the son of man : there was in him a duplicity of natures really distinguished : and in this respect the greatest ma-

jesty, and the greatest humility that ever was, are found in Christ : so we, though sons of God, must remember ourselves to be but sons of men : our privileges are not so high, but our poor conditions, frailties, infirmities, sins may make us low. Who was higher than the Son of God ? And who was lower than the son of man ? As he is God, he is in the bosom of his Father ; as he is Man, he is in the womb of his mother ; as he is God, his throne is in heaven, and he fills all things by his immensity ; as he is man, he is circumcised in a manger. Well, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus ; who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God ; but made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself : he that thought it no robbery to be equal with God, humbled himself to become man. We should have found it no robbery to be equal with devils, and are we too proud to learn of God ? What an intolerable disproportion is this, to behold an humbled God, and a proud man ! Shall the Son of God be thus humbled for us, and shall not we be humbled for ourselves ? I say for ourselves, that deserve to be cast down among the lowest worms. What are we in our best condition on earth ? Had we the best natures, purest conversations, happiest endowments, pride overthrows all ; it thrusts proud Nebuchadnezzar out of Babel, proud Saul out of his kingdom, proud Lucifer out of heaven. Poor man ! how ill it becomes thee to be proud, when God himself is become thus humble ! *O learn of me, saith Christ, for I am meek and lowly in spirit, and you shall find rest unto your souls.*

5. The two natures of Christ, though really distinguished, yet were inseparably joined ; so must our natures though at great distance from God, be inseparably joined to Christ, and thereby to God. *I pray, saith Christ, that they all may be one, as*

*thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.* That union of Christ's two natures, we call an hypostatical union; and this union of Christ with us, we call a mystical and spiritual union; yet though it be mystical and spiritual, this hinders not but that is a true, real union, whereby the believer is united to the Son of God. O what a privilege is this! a poor believer, be he never so mean a man or miserable in the eye of the world, yet is one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father: Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Every saint is Christ's fellow; there is a kind of proportion between Christ and his saints in every thing; if we take a view of all Christ, what he is in his person, in his glory, in his spirit, in his graces, in his Father's love, and in the access he hath to the Father, in all these we are in a sort fellows with Christ; only with this difference, that Christ hath the pre-eminence in all things: All comes from the Father first to Christ; Christ by his union hath all good things without measure, but we by our union have them only in measure, as it pleaseth him to distribute. But herein if we resemble Christ, whether in his union with the Father, or in his union of the two natures in one person of a Mediator, if by looking on Christ, we come to this likeness, to be one with Christ, Oh! what a privilege is this! Had we not good warrant for so high a challenge, it could be no less than a blasphemous arrogance to lay claim to the royal blood of heaven; but the Lord is pleased to dignify a poor worm, that every believer may truly say, I am one with Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is one with me.

Nay, yet more, my sufferings are Christ's, Col. i. 24. and Christ's sufferings are mine, Rom. viii. 17. I am in Christ an heir of glory, Rom. viii. 17. O my Christ, my life, what am I, or what is my father's house, that thou shouldst come down into me! that thou shouldst be conceived in my poor

sinful heart, that thou shouldst give my soul a new, a spiritual life, a life begun in grace, and ending in eternal glory? I shall not reckon up any more privileges of this union. Methinks I should not need. If I tell you of grace and glory, what can I more? Glory is the highest pitch, and Christ tells you concerning it, *The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.* Ah, my brethren, to be so like Christ, as to be one with Christ, it is near indeed! O let us conform to Christ in this; he is one with our nature in an hypostatical, personal union; let us be one with him in a spiritual, holy, and mystical union. If God be not in our persons as truly, though not as fully as in our nature, we have no particular comfort from this design of his personal, hypostatical, and wonderful union.

6. When Christ was born, all Jerusalem was troubled: so when this new birth is, we must look that much commotion and much division of heart will be. The devil could not be cast out of the possessed person, but he would tear and torment him. We cannot expect that Christ should expel Satan from the dominion he hath over us, but he will be sure to put us to great fear and terror. Besides, not only the evil spirit, but God's Spirit is for a while a spirit of bondage. There are many pretenders to the grace of God in Christ, but they cannot abide to hear of any pains in this new birth. Oh, this is legal! But I pray thee tell me, dost thou know any woman bring forth in her sleep, or in a dream, without feeling any pain? And how then should the heart of man be thus new changed and moulded without several pangs and troubles: *In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children*; so it is, and must be in our spiritual birth; there is usually (I will not say always, to such or such a degree) many pangs and troubles, there is many a throb, and many a heart-ache ere Christ can be formed in us.

7. Christ after his birth did and suffered many things in his childhood, so should we learn to bear God's yoke in our youth. O ye parents, do your duties, and in that respect imitate Joseph and Mary in their care of the holy Child Jesus; and O ye children, do your duties, and imitate Jesus, the blessedest pattern that ever was, that as you grow in stature, you also might grow in favour with God and man.

Thus far we have looked on Jesus, as our Jesus in his incarnation. Our next work is to look on Jesus carrying on the great work of man's salvation during his life, from John's baptism until his dying on the cross.



## LOOKING UNTO JESUS

IN HIS LIFE.



I JOHN i. 2.

*For the life was manifested, and we have seen it.*



CHAP. 1.

SECT. 1. *Of the Beginning of the Gospel.*

**I**N this piece, as in the former, we must first lay down the object, and then direct you how to look to it.

The object is Jesus carrying on the work of man's salvation during the time of his life.—Now in all the transactions of this time, we shall observe them as they were carried on successively in those three years and an half of his ministerial office.

For the first year, the evangelist Mark, begins thus: *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God*; q. d. the beginning of that age of the world, which the prophets pointed out for the

time of good things to come ; or the beginning of the completion of that gospel, which in respect of the promise, was from the beginning of the world.

That now was the beginning of the gospel, appears, in that baptism (which was only used among the Jews for the admission of heathens to their church) is now proposed to the Jews themselves ; shewing, that now they were to be transplanted into a new profession ; that the Gentiles and they were now to be knit into one church and body. Indeed the doctrine of John was of a different strain, from the literal doctrine of the law, in the sense of the Jews ; for that called all for works, do this and live : but John called for repentance, and for the renewing of the mind, and for belief in him, that was coming after, disclaiming all righteousness by the works of the law.

Hence one observes that the evangelist Luke points out this year in a special manner ; it was the “ fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar ; at which time, (said he) Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was tetrach of Galilee, Philip was tetrach of Iturea, Lysanias was tetrach of Abilene, and Annas and Caiaphas were high priests. And then, even then, *the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharius, in the wilderness.* See how exact the evangelist is, that so remarkable a year of the beginning of the gospel might be made known to all the world. I shall begin the first year of Christ’s life with the beginning of John’s preaching, which was six months current before the ministry of Christ.

---

## S E C T. II.

### *Of the Preaching of John Baptist.*

**N**OW was it that the gospel began to dawn, and John like the morning-star, springing from the windows of the east, foretels the approach of the sun of

righteousness: now was it that he laid the first rough stone of the building in mortification, self-denial, and doing violence to our natural affections. I read not that ever John wrought a miracle, but good works convince more than miracles themselves. To this purpose, I suppose, John the baptist spent his time in prayer, meditation and colloquies with God, eating flies and wild honey in the wilderness, that he might be made a fit instrument of preparation of the gospel of Christ.

John's sermons were to those of Jesus as a preface to a discourse:—

His usual note was repentance, the axe to the root, the fan to the floor, the chaff to the fire. As his raiment was rough, so was his tongue; and thus must the way be made for Christ in obstinate hearts. Plausibility, or pleasing of the flesh is no fit preface to regeneration. If the heart of man had continued upright, Christ might have been entertained without contradiction; but now violence must be offered to our corruptions, ere we can make room for grace. If the great Way-maker do not cast down hills, and raise up vallies in the bosoms of men, there is no passage for Christ; never will Christ come into that soul, where the herald of repentance, either in one motive or other hath not been before him.

Shall we hear that sermon that John preached in his own words? *Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* These are the words when he first began to preach the gospel of Christ; and indeed we find Christ himself doth preach the same doctrine in the same words: *Jesus began to preach, and to say, repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

Oh! how seasonable is this sermon to christians! Hath not the kingdom of heaven approached unto us? Take the kingdom of heaven for the kingdom of glory, are we not near to the door of glory, to the confines of eternity? What is our life but a vapour that

appeareth for a little time, and after it vanissheth away? We know not but ere the sun have run one round, our souls may be in that world of souls, and so either in heaven or hell.—Or take the kingdom of heaven for the church of Christ, and what expectation have we now of the flourishing state of Christ's church here upon earth? *Then shall the children of Israel and of Judah be gathered together, —for great shall be the day of Jazreel, Hos. i. 11.* A time is at hand, that Israel and Judah shall be called together, that the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in; and what is this but the great day of Jezreel? Then what manner of persons ought we to be? How spiritual? How heavenly-minded? Arise, arise, shake off thy dust, for thy light is coming, and the glory of the Lord is rising upon thee.—But I will not dwell on this: my design is to consider of Jesus, and of the transactions of Jesus in reference to our souls health: now John's sermons were only a preparative to the manifestation of Jesus.

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### S E C T, III.

#### *Of the Baptism of Jesus.*

**H**E that formerly was circumcised, would now be baptized; he was circumcised to sanctify his church that was, and he was baptized to sanctify his church that should be; we find him in both testaments opening a way into heaven. This was the first appearing of Christ in reference to his ministerial office; he that lay hid in the counsel of God from all eternity, and he that lay hid in the womb of his mother for the space of forty weeks, and he that lay hid in Nazareth for the space of thirty years; now at last begins to shew himself to the world: he comes from Galilee to Jordan, to John, to be baptized of him. Now was the full time come that

Jesus took his leave of his mother, and his trade, to begin his Father's work, in order to the redemption of the world.—For the clearer understanding of Christ's baptism, we shall examine these particulars:

1. What reason had Christ to be baptized ?
2. How was it that John knew him to be Christ ?
3. Why was it that the Holy Ghost descended on Jesus ?

1. What reason had Christ to be baptized ? We find John himself wondering at this ; *I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me ?* Many reasons are given for Christ's baptism : 1. That he might bear witness to the preaching and baptism of John, and might reciprocally receive a testimony from John. 2. That by his own baptism, he might sanctify the water of baptism to his own church. 3. That he might fulfil all righteousness : not only the moral, but the figurative, ceremonial and typical. Some think, that the ceremony, which our Saviour looked at in these words, was their washing of the priests in water, when they entered into their function : *And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall wash them with water.* And surely this was the main reason of Christ's being baptized, that by this baptism he might be installed into his ministerial office.

2. How did John know him to be Christ : The baptist speaks expressly, *I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, on whomsoever thou shalt see the spirit descending, and abiding on him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* Now this descent of the Holy Ghost was not until after baptism ; how then did he know him to be Christ ?

It is not unlikely but John knew Christ at his first arrival by revelation. Thus Samuel knew Saul ; and thus John might know Christ. That knowledge he had after baptism, was a further confirmation of that knowledge that he had before baptism,

and that not so much for his own sake, as for the people's: *I saw, and bear record that this is the Son of God.*

3. Why was it that the Holy Ghost descended on Jesus? I answer, for these reasons, 1. That John the baptist might be satisfied; for this token was given John, when he first began to preach, *That upon whom he should see the spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* 3. That Christ himself might be anointed or installed to his function: *The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek.* As Aaron and his sons were anointed with material oil, when they entered into their offices; so Christ was by the spirit (as it were) anointed, that so he might receive this consecration and institution for the office that he was to enter on, viz. the preaching and ministry of the gospel.

4. Why in the form of a dove, rather than some other form?—Perhaps,

1. To shew Christ's innocency, purity, and love.  
2. To answer the figure in Noah's flood; for as a dove at that time brought tidings of the abating of the waters, so now it brings tidings of the abating of God's wrath upon the preaching of the gospel.

Observe, the baptism we use, and the baptism of John, are in nature and substance one and the same. 1. John preached the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins. They have therefore the same doctrine, and the same promise. 2. The baptism ministered by John, pertained to the fulfilling all righteousness. And Luke testifies, that the publicans and people being baptized of John, they justified God. *But the Pharisees despised the counsel of God against themselves, and were not baptized.* Only herein lies the difference, that John baptized in Christ that should die and rise again: but we baptize in the name of Christ that is dead, and risen again. It is a difference in respect of circumstance,

but not of the substance : Oh ! take heed of throwing away the baptism of water, upon the pretence of baptism only with fire ! Christ (we see) hath joined them together, and let no man separate them asunder : Christ himself was baptized with fire ; and yet Christ himself was baptized with water.

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SECT. IV.

*Of the Fasting and Temptation of Christ.*

**N**O sooner is Christ come out of the water of baptism, but he enters into the fire of temptation. No sooner is the Holy Spirit descended upon his head, but he is led by the same Holy Spirit to be tempted in the wilderness. No sooner doth God say, *This my Son* ; but satan puts it to the question, *If thou be the Son of God ?* All these are but Christ's preparatives to his prophetic office. In the former, Christ was prepared by a solemn consecration ; now he is further prepared by satan's temptation. In the same method as the evangelist lays it down, Matt. iv. 1, 2, 3—12. I shall proceed. *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.* In the whole, we may observe these several branches : First, the place where the temptation was, the wilderness ; Secondly, the cause of Christ's going into the wilderness, the spirit's leading ; Thirdly, the end of the spirit's leading Christ into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil ; Fourthly, the time and occasion of the devil's onset, at the end of forty days fast, and when he was an hungred ; Fifthly, the temptations themselves, which are in number, three ; to which are added as many victories, which Christ had over the tempter ; who therefore *left him, and so the angels came, and ministered unto him.*—I shall begin first with the place where the temptation was ; to wit, in the wilderness.

This wilderness was not that same wilderness, or not that same place of the wilderness wherein John Baptist lived, Matt. iii. 1. For that wherein John Baptist lived, was a place inhabited. There was in that place cities and towns, and a number of people to whom John preached ; but this wilderness was devoid of men, full of wild beasts. So saith Mark—*He was tempted of satan, and was with the wild beasts.* As Adam, in his innocency, lived with wild beasts, and they hurt him not : so Christ, the second Adam, lives here in a wilderness with wild beasts, and has no hurt at all. He is Adam-like in his safety and security ; above Adam in the resisting of temptations. Probably, during his forty days abode, Christ was continually exercised in prayer and fasting ; but he knew he had the great work of redemption to promote ; and therefore his conversation for this interval must be preparatory to it ; in this respect, I know not but the wilderness might be an advantage to Christ's design : In this solitary place he could not but breathe out more pure inspiration. Heaven usually is more open, and God usually is more familiar in his visits in such places.

2. The cause of Christ's going into the wilderness was the spirit's leading : *Then was Jesus led of the spirit into the wilderness.* Christ was led by the good spirit, to be tempted by the evil spirit : O wonder ! that same spirit which was one with the Father and the Son ; that same spirit whereby Christ was conceived, now drives him or leads him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Christ himself would not go into the combat uncalled, unwarranted ; how then should we poor weaklings presume upon any abilities of our own ? Who dares grapple with the devil in his own strength ? Oh ! take heed ! If we are to pray not to be led into temptation, much more are we to pray not to run into temptation before we are led ; and yet for the comfort of God's people, if it be so that

we are led ; if by divine permission, or by an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we are engaged in an action, or in a course of life that is full of temptations, let us look upon it as an issue of divine providence in which we must glorify God.

3. The end of the spirit's leading Christ into the wilderness, was either immediate, or remote. 1. The immediate end was, to be tempted of the devil: To this purpose was Christ brought thither, that satan might tempt him. One would think it a very strange design that the Son of God should be brought into a wilderness to be set on by all the devils in hell ; but in this also, God had another remote end, *i. e.* his own glory and our good. 1. His own glory appeared in this ; had not satan tempted Christ, how should Christ have overcome satan ? Herein was the power of Christ exceedingly manifested ; the devil having the chain let loose, lets fly at Christ with all his might ; and Christ both overcomes him, and triumphs over him. And herein were the graces of Christ exceedingly manifested : how was the faith, patience, humility, zeal and valour of Christ set forth, which they could not have been, if he had always lain quietly in garrison, and never had come into the skirmish ? 2. As it was for his glory, so also for our good. Now we see what manner of adversary we have, how he fights, and how he is resisted, and how overcome ; now we see the dearer we are to God, the more obnoxious we are to temptation ; now we see that the best of saints may be tempted or allured to the worst of evils, since Christ himself is solicited to infidelity, covetousness and idolatry : now we see that we have not an high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but such a one as was in all things tempted in like sort, yet without sin : and therefore we may go boldly to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and find grace in time of need.

4. The time and occasion of the devil's onset ;

it was at the end of forty days fast, and when he was an hungred. Moses fasted forty days at the delivery of the law; and Elias fasted forty days at the restitution of the law; and to fulfil the time of both these types, Christ thinks it fit to fast forty days at the accomplishment of the law, and the promulgation of the gospel. In fasting so long, Christ manifests his Almighty power; and in fasting no longer, Christ manifests the truth of his manhood, and of his weakness; to shew that he was man as well as God, and so a fit Mediator betwixt God and man, he would both feed and fast; make use of the creature, and withal fulfil hunger.—And now our Saviour is an hungred. This gives occasion to satan to set upon him with his fierce temptations. He knows well what baits to fish withal, and when, and how to lay them. He considers the temper and constitution of the person he is to tempt. And he observes all exterior accidents, occasions, and opportunities.

5. The temptations themselves are in number three; whereof the first was this: *If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.* What an horrible entrance is this: If thou be the Son of God? No question, satan had heard the glad tidings of the angel, he saw the star, and the journey, and the offerings of the sages, he could not but take notice of the gratulations of Zachary, Simeon, Anna. And of late, he saw the heavens open, and heard the voice that came down from heaven, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* And yet, now that he saw Christ fainting with hunger, as not comprehending how infirmities could consist with a Godhead, he puts it to the question, *If thou be the Son of God.* Here is a point in which lies all our happiness: How miserable were we, if Christ were not indeed the Son of God? Satan strikes at the root in this supposition? Surely, all the work of our redemption, and all the work of our salvation depends upon this, that,

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. If Christ had not been the Son of God, how should he have ransomed the world? How should he have done, or how should he have suffered that which was satisfactory to his Father's wrath? If Christ be not the Son of God, we are all gone; we are lost, we are undone, we are damned for ever. Farewel glory, farewel happiness, farewel heaven. If Christ be not the Son of God, we must never come there. Well, Satan, thou beginnest thy assault like a devil indeed. *If thou be the Son of God; but what then? Command that these stones may be made bread.* He knew Jesus was hungry; and therefore, he invites him to eat bread only of his own providing, that so he might refresh his humanity, and prove his divinity. There is nothing more ordinary with our spiritual enemy, than by occasion of want, to move us to unwarrantable courses; if thou art poor, then steal: if thou canst not rise by honest means, then use indirect means. I know Christ might have as lawfully turned stones into bread, as he turned water into wine; but to do this in a distrust of his Father's providence, to work a miracle of satan's choice, and at satan's bidding, it could not be agreeable with the Son of God. And hence Jesus refuseth to be relieved; he would rather deny to manifest the divinity of his person, than he would do any act which had in it the intimation of a different spirit. O christians! it is a sinful care to take evil courses to provide for our necessities. Come, it may be thou hast found a way to thrive, which thou couldst not do before. O take heed; was it not of the devil's prompting, to change stones into bread? Sadness into sensual comforts? If so, then satan hath prevailed; alas, he cannot endure thou should live a life of austeriety, or self-denial, or mortification; if he can but get thee to satisfy thy senses, and to please thy natural desires, he then hath a fair field for the battle. It were a thousand times better for us to make stones our meat, and

tears our drink, than to swim in our ill-gotten goods, and in the fulness of voluptuousness.

But what was Christ's answer? *It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

1. It is written, He easily could have confounded satan by the power of his Godhead; but he rather chuses to vanquish him by the sword of the spirit: surely this was for our instruction. By this means he teacheth us how to resist, and to overcome. Nothing in heaven or earth can beat the forces of hell, if the word of God cannot do it: O then, how shall we pray: with David, *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes—and take not from me the words of truth, let them be my songs in the house of my pilgrimage—so shall I make answer to my blasphemers.*

2. Man shall not live by bread. Whilst we are in God's work, God hath made a promise of the supply of all provisions necessary for us. Jesus was now in his Father's work, therefore he was sure to be provided for according to God's word. Christians! Are we in God's service? God will certainly give us bread: and till he does, we can live by the breath of his mouth, by the light of his countenance, by the refreshment of his promises, by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Every word of God's mouth can create a grace, and every grace can supply two necessities, both of the body, and of the spirit. I remember one kept straitly in prison, and sorely threatened with famine; he replied, "That if he must have no bread, God would so provide that he should have no stomach." If our stock be spent, God can lessen our necessities: if a tyrant will take away our meat, God our Father knows how to alter our faint, and feeble, and hungry appetites.

The second temptation is not so sensual; the devil sees that was too low for Christ, and therefore he comes again with a temptation something

more spiritual; He sets him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, he shall give his angels charge concerning thee. He that was content to be led from Jordan into the wilderness, yields to be led from the wilderness to Jerusalem. The wilderness was fit for a temptation arising from want, and Jerusalem for a temptation arising from vain-glory.

Methinks it is a sweet contemplation of an holy divine; he supposed as if he had seen Christ on the highest battlements of the temple, and satan standing by him with this speech in his mouth: "Well then, since in the matter of nourishment thou wilt need depend upon thy Father's providence; take now a further trial of that providence, in thy miraculous preservation: cast down thyself from this height; and if thou be God, now the eyes of all men are fixed upon thee, there cannot be devised a more ready way to spread thy glory, and to proclaim thy deity: and for danger, if thou art the Son of God, there can be none: What can hurt him that is the Son of God?" Come, cast thyself down, saith satan. But why did not satan cast him down? He carried him up thither; and was it not more easy to throw him down thence? O no, the devil may persuade us to a fall, but he cannot precipitate us without our own act; his malice is infinite, but his power is limited: he cannot do us any harm, but by persuading us to do it ourselves; and therefore saith he to Christ, *cast thyself down.*

To this Christ answers, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* Though it is true, that God must be trusted in, yet he must not be tempted; if means be allowed, we must not throw them away upon a pretence of God's protection. Christ knew well enough that there were ordinary descents by stairs from the top of the temple, and therefore he would not so tempt God to throw himself headlong. All

the devils in hell could not tempt Christ, as to make him tempt his God.

The third temptation is yet more horrid ; the temple was not high enough, so that satan takes him up to the top of an exceeding high mountain, and shews him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, saying, *All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* In this temptation the devil united all his power, by an angelical power he drew into one centre all the kingdoms and glories of the world, and made an admirable map of beauties, and represented them to the eyes of Jesus : he thought ambition more likely to ruin him, because he knew it was that prevailed upon himself, and therefore, *Come saith satan, all these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* How ? God worship the devil ? Was ever the like blasphemy since the creation ? The Lamb of God, that heard all the former with patience, could by no means endure this : he commands him away, and tells him, *It is written thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Now was the devil put to flight, and in his stead, the angels came and ministered unto Jesus, i. e. after his fast they minister such things as his necessities required.

O Christians ! what shall we say to this ? If Christ was thus tempted by satan, what may we look for ? Sometimes it cheers my heart to think that Christ was tempted, because thereby he knows how to succour those that are tempted ; and sometimes it affrights my soul to think that satan durst be so bold with Jesus Christ. Oh what may he do with me ! how easily may he prevail against my soul ? When he came to tempt Christ, he found nothing in him to join with him in the temptation, but in my heart is a world of corruptions, and unless the Lord prevent, I am quickly gone.

## SECT. V.

*Of the first Manifestation of Christ.*

**T**O manifest Christ were many witnesses. As, 1. From heaven the Father is witness: for see, saith Christ, *the Father that sent me, beareth witness for me*: and the Son is witness; for so saith Christ, *I am one that bear witness of myself; and though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true; for I know whence I came, and whither I go*: and the Holy Ghost is witness; so saith Paul, *The Holy Ghost also is a witness to us*; and to that purpose he descended like a dove, and lighted upon him. 2. On earth John the baptist is witness; for so saith Christ, *Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth; he came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through Christ might believe*. No sooner was John confirmed by a sign from heaven that Jesus was the Christ, but he immediately manifests it to the Jews, and first to the priests and Levites sent from the sanhedrim; and secondly, to all the people he professeth, where-soever he saw Jesus Christ, *this is he*: yea, he points him out with his finger, *Behold the Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world*. Then he shews him to Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, and then to another disciple with him, *who both followed Jesus, and abode with him all night*. Andrew brings his brother Simon with him. Then Jesus himself finds out Philip of Bethsaida, and bade him follow him; and Philip finds out Nathaniel, and bids him come and see, for the Messiah was found. Thus we see no less than five disciples found out at first, which must be so many witnesses of Jesus Christ.

And yet we find more witnesses; *The works*, saith Christ, *that I do, in my Father's name, they*

*bear witness of me.* These works or miracles of Christ were many ; but because we are speaking of his first manifestation, I shall instance only in his first work, which was at a marriage in Cana of Galilee. The power of miracles had now ceased since their return out of captivity ; the last miracle that was done by man until this very time, was Daniel's tying up the mouths of the lions ; and now Christ begins. He that made the first marriage in paradise, bestows his first miracle upon a marriage-feast. O happy feast where Christ is a guest ! I believe this was no rich or sumptuous bridal : who ever found Christ at the magnificent feasts or triumphs of the great ? The poor bridegroom wants drink for his guests ; and as soon as the holy virgin hath notice of it, she complains to her son : whether we want bread or wine, necessaries or comforts, whither should we go but to Christ ? *But Jesus answered her, woman, what have I to do with thee ? Mine hour is not yet come.* This shews, that the work he was to do must not be done to satisfy her importunity, but to prosecute the great work. In works spiritual and religious, all outward relation ceaseth : matters of miracle concerned the Godhead only ; and in this case, *O woman, what have I to do with thee ?* We must not deny love and duty to relations ; but in the things of God, natural endearments must pass into spiritual ; and like stars in the presence of the sun, must not appear. Paul could say, *Henceforth know we no man after the flesh ; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.*

At the command of Jesus, the water-pots were filled with water, and the water by his divine power is turned into wine ; where the different dispensation of God and the world is highly observable ; *Every man sets forth good wine at first, and then the worse :* but Christ not only turns water into wine, but into such wine that at the last draught is

most pleasant. These were the first manifestations of Jesus: you see he had several witnesses to set him forth: some from heaven, and some on earth: The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost witnesses from heaven: the baptist, disciples, and his works witness on earth; and there's no disagreement in their witness, but all bring in this testimony of Jesus, that he is the Messiah; that is being interpreted, the Christ.

But what are those manifestations to us? or to that great design of Christ in carrying on our souls salvation? Much every way. For either must Christ be manifested to us even by these witnesses, in the preaching of the gospel, and manifested in us by that one witness, his Holy Spirit, or we are undone for ever.

1. Christ must be manifested to us in the preaching of the gospel. This mercy we have this day; nay, you see every sabbath-day all the witnesses speak in us. What do we, but in God's stead, in the baptist's stead, in the disciples stead, manifest Christ to you in every sermon? It is the commission which Christ hath given us of the ministry; *Go, preach the gospel to every creature.*

2. Christ must be manifested in us by his Holy Spirit. Christians! look to your hearts; what manifestations of Christ are there? When Paul speaks of the gospel in general, he adds in particular, *that it pleased God to reveal Christ in me.* And when Peter speaks of the word of God, he adds, *That we take heed thereunto—until the day dawn, and the day-star* (that is, Christ, Rev. xxii. 16.) *arise in your hearts*; until then, though we be circled with gospel-discoveries, our hearts will be full of darkness; but when Christ, whom the prophet calls *the Sun of righteousness*, and Peter the *Day-star*, shall arise within us, we shall be full of light.

## SECT. VI.

*Of Christ's Whipping the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple.*

**C**ONCERNING Christ's whipping the buyers and sellers out of the temple, we read in the gospel, that *the Jews passover being at hand, Jesus went up to Jerusalem*: thither, if we follow him, the first place that we find him in, is the temple; where, by the occasion of the national assembly, was an opportune scene for Christ's transactions. In that temple Christ first espies a mart; there were divers merchants and exchangers of money, that brought beasts thither to be sold for sacrifice against that great solemnity; at the sight of which Jesus being moved with indignation, makes a whip of cords, and drives them all out of the temple, overthrows the accounting tables, and commands them that sold the doves, to take them from thence.

Sometimes I wonder at the irreverent carriage of some hearers, laughing, talking, prating, sleeping, in our congregations: what, is this a demeanour befitting the presence of Christ? Wouldst thou carry thyself thus in the presence of a prince, or of some earthly majesty? If thou goes but into a king's palace (as Chrysostome speaks) thou composest thyself to a comeliness in thy habit, look, gait, and all thy guise, and dost thou laugh? I may add, and dost thou any way carry thyself undecently in God's presence? Some there are, that in the very midst of ordinances the devil usually rocks them asleep: But O! dost thou not fear that thy damnation sleeps not? How justly might Christ come against thee in his wrath, and whip thee out of the temple into hell? Surely we should do well to behave ourselves in such a presence with the thoughts of heaven about us; our business here is an errand

of religion, and God himself is the object of our worship: how then should our actions bear at least some degrees of proportion to God and Christ?

And now was the first passover after Christ's baptism.—This was the first year of Christ's ministry: whereof the one half was carried on by his forerunner, John the Baptist; and the other half (betwixt his baptism and this first passover) was carried on by himself. And now hath Christ three years to his death. I shall come on to the second year, and to his actions therein in reference to our salvation.

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## CHAP. II.

### SECT. 1. *Of the second Year of Christ's Ministry.*

**N**OW was it that the office of the Baptist was expired; and Christ beginning his prophetic office, he appears like the sun in succession of the morning-star; he preacheth the sum of the gospel, faith and repentance: *Repent ye, and believe the gospel*, Mark i. 15. Now, what this gospel was, the sum and series of all his following sermons expressed.

By this time Jesus saw it convenient to chuse more disciples: with this family he goes up and down Galilee, *preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing all manner of diseases.*

It is not my purpose to enlarge on all the sermons, miracles, or colloquies of Christ with men: in this year therefore I shall limit myself to the consideration of Christ in these two particulars. 1. His preaching. 2. His miracles; both these relate to the exercise of his prophetic office.

## SECT. II.

*Of Christ's Sermons this Year.*

1. HIS preaching this year was frequent, and, amongst others, now it was that he delivered his first sermon, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

2. Now was it that he delivered that spiritual and mystical sermon of regeneration, at which Nicodemus wonders; *How can a man be born when he is old; Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?* But Jesus takes off the wonder, in telling him, this was not a work of flesh and blood, but of the Spirit of God; for *the Spirit bloweth where it listeth*, and is as the wind certain and notorious in the effects, but secret in the principle and manner of production.

3. Now was it that the throng of auditors forced Christ to leave the shore. Whilst he was upon land, he healed the sick bodies by his touch; and now he was upon sea, he cured the sick souls by his doctrine: he that made both sea and land, causeth both to conspire to the doing good to the souls and bodies of men.

4. Now it was that he preached that blessed sermon on that text, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.* No question but he preached both to poor and rich, Christ preached to all; but for the power and fruit of his preaching, it was only received by the poor in spirit. In the following particulars, his office is set out still in an higher tenor, *To heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; or as it is in Isaiah, lxi. 1. The opening of the prison to them that are bound* A sad thing to be in cap-

tivity, but sadder to be bound in chains, or locked up in a prison there ; but 'tis most sad of all to be imprisoned, having one's eyes put out, as was the case of Sampson and Zedekiah. Now the evangelist, willing to render the prophet to the highest sense that might be, useth an expression that meets with the highest mystery ; that is, when a man is not only shut up in a prison, but himself also hath his eyes put out ; to such Christ should preach, not only deliverance to the captives, but also recovering of sight to blinded persons.

5. Now it was that he delivered the admirable sermon, called, the sermon upon the mount. It is a breviary of all those precepts which are truly called christian ; it contains in it all the moral precepts given by Moses, and more severe exposition than the Scribes and Pharisees had given ; it holds forth the doctrines of meekness, poverty of spirit, christian mourning, desire of holy things, mercy and purity, peace and patience, and suffering of injuries ; he teacheth us how to pray, how to fast, how to give alms, how to condemn the world, and how to seek the kingdom of God and its appendant righteousness.

And thus Christ being entered upon his prophetic office ; in these and the rest of his sermons he gives a clear testimony that he was not only an interpreter of the law, but a law-giver ; and that this law of Christ might retain some proportion at least with the law of Moses, Christ, in his last sermon, went up into a mountain, and from thence gave the oracle. I cannot stand to paraphrase on this, or any other of his sermons ; but seeing now we find Christ in the exercise of his prophetic office, let us observe first his titles in this respect.

2. The reasons of his being a Prophet. 3. The excellency of Christ above all other prophets.

## S E C T. III.

*Of Christ's Prophetical Office.*

1. **T**HE titles of Christ in respect of his prophetical office, were these, 1. Sometimes he is called doctor, or master, *Be ye not called masters, for one is your master, even Christ.* The word in the original signifies a doctor, moderator, teaching-master, a guide of the way. 2. Sometimes he is called a law-giver; *There is one Law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy.* The apostle speaks of the internal government of the conscience, in which case the Lord is our judge. 3. Sometimes he is called a Counsellor; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor; *Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom,* saith Christ; *I am understanding, and I have strength.* 4. Sometimes he is called the Apostle of our profession; *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers, of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle, and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.* God sent him as an Embassador to make known his will; he came not unsent: the very word imports a mission, a sending: *How shall they preach except they be sent?* 5. Sometimes he is called the Angel of the covenant, *even the Angel of the covenant whom ye delight in.* Christ was the publisher of the gospel covenant; and in this respect he is called a Prophet, Acts iii. 22. whose office it was to impart God's will unto the sons of men, according unto the name, Angel. 6. Sometimes he is called the Mediator of the new covenant; *For this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament,* saith the apostle. Now, a mediator is such a one as goes betwixt two parties, at variance, imparting the mind of the one to the other, so as to breed a right understanding, and thereby to work a compliance betwixt both; and thus

Christ is a Mediator betwixt God and us, an Interpreter, an Inter-messenger betwixt God and his people.

2. The reasons of Christ's being a Prophet, were these. 1. That he might reveal to his people the will of his Father. 2. That he might open and expound the same, being once delivered. 3. That he might make saints understand and believe the same.

1. As a Prophet he delivers to the people his Father's will, both in his own person, and by his servants the ministers: in his own person, when he was upon earth, as a minister of the circumcision; and by his servants the ministers, from the beginning of their mission until the end of the world.

2. As a Prophet he opens and expounds the gospel. Thus being in the synagogue on the sabbath-day, he *opened the book, and found the place where it was written, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, &c.* and then he closed the book, and said, *This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.* The gracious purpose of God towards lost mankind, was a secret locked up in the breast of the Father; and so it had been even to this day, had not Christ, who was in the bosom of the Father, revealed it unto us: hence Christ is called the interpreter of God: no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him, by his interpretation.

3. As a Prophet he gives us to understand and to believe the gospel. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures; and thus was the case of Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened. He that first opens scriptures, at last opens hearts; he is that true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. He

enlightens every believer, not only with a common natural light, but with a special supernatural light of saving, spiritual, and effectual knowledge. Now there is no prophet can do this save only Jesus Christ; he only is able to cause our hearts to believe, and to understand the matter which he doth teach and reveal: Other prophets may plant and water; *Paul may plant, and Apollos may water,* but he, and only he, can give the increase.

3. The excellencies of Christ above all other prophets are in these respects:

1. Other prophets were but types and shadows of this great prophet; even Moses himself was but a figure of him: *A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me,* saith Moses. These words, *like unto me,* plainly shew that Moses was but an image and shadow of Christ. Now as substances far excel shadows, so doth Christ far excel all the prophets.

2. Other prophets revealed but some part of God's will, and only at some times. *God,* saith the apostle, *at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets; i. e.* He let out his light by little and little, till the day-star and sun of righteousness arose; *but in these last days he hath spoken by his Son, i. e.* he hath spoken more fully and plainly; in this respect, saith the apostle, the heirs of life and salvation were but children before Christ's incarnation.—As now we see but through a glass darkly, towards what we shall do in the life to come; so did they of old in comparison of us; their light, in comparison of ours, was but an obscure and glimmering light.

3. Other prophets speak only to the ears of men, but Christ spake, and still speaks to the heart; *he hath the keys of David, that openeth, and no man shutteth, that shutteth, and no man openeth;* it is a similitude taken from them that keep the keys of a city, or castle, without whom none can open or

shut ; no more can any man open the heart, or break in upon the spirit, but Christ : he only is able to open the eyes of the mind by the secret, kindly, and powerfully working of his own spirit.

4. Other prophets had their commission and authority from him ; the words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of the assemblies, which are given from one shepherd, i. e. the words of the wise are divine and heavenly instructions ; the masters of assemblies are gospel-ministers, and Christ is that one shepherd, from whom these words are given, and from whom these masters have their authority.

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## SECT. IV.

### *Of Christ's Miracles.*

1. **T**HE miracles of Christ this year were many : Now what were these miracles but a pursuance of the doctrines delivered in Christ's sermons ? One calls them, a verification of Christ's doctrine, a signal of Christ's sermons. If we observe, we shall find him to work most of his miracles in actions of mercy : Indeed once he turned water into wine, and sometimes he walked upon the waters ; but all the rest were actions of relief, according to the design of God, who would have him manifest his power in shewing mercy to men.

1. Amongst all his miracles done this year, now was it that at Cana where he wrought the first miracle. He does a second ; *a certain nobleman, or courtier, came to Jesus, and besought him to come down to his house, and to heal his son, who was at the point of death.* We do not find Christ often attended with nobility, but here he is. This noble ruler listens after Christ in his necessity : Happy was it for him that his son was sick, for else he had not been so

well acquainted with his Saviour. The first answer Christ gives is a word of reproof, *except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe*. Incredulity was the common disease of the Jews, which no receipt could cure but wonders. *A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after signs*. The doctrine of Christ, and all the words that he spake, must be made up with miracles, or they will not believe. O what a sin is this? Christ's next answer is a word of comfort: *go thy way, thy son liveth*. O the meekness and mercy of Jesus Christ! When we would have looked that he should have punished this sutor for not believing, he condescends to him that he may believe: *go thy way, thy son liveth*. With one word doth Christ heal two patients, the son and the father; the son's fever, and the father's unbelief. We cannot but observe here the steps of faith, he that believed somewhat ere he came, and more when he went, grew to more faith in the way, and when he came home he enlarged his faith to all the skirts of his family. *And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way; and in the way one meets him, and tells him, thy son liveth; which recovery he understands to be at the same time that Christ had spoken those healing words, and himself believed, and his whole house*.

2. Now was it that *a Centurion came unto Christ, beseeching him, and saying, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy grievously tormented*. Many suitors come to Christ, one for a son, another for a daughter, a third for himself, but I see none come for his servant but this one Centurion; and if we observe Christ's answers to his suit, we see how well pleased Christ is with his request: *And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him*. He is no respecter of persons, but he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him. It may be this servant had more grace, or had more need, and therefore Christ will go down to visit this poor sick

servant. Nay, says the Centurion, *I am not worthy, Lord, that thou shouldst come under my roof*: q. d. Alas, Lord, I am a Gentile, an alien, a man of blood, but thou art holy, thou art omnipotent; and therefore *only say the word, and my servant shall be whole*. The Centurion knew this by the command he had over his own servants; "I say to this man go, and he goes; and to another come, and he comes; and to a third do this, and he doth it. Oh that I were such a servant to my heavenly master! Alas! every of his commands say, do this, and I do it not: Every of his inhibitions say, do it not, and I do it. He says, Go from the world, and I run to it. He says, Come to me, and I run from him. Wo is me, this is not service, but enmity: Oh that I could come up to the faith and obedience of this exemplar, that I could serve my Christ as these soldiers did their master! Jesus marvels at the Centurion's faith. We never find Christ wondering at gold, or silver, or costly and curious works; but when he sees the acts of faith, he so approves of them that he is ravished with wonder. And he that both wrought this faith, and wondered at it, doth now reward it; *Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it unto thee, and his servant was healed in the selfsame hour*.

3. Now it was, even *the day after, that Jesus goes into the city of Naim*. The fruitful clouds are not ordained to fall all in one field, Naim must partake of the bounty of Christ, as well as Cana or Capernaum. He no sooner enters the gate but he meets a funeral; a poor widow, with her weeping friends, is following her only son to the grave; Jesus observing her sad condition, he pities her, comforts her, and at last relieves her: Here was no solicitor but his own compassion. In his former miracles he was sued to; but now Christ offers a cure, to give us a lesson, that "whilst we have to do with the Father of Mercies, our miseries and afflictions are the most powerful suitors." Christ

sees and observes the widow's sadness, and presently speaks comfortably to her, *Weep not; and he said, young man, I say unto thee, arise.* See how the Lord of life speaks with command; the same voice speaks to him, and shall one day speak to us, and raise us out of the dust of the earth. So at the sound of the last trumpet, by power of the same voice, we shall arise out of the dust, and stand up gloriously; *This mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption.* And lest our weak faith should stagger at so great a difficulty, by this he hath done, Christ gives us tastes of what he will do; the same power that can raise one man, can raise a world.

4. Now it was that in the synagogue he finds a man that had a spirit of an unclean devil. This I take it, is the first man that we read of as possessed with a devil: *And he cried, let us alone; what have we to do with thee? &c.* In these words the devil dictates, the man speaks; and whereas the words are plural, *let us alone*, it is probable he speaks of himself, and the rest of the men in the synagogue with him. So high and dreadful things are spoken concerning the coming of Christ, (*Mal. iii 2. Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appearth?*) that the devil by this takes opportunity to affright the men of the synagogue with the presence of Christ; he would dissuade them from receiving Christ by the terrors of Christ, as if Christ had come only to destroy them; *Thou, Jesus of Nazareth, art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.*

*And Jesus rebuked him, saying, hold thy peace, and come out of him.* The word, *hold thy peace*, is in the original, *be muzzled*; it was not a bare command of silence, but there was such power in it, that it cast a muzzle upon the mouth of Satan, that he could speak no more; and when the unclean spirit had torn him, not with any gashes in his flesh,

or dismembering of his body, for he hurt him not, but with some convulsion-fits, as it is supposed, then *he threw them in the midst*, and made an horrid cry, *and so came out.*

They all take notice of the doctrine attested by so great a miracle, what a word is this? Surely this was the great design of all the miracles of Christ, to prove his mission from God, to demonstrate his power unto men, to confirm his gospel, to endear his precepts, to work in us faith to help us heavenward: "These signs are written that we might believe,—and that believing we might have life through his name.

I have given you several instances of the miracles of Christ in this second year of his ministry; only a few words on this doctrine of miracles for our information: As—

1. What they are?
2. Why they are?
3. Whether they are continued in this great transaction of our salvation?

For the first, what they are? Miracles are unusual events, wrought above the course or possibility of nature; such were the miracles of Christ, and such were the miracles of the prophets and of the apostles of Christ; for what they did was above nature; and all the difference betwixt their miracles and the miracles of Christ, was only in this, viz. they wrought them not in their own name and power, as Jesus Christ did.

For the second, why they are? many reasons are given, but this is the main: "miracles are wrought for the grounding or confirming of some divine truth or doctrine of its first settling." To this purpose miracles were as the trumpets or heralds by which the gospel was first commended unto us; as the law of Moses was first authorized by manifold miracles wrought in Sinai, and in the desert, which afterwards ceased when they were settled in the promised lands; so the gospel of Christ was first

authorized by manifold miracles, but the sound thereof having now gone through all the world, these miracles cease.

For the third, whether they are continued in this great transaction of our salvation? I answer, yea; in this respect miracles cease not; 'tis without controversy that Jesus Christ, in carrying on our salvation, is adding miracle to miracle: there is a chain of miracles in the matter of our salvation from first to last: As—

1. It was a miracle, that God, before we had a being, should have once thought of us; especially that the blessed Trinity should contrive that astonishing plot of the salvation of our souls: Oh what a miracle was this!

2. It was a miracle, that God for our sakes should create the world, and after our fall in Adam, should preserve the world, especially considering that our sin had unpinned the whole frame of the creation; and that God, even then sitting on his throne of judgment, ready to pass the doom of death for our first transgression, should give a promise of a Saviour, when justly he might have given us to the devil, and to hell, according to his own law, *in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die.*

3. It was a miracle, that God's Son should take upon him our nature, and that in our nature he should transact our peace; that he should preach salvation to us all if we would believe; and to the end that we might believe, that he would work so many signs and miracles in the presence of his disciples, and of a world of men.

4. It was a miracle, that God should look upon us in our blood: O miracle of mercies! If creation cannot be without a miracle, surely the new creature is a miracle indeed. So contrary are our perverse natures to all possibilities of salvation, that if salvation had not marched to us all the way in a miracle, we should have perished in the ruins of a sad eternity. Indeed every man living in the state

of grace, is a perpetual miracle ; in such a one his reason is turned into faith, his soul into spirit, his body into a temple, his earth into heaven, his water into wine, his averfations from Christ into intimate union with Christ. O what a chain of miracles is this ? Why, Lord, *if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.* Say thus, you that are yet in your blood ; Lord, *I believe, help thou my unbelief.*



## CHAP. III.

### SECT. I. *Of the third Year of Christ's Ministry.*

**H**ITHERTO all was quiet, neither the Jews nor the Samaritans, nor Galileans, did as yet malign the doctrine or person of Jesus Christ ; but he preached with much peace on all hands, till the beginning of this year. I shall not yet speak of his sufferings, neither shall I speak much of his doings, only such things as refer more principally to the main business of our salvation, I shall touch in these particulars. As, 1. The ordination of the apostles. 2. His reception of sinners. 3. The easiness of his yoke, and the lightness of his burthen.



### SECT. II.

#### *Of Christ's Ordination of his Apostles.*

**I**N the ordination of his apostles, are many considerable things. The evangelist Luke lays it down thus: *And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all*

*night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples, and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles.* Till now Christ taught alone; but, because after his ascension, he must needs have a ministry, until the end of the world: in the first place, he chuseth out some, whom he would have on purpose to wait upon him all the time of his ministry, till he was taken up into heaven. In this election, or ordination, here is the first person by whom they are chosen, Jesus Christ. 2. The place where they are chosen, viz. in a mountain. 3. The time when they were chosen, after his watching and praying all night. 4. The company out of whom they were chosen, they were his disciples. 5. The number of them that were chosen, they were twelve. 6. The end to which they were chosen, it was an apostleship, he chose twelve, whom he also named apostles.

1. The person by whom they are chosen is Jesus Christ. They chose not themselves, but were chosen of Christ; this call was immediate, and therefore most excellent.

2. The place where they were chosen, it was on a mountain. Mountains are open and in view, which shews their ministry must be public; again, mountains are subject to winds and tempests, which shews their callings must meet with many oppositions.

3. The time when they are chosen, after he had continued all night in prayer to God; he goes not to election, but first he watches, and prays all the night before. This shews the singular care that Christ had in this great employment: What? To set men apart to witness his name, and, to publish to the world the gospel of Christ? This he would not do without much prayer.

4. The company out of whom they are chosen. *He called unto him his disciples and out of them he chose twelve.* A disciple of Christ is one thing, and an apostle of Christ is another thing. Those

were Christ's disciples that embraced Christ's doctrine of faith and repentance. It was not material to the constituting of a disciple of Christ, whether they followed Christ as many did, or, returned to their own homes, as others did. The man out of whom the legions of devils were cast, besought Christ that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, *Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done to thee.* I make no question but Christ at the election of his apostles had many disciples both waiting on him, and absent from him; and, out of them that waited on him, his apostles were chosen; Christ's ministers should be first disciples. O how unfit are any to take upon them the ministry of Christ, that were never yet the disciples of Christ? First, the grace of God must be within us, and then must that grace of God be discovered by us.

5. The number of them that were chosen, they were twelve. Very probable, the number was figured out to us, in the twelve tribes of Israel.

6. The end to which they were chosen, it was to an apostleship; (*i. e.*) That they might be Christ's legates to the sons of men, that they might be sent up and down the world to persuade men to salvation.

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### SECT. III.

#### *Of Christ's Reception of Sinners.*

**I** CANNOT limit this only to one year of Christ's ministry, but I shall only mention it this year. Now this will appear, 1. In the doctrine of Christ, 2. In the practice of Christ.

1. In his doctrine, Christ lays it down expressly: *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-*

*laden, and I will give you rest.* It is no more but come, and welcome. The gospel shuts none out of heaven, but those that by unbelief lock the door against their own souls. Christ is so willing to receive sinners, as that he sets all his doors open, and he casts out none that will but come in. And why so? For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

1. I came down from heaven. It was a great journey from heaven, to earth; and this great journey I undertook for no other purpose but to save sinners. Great actions (as one says well) must needs have great ends. Now this was the greatest thing that ever was done, that the Son of God should come down from heaven. And, what was the end, but the reception, and salvation of sinners? For the Son of man is come to seek, and to save that which was lost: had not Christ come down, sinners could not have gone up into heaven, and therefore that they might ascend, he descends. 2. I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. His Father had sent him on purpose to receive, and to save sinners; and, to this purpose he is called the apostle of our profession,—who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. His Father could not send him on any errand, but he was sure to do it. His Father's mission was a strong demonstration, that Christ was willing to receive those sinners that would but come to him.

Again, Jesus stood and cried, saying, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.* The very pith, heart, and marrow of the gospel is contained in these words: the occasion of them was thus; on that last day of the feast of tabernacles, the Jews were wont with great solemnity, to draw water out of the fountain of Siloam, at the foot of mount Sion, and to bring it to the altar, singing out of Isaiah, “With joy shall ye draw water out

of the wells of salvation." Now Christ takes them at this custom, and recalls them from earthly to heavenly waters, alluding to that of Isaiah, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters—incline your ears, and come unto me, and your souls shall live." The Father saith come, the Son saith come, the Spirit saith come, yea, the spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him drink of the water of life freely. All the time of Christ's ministry, we see him tiring himself, in going about from place to place, upon no other errand than this, to cry at the markets, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters! If any sinner love life, if any will go to heaven, let them come to me, and I will shew them the way to my Father's bosom, and endear them to my Father's heart."

2. Christ's reception of sinners appears yet more in his practice. How welcome were all sorts of sinners unto him? He cast out none that acknowledged him for the Messiah; he turned none away that gave up their souls to be saved by him in his own way. This he manifests, 1. Parabolically, 2. Really.

1. Parabolically, especially in those three parables, of the lost goat, and of the lost sheep, and of the lost son; I shall instance in this last, which may well serve for all the rest.—"When the prodigal was yet afar off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. In these words, observe, 1. His father sees him, before he sees his father; no sooner a sinner thinks of heaven, but the Lord spies him, and takes notice of him. 2. The Lord sees him while he was yet a great way off; he was but in the beginning of his way; his father might have let him alone until he had come quite home to his house, and it had been a singular mercy to have

bid him welcome then ; but he takes notice of him yet a great way off. Sinners may be far off from God in their own apprehensions, and yet the Lord even then draws near ; whilst thus they apprehend.

3. His father had pity or compassion on him ; the Lord's bowels yearn within him, at the sight of his returning prodigals. 4. His father ran ; there is much in this : As, 1. It had been mercy though his father stood still, until his son had come. 2. What a mercy is this, that his father will go, and give his son the meeting ? 3. But above all, O what abundant mercy call we this, that the father will not go, but run ! If he would needs meet his son, might he not have walked towards him in a soft flow pace ; O no, if a sinner will but come, or creep towards Christ, mercy will not go a foot-pace, but run to meet him ; bowels full of mercy, out-pace bowels pinched with hunger ; God's mercy is over all his works, and so it is over all our needs, and over all our sins. 5. He ran, and fell on his neck ; (*i. e.*) he hugged and embraced him ; O wonder ! who would not have been loth to have touched him ? was he not in his loathsome, stinking rags ? we see mercy is not nice ; " When I passed by (said God) I saw thee polluted in thy own blood, and I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live ; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live ;" that very time of her blood, was the time of love. 6. He ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him ; there is a passage somewhat like this, and Esau ran to meet Jacob, and he embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him ; before, he had thought to have killed him, but now he kissed him ; it is not to tell how dear the father was to his prodigal son, when he ran, and fell on his neck, and embraced, and kissed him. The scope of the parable is this, that Christ is willing and glad to receive sinners. Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways ; for why will you die, O house of Israel ?

Christ manifests this willingness in his practice really ; amongst many instances I shall insist only on one, a notable instance of this year : One of the Pharisees named Simon, invited Christ to eat with him, into whose house when he had entered, a certain woman, that was a sinner, abiding there in the city, heard of it : she came to Jesus in the Pharisee's house, and no sooner come, but she lays her burden at Jesus's feet, and presents him with a broken heart, and weeping eye, and an alabaster box of ointment. *She stood at his feet behind him, weeping, and began to wash his feet with her tears, and to wipe them with the hairs of her head ; and she kissed his feet, and anointed them with ointment.*

1. She stands at his feet, a sign of her humility. O what a change ! She that was before a noble personage, a native of the town and castle of Magdal, from whence she had her name of Magdalen ; and therefore took her liberty of pride and lust ; comes in remorse and regret for her sins ; and throwing away her former pride, stoops, and waits, and humbly stands at Jesus's feet. 2. She stood at his feet behind him ; it comprehends a tacit confession of her sins, she knew herself unworthy of Christ's presence ; she durst not look him in the face ; but, she waits behind him ; her shame speaks her repentance. 3. She stood at his feet behind him weeping, her grief burst out in tears ; she heeds not the feast, or feaster ; but, falling down, weeps bitterly for her sins. 4. She began to wash his feet with tears ; she wept a shower of tears, great enough to wash the feet of her blessed Jesus. This was the manner of the Jews, to eat their meat lying down, and leaning on their elbows ; and in this posture Jesus sitting or lying at meat, Mary had the convenience to weep at his feet. 5. She wipes his feet with the hairs of her head ; her hair being added to her beauty, she made it a snare for men ; but now she consecrates it to her Lord ; worthy fruit of serious repentance. 6. She kissed his feet

in token of her new choice, and new affection; her kisses had formerly been to wantons, but now she bestows them on the feet of Christ. 7. She anointed them with ointment; which expression was so great an extacy of love, and sorrow, that to anoint the feet of the greatest monarch was long unknown, and in all the pomps of Roman prodigality, it was never used until Otho taught it Nero. When Simon observed this sinner so busy, he thought within himself, that Christ was no prophet, that he did not know her to be a sinner; for although the Jews religion did permit harlots to live, yet the Pharisees would not admit them to the benefits of ordinary society: and hence Simon made an objection within himself, which Jesus knowing (for he understood his thoughts as well as words) first makes her apology, and then his own; the scope gives us to understand, that Christ was not of the same superciliousness with the Pharisees; but that repenting sinners should be welcome unto him; and this welcome he publisheth first to Simon, *her sins which are many are forgiven;* and then to the woman, *thy sins are forgiven thee, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.*

What? is Christ most willing to receive sinners? O then! who would not come to Jesus Christ? Methinks now all sinners, of all sorts should say, though I have been a drunkard, a swearer, an unclean person, yet now I hear Christ is willing to receive sinners, and therefore I will go to Jesus Christ. This is my exhortation, O come unto Christ, come unto Christ; behold here in the name of the Lord I stand, and make invitation to poor sinners; O will you not come? How will ye answer it at the great day, when it shall be said, the Lord Jesus made a tender of mercy to you, and you would not accept of it? O come to Christ, and believe on Christ; as Christ is willing to receive you, so be you willing to give up your souls to him.

## SECT. IV.

*Of Christ's easy Yoke and light Burthen.*

**F**OR the easiness of Christ's yoke, and the lightness of Christ's burden, Christ delivers it in these words: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me,—for my yoke is easy, and my burthen is light."

My yoke (i. e.) my commandments, so the apostle John gives the interpretation, *His commandments are not grievous*. My yoke is easy, (i. e.) my commandments are without any inconvenience: the trouble of a yoke is not the weight, but the uneasiness of it, and Christ speaks suitably, My yoke is easy, and my burthen (i. e.) my institutions: the word primarily signifies the freight, or ballast of a ship, which cuts through the waves, as if it had no burthen; and without which burthen there were no safety in the ship.

The christian religion, and the practice of it, is full of sweetness, easiness, and pleasantness.

The reasons of the sweetness, easiness and pleasantness of the christian religion, and the practice of it, I shall reduce to these heads:

1. The christian religion is most rational. If we should look into the best laws that the wisest men in the world ever agreed upon, we shall find that Christ adopted the quintessence of them all into his own law. The highest pitch of reason is but as a spark, a taper, which is involved and swallowed up in the body of this great light, that is made up by the Son of righteousness. Some observe, that Christ's discipline is the breviary of all the wisdom of the best men, and a fair copy and transcript of his Father's wisdom; there is nothing in the laws of the christian religion, but what is perfective of our spirits. Indeed the Greeks, whom the world admired for their wisdom, accounted the

preaching of the gospel foolishness, and therefore God blasted their wisdom, as it is written, " I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." 1 Cor. i. 19. The gospel may be as foolishness unto some, but unto them which are called,—Christ; the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

The Christian religion is all composed of peace; her ways are the ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace, Prov. xvii. 3. Christ framed all his laws in compliance of his design of peace; peace within, and peace at home, and peace abroad. 1. It holds forth a certain heavenly peace, and tranquillity within; *great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.* But on the contrary: the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest; whose waters cast up mire and dirt; *there is no peace, saith my God to the wicked.* Their passions were never yet mortified; and such passions usually rage in wicked men as are most contrary, and demand contrary things; the desire of honour cries, spend here; but the passion of avarice cries, hold thy hands; lust cries, venture here; but pride saith, no such thing, it may turn to thy dishonour; anger cries, revenge thyself here; but ambition says, it is better to dissemble. And here is fulfilled that of the psalmist, *I have seen violence and strife in the city.* The vulgar renders it, I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the self same city. First, iniquity; for all the demands of these passions are unjust. And, 2. Contradiction; for one passion cries out against another. But now, *great peace have they that love thy law;* for by the aid of Christ and his grace, their passions are subdued, and they pass on their life sweetly and calmly, without any perturbations, much troubling their spirits; they have that *peace which passeth all understanding,* which the world can neither give nor taste of.

2. It holds forth peace at home: the laws of Jesus teach us how to bear with the infirmities of our relatives, and indeed, whosoever obeys the laws of Jesus Christ, he seeks with sweetness to remedy all differences, he throws water upon a spark, he lives sweetly with his wife, affectionately with his children, discreetly with his servants; and they all look upon him as their guardian, friend, and patron: but, look upon an angry man, not subject to these christian laws, and when he enters upon his thresh-old, it gives an alarm to his house, every little accident is the matter of a quarrel, and every quarrel discomposes the peace of the house, and sets it on fire, and no man can tell how far it may burn. O the sweetness, easiness, and pleasantness of the Christian religion! Where that is embraced and followed, the man is peaceable, and charitable, and just, and loving, and forbearing, and forgiving; and how should there be but content in this blessed family?

3. It holds out peace abroad; it commands all offices of kindness, gentleness, love, meekness, humility; it prescribes an austere, and yet a sweet deportment; it commands all those labours of love, to relieve the stranger, to visit the sick, to wash the feet of the poor; it sends upon charitable embassies, to unclean persons, nasty dungeons, and, in the cause of Christ, to lay down our lives one for another: it teacheth us how to return good for evil, kindness for injuries, a soft answer for the rough words of an enemy. O! when I think of this, I cannot but think of him who said, "That either this was not the Christian religion, or we were not Christians." For my part, I am easily persuaded, that if we would but live according to the Christian religion, one of those great plagues that vex the world (I mean the plague of war) would be no more. Certainly this was one of the designs of Christianity, that there should be no wars, no jars, no discontents amongst men. And if all men that

are called Christians, were indeed charitable, peaceable, just, loving, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, what sweet peace should we have? How would this world be an image of heaven, and of the society of saints and angels in glory?

Thus far I have held forth Jesus in his life, or during the time of his ministry; and now was it that *Jesus knew his hour was come, and that he should depart out of this world unto the Father*: but of that hereafter. Our next business is to direct you in the art or mystery, how we are to look unto Jesus in respect of his life.

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## C H A P. V.

SECT. 1. *Of Knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Life,*

**F**ROM the object considered, that we may pass to the act,—

1. Let us know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation during his life. We have many books of the lives of men, of the lives of heathens, of the lives of Christians; and by this we come to know the generations of old, but above all, read over the life of Jesus, for that is worth thy knowing. To this purpose we have four evangelists, who in blessed harmony set forth his life: these should be read over and over; *then shall we know, saith the prophet, if we follow on to know the Lord.* Ah! my soul, that which thou knowest of Christ already is but the least part of what thou art ignorant of. *We know but in part,* saith Paul of himself and others. The highest knowledge which the most illuminate saints have of Jesus Christ is but imperfect. Come then, and follow on to know the Lord: still enquire after him; imitate the angels, who ever desire to stoop down and to pry into the actings of

Christ for our salvation. And for thy better knowledge, (1.) Study over those passages in the first year of Christ's ministry; as the preaching of John, the baptism of Christ, his fasting and temptation in the wilderness, his first manifestation by several witnesses, his whipping of the buyers and sellers out of the temple. (2.) Study over those passages in the second year of Christ's ministry; as those several sermons that he preached; and because his miracles were as signals of his sermons, study the several miracles that he wrought: thou hast but a few instances in comparison of all his miracles, and yet how fruitful are they of spiritual instructions? (3.) Study over those passages in the third year of Christ's ministry; as his commissioning his apostles to call sinners, his readiness to receive them that would come in, and his sweetening the ways of Christianity to them that are come; for his yoke is easy, and his burthen is light.

O what rare matter is here for Christian study! Some have took such pains in the study of these things, that they have writ large volumes. Men have been writing and preaching a thousand six hundred years of the life of Christ, and they are writing and preaching still. O, my soul, if thou dost not write, yet study what is written. Come with fixed thoughts to that blessed subject, that will make thee wise unto salvation. Paul accounted all things but dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. If thou didst truly understand the excellency of this knowledge, thou couldst not but account all things loss in comparison of it.

## S E C T. II.

### *Of Considering Jesus in that Respect,*

**L**ET us consider Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation during his life. It is not enough to

study and know, but we must muse and meditate, and consider it, until we bring it to some profitable issue. By meditating on Christ, we may feel a kind of insensible change; as those that stand in the sun for other purposes, they find themselves lightened and heated; therefore, look further, O my soul, have strong apprehensions of those several passages of the life of Christ.

1. Consider the preaching of John Baptist. We talk of strictness, but shew me among all the ministers or saints of this age, such a pattern of sanctity and singular austerity. He had an excellent zeal, and a vehement spirit in preaching, and the commentary upon all his sermons was his life; he was clothed in camels hair, his meat was locusts and wild honey. He contemned the world, resisted temptations, despised honours, and in all passages was a rare example of self-denial and mortification: and by this means made an excellent preparation for the Lord's coming. O my soul, sit a while under this preacher. See, what effect doth it work on thy heart and life? Dost thou feel in thee a spirit of mortification? Dost thou with the Baptist die to the world? Dost thou deny thy will? Dost thou abstain from pleasures, and sensual complaisancies, that the flesh being subdued to the spirit, both may join in the service of God? O, my soul, so consider the preaching of this forerunner of Christ, until thou feelest this consideration to have some warmth in thy heart, and influence on thy life in order to holiness, self-denial, and mortification.

2. Consider the baptism of Christ. He was baptized, that in the symbol he might purify our nature, whose stains and guilt he had undertaken. Surely every soul that lives the life of grace, is born of water and the spirit; and to this purpose, Christ who is our life, went down into the waters of baptism, that we, who descend after him, might find the effects of it, pardon of sin, and holiness of life. Had not Christ been baptized, what virtue had there

been in our baptism? As it became him to fulfil all righteousness, and therefore he must needs be baptised, so he fulfilled it not for himself, but for us. Christ's obedience in fulfilling the law is imputed to all that believe unto righteousness, as if themselves had fulfilled; so that he was baptized for us, and the virtue of his baptism is derived unto us; therefore, if thou art in Christ, thou art baptized into his death, and baptized into his baptism; thou partakest of the fruit and efficacy both of his death and life, and baptism, and all.

3. Consider the fasting and temptation of Christ in the wilderness. Now we see what manner of adversary we have, how he fights, how he is resisted, how overcome. In one assault, satan moves Christ to doubt of his Father's providence; in another, to presume on his Father's protection; and when neither diffidence or presumption can fasten upon Christ, he shall be tried with honour; and thus he deals with us; if he cannot drive us to despair, he labours to lift us up to presumption; and if neither of these prevail, then he brings out pleasures, profits, honours, which are indeed most dangerous. O, my soul, whilst thou art in this warfare, here is thy condition, temptations, like waves, break one in the neck of another: if the devil was so busy with Christ, how shouldst thou hope to be free? How mayest thou account that the repulse of one temptation will but invite to another? But here is thy comfort, thou hast such a Saviour as was in all things tempted in like sort, yet without sin. How boldly therefore mayest thou go to the throne of grace to receive mercy, and to find grace to help in time of need? Christ was tempted, that he might succour them that are tempted. Never art thou tempted, O my soul, but Christ is with thee in the temptation. He hath sent his spirit into thy heart, to make intercession for thee there, and he himself is in heaven, making intercession, and praying for thee there; yea, his

his own experience of temptations hath so wrought it in his heart, that his love and mercy is most of all at work when thou are tempted most. As dear parents are ever tender of their children, but then especially when they are sick and weak; so though Christ be always tender of his people, yet then especially when their souls are sick, and under temptation; then his bowels yearn over them indeed.

4. Consider Christ's first manifestations by his several witnesses. We have heard of his witnesses from heaven, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and of his witnesses on earth, the Baptist, his disciples, and the works that he did in his Father's name; and all these witnesses being lively held forth in the preaching of the gospel, they are witnesses to us; even to this day is Christ manifested to us; yea, and if we are Christ's, even unto this day is Christ manifested within us. O my soul, consider this above all! It is this manifestation within that concerns thee most; because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts. If Christ be not manifested in thy heart by his blessed spirit, thou art no son of God; and therefore the apostle puts thee seriously on this trial, *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove yourselves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* Is Christ manifested to thee? Surely this is more than Christ manifested in thee. The bare history is a manifestation of Christ unto thee, but there is a mystery in the inward manifestation. The apostle speaking of the saints, adds, *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory.* O the riches of the glory of this mystery! God might have shut thee up in blindness with the world, but hath he revealed Christ in thee? Hath he let thee see into the wonders of his glory? Hath he given thee the light of his glory within? This only the experimental Christian feels.

5. Consider the preaching of Christ. O the admirable sermons of this great prophet!—Read and peruse those he hath left on record. How spiritual was that sermon of Christ? *Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.* It may be thou art a doctor, a master of Israel; thou art a learned scholar, thou art a man of parts and abilities in other things; it may be thou hast read so long in the bible, thou hast heard so many and so many sermons; but, ah! miserable soul, it may be all the work is to do still within. Come, say this sermon of Christ to thine own soul: “Unless I be  
 “born again, I cannot enter into heaven. Born  
 “again! O Lord, what is that? Was ever such a  
 “thing done upon me? Was ever I cast into the  
 “pangs of a new birth? and continued I in those  
 “pangs until Christ Jesus was formed in me? Are  
 “old things done away, and all things now become  
 “new? Is the old man, the old lusts, the old con-  
 “versation, quite abandoned and left? Are my  
 “principles new? my aims and ends new? my life  
 “and conversation new.” Thus might I paraphrase on all the sermons; but I intend brevity. Only consider, O my soul, as if this sermon; and all the rest, had been preached to thee: realize Christ standing by thee, and opening his mouth, and teaching thee thus and thus. Surely there is a speaking of Christ from heaven: *See that ye refuse not him (saith the apostle) that speaketh from heaven.* And besides, he hath his ministers here on earth; and they are daily preaching over these sermons of Christ; they preach such things as were first spoken by the Lord himself: they beseech and pray thee in Christ’s stead. O then; meditate on these things, and give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.

6. Consider the miracles of Christ in pursuance of the doctrine delivered in his blessed sermons. Here is a world of matter to run over; such miracles as never man did before. O my soul,

consider of these miracles, and believe that doctrine which was ratified with arguments from above. How shouldst thou but assent to all those mysterious truths which are so strongly confirmed by an almighty hand?

7. Consider Christ's ordination of his apostles. He chose twelve, whom he named apostles. And what was the office of these apostles, but to go and teach all nations. The gospel was first preached in Jewry, but afterwards the sound of it came unto us. O the goodness of God in Christ! What? That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, beginning at Jerusalem, and afterwards among all nations. Of what near concernment, O my soul, is this to thee! What, art thou but a sinner of the gentiles? Understand that term. When the apostles would express the greatest sinners that the world had, he calls them sinners of the gentiles. Why? The gentiles knew not God, the gentiles were unacquainted with Christ, the gentiles walked in nothing but sin. O then what a love is this, that God should ever have thought of good-will towards thee! How shouldst thou be ravished in this one meditation? What; that the sun of his gospel, now in these latter times, when the sun is set in Zion where it first arose, should make a noon with us, and shine more brightly here, for ought I know, or can yet learn, than in any other nation, country, kingdom, throughout all the world? O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and counsel of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

8. Consider Christ's reception of sinners. He sent forth his apostles to call them in; and if they would but come, how ready was he to receive them? This was Christ's errand from heaven; Ah, poor soul! why shouldst thou despair because of sin? Look on Christ as spreading out his arms to receive thee. Look on the gracious nature that is in Christ: Look on the office of Christ; it is an

office of saving, and shewing mercy; that Christ hath undertaken; it is an office to receive sinners; yea, to seek and to save that which was lost; to bring home straying souls to God; to be the great Peace-Maker between God and man.

Certainly the devil strangely wrongeth many a poor troubled soul, that he can bring them to have hard thoughts of Jesus Christ: How can they more contradict the office of Christ! How can they more contradict the gospel-description of Christ, than to think him a destroyer of his creatures, and one that hath more mind to hurt than help them? Resolve, O my soul, to throw thyself on him for life and for salvation: Why; if thou wilt but come, he hath promised freely to make thee welcome: All the day long he stretcheth out his arms, and would fain gather thee and all others into his embraces.

9. Consider the easiness of his yoke, and the lightness of his burthen. Many a one is willing to take Jesus as their Saviour, but they are unwilling to take him on his own terms, they imagine it an hard task, and a heavy burthen: It is otherwise with christians; for his commandments are not grievous. O my soul, if thou canst but taste, thou wilt find a world of sweetness, in Christ's ways; there is sweetness in the word; How sweet are thy words to my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth; There is sweetness in prayer; hast thou not known the time that thou hast tasted the joys of heaven in prayer? There is sweetness in meditation: Now, O my soul, thou art in the exercise of this duty, now thou art in the meditation of the easiness of Christ's burthen, tell me, is there nothing of heaven in this meditation? O if men did but know what ravishing sweetness were in the ways of God, they could not but embrace them, and esteem one day's society with Jesus Christ, better than all the gold in the world.

10. Consider the holiness of Christ's nature, and the holiness of his life.

1. For the holiness of his nature ; if thou couldst but clearly see it, what work would it make in thy breast ? Christ's inward beauty would ravish love out of the devils, if they had but grace to see his beauty. This loveliness of Christ ravishes the souls of the glorified. How is it, O my soul, that thou art not taken with this meditation. But,—

2. Go from the holiness of his nature to the holiness of his life, it may be that will make deep impressions on thy spirit. Consider his charity, his self-denial, his contempt of the world, his mercy, his bounty, his meekness, his pity, his humility, his obedience, to his Father. A fruitful meditation on these particulars cannot but make thee like Christ. O the wonder that any should disclaim the active obedience of Christ, as to his own justification ! away, away with these cavils, and consider the obedience of Christ in relation to thyself. God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. " That is, under the whole law ; the one half of the law, which is the directive part, he was made under that, and satisfied it by the innocency of his life, without breaking one jot or tittle of the law, and so he answers that part, as it might be the principal ; the other half of the law, which is the penalty, he was under that also, and satisfied it by suffering a wrongful death, no way deserved or due by him, and so he answered that part as it might be the forfeiture. But if we come now to ask, for whom is all this ? It is only for us, that we might be redeemed and adopted ; redeemed from all evil, and adopted or interested into all good." If this be so, O who would for a world of gold, lose the influence and the benefit of Christ's active obedience ? Consider of this, O my soul, until thou seelest some virtue to come out of Christ's life into thyself.

## SECT. III.

*Of Desiring Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us desire Jesus, carrying on the work of salvation in his life : It is not enough to know and consider, but we must desire ; Our meditation of Christ should draw forth our affections to Christ ; and amongst all affections I place this first of all, A desire after Christ.

But what is it in Christ's life that is so desirable ? I answer, Every passage, every thing of Christ is desirable. All that concerns Christ in any kind whatsoever is very precious and excellent, and necessary, and profitable, and comfortable, and therefore desirable : But to put them in order,—

1. The meanest things of God are desirable things. The very filings of the gold, the dust of precious stones are of real value. Hence we read, that one poor woman sought no more but to wash Christ's feet, and to kiss them : Another breathes out these desires ; If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be whole. John the Baptist thinks it an honour to unloose the latchets of his shoes : David to be a door-keeper of the house of God. Yea, he puts a happiness on the sparrow and the swallow, that may build their nests beside the Lord's altar.

2. The more considerable the actions of Christ especially desirable. O my soul, run through his life, and consider some of his more eminent actions.

1. To his friends, he was sweet and indulgent ; where there was any beginning of grace, he did encourage it ; so was the prophecy, " A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench." And so the people that fainted, that were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd —He was moved with compassion on them ; He

was boweled in heart, his very bowels were moved within him. 2. To his enemies he was kind and merciful ; many a time he discovers himself most of all unto sinners ; he was never more familiar with any at first acquaintance, than with the woman of Samaria, that was an adulteress ; and Mary, that had been a sinner, how sweetly did he appear to her at the very first view ? How ready was he to receive sinners ? How ready to pardon sinners ? How gracious to sinners after pardon ? See it in Peter, He never upbraided him ; only he looks upon him, and afterwards, “ Lovest thou me ? Often he was wronged by men, but what then ? Did he call for fire down from heaven ; indeed his disciples would fain have had it so ; but he sweetly replies, “ You know not what spirits you are of : The Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” Sometimes we find him shedding tears for those very persons that shed his blood : “ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,—if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this day, the things belonging to thy peace.” Well might they sing in that day in the land of Judah,—“ In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee ; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

3. The ever blessed and holy Person of Christ is desirable above all. My beloved is the chiefest of ten thousand ;—yea, he is altogether lovely or desirable ; so Vatablus renders it, *Christus est totus desideria*, Christ is all desires. If the actions of Christ be desirable, what must himself be ? he is the express image of the person of his Father ; as the print of the seal on the wax is the express image of the seal itself ; so is Christ the highest representation of God. And hence it is that Christ is called the Standard-bearer of ten thousands : all excellencies are gathered in Christ, as beams in the sun. Come poor soul ! thy eyes run to and fro in the world to find comfort and happiness ; cast thy

eyes back, and see heaven and earth in one; look if thou wilt, at what thy vast thoughts can fancy, not only in this world, but in the world to come; see that, and infinitely more, shining forth from the person of Jesus Christ; no wonder if the saints adore him, no wonder if the angels stand amazed at him, no wonder if all creatures vail all their glory to him.

O, what are things in the world to Jesus Christ? Paul compares them together, with this one thing; *And I account all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.* And I account all things: Surely, all things is the greatest account that can be cast up; for it includeth all prices, all sums; it takes in earth and heaven, and all therein; what are they in comparison of Christ, but as feathers, dung, shadows, nothing? If there be any thing worthy a wish, it is eminently, transcendently in the Lord Jesus Christ; there is no honour, no felicity like that which Christ hath; some are sons, Christ is an only son; some are kings, but Christ is King of kings; some are honourable, none above angels; Christ is above angels and archangels: to which of the angels said he at any time, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee? Some are wealthy, Christ hath all the sheep on a thousand hills; the very uttermost parts of the earth are his; some are beautiful, Christ is the fairest of all the children of men? He is spiritually fair, he is all glorious within; if the beauty of the angels (which I believe are the beautifulest creatures the world has) should be compared with the beauty of Christ, they would be but as lumps of darkness: The brightest cherubim is obliged to screen his face, from the dazzling brightness of the glory of Christ. Alas! the cherubim and seraphim are but as stars in the canopy of heaven, but Christ is the Sun of righteousness, that at once illuminates and drowns them all.

Come then, breathe, O my soul, after the enjoyments of this Christ; "O that this Christ was mine! O that the actions of Christ, and the person of Christ were mine! O that all he said, and all he did, and all he were, were mine! O that I had the silver wings of a dove, that in all my wants, I might fly into the bosom of Christ! If I must not sit at table, O that I might but gather up the crumbs! Surely there is bread enough in my Father's house; Christ is the bread of life; Christ is enough for all the saints in heaven and earth to feed on; and what must I pine away, and perish with hunger? Thousands of instructions dropped from him while he was on earth; O that some of that food might be my nourishment! O that my ways were directed according to his statutes! Many a stream, and wave, and line, and precept, flowed from this fountain, Christ; O that I might drink freely of this water of life! He hath proclaimed it in my ears; *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink*: O that I might come and find welcome! Sure I thirst, I feel in me such a burning drought, that either I must drink or die; either the righteousness of Christ, the holiness of Christ, the holiness of his nature, and the holiness of his life must be imputed unto me, or farewell happiness in another world. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; I long to see the beauty of thy face! Such is thy beauty, that it steals away my heart after thee, and I cannot be satisfied until with Ab-solon, I see the King's face. Come Christ! or if thou wilt not come, I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him I am sick of love."

## S E C T. IV.

*Of Hoping in Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us hope in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation in his life. By this hope, I mean an hope well grounded. The main question is, whether Christ's life be mine? Whether all those passages of his life laid open, belong unto me? Whether the habitual righteousness, and actual holiness of Christ be imputed to my justification? And what are the grounds and foundations on which my hope is built? The apostle tells us, that God gives good hopes through grace; if hope be right and good, it will manifest itself by operation of saving grace; O look into thy soul! what gracious effects of the life of Christ are there? Certainly his life is not without some influence on our spirits, if we be his members, and he be our Head. O the glorious effects flowing out of Christ's life, into a believer's soul!

1. If Christ's life be mine, then am I freed from the law of sin; this was the apostle's evidence: For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Christ's life is called the spirit of life, because of its perfection; and this spirit of life hath such a power in it, here termed a law, that it works but in believers, a freedom from the law or power in sin. Look to this! Doth the power of Christ's life throw out of thy heart and life, the power of sin? Here is one ground of hope.

2. If Christ's life be mine, then I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me. Paul speaks out this evidence, *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, &c.* He conjoins the death of Christ, and the life of Christ in one and the same soul: as if he

had said, no man knows the benefit of Christ's death, but he that feels the virtue of Christ's life; there is no assurance of Christ's dying for us, but as we feel Christ living in us; if the power of Christ's death mortify my lusts, then the virtue of Christ's life will quicken my soul; *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*; I live to God, and not unto myself; I live to Christ, and not unto the world; I live according to the will of God, and not after my own lust and fancy. O my soul! question thyself in these few particulars; dost thou live to God, and not to thyself? Dost thou live to Christ and not to the world? Dost thou derive thy life from Christ? And hath that life of Christ a special influence into thy soul? Dost thou feel Christ living in thy understanding and will, in thy imagination and affections, in thy duties and services? 1. In thy understanding; by prizing the knowledge of Christ, by determining to know nothing in comparison of Christ? 2. In thy will, by making thy will free to chuse and embrace Christ; and by making his will to rule in thy will; 3. In thy imagination, by thinking upon him with more frequency and delight; by having more high, and honourable, and sweet apprehensions of Christ than of all the creatures? 4. In thy affections, by fearing Christ above all earthly powers, and by loving Christ above all earthly persons? 5. In thy duty and services, by doing all thou doest in his name, by his assistance, and for his glory? Why then here is another ground of thy hope; surely thou hast thy part in Christ's life.

Away, away with all doubts and perplexing fears! If thou findest the power of sin dying in thee; if thou livest, and livest not; but in truth, it is Christ that lives in thee; then thou mayest assure thyself that Christ's habitual righteousness, and actual holiness is imputed to thy justification; thou mayest confidently resolve that every passage of Christ's life belongs to thee. Would Christ have ever lived

in thee, have been the soul of thy soul, the all of thy understanding and will, imaginations and affections, duties and services, if he had not purposed to have saved thee by his life? Surely it is good that I both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of God. I cannot hope in vain, if these be the grounds of my hope.

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S E C T. V.

*Of Believing in Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us believe in Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his life. Many souls stand aloof, not daring to make a particular application of Christ, and his life to themselves; but, herein is the property of faith, it brings all home, and makes use of whatsoever Christ is, or does, for himself.

1. In order to this, faith must directly go to Christ. Many poor souls humbled for sin, run immediately to the promise of pardon, and rest on it, not seeking for, or closing with Christ in the promise; this is a common error, but we should observe, that the first promise that was given, was not a bare word, simply promising pardon, peace, or any other benefit; but, it was a promise of Christ's person, as overcoming Satan: and purchasing those benefits; *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.* So when the promise was renewed to Abraham, it was not a bare promise of blessedness and forgiveness, but of that seed, that is, Christ, Gal. iii. 6. In whom that blessedness was conveyed; *In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* So that Abraham's faith first closed with Christ in the promise, and therefore he is said to see Christ's day, and rejoice. Christ in the first place, is every where made the thing which faith embraced to salvation, and whom it looks unto and respects, as it makes us righteous in the sight of God. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only*

*begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*—And hence it is called the faith of Christ, Gal. ii. 16. Phil. iii. 9. Because Christ is it whom faith apprehends immediately; and, as for the other promises they depend all on this, *Whosoever believeth on him, shall receive remission of sins; and, he that believeth on the Son of God shall have life everlasting.* O remember, this in the first place, faith must go unto Christ; and yet I mean not to Christ, as nakedly considered; but to Christ as compassed with all his promises, privileges, benefits.

2. Faith must go to Christ, as God in the flesh. But now under the New Testament, our faith more usually and immediately addresseth itself unto Christ, as God dwelling in our nature, than to the Father, who is merely God. God in the flesh is more distinctly set forth in the New Testament; and so he is more distinctly to be apprehended by the faith of all believers. Remember this; let our faith in the more direct and immediate exercise of it, be pitched upon Christ, as God in the flesh.

3. Faith must go to Christ, as God in the flesh, made under the law. And, hence it is, that the apostle joins these together, God sent his Son made of a woman, made under the law: If Christ had been out of the compass of the law, his being incarnate, and made of a woman, had done us no good. Suppose one in debt, and danger of the law, to have a brother of the same flesh and blood, of the same father and mother; what will this avail; if that same brother will not come under the law, that is, become his surety, and undertake for him? This is our case,—we are debtors to God, and there is an hand-writing against us. Here is a bond of the law, which we have forfeited; now, what will Christ avail, if he had not come under the law, if he had not been our surety, and undertook for us? Our faith therefore must go to Christ, as made under the law, not only taking our nature upon him,

but our debt also ; our nature as men, and our debt as sinful men : he hath made himself sin for us, who knew no sin, that is, he made him to be handled as a sinner for us under the law, though he knew no sin on his part, but continued in all things written in the book of the law, to do them. He both satisfied the curse, and fulfilled the commandments. O remember this ! as Christ, and as Christ in the flesh, so Christ in the flesh made under the law, is principally to be in the eye of our faith. If we put all together, our first view of faith, is to " look on Christ, God in the flesh, made under the law."

4. Faith going to Christ as God in the flesh, and as made under the law, is principally to look to the end of Christ, as being God in the flesh, and as fulfilling the law.

The apostle tells us of a remote, and of a more immediate end.

1. Of a remote end. God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. This was the remote end of Christ, Alas ! we were strangers from the adoption, and lay under the law, as men whom sentence had passed on. Now, from this latter we are redeemed ; He was under the law, that we might be redeemed from under the law ; nor is that all, but as we are redeemed, so are we adopted the children of God : And, this end I rather attribute to the life of Christ, that we might receive the adoption, that is, from the estate of prisoners condemned, that we might be translated into the estate of children adopted. O the mercy of God ! who ever heard of a condemned man to be afterwards adopted ? Would not a condemned prisoner think himself happy to escape with life ? But the zeal of the Lord of hosts hath performed this ; we are in Christ both pardoned and adopted, and, by this means, God's heavenly inheritance is estated upon us. O let our faith look mainly to this design of

Christ! He was made under the law, yea, and under the directive part of the law by his life; he fulfilled every tittle of the law by his obedience, that we might be entitled to glory.

2. For the more immediate end of Christ; the apostle tells us, Christ was made under the law, or fulfilled all righteousness, that the law might be fulfilled in us. O my soul, look to this! Herein lies the pith, and the marrow of thy justification. Of thyself thou canst do nothing good; but Christ fulfilleth the law in thy stead; and if now thou wilt but exercise thy faith, thou mayest feel the virtue and efficacy of Christ's righteousness, flowing into thy own soul. But here is the question, how should I manage my faith? To feel Christ's righteousness my righteousness. I answer, 1. Thy way is to discern this righteousness of Christ, this holy and perfect life of the Lord Jesus, in the whole, and in all the parts of it, as it is laid down in the written word. 2. Thy way is to believe and to receive this as sacred and unquestionable in reference to thy own soul. 3. Thy way is to apply, and improve this discovery according to those ends, to which thou believest they were designed. Yea, but there lies the question, how may that be done? I answer,—

1. Setting before thee that discovery (that perfect life of Christ) first endeavour to be deeply humbled for thy great inconformity thereto in whole, and in part.

2. Still keeping thy spirit intent on the pattern, quicken, provoke and encrease thy sluggish soul, with renewed, redoubled vigilancy and industry, to come up higher towards it, and (if it were possible) completely to it.

3. Yet having the same copy before thee, exercise faith thereupon, as that which was performed, and is accepted on thy behalf. And so go to God, and offer Christ's holy life and active obedience unto him. And that, first to fill up the defects of thy utmost endeavour. Secondly, to put a value and

worth, upon what thou doest, and attainest to, Thirdly, to make Christ's righteousness thy own, that thou mayest say with the psalmist, in way of assurance, "O God my righteousness."

SECT. VI.

*Of Loving Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation, during his life. O what a lovely object is the life of Christ? Who can read over his life, who can think over his worthiness, both in his person, relations, actions, and several administrations, and not love him with a singular love?

O my soul, much have been said to persuade thee to faith; and if now thou believest thy part in those several actings of Christ, let thy faith take thee by the hand, and lead thee from one step to another; from his baptism to his temptations; from his temptations to his manifestations; and so on. Is not here fuel enough for love? Canst thou read the history of love (for such is the history of Christ's life) and not be all on a flame? Come, read again! There is nothing in Christ but what is lovely, winning and drawing.

1. When he saw thee full of filth, he goes down into the waters of baptism, that he might prepare a way for the cleansing of thy polluted soul.

2. When he saw the devil ready to swallow thee up, he himself enters in the list, and overcomes him, that thou mightest overcome, and triumph with Christ in his glory.

3. When he saw thee in danger of death through thy unbelief, he condescends so far to succour thy weakness, as to manifest himself by several witnesses? Three in heaven, and three on earth; yea, he multiplies his three on earth; to thousands of

thousands; so many were the signs witnessing Christ, that the disciples which testified of them, could say, If they should be written every one, the world could not contain the books that should be written.

4. When he saw thee like the horse and mule, not having understanding, he came with his instructions, adding line unto line, and precept on precept, teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom: and sealing his truths with many miracles, that thou mayest believe, and in believing mightest have life through his name.

5. When he saw thee a sinner of the gentiles, stranger from the common-wealth of Israel, and without God in the world, he sent his apostles and messengers abroad, and bade them preach the gospel to thee; "Go to such a one in the dark corner of the world, an isle at such a distance, and set up my throne amongst that people, open the most precious cabinet of my love there; and amongst that people, tell such a soul that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom he is one."

6. When he saw thee cast down, and refusing thy own mercy, crying and saying, "What! is it possible that Jesus Christ should send a message to such a dead dog as I am?" He then appeared, and even then spread his arms wide to receive thy soul: He cried, Come unto me, thou that art weary and heavy laden with sin, and I will give thee rest.

7. When he saw thee in suspense, and heard thy complaint, "Oh! it is an hard passage, and an high ascent up to heaven!—Oh! what shall become of my poor soul?" He told thee that all his ways were ways of pleasantness, and all his paths peace;—that thou shouldst find by experience his yoke, was easy, and his burthen light.

8. When he saw the wretchedness of thy nature, and original pollution, he took upon him thy nature, and by this means took away thy original sin. Here is the lovely object! What is it but the absolute ho-

liness of the nature of Christ? This is the fairest beauty that ever eye beheld; This is that compendium of all glories.—Now if love be a motion and union of the appetite to what is lovely, how shouldst thou flame forth in love upon the Lord Jesus Christ?—See, O my soul, here is the sum of all the particulars thou hast heard, Christ loves thee, and Christ is lovely: his heart is set upon thee, who is a thousand times fairer than all the children of men. Doth not this double consideration, like a mighty loadstone, snatch thy heart unto it? “It pleased thee my Lord, to say to thy poor church, *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me*:—But O let me say to thee, Turn thine eyes to me, that they may overcome me: My Lord, I would be thus ravished, I would be overcome: I would be thus out of myself, that I might be all in thee.—How chill and cold art thou in thy converse with Jesus Christ? Surely, had Christ’s love been like this faint and feeble love of mine, I had been a damned wretch without all hope. O Christ I am ashamed, that I love thee so little: I perceive thy loves are great by all those actions in thy life: come, blow upon my garden, persuade me by the Spirit, that I may love thee; many sins are forgiven me, O that I may love thee much!”

## SECT. VII.

### *Of Joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation during his life.

1. In order to this, let us contemplate this life of Christ, let us spend our frequent thoughts upon this blessed object; the reason we miss of our joys, is because we are so little in contemplations of our Christ. It is said, that “he pities us in our sorrows;

but he delights in us, when we delight in him." Certainly he would have us to delight in him, and to that purpose he way-lays our thoughts, that wheresoever we look, we shall still think on him: O my soul, cast thine eyes which way thou wilt, and thou shalt hardly look on any thing, but Christ Jesus hath taken the name of that very thing upon himself. What, is it day? and dost thou behold the sun? He is called *the Sun of righteousness*: Or, is it night? and dost thou behold the stars? He is called *a Star; there shall come a Star out of Jacob*. Or, is it morning, and dost thou behold the morning star? He is called *the Bright Morning Star*. Or, is it noon; and dost thou behold clear light all the world over? He is *that light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world*. Come a little nearer; if thou lookest on earth, and takest a view of the creatures about thee, seest thou the sheep; *as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth*: Or, seest thou a lamb; *behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world*: Seest thou a shepherd watching over his flock; *I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine*: Or, seest thou a fountain, rivers, waters; he is called a Fountain; *in that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David*: Or, seest thou a tree good for food, or pleasant to the eye? He is called *the Tree of life*; and, *as the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons*: Seest thou a rose; a lilly, any fair flower in a garden? He is called a rose, a lilly: *I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lilly of the Vallies*: To come a little nearer yet; art thou adorning thyself, and takest a view of thy garments; he is a garment; *put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*. Art thou eating meat, and takest a view of what is on thy table; *He is the bread of God, true bread from heaven, the bread of life*. Thus Christ way-lays our thoughts, that wheresoever we look, we should ever think of Christ.

Now, I cannot think of Christ, or the life of Christ, of Christ preaching, or of Christ preached, but I must rejoice, in Christ; as sometimes the apostles said, *Christ is preached, I therein rejoice, yeu and will rejoice.*

2. Let us upon good grounds hope our share in the life of Christ. Hope and joy go together: If I have but assured hope that Christ's life is mine, I cannot but rejoice therein. Look to this, O my soul: peruse again and again thy grounds of hope. Do not slightly run them over; thou canst not be too sure of Christ. When Zaccheus in the sycamore tree heard but Christ's voice, *Zaccheus, made haste and came down: for to-day I must abide in thy house.* O what haste made Zaccheus to receive Christ! He came down hastily, and received him joyfully. This offer of Christ to Zaccheus is thine as well as his, if thy hope be right. Come down, poor soul, saith Christ, *this day must I abide in thy house.* Then what joy should there be in thy heart when Christ comes in, or when thou seelest Christ come in? *The friend of the bridegroom rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.* How much more may the bride herself rejoice?

3. Let us come up to more and more fruition of Christ: all other things work our delight but as they look towards this. Now in this fruition of Christ are contained these things: (1.) A propriety unto Christ; for, as a sick man doth not feel the joy of a sound man's health, so neither doth a stranger to Christ feel the joy of a believer in Christ. How should he joy in Christ that can make no claim to him? (2.) A possession of Christ. This exceedingly enlargeth our joy. O how sweet was Christ to the spouse, when she could say, *I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.* Many are taken up with the joy and comfort of outward possessions, but Christ is better than all: in one Christ, is comprized every scattered comfort here below. Christ mine (saith the soul) and all mine. O the useful-

ness of Christ to all believing souls! The scriptures are full of this, as appears by all his titles in scripture: he is our life, our light, our bread, our water, our milk, our wine; *his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed.* He is our father, our brother, our friend, our husband, our king, our priest, our prophet; he is our justification, our sanctification, our wisdom, our redemption: he is our peace, our mediation, our atonement, our reconciliation, our all in all. Alas! I look on myself, and I see I am nothing: I have nothing without Jesus Christ. Here is a temptation, I cannot resist it, here is a corruption I cannot overcome; here is a persecution I cannot down with it: well, but Christ is mine, I have interest in Christ, and I have possession of Christ, and I find enough in Christ to supply all my wants.

Those that lived with him, *all rejoiced for the glorious things that were done by him.* And doth not thy heart leap within thee, O my soul, I cannot but check thee for thy deadness: it is said, that when *Christ was at the descent of the mount of olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice, and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen.* What? a multitude of disciples rejoicing in Christ's acts? And art thou not one amongst the multitude? If thou art a disciple, rejoice thou: surely, it concerns thee as much as them; and therefore rejoice, lift up thy voice in harmony with the rest, rejoice and again rejoice.

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## S E C T. VIII.

### *Of Calling on Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us call on Jesus, or on God the Father in and through Jesus. Thus we read, that looking up to Jesus, or lifting up the eyes to Jesus, goes for

prayer in God's book: *My prayer will I direct to thee* (saith David) *and will look up*, faith in prayer, will often come out at the eye. Thus Stephen looked up to heaven; let us look up to Jesus by calling on him: now this calling on him contains prayer and praise.

1. We must pray that all these transactions of Jesus during his life, or during his ministry upon earth, may be ours: we hope it so, and we believe it to be so: but for all that, we must pray that it may be so. There is no contradiction betwixt hope, and faith, and prayer; Lord, I believe, yet help my unbelief; be it to me according to my faith, how weak soever:

2. We must praise God for all those passages in Christ's life. Thus did the multitude; "they praised God with a loud voice, saying, blessed be the King that comes in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!" What (my soul) hath Christ done this for thee? Was he made under the law to redeem thy soul, and adopt thee for his son, to the inheritance of heaven? Came he down from heaven, and travelled so many miles on earth to woo and win thy heart? Spent he so many sermons, and so many miracles to work thee into faith? O how shouldst thou bless and praise, and magnify his name? How shouldst thou break out into that blessed hymn, *To him that loved us, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever, and ever, Amen.*

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S E C T. IX.

*Of Conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

9. **LET** us conform to Jesus, as he acted for us in his life. Looking to Jesus intends this especially; we must look as one looks to his pattern; as ma-

sinners at sea, that they may run a right course, keep an eye on that ship that bears the light: so in the race that is set before us, we must have our eye on Jesus, our blessed pattern. This must be our constant query, "Is this the course that Jesus steered?"

In this particular I shall examine these three queries; 1. Wherein we must conform? 2. Why we must conform? 3. How we must conform to this life of Jesus?

For the first, I answer,—

We must not, cannot conform to Christ in those works proper to his Godhead; as in working miracles.—Nor need we to conform to Christ in some other particulars: as in his voluntary poverty; and ceremonial performances.

But we must conform to Christ's life.

1. In respect of his judgment, will, affections, look we at his spirit, observe what mind was in Jesus Christ, *Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ*, Phil. ii. 5. 1 Cor. ii. 16.

2. In respect of his virtues, graces, holiness. *Learn of me* (saith Christ) *for I am meek and lowly in heart*: I might instance in all other graces; for he had them all in fulness: *and of his fulness have we all received, grace for grace.*

3. In respect of his words. The very officers of the priest could say, "Never man spake like this man; and sometimes they all wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth; who when he was reviled, reviled not again."

4. In respect of his carriage, conversation, close walking with God. The apostle sets forth Christ as an high priest, *who was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners*: and in like manner, saith Peter, *Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the virtues of him, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light, that ye should in your lives and conversations ex-*

press those graces and virtues which were so eminent in Jesus Christ; that you should not only have them, but that you should hold them forth. The word signifies properly to preach; so clearly should we express the virtues of Christ. As if our lives were so many sermons of the life of Christ.

As for all other saints, though they are imitable, yet with limitation, only so far as they express his life in their conversation: *Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ.*

For the second; why we must conform? Upon what motives? I answer, 1. Because Christ hath done and suffered much to that end. If it had not been for thy imitation, I cannot think that Christ would have lived on earth so many years, to have done so many glorious and meritorious works.

2. Because Christ is the best and highest exemplar of holiness that ever the world had: hence we must needs conform to Christ. Christ is "the head of the body, the beginning, the first-born from the dead, in all things he hath the pre-eminence;" and the rule is general, that, that which is first and best in any kind, is the rule and measure of all the rest. Why such is Christ; O then let him be the guide of our life, and of our manners.

3. Because Christ doth not only give us an example, but he doth succour and assist us by its easiness. Some sweetly observe, that Christ's piety (which we must imitate) was even, constant, unblameable, complying with civil society, without any prodigious instances of actions, greater than the imitation of men. We are not commanded to imitate a life, whose story tells us of extacies in prayer, of abstractions of senses, no; but a life of justice, piety and devotion; and it is very remarkable, that besides the easiness of this imitation, there is a virtue and efficacy in the life of Christ: it may be, we think our way to heaven is troublesome, obscure, and full of objection; well, faith

Christ, but mark my footsteps; come on, and tread where I have stood, and you shall find the virtue of my example will make all smooth and easy; you shall find the comforts of my company, you shall feel the virtue and influence of a perpetual guide.

4. Because Christ in his word hath commanded us to follow his steps; "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am; if I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet, for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.—And as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, *be ye holy, for I am holy.*" We must be holy as Christ is holy, yet still we must look at the holiness of Christ, as the sun, and root, and fountain; and that our holiness is but as a beam of that sun, but as a branch of that root, but as a stream of that fountain.

For the third, how we must conform to this life?

I answer:—

1. Let us be humbled, for our great conformity to this copy; what an excellent pattern is here before us? And how far, how infinitely do we come short? Alas! if Christ will not own me, unless he see his image written upon me, what will become of my poor soul? Why Christ was meek, and humble, and lowly in spirit; Christ even went about doing good; and now when I come to examine my own heart according to this original, I am as opposite to Christ, as hell to heaven. O wo is me! what a vast disproportion there is betwixt Christ's life and mine? Thus, O my soul, shouldst thou humble thyself; each morning, each prayer, each meditation, each self-examination, shouldst thou fetch new, fresh, clear, particular occasions of humiliation: as thus, lo there the evenness, gravity, holiness, heavenliness of Jesus Christ; lo there the dear love, tender pity, constant industry, unwearied

pains, self-denial, contempt of the world in Jesus Christ: lo there those continual devout breathings of the soul after God, his Father's glory, after the immortal good of precious souls. O the sweet expressions, gracious conversation! O the blessed lustre of his divine soul! O the sweet countenance, sacred discourse, ravishing demeanour, winning deportment of Jesus Christ! and now I reflect upon myself, O the wide disproportion of mine therefrom! I should punctually answer, perfectly resemble, accurately imitate, exactly conform to this life of Christ; but ah! my unevenness, lightness, vanity! Ah! my deformity, slightness, execrableness! Ah my sensuality, brutishness, devilishness! how clearly are these, and all my other enormities discovered by the blessed life of Jesus?

2. Let us quicken our sluggish souls to conform to Christ. If this was one of the ends of Christ's coming, to destroy the works of the devil, to deface all satan's works, especially his work in me, and to set his own stamp on my soul; how then should I but endeavour to conform? I read but of two ends of Christ's coming into the world in relation to us; whereof the first was to redeem his people, and the other was to purify his people; "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:" The one is the work of his merit, which goeth upwards to the sanctification of his Father; the other is the work of his grace, which goeth downwards to the sanctification of his church; in the one, he bestoweth his righteousness on us by imputation; in the other he fashioneth his image in us by renovation; and what, O my soul, wouldst thou destroy the end of Christ's coming in the flesh? Thus let us provoke our souls to this conformity; let us excite our faint, drooping, languishing affections, desires, endeavours! Let us with enlarged industry engage, and encourage our backward spirits to fall upon this duty; let us come up higher to-

wards it, or if possibly we may, compleatly to it, that the same mind, and mouth, and life, may be in us that was in Jesus Christ, that we may be found to walk after Christ, that we may tread in the very prints of the feet of Christ, that we may climb up after him, into the same heavenly kingdom, that we may aspire continually towards him, and grow up to him, even to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

3. Let us regulate ourselves by the life of Christ; whatsoever action we go about, let us do it by this rule, would Christ have done this? It is true, some things are expedient and lawful with us, which are not suitable to the person of Christ, *Marriage is honourable with all men, and the bed undefiled*; but it did not benefit his person. Writing of books is commendable with men, because like Abel, being dead, they may still speak, but it would have been derogatory, to the person and office of Christ: for it is his prerogative to be in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, to be present to all his members, to teach by power and not by ministry; to write his law in the hearts of his people, and to make them his epistle. In these things we must only respect the allowance of Christ, but in other things we must reflect upon the example of Christ, as, 1. In sinful acts eschewed by Christ. 2. In moral duties that were done by him.

1. In sinful acts eschewed by Christ, as when I am tempted to sin, then am I to reason thus with myself: Would my blessed Saviour if he were upon earth do thus and thus? If he were to live again, would he live after this manner? Would this be his language? would such speech as this drop from his lips?

2. In case of moral obedience, concerning which we have both his pattern and precept. I look upon Christ as my rule; and I question thus, Did Christ frequently pray with his disciples, and alone? And shall I never in my family, or in my closet think

upon God? Did Christ shew mercy to his very enemies? And shall I be cruel to Christ's members? O my soul, look in all thy sins, and in all thy duties to thy original, and measure them by the holiness of Christ? whether in avoiding sin, or in doing duty, think, what could my blessed Saviour do in this case? Or what did he in the like case, when he was upon earth? If we had these thoughts every day, if Christ were continually before our eyes, if in all we do or speak we should still muse on this: what would Jesus Christ say if he were here? It would be a blessed means of living in comfort, and spiritual conformity to the commands of God.

Let us look fixedly on Jesus Christ; let us keep our spiritual eyes still on the pattern, until we feel ourselves conforming to it; let us set the copy of Christ's life in our view, and let us look upon it with the eye of reason, and with the eye of faith.

But how should we keep the eye of our faith on this blessed object, until we feel this conformity in us? I answer,—

1. Let us set apart some times on purpose; the day begins to close: if together with our closet prayer we would fall on this duty of looking unto Jesus by lively faith, how blessed a season might this be?

2. Let us remove hindrances; satan labours to hinder the soul from beholding Christ with the dust of the world. The God of this world blinds the eyes of men: O take heed of fixing our eyes on this world! our own corruptions are also great hindrances to this view of Christ; away with all carnal passions, sinful desires; unless the soul be spiritual, it can never behold spiritual things.

3. Let us fix our eyes only on this blessed object; a moving eye sees nothing clearly: when the angels are said to look into these things, the word signifies, that they look into them narrowly; as they who bowing or stooping down look into a thing, so should we look narrowly into the life of Christ; our

eye of faith should be set upon it in a steady manner, as if we forgot all the things behind, and had no other business in the world.

4. Let us look on Christ with a craving eye, with an humble expectation to receive a supply of grace. Lord, thou art not only anointed with the oil of gladness above thy fellows, but for thy fellows; I am earthly-minded, but thou art heavenly; I am full of lusts, but the image of God is perfect in thee; thou art the fountain of all grace, an head of all influence as well as of eminence; thou art not only above me, but thou hast all grace for me; O give me some portion of thy meekness, lowliness, heavenly-mindedness, and of all other the graces of thy Spirit. Surely thou art an heaven of grace, full of bright shining stars; O that of that fulness thou wouldst give me to receive grace for grace.

5. Be ye assured that our prayer (if it be in faith) is even now heard; never any came to Christ with strong expectations to receive grace, or any benefit prayed for, that was turned empty away; besides Christ hath engaged himself by promise, to make us like himself; *as he which hath called us his holy, so should (yea, and so shall) we be holy in all manner of conversation.* O let us build on his gracious promise: heaven and earth shall pass away before one tittle of his word shall fail; only understand we that our conformity must be gradual, *We all with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, (i. e.) from grace to grace; or from glory inchoate in obedience, to glory consummate, in heaven.*

6. If notwithstanding all this, we feel not for the present this conformity in us, at least in such a degree; let us act over the same particulars again; the gifts of grace are therefore communicated by degrees, that we might be taken off from living upon a received stock of grace; and that we might still be running to the spring; we have continual need

of Christ's letting out grace into our hearts; and therefore we must wait at the well-head, Christ; we must look on Christ as appointed on purpose by his Father to be the beginner and finisher of our holiness; and we must believe that he will never leave that work imperfect, whereunto he is ordained of the Father. O then be not weary of this work, until he accomplish the desires of thy soul.

I have now done with this subject; only before I finish, one word more. I deny not other helps, but amongst them all, if I would make choice which to call upon, that I may become more and more holy, I would set before me this glass, (*i. e.*) Christ's holy life, the great exemplar of holiness; and this image we lost through our sin, and to this image we should endeavour to be restored by imitation: and how should this be done but by looking on Christ as our pattern? In this respect I charge thee, O my soul (for to what purpose should I charge others, if I begin not at home?) that thou make conscience of this evangelical duty: O be much in the exercise of it; not only in the day, but when night comes, and thou liest down on thy bed, let thy pillow be as Christ's bosom, in which John the beloved disciple was said to lean; there lean thou with John; thus mayest thou lie down in peace, and the Lord only will make thee to dwell in safety; and when day returns again, have this in mind, yea, in all thy thoughts, words, and deeds, even look unto Jesus as thy holy exemplar: say to thyself, if Christ my Saviour were now upon earth, would these be his thoughts, words, and deeds; would he be thus disposed as I now feel myself? Would he speak these words that I am now uttering? Would he do this that I am now putting my hand unto? O let me not yield myself to any thought, word or action, which Jesus would be ashamed to own: yea, if it were possible, going and standing, sitting and lying, eating and drinking, speaking and holding thy peace, by thyself or in company, cast

an eye upon Jesus, for by this means thou canst not chuse but love him more, and joy in him more, and trust in him more, and be more and more familiar with him, and draw more and more grace and virtue, and sweetness from him: O let this be thy wisdom, to think much of Christ; so as to provoke thee to imitation; then shalt thou learn to contemn the world, to do good to all, to injure no man, to suffer wrong patiently, yea, to pray for those that despitefully use thee, and persecute thee; then shalt thou learn to bear about in thy body, *The dying of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in thy body*; This is to follow Christ's steps, he descended from heaven to earth for thy sake; do thou trample on earthly things, *Seek after the kingdom of God, and his righteousness*, for thy own sake; though the world be sweet, yet Christ is sweeter; though the world prove bitter, yet Christ sustained the bitterness of it for thee: and now he speaks to thee, as he did to Peter, Andrew, James and John, *Come follow me*; O do not faint in the way, lest thou lose thy place in thy country, that kingdom of glory,

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## LOOKING UNTO JESUS

IN HIS RESURRECTION,

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### CHAP. I.

SECT. 1. *Of the Time and Reasons of Christ's Resurrection.*

**T**HE sun, that went down in a ruddy cloud, is risen again with glorious beams. In this piece, as in the former, we shall first lay down the object, and then give directions how to look upon it.

The object is Jesus, carrying on the great work of man's salvation in his resurrection, and during the time of his abode on earth after his resurrection. Now in all the transactions of this time, I shall only take notice of these two things: 1. Of his resurrection. 2. Of his apparitions; first, he arose; and secondly, he shews himself that he was risen.

The scripture tells us, that he rose again the third day. In this point I shall observe these particulars. 1. When he arose. 2. Why he arose. 3. How he arose.

1. When he arose; it was the third day after his crucifying. Had he rose sooner, a doubt might have been of his dying.

2. Why he arose. We have these reasons.

1. That he might powerfully convince or confound his adversaries, notwithstanding their care, their watch, their seal, their making all as sure as possibly they could; at the very same time he told them before, he broke open the gates of death, and made the gates of brass to fly asunder.

2. That he might confirm the faith of all his followers. *If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain,* saith the apostle. Christ's resurrection both confirms our faith, as to his person, and to his office; for his person; this speaks him to be the eternal Son of God, by the resurrection from the dead: and as for his office; this speaks him to be the promised Messiah, the King and Saviour of his Church.

3. That it might appear he had fully satisfied the justice of God for sin: so it was, that God laid the forfeiture of the bond on Christ; he arrested him, brought him to the goal, the grave, and there he was until the debt was paid to the uttermost farthing; and then, that it might clearly appear the bond was cancelled, he arose again from the dead.

4. That he might conquer sin, death, and the devil: and hence the apostle cries victory upon the occasion of Christ's resurrection: *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?* Now

was the day that he spoiled principalities and powers, that we trode on the serpent's head, that he came upon him, took him from his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils.

5. That he might become the first-fruits of them that slept. Christ is called the first-fruits in a double respect. 1. In respect of the day whereon he rose; Paul was an excellent critic, the very feast carried him to the word; as the day of his passion was the day of the passover, and the apostle thence could say, *Christ is our passover*, 1 Cor. xv. 7. So the day of Christ's rising was the day of the first-fruits, and the apostle thence could say, *Christ is our first-fruits*. Concerning this feast of the first-fruits, we read, Lev. xxii. 10, 11. It was their first harvest of their basest grain, barley; the full harvest of their best grain of wheat, was not until pentecost. Now, upon this day, the morrow after the sabbath, the beginning of their first harvest, when the sheaf of their first-fruits, was brought unto the priest, and waved before the Lord, Christ arose from the dead, and in this respect Paul calls him the *first-fruits of them that sleep*, of all the saints. He arose first on this day, for the full harvest is not, till the general resurrection day. 2. He is called the first-fruit in respect of them whom he thereby sanctified: for as an handful of the first-fruits sanctified the whole field of corn that was growing; so Jesus Christ the first-fruits of the dead, sanctifies all those who are lying in the grave to rise again by his power, even when they are in the dust of death. *If Christ be not risen* (saith the apostle) *ye are yet in your sins.—But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep.*

6. That being formerly abased as a servant, and crucified as a sinner, he might thus be declared to be the Son of God, and exalted to be a Prince and Saviour; and so his name might be glorified of all the world. *He was made of the seed of David*

according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. It was of necessary consequence, that he that was so humbled, must be thus exalted; therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death. Of all the reasons of Christ's resurrection, we must look upon this as the main; for as he hath made all things for his own glory; so Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father; by the glory, or to the glory, or for the glory of himself, and of his Father.

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## S E C T. II.

### *Of the Manner of Christ's Resurrection.*

**H**OW he rose; the manner of his resurrection we may consider in these particulars :

1. That Christ rose again as a common person, he stood in our stead; Adam, we know, was reckoned before the fall as a common person, not standing singly for himself, but as representing all mankind to come of him; so Jesus Christ is reckoned to us, both before his death, and in his death, and after his death, as a common person; not living, dying, or rising again, singly, for himself, but as representing all the believers in the world. As among all the sheaves in the field, there was some one sheaf, that in the name of all the rest was lift up, and waved before the Lord, so when all were dead, Christ as the first-fruits rose again from the dead. Let this ever be remembered, that Christ rose again as the first-fruits, as an head, as a common person.

2. That Christ rose again by his own power; this he meant when he said, *Destroy this temple, and in*

*three days I will raise it up.* He saith not, destroy you, and some other shall raise it up; no: but I, even I myself will do it; yea, and by my own power: here is a plain argument of the divine nature of Christ, for none ever did, ever could do that but God himself.

It is true, that the Father raised him, and yet this contradicts not but that he raised up himself, *Whatsoever the Father doth, I do*, saith Christ. Christ's resurrection is the indivisible work of the blessed Trinity; it is a work common to all the three persons; there is but one power of the Father, and of the Son; so that of both it is true, the Father raised him, and the Son raised himself.

3. That Christ rose again with an earthquake; *And behold there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven.* The earth shook at his death, and now it trembles at his resurrection; plainly speaking that it could neither endure his suffering, nor hinder his rising.

4. That Christ rose again, *Angels ministering to him.* *An angel came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.* Christ's power was not included in the grave, but extended to heaven; and to the hosts therein; however the chief priests and Pharisees conspired together to close him in the earth; they sealed the stone, and set a watch; yet, the angels of heaven are ready to wait on him as their sovereign Lord. An angel descending to roll away the stone; not that Christ was unable to do it himself; he shook the earth, and could not he lift a stone? O yes! but thus he would manifest his power, by declaring his power over the mighty angels; he need but to say unto his angel, do this, and he doth it.

5. That Christ rose again accompanied with others; *And the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept, arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city; and appeared unto many.* It may be the

graves were opened when Christ was laid down in his grave; yet the Spirits came not into the dead bodies till Christ's resurrection; the text is plain, that they came not out of their graves until Christ was raised. *Christ is the beginning* (saith the apostle) *the first-born from the dead*: both in time and efficacy. 1. In time, he rose to eternal life the first of all men. 2. In respect of efficacy, Christ rose first, that by his power all the rest might rise. It is a question what became of those bodies which now rose: some think they died again; but it is more probable, that seeing they rose to manifest the quickening virtue of Christ's resurrection, they were also glorified with Christ; and as they rose with Christ arising, so they ascended up into heaven with Christ ascending.

6. That Christ rose again with a true, perfect, incorruptible, powerful, spiritual, agile, and glorious body.

1. He had a true body, consisting of flesh, and blood and bone; so he told his disciples when they supposed him a spirit; *Handle me, and see* (said he) *for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have*. I know, this body, after his resurrection, was comparatively a spiritual body; yet for all that, he never laid aside the essential properties of a true body.

2. He had a perfect body; however he was cut, and mangled before his death, yet after his resurrection, all was perfect.

3. He had an incorruptible, immortal body. The apostle is express; *Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him*. Consonant hereunto is that of Christ, *I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen*.

4. He had a powerful body. Luther could say of the glorified saints, that they had a power so great as to toss the greatest mountains in the world like a ball: and Anselm hath an expression; not

much unlike, " They have such a power, as they " are able to shake the whole earth at their pleasure." How much more could Christ cause that great earthquake at the rising of his body?

5. He had a spiritual body; it needed not meat, drink or refreshings, as it did before; it is true, that the disciple *gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey comb, and he took it, and did eat before them;* but this he did only to confirm their faith; he eat out of power, and not out of necessity.

6. He had an agile body; it was in his pleasure to move as well upwards as downwards, as it may appear by the ascension of his body into heaven; which was not caused by constraint, or by any violent motion, but a property agreeing to all bodies glorified. Augustine hath an expression concerning the glorified saints, " That they shall move to any place they will, and as soon as they will;" they shall move up and down like a thought, how much more may it be said of the body of Christ?

7. He had a glorious body; this appeared in his transfiguration, *when his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as light;* but especially after his resurrection and ascension, *when his head and his hair were white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.* It is true, that from his resurrection, until his ascension, his body appeared not thus glorious unto them that saw it: but whether his glory was delayed, during his forty days abode upon earth; or whether they so far condescended for his disciple's sake, as to keep in his glory, that it might not dazzle them, is hard to determine. I am apt to think, that in some sort he might draw in the beams of his glory, and yet that he was not entered into that fulness of glory, as after his ascension; and so some expound those words of Christ to Mary, " Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father;" *q. d.* Fix not thy thoughts so much upon my present condition, for I have not

yet attained the highest pitch of my exaltation, nor shall I until I ascend unto my Father.

From this resurrection of Christ, how are we informed, that Christ is the Son of God? Thus Paul speaks, *He was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead.* And how are we informed that Christ is Lord over all things? *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.* And how are we informed that Christ rose again for us? *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep.* And how are we informed that by his resurrection we are justified? who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification: and that by his resurrection at the last day we shall be raised; for the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies: and that by his resurrection finally we shall be saved; for after we are raised, we shall never die any more, but be equal unto the angels, and be the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

### SECT. III.

#### *Of the Arguments of Christ's Resurrection.*

**C**HRI<sup>S</sup>T after his passion shewed himself alive by many infallible proofs. And so he had need to persuade men into the faith of so strange a truth; if we consult with primitive times, or latter times, never was matter carried on with more scruple, and slowness of belief, with more doubts and difficulties than was this truth of Christ's resurrection. Mary Magdalen saw it first, and reported it; *but they believed her not,* Mark xvi. 10. The two disciples that went to Emmaus, they saw it also, and report-

ed it, but *they believed them not*, Luke xxiii. 37. Divers women together saw him, and came and told the disciples, but *their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not*, Luke xxiv. 11. They all saw him, and even seeing him, *yet they believed not for joy, but wondered*, Luke xxiv. 41. When the wonder was over, and the rest told it but to one that happened to be absent, you know how peremptory he was; not he, *except he saw in his hands the print of his nails, and put his fingers into the print of the nails, and thrust his hands into his side, he would not believe*, John xx. 25.—In after-times the whole world stopt their ears at this report of the resurrection of Christ, it was with the Grecians at Athens a very scorn; *when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked*, Acts xvii. 22. It was with Festus, the great Roman, a plain phrenzy; Festus said with a loud voice, *Paul, thou art besides thyself, much learning doth make thee mad*, Acts xxviii. 24.—But come we to our own times, the resurrection of Christ is to this day as much opposed by Jews and Atheists, as any one article of our creed. And surely we had need to look to it; for *if Christ be not risen (as the apostle argues) then is our preaching vain, and our faith is also vain*. 1 Cor. xv. 14. *If Christ be not risen, ye are yet in your sins; and they which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished*, 1 Cor. xv. 17, 18. Of all the precious truths in the book of God, we had need to be well skilled in the defending this of the resurrection of Christ.

I mean not to enter into controversies; only I shall declare those clear demonstrations, that substantially prove Christ to have risen again; namely, the several apparitions that Christ made to others after his resurrection.

1. He appeared unto Mary Magdalen apart. As a woman was the first instrument of death, so was a woman the first messenger of life.

2. He appeared to all the Marys together, as they returned homewards from the sepulchre; never any truly sought for Christ, but with these women they were sure to find Christ.

3. He appeared to Simon Peter alone; he first went into the sepulchre, and he first saw him that was raised thence.

4. He appeared to the two disciples journeying towards Emmaus: the name of the one was Cleophas; and probable it is, the other was Luke. "who out of modesty concealed his own name." saith Theophilact.

5. He appeared unto the ten apostles, when the doors were shut.

6. He appeared to all the disciples, and Thomas was with them; and then he shewed them his wounds, to strengthen the weak faith of his wavering servants.

7. He appeared to Peter, and John, and James, and Nathaniel, and Didimus, and two other disciples, when they were a fishing at the sea of Tiberias; there he proved the verity of his Deity by that miracle of the fishes; and the verity of his humanity by eating meat with them.

8. He appeared unto more than five hundred brethren at once; of this we read not in the evangelist's, but the apostle Paul records it.

9. He appeared unto James the brother of the Lord: (*i. e.*) the cousin-german of Christ according to the flesh; called James the just, in regard of his upright life.

10. He appeared to the eleven disciples, on mount Tabor in Galilee. And this Matthew intimates, when Jesus bade the woman tell his brethren that he was risen, and that they should go into Galilee, and there they should see him; and accordingly in that mountain where Jesus had appointed them, they saw him, and worshipped him.

11. He appeared to all his apostles and disciples upon mount Olivet by Jerusalem, when in the presence of them all he ascended up into heaven.

12. He appeared unto Paul travelling unto Damascus.

My meaning is not to speak of all these apparitions in order, but of the most considerable.

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## S E C T. IV.

### *Of Christ's Apparition to Mary Magdalen.*

**O**N the first day were many apparitions: but I shall speak only to one or two, as related by the evangelist John.

1. Christ appeared unto Mary Magdalen apart; *The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalen, early when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre; she came whilst it was yet dark; she departed from home before day, and by that time she came to the sepulchre, the sun was about to rise; thither come, she finds the stone rolled away, and the body of Jesus gone: upon this she runs to Peter and John and tells them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.* Then Peter and John ran to see, they looked into the sepulchre, and not finding the body there, they presently returned. By this time Mary Magdalen was come back, and howsoever the disciples would not stay, yet she was resolved to abide by it, and to see the issue.

We find this apparition for our farther assurance, compassed, and set about with each needful circumstance; here is the time when, the place where, the persons to whom, the manner how he appeared, together with the consequents after his apparition.

1. For the time when he appeared; *Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning.* It was the first day of the week, the next day to their sabbath; and it was very early in the morning; the apparition was early, but Mary's seeking Christ was so early, that it was yet dark: she sought him early whom she loved intirely; they that will not seek Christ until they have given over seeking other things, may justly fear to miss Christ.

2. For the place where he appeared, it was in the garden, where Christ was buried.

3. For the person to whom he appeared; it was Mary Magdalen; she that sometimes lived a sinful life, that was no better than a common courtezan, now is first up to seek our Saviour. Let never any despair of mercy. Her love to Christ appears at this time, *But Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre.*

1. *Mary stood at the sepulchre;* she stood by the grave of Christ; it signifies her great love: Mary chuseth Christ's tomb for her best home, and his dead corpse for her chief comfort; having lost that light of the Sun of righteousness, she desired to dwell in darkness, in the shadow of death.

2. *But Mary stood at the sepulchre weeping.* This was love indeed; see how every word is a degree of love. She cannot think of Jesus as lost, but she weeps; she weeps for having lost him whom she loved; at first she mourned for the departure of his soul out of his body, and now she laments the taking his body out of the grave.

3. *And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre.* She did so weep as she did seek withal; her weeping hindered not her seeking; she sought, to what purpose? that Christ is not in the tomb, her own eyes have seen; the disciples hands have felt; and yet for all this she will be stooping down, and looking in; she would rather condemn her own eyes of error, she would rather

suspect all testimonies for untrue than not to look after him whom she had lost.

4. For the manner how he appeared ; it was first by his angels, and secondly by himself.

1. There was an apparition of angels, *she seeth two angels in white, sitting the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.* As the apparition of angels, is not only a preparation to Christ's apparition.

In this apparition we see further, a question and answer: The angels question Mary, *woman why weepest thou ; She saith unto them, because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.* Here was the cause of Mary's tears ; she knew not whither to go to find any comfort ; her Lord is gone, his life is gone, his soul is gone, his body is gone ; yea gone, and carried she knows not whither.

2. After this, Christ himself appears but first as unknown, and then as known. 1. As unknown; *She turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, woman, why weepest thou ? whom seekest thou ? she supposing him to be the gardener, &c.* In this apparition of Christ unknown, I shall only take notice of Christ's question, and Mary's inquisition ; his question, is in these words ; *woman, why weepest thou ? whom seekest thou ?* 1. *Why weepest thou ?* As if he had said, there is no cause of weeping now, Lo I am risen, from the dead ; and become the first-born of them that sleep !

3. *Whom seekest thou ?* She seeks Christ, and Christ asks her, *woman whom seekest thou ?* A shower of tears come betwixt her and him, and she cannot see him, or it may be, *her eyes were holden that she should not know him ;* or it may be he appeared in some other shape, such as resembled the gardener, whom she took him for.

4. For Mary's enquiry, *she supposing him to be the gardener, Sir, If thou hast borne him hence ; tell*

*me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.*

Her words to Christ, are not much unlike the answer she gave the angels; only she seems to speak more harsh to Christ, than she did to the angels; to them she complains of others; *They have taken away my Lord*; but to Christ, she speaks as if she would charge him with the fact. But pardon love, as it fears where it needs not; so it suspects very often where it hath no cause: when love is at a loss; he, or any that comes but in our way, hath done it, hath taken him away.

Something she spoke now to Christ, which she had not mentioned to the angels. She said not unto them, *tell me where he is, and I will take him away*; there is no essay too hard for love; she speaks without fear, she promises without condition, she makes no exception, as if nothing were impossible that love suggesteth.

5. Christ appears as known; *Jesus saith unto her, Mary; she turned herself, and saith unto him, rabboni, which is to say, master. Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.* She that hitherto had sought without finding, and wept without comfort, and called without answer, even to her Christ now appears; and at his apparition these passages are betwixt them: first, he speaks unto her, *Mary*; and then she replies unto him, *rabboni*, which is to say, master.

1. He speaks unto her, *Mary*! it was but a word, but O what life? what spirit? what quickening and reviving was in the word? the voice of Christ is powerful; "If the spirit of Christ come alone with the word, it will rouse hearts, raise spirits, work wonders." And at this word her tears are dried up, no more tears now, unless they be tears for joy. Observe the way how you may know the voice of Jesus Christ; if it be effectual, it usually singles a man out; yea, though it be generally spoken by a minister; yet the voice of

Christ will speak particularly to the very heart of a man, with a marvellous kind of majesty and glory, stamp'd upon it, and shining in it. Take a broken, drooping spirit, he hears the free offer of grace, the precious promises of God in Christ; but he casts by all promises; but when the Lord comes in, he speaks particularly to his heart, he meets with all his objections, that he thinks, this is the Lord, and this is to me.

2. *She said unto him, rabboni, which is to say, master.* As she was ravished with his voice, so impatient of delay she takes his talk out of his mouth, and to his first and only word, she answered but one other, *rabboni, which is to say master.* A wonder that in this verse but two words should pass betwixt them two; but some give this reason, that a sudden joy rousing all her passions, she could neither proceed in her own, nor give leave to go forward in his speech.

3. For the consequents after this apparition, Jesus saith unto her, *touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father; and to my God and your God.*

*Touch me not.* Mary is not satisfied to see her Lord, nor is she satisfied to hear her Lord, but she must touch him, embrace his feet, but on a sudden he checks her forwardness; as if he had said, O Mary, fix not thy thoughts so much upon my present condition; in as much as this is not the highest pitch of my exaltation; I am not as yet attained to that, nor shall I attain to it until I ascend; the degrees of my exaltation, are, first, my resurrection. 2. My ascension, 3. My session at God's right-hand; but that is not yet.

4. *But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God;* this was the command of Christ; instead of touching him, she must go with

a message to his apostles, and this was more beneficial both to her and them.

But what means he to speak of the ascension when as yet we are but upon the resurrection? I suppose this was to prevent their mistake, who might have thought, if Christ be risen, then we shall have his company again, as heretofore; no, saith Christ, I am not risen, to make any abode with you; my rising is in reference to my ascending.

But whither will he ascend? *To his Father, and our Father, to his God and our God.* O blessed message! This is the voice of a father to his son; *all that I have is thine.* Now if this father be also God, and if all that is God's be also ours, what can we desire more? But here's the question whether his father and God, be also ours? That he is Christ's father, and Christ's God, is without all question: but that his father, should be our father; and that his God, should be our God; this were a gospel indeed. O then what a gospel is his! Go to my brethren, and say unto them, that our relations and interest are all one; the same father that is mine is theirs, and the same God that is mine is theirs.



#### SECT. IV.

*Of Christ's Apparition to his ten disciples.*

**O**N this day some reckon five apparitions; but I shall now only take notice of the last. *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you; and when he had so said, he shewed unto*

*them his hands and his feet.* In these words we have the apparition of Christ, with all its circumstances.

As, 1. When he appeared.

2. Where he appeared.

3. To whom he appeared.

4. How he appeared.

So necessary was it to confirm this point, that not a needful circumstance must be wanting. And first is laid down the time; *then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week.*

1. It was the same day, that is, the very day of rising; the same day that he appeared to Peter, to the two disciples going to Emmaus, to the woman coming to the sepulchre, and to Mary Magdalen; the very same day he appears to the ten.

2. It was the same day at evening: Both at morn, noon, and evening, Christ shewed himself alive by many infallible proofs. Early in the morning he appeared to Mary, and presently after to the three Maries, who touched his feet, and worshipped him. About noon he appeared to Simon Peter: in the afternoon he travelled with two of his disciples almost eight miles, to the castle of Emmaus; and in the evening of the same day, he returned invisible from Emmaus to Jerusalem. At all times of the day, Christ is prepared, and preparing grace for his people.

3. It was the same day at evening, *being the first of the week.* When Joseph shewed himself unto his brethren, he would not do it first, and yet he dealt very kindly with them; but Christ's kindness is far above Joseph's: for on the first day of the week, the very same day that he rose from the dead, he appears unto them.

4. The place is laid down in this passage, *where the disciples were assembled.* The evangelist, Luke,

speaks expressly, it was in Jerusalem; but in what house of Jerusalem, it is unknown; only some conjecture, that it was in the house of some disciple, wherein was an upper room: This upper room, according to the manner of their buildings at that time, was the most large and capacious of any other, and the most retired and free from disturbance. Christ came in when the doors were shut, either causing the doors to give place, the disciples not knowing how; or else altering the very substance of the doors, that his body might pass through them without destruction. I know not but he that thickens the waters to carry his body, might also attenuate the doors, to make way for his body.

5. The persons to whom he appeared, were his disciples; they that were shut up, not daring to step out of doors, for fear of the Jews. It is Christ's usual course to appear to them who are full of fears and griefs, and most in dangers; *when thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.*

6. For the manner how he appeared. 1. *He stood in the midst.* 2. *He said, peace unto you.* 3. *He shewed them his hands and his side.*

(1.) *He stood in the midst.* O what comfort is here to see Jesus Christ stand in the midst; now may the disciples behold him as their blessed peacemaker, their mediator, as one that hath slain the enmity: not only that enmity betwixt men and men, Jews and Gentiles; but also betwixt God and men. This he did by his death, and now he declares it as his resurrection; *having slain the enmity by his cross, he came and preached peace; Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said unto them, peace be unto you.*

(2.) *He said, peace be unto you.* A seasonable salutation; for now were the disciples in fear and trouble; they had no peace with God, or man, or with their own consciences; and therefore a more welcome news could not have come.

[1.] It speaks their peace with God. Sin was it that brought a difference betwixt God and man: now this difference Jesus Christ had taken away by his death, *behold the lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world*: This was the great design of Christ's coming, to make peace betwixt God and man; his father imposed this office upon him, and Jesus Christ undertook it, and discharged it, and he proclaims it, in the first place, to his disciples, *peace be unto you.*

[2.] It speaks their peace with man. I know no reason why we should exclude civil peace out of Christ's wish; many a promise and precept we have in a word, scattered here and there, to this purpose, *and I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid.— Follow peace, and holiness, without which, no man, shall see God.* *Orbem pacatum*, was ever a clause in the prayers of the primitive church, that the world might be quiet; I am sure it is Christ's command, *if it be possible as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*

[3.] It speaks their peace among themselves, peace one with another; such is, or should be the condition of the church. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is at unity within itself, the apostle dwells on this unity, *there is one body, and one spirit, and one hope, and one Lord, and one faith, and one baptism, and one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* The church is a court, whose very pillars are peace. The building of christianity knows no other material to work upon. If we look upon the church itself, *there is one body*: if upon the very soul of it, *there is one spirit*: if upon the endowment of it, *there is one hope*: if upon the head of it, *there is one Lord*: if upon the life of it, *there is one faith*: if upon the door of it, *there is one baptism*: if upon the father of it, *there is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* It was sometimes

Christ's command unto his apostles, *have salt in yourselves and have peace one with another*. And as a blessed effect of this salutation, (for I look upon them as words full of virtue) the apostles and churches of Christ kept a most sweet harmony, *the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart, and of one soul*.

[4.] It speaks peace within, peace of conscience. The apostles had exceedingly fallen from Christ; one betrayed him, and another denied him, all left him alone in the midst of his enemies; and yet to them he speaks, *peace be unto you*. I know not a better ground for comfort of poor humbled sinners than this is; it may be you have dealt very unkindly with Jesus Christ, you have forsook him, denied him, forsworn him; O but consider, all this hindered not Christ's apparition to his apostles; he comes unexpected, and quiets their spirits: he stays not 'till they had sued to him for mercy, but of his mere love, he stills the waves, and calls their troubled spirits, working in them according to his word, *peace be unto you*.

(3.) *He shewed unto them, his hands and his side*. I look upon this as a true and real manifestation of his resurrection: Christ's body yet remaining on earth, was not entered into that fulness of glory; and therefore he might then retain some scars, or blemishes, to manifest the truth of his resurrection to his disciples. O the wonderful condescensions of Christ! what helps doth he continually afford to beget in us faith? If we are ignorant, he instructs us; if we err, he reduceth us; if we sin, he corrects us; if we stand, he holds us up; if we fall, he lifts us up again; if we go, he leads us, if we come to him, he is ready to receive us, there's not a passage of Christ between him and his, but is an argument of love, and a means either of begetting or increasing faith.

## C H A P. II.

SECT. 1. *Of Knowing Jesus as carrying on the great work of our Salvation in his Resurrection.*

**T**HAT in all respects we may look on Jesus. 1. Let us know Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection, and during the time of his abode upon the earth after his resurrection. This is worth the knowing; on it depends our justification, sanctification, salvation; "For if Christ be not risen, we are yet in our sins, and our faith is in vain, and our hope is in vain." O my soul, study this point; many take it up in gross, they can run over this article of their creed, "The third day he rose again from the dead;" but for a particular understanding of it, in respect of the time, or the end, or the manner, or the certainty, how many are to seek? I shall appeal to thyself, are not many discoveries already made which before thou never tookest notice of? and if thou wouldst but study this point, how much more might yet appear; especially to thine own good; it is not enough to know Christ's resurrection, unless thou know it for thyself. Be sure thou hast this in mind, that Christ rose again, but what is that to me; Saving knowledge is ever joined with a particular application; if Christ be my head, then he could not rise, but I rose with him, and in him: and thus, O my soul, look on Christ; and thus search into every particular of Christ's resurrection; come, study when he rose; study the arguments that make out Christ's resurrection sure and certain; study all the apparitions of Jesus Christ; O what delightful studies are these! Hadst thou been with them to whom Christ appeared, would not thy heart have leaped

with joy? Come, study it close, for the benefits of these apparitions extend to thee. Know this for thyself.

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S E C T. II.

*Of Considering Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us consider Jesus carrying on this work of our salvation in his resurrection.

1. Consider the time when Christ rose again. As Christ had his three days, and no more, so must thou have the same three days like unto his; the first day was called the day of preparation; the second was the sabbath day; and the third day was the resurrection day; so thy first day is a day of preparation, a day of passion, wherein thou must strive against sin and Satan, wherein thou must suffer all their darts until thou diest; and thy second day is a day of rest, wherein thy body must lie in the grave, and thy flesh rest in hope: wherein thou shalt enter into peace and rest in thy bed, until the trumpet sound, and bid thee arise, and come to judgment; and thy third day is a day of resurrection.

2. Consider the reasons why Christ arose; was it not to confound the Jews? They could not endure to hear of Christ's resurrection, and therefore when Peter and the other apostles preached that point, "They were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them." Again, was it not to confirm the faith of Christ's followers? Until he was risen, their faith was weak; but after he had shewed himself alive by many infallible proofs, they could then cry out my Lord, and my God. Again, was it not to evidence, that he had fully satisfied all our debts? The apostle tells us, that Christ was our surety; at his death he was arrested, and cast into prison, whence he could not come until all was paid; and therefore

to hear that Christ is risen, is a clear evidence that God is satisfied. Again, was it not to conquer sin, death and the devil? Now he took from death his sting, and from hell its standard; now he seized upon the hand-writing that was against us, and nailed it to his cross; now he spoiled principalities and powers, and carried away the keys of death and hell: now he came out of the grave as a mighty conqueror, saying, as Deborah did in her song, "O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength, thou hast marched valiantly." Again, was it not to become the first fruits of them that slept? Christ was the first that rose again to die no more; and by virtue of his resurrection (as being the first fruits) we must rise again; "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive; every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, and afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." Again, was it not that he might be declared to be the Son of God? Was it not that he might be exalted and glorified? This is the main reason of all; see thou to this! O give him the glory of his resurrection; so meditate, and consider on this transaction, as to ascribe to his name all honour and glory. What, is he risen from the dead? Hath God highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name? O then let every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

3. Consider the manner of Christ's resurrection.

1. He arose as a common person; in which respect his resurrection concerns us no less than himself. We must not think that when Christ was raised, it was no more than when Lazarus was raised; his resurrection was the resurrection of us all; it was in the name of us all, and had in it a seed-like virtue, to work the resurrection of us all.—2. He rose by his own power; and so did none but Jesus Christ from the beginning of the world. O my soul, he was able to raise himself, much more is he able to raise thee up. 3. He rose with an earthquake: O the

power of Christ! What ailed thee, O earth, to skip like a ram? "The Lord reigneth, and therefore the earth is moved." O what a rocky heart is mine? How much harder than that rock that moves not, melts not at the presence of God, the presence of the God of Jacob.

4. An angel ministered to him at his resurrection; "An angel came, and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." Angels were the first ministers of the gospel, the first preachers of Christ's resurrection; they preached more of Christ than all the prophets did; they first told the woman, that Christ was risen; and they did the first service to Christ at his resurrection, in rolling the stone from the door's mouth. O my soul, that thou wert but like these blessed angels! How is it that they are so forward in God's service, and thou art so backward? One day thou expectest to be equal with the angels, and art thou now so far behind them?—Many of the bodies of the saints arose out of their graves at his resurrection; as the angels ministered, so the saints waited on him; look upon them as the fruit of Christ's resurrection, and as an earnest of thy own.—Christ rose again with a true and perfect body, with an incorruptible and powerful body, with a spiritual and agile body, with a glorious body, brighter than the sun in his utmost glory; "And he shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned unto his glorious body. O consider of it, until thou feelst the influence, and comest to the assurance of this blessed change.

1. Consider the several apparitions of Jesus Christ.

2. Muse on his apparition to Mary Magdalen: Oh the grief before he appeared! And, Oh the joys when he appeared!—1. Before, she apprehended nothing, but that some or other had took away her Lord: these were all the words she uttered; "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."—After he appeared, she was

filled with joy: when nothing else would satisfy, Jesus himself appears. At first he is unknown, she takes him for the gardener; but within a while he utters a voice that opens both her ears and eyes: *And Jesus saith unto her, Mary.* It was the sweetest sound that ever she heard; hereby the cloud is scattered, and the sun of righteousness appears; this one word lightens her eyes, and cheers her heart.

I know not in all the books of God a soul more depressed with sorrow, and lifted up with joy: O meditate on this! if Christ be absent, all is night: but if Christ appears, he turns all again into light-some day.

3. Muse on his apparition to the ten disciples. "When the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, then came Jesus and stood in the midst, saying to them, peace be unto you." Before his apparitions, sorrow and fear had possessed all their spirits; sometimes they walked abroad, and were sad; and sometimes they kept within, and shut the doors upon them as being exceedingly afraid: in this condition Jesus Christ (that knows best the times and seasons of grace and comfort) comes and stands in the midst of their assembly; he comes in, they know not how; and no sooner he is in, but he salutes them, "peace be unto you."

This was the prime of all his wishes; no sooner is he risen, but he wisheth peace to all his apostles, no sooner meets he with them, but the very opening of his lips was with these words. They are the first words, at the first meeting, on the very first day.— A sure sign that peace was in the heart of Jesus Christ; howsoever it is with us, peace, or war; there is the commonweal where Christ is King; and there is nothing but peace. Come, examine: art thou, O my soul, a member of this body? A subject of this commonweal? Hath the influence of Christ's peace (wrought and declared at his resurrection) any force on thee? Hast thou peace with God? and peace within? and peace without?

Dost thou feel that ointment poured upon Aaron's head, and running down the skirts of his garments? Doth the spirit assure thee, that Christ the Prince of peace hath made peace and reconciliation betwixt God and thee? "O how beautiful upon the mountains would the feet of him be, that should publish peace, that should bring these good tidings, that thou art a citizen of that Jerusalem where God is King, and Christ the Prince of peace? Where all the buildings are compact together, as a city that is at unity within itself?"

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S E C T. III.

*Of Desiring Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us desire Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection.

But what is there in Christ's resurrection, that should move our souls to desire it?

I answer, 1. Something in itself. 2. Something in reference to us.

1. There is something in itself. Had we but a view of the glory, dignity, and excellency of Christ, as raised from the dead, it would put us on this heavenly motion: we should *fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat*. The more excellent and glorious any good is, the more eager should our desires be: now Christ raised from the dead, is an excellent object; the resurrection of Christ is the glorifying of Christ; yea, his glorifying took its beginning at his blessed resurrection: now it was that *God highly exalted him, and gave him a name above every name*.

2. There is something in reference unto us; as,  
1. He rose again for our justification. I must needs grant, that Christ's death, and not his resurrection, is the meritorious cause of our justification; but on the other side, Christ's resurrection, and not his

death, is for the applying of our justification : as the stamp adds no virtue, nor matter of real value to a piece of gold, but only it makes that value, which before it had, actually appliable and current unto us; so the resurrection of Christ was no part of the price or satisfaction which Christ made to God, yet is it that which applies all his merits, and makes them of force unto his members. "If Christ be not risen again, ye are yet in your sins, and your faith is in vain." Remission of sin (which is a part of our justification) though purchased by Christ's death, yet could not be applied to us, or be made ours without Christ's resurrection; and in this respect, Oh how desirable it is!

3. He rose again for our sanctification. So the apostle, *He hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together with Christ.* If you would know how you that were blind in heart, uncircumcised in spirit, utterly unacquainted with the life of God, are now light in the Lord, affecting heavenly things, walking in righteousness; it comes from this blessed resurrection of Jesus Christ; *we are quickened with Christ,* it is Christ's resurrection that raised our souls: Whence, "Reckon yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." This is the end of Christ's resurrection, that we should be new creatures, of new lives, new principles, new conversations, he rose again for our sanctification.

4. He rose again for our resurrection to eternal life: Christ is the pattern, and pledge, and cause of the resurrection of our bodies; *For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.* There is a virtue flowing from Christ to his saints, by which they shall be raised up at the latter day: not but that all the wicked shall be raised again by the power of Christ, as he is a Judge; for "All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth;" yet with this

difference, "They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

5. He rose again for the assurance of our justification, sanctification, and salvation. This is the reason why the apostle useth these words to prove the resurrection of Christ, "I will give you the sure mercies of David:" none of God's mercies had been sure to us if Christ had not risen again from the dead. But now all is made sure; his work of redemption being fully finished, the mercy which thereupon depended, was now made certain, (and as the apostle speaks) "Sure unto all the seed."

Methinks a thought of this object, in respect of itself, and in respect of us, should put our souls into a longing frame: is it not a desirable thing to see the King in his beauty? If Christ incarnate was the desire of nations, how much more is Christ in his glory? If it was Augustin's great wish to have seen Christ in the flesh, how should we wish to see Christ risen from the dead? In this consideration we cannot fathom the thousand, thousand part of the worth and excellency of Jesus Christ. Or if Christ's resurrection in itself will not stir up our desires, is it not desirable in reference unto us? What, that he should rise again for our justification? That by virtue of his resurrection, thy soul should appear righteous before the judgment-seat of God! O my soul, that thy portion may be with theirs who have a right and title to this blessed resurrection of Jesus Christ! O that thou wert on the wing in thy desires after Christ! O that feelingly thou knewest him; and the power of his resurrection! that thou wert resolved to give no sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eye-lids, until thou couldst say, Christ's resurrection is mine!

## SECT. IV.

*Of Hoping in Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us hope in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection. We may examine the firmness of our hope in Christ's resurrection by these signs:

1. If Christ's resurrection be mine, then is Christ's death mine; the fruits or effects of Christ's death and resurrection cannot be severed: *If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be in the likeness of his resurrection.*

2. If Christ's resurrection be mine, then is Christ's spirit mine, yea, then I am quickened by the spirit of Christ. *If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his:—But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, then he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies (and I may add your immortal souls) by his spirit that dwelleth in you.* Christ's spirit (if Christ's resurrection be ours) will have the same effect in our souls, that it had in his body; as it raised up the one, so it will raise up the other; as it quickened the one, so it will quicken the other: but how shall we know whether we have received this quickening spirit? Many pretend to the spirit, but how we may be assured that the spirit is ours? I answer,

(1.) The spirit is a spirit of illumination; here is the beginning of his work, he begins in light; as in the first creation, the first-born of God's works was light. *And God said, let there be light, and there was light;* so in this new creation, the first work is light; *God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts; to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* There is a light in the

mind, and a light in the heart, of those who have the spirit of Christ; not only to know the truth, but to love it, believe it, embrace it. Consider whether any of this new light of Jesus Christ hath shined into thy heart; take heed, deceive not thyself, thou mayest have a great deal of wit and knowledge, and yet go to hell; this light is a light shining into thy heart; this light is a Christ-discovering light; this light is a sin-discovering light; this light will cause thee to find out thy hypocrisy, deadness, dullness in spiritual duties; if thou hast not this light, thou art near to eternal burnings; darkness is one of the properties of hell, and without this light, inward darkness will lead to utter darkness, where is *weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.*

(2.) Thy quickening spirit is a spirit of sanctification; such was the spirit whereby Christ was raised. *He was declared mightily to be the Son of God, according to the spirit of sanctification by the resurrection from the dead.* That spirit which raised up Jesus Christ, was the same spirit which sanctified his human nature; and such is that quickening spirit to all in whom it dwelleth; it is a spirit of holiness, and it works holiness, changing the heart, and turning the bent of it from sin to holiness. *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.* O, my soul, try thyself by this sign, dost thou find such an inward change wrought in the soul? Dost thou find the law of God, a law of holiness written on thy heart? Dost thou find a law within thee contrary to the law of sin, commanding with authority that which is holy and good? If so, surely this is no other, *but the law of the spirit of life in Jesus Christ;* or the law of the quickening spirit, communicated from Christ, unto the soul.

(3.) If Christ's resurrection be mine, then am I planted together in the likeness of Christ's resurrection; then I am made conformable to Christ in his resurrection; now if we would know wherein that

resemblance: is, the apostle tells us, *That like us Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in the newness of life.* Our mortification is a resemblance of Christ's death, and our vivification is a resemblance of Christ's resurrection. In this ground of our hope concerning our interest in the resurrection of Christ, I shall propound these questions:

1. Whether our souls are vivified?
2. Whether we grow in our vivification?

For the first, the truth of our vivification will appear by these rules:

(1.) True vivification is general, both in respect of us, and in respect of grace.

In respect of us, it is diffused throughout the whole man; *The very God of peace sanctify you wholly* (saith the apostle.) And, in respect of grace, it is in every grace. Indeed, some Christians are eminent in some graces; and some in others; some have more love, and some more knowledge, and some more patience, and some more self-denial; but all that are true Christians have each of these graces in some measure; if vivification be true, there is a whole work of grace both in heart and life; as the light in the air runs through the whole hemisphere, so the grace runs through the whole man.

(2.) True vivification is a new life acting upon a new principle of faith. *The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.* Paul's life is a spiritual life, and the spring of his life is the Son of God. Jesus Christ is essentially, fundamentally life itself, and by his incarnation, passion, resurrection, he is life for his saints; they live by him, and in him, and for him, and through him; he is the heart of their spiritual life. O, my soul, dost thou live this life of faith on the Son of God? Canst thou make use of Christ in every con-

dition? Dost thou look up to Jesus, and desirest no more good name, repute, or honour than Christ will afford thee? Or, in case of death, dost thou like Stephen resign thy soul to Christ? Dost thou see death conquered in the resurrection of Christ? Dost thou look beyond death? Dost thou over-eye all things betwixt thee and glory? O the sweet of this life of faith on the Son of God! If thou knowest what this means, then mayest thou assure thyself of thy vivification.

(3.) True vivification is a new life acting upon a new principle of hope of glory. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for you." By Christ's resurrection we have a lively hope of our resurrection unto glory: is not Christ our head? and if he be risen to glory, shall not his members follow after him? Certainly there is but one life, one spirit, one glory of Christ and his members; "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given unto them," said Christ. The soul that is vivified, hath a lively hope of glory on several grounds. As, [1.] Because of the promises of glory set down in the word; now on these promises hope fastens her anchor; if Christ hath promised, how should I but maintain a lively hope? [2.] Because of the first-fruits of the spirit; there are sometimes foretastes of the glory, drops of heaven poured into a soul; whence it comfortably concludes, if I have the earnest and first-fruits, surely in his time Jesus Christ will give the harvest. [3.] Because of Christ's resurrection unto glory: now he arose as a common person, and he went up into heaven as a common person; whence hope is lively, saying, Why should I doubt, seeing, I am quickened together with Christ, and raised up together with Christ, and am made to sit together with Christ in heavenly places?

Try, O my soul, by this sign : art thou lively in the hope of glory? Doth thy heart leap within at that thought of thy inheritance in heaven? In a lively fountain the waters will leap and sparkle; so if thy hope be lively, thou wilt have living joys, living speeches, living delights: amidst all thy afflictions thou wilt say, these will not endure for ever; I myself shall away ere long, glory will come at last. O the sweet of this life of hope! If thou feelest these stirrings, it is an argument of thy vivification.

(4.) True vivification acts all its duties upon a new principle of love to Christ; men not enlivened by Jesus Christ may do much, and go far in outward service; yea, they may come to sufferings, and yet without love to Christ, all is lost, all comes to nothing. "Though I speak with tongues of men and angels,—though I have the gift of prophesy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge,—though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor; and though I give my body to be burnt, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." But how we may know that all our actings are out of love to Jesus Christ? I answer,

1. If we act by the rule of Christ. "If ye love me, keep my commandments.—He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.—If any man love me, he will keep my commandments." He that loves Christ, will look upon every act, every service, every performance, whether it be according to the rule of Christ, and then on he goes with it.

2. If we act to the honour of Christ. We may pray, and hear, and preach, and act ourselves more then for the honour of Jesus Christ: while Christ shewed miracles, and fed his followers to the full, they cried up Jesus, and none like Jesus; but when he pressed sincerity upon them, and preparation for sufferings. "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." It is no news for men to fall off when their ends fail;

only they that love Christ, look not at these outward things: and hence it is, that in all their actings, they will carry on the design of the Father, in advancing the honour of the Son, whatever it cost them. O my soul, apply this to thyself; if thou livest the life of love, if in all thy actings, duties, services, thou art carried on with a principle of love to Jesus Christ, it is a sure sign of thy vivification.

For the second question, whether we grow in our vivification? We may discover it thus:

1. We grow, when we are led on to the exercise of new graces; this the apostle calls adding one grace unto another: "Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." At first a christian doth not exercise all graces; though all graces be planted in him, yet the exercise of them is not all at once; but, as wicked men are led on from one sin unto another; and so grow worse and worse, so good men are led on from one grace to another; and so increase, tribulation working patience, and patience, experience; and experience, hope.

2. We grow, when we find new degrees of the same grace; as when love grows more fervent, when knowledge abounds, and hath a larger apprehension of spiritual things; when faith goes on to plerophory, or full assurance of faith. When godly sorrow proceeds from mourning for sin, as contrary to God's holiness; to mourn for it, as contrary to him who loves us; when obedience enlargeth its bounds, and we abound more and more in the work of the Lord. "I know thy works (said Christ to the church of Thyatira) I know thy works, and the last to be more than the first.

3. We grow, when the fruits and duties we perform grow more ripe, more spiritual, and more to the honour of Christ; it may be we pray not more,

nor longer than sometimes we used ; it may be our prayers have not more wit, or memory, than sometimes they had, yet they are more favourable, more spiritual, and more to Christ's honour than sometimes they were. Now we must know, that one short prayer, put up in faith, with a broken heart, and aiming at the honour of Christ, argues more growth in grace, than prayers of a day long, and never so eloquent, without the like qualifications. In every duty we should look at their ends, and aims ; for if we debase ourselves, in the sense of our own vileness, and emptiness, and inability ; and if we aim at God's honour, and praise, and glory, it is a good sign of growth ; we call this the spiritual part of duty, when it is from God, and through God, and to God.

4. We grow, when we are more rooted in Christ ; so the apostle describes it, " A growing up unto him in all things." Growth of grace, is usually expressed by the growing into Christ ; grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. As if to grow in grace without him, were nothing, as indeed it is not. Philosophers, moral men, and others, may grow in virtues, but not in Christ. Come then, search and try, whether we are more rooted in Christ : When a young plant is new set, the roots are a small depth in the earth, one may pull them up with his hands ; but as the tree shooteth up in height, so it strikes the root deeper and deeper : so it is with us ; we have not so firm and near a conjunction with Christ, at our first union ; but the more we live with him, like good trees, bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, the more we strike root downwards.

O my soul, try the growth of vivification by these few signs ; art thou led on to the exercises of new graces, adding grace to grace ? Dost thou find new degrees of the same grace ? Is thy love more hot, thy faith more firm ? All thy boughs more laden and filled with the fruits of righteousness ? Are all thy

duties more spiritual? Are thy ends more raised to aim at God, to sanctify him, and to debase thyself? Art thou more rooted in Christ? In all thy duties, graces and gracious actions, hast thou learnt habitually to say, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me? Dost thou interest Christ more and more in all thou dost? Dost thou know and affect Christ more and more? Come, search, try; it may be little winds have formerly shaken thee; but thy root is struck lower into Christ; and now thou art not so soon shaken with every wind; surely thy hope is well grounded; thou hast a part in Christ's resurrection.

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## SECT. V.

### *Of Believing in Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us believe in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection.

Scrupulous souls! throw not away your confidence; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? Was not satisfaction and justification, payment of debt, and discharge of bonds required of him, and of necessity for us? O believe, and that I may persuade to purpose, I shall lay down, as before; 1. Some directions; and, 2. Some encouragements of faith.

1. For directions of faith, in reference to Christ's resurrection, remember

- (1.) Faith must directly go to Christ.
- (2.) Faith must go to Christ, as God in the flesh.
- (3.) Faith must go to Christ, as God in the flesh, made under the law.
- (4.) Faith must go to Christ, not only as made under the directive part of the law by his life, but under the penal part by his death.

5. Faith must go to Christ as God in the flesh, made under the directive and penal part of the law; and as quickened by the spirit. *He was put to death in the flesh*, saith Peter, *and quickened by the spirit*. And accordingly must be the method, and order of our faith. After we have looked on Christ as dead in the flesh, we must go on to see him as quickened by the spirit; *if Christ was not raised, or quickened*, saith the apostle, *your faith were in vain*; as if he had said, to believe in Christ as only in respect of his birth, life, death, and to go no farther, were but a vain faith; therefore all the sermons of the apostles represented Christ, not only as crucified, but as raised. This was the way of the apostles' preaching; they told an history, I speak it with reverence, of one Jesus Christ, that was the word of God; and that was become man, and how he was crucified at Jerusalem, and how he was raised from the dead; and all this in a plain, simple, spiritual manner; and while they were telling those blessed truths, the spirit fell upon the people, and they had faith wrought in them. Faith is not wrought so much in the way of ratiocination, as by the spirit of God, coming upon the souls of people, by the relation or representation of Jesus Christ to the soul. And this our Lord himself hints, *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life*. Come then, set we before us, Christ raised; and in that respect, we must look up to Jesus.

6. Faith in going to Christ, as raised from the dead, is principally, and mainly to look to the end of Christ in his resurrection; very devils may believe the history of Christ's resurrection, *they believe and tremble*; but the people of God are to look at the meaning of Christ, why he rose from the dead. 1. The supreme end was God's glory, and that was the meaning of Christ's prayer, *Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify*

*thee* ; with which agrees the apostle, *He rose again from the dead, to the glory of the Father.* 2. The subordinate ends were many: As, 1. That he might tread on the serpent's head. 2. That he might destroy the works of the devil. 3. That he might be the first-fruits of them that sleep. 4. That he might assure our faith, that he is able to keep that which we have committed to him against that day. 5. That he might be justified in the spirit ; as he was begotten in the womb by the spirit ; led up and down in the spirit, offered up by the eternal spirit, so he was raised from the dead by the spirit, and justified in his spirit at his resurrection. Christ was under the greatest attainder that ever man was, he stood publicly charged with the guilt of a world of sins ; and therefore he was raised up from the power of death, that he might be declared a righteous person. 6. That he might justify us, *as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all for condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came on all men unto justification.*

(7.) That he might beget us anew, by his resurrection ; *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again—by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, from the dead.* And this he doth two ways. 1. As our pattern ; *Like as Christ was raised from the dead,—even so we also should walk in newness of life : and likewise reckon ye yourselves, to be alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* 2. As the efficient cause thereof, *for when we were dead in sin, he hath quickened us together with Christ ; and ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.* O the power of Christ's resurrection ! If we saw a man raised from the dead, how should we admire at such a wonderful power ; but the raising of one dead soul, is a greater work, than to raise a church yard of dead bodies.

8. That he might sanctify us, which immediately follows the other,—*But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.* In our regeneration we are risen with Christ, it is the apostle's argument. *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,—Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth.* As the death of Christ hath the special influence upon our mortification, so the resurrection of Christ hath the special influence on our vivification. He hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together with Christ.

But how should I manage my faith, to draw down the virtue of Christ's resurrection for my vivification? I answer:—

Go to the well-head ; look into the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This one act contains in it these particulars ; As, 1. That I must go out of myself, to something else ; this is that check that lies upon that work of grace, to keep out pride, that faith sees the whole good of the soul in a principle extraneous, even the springs of Jesus. 2. That I must attribute wholly, freely, joyfully, all that I am, to Jesus Christ, and to the effectual working of his grace. *By the grace of God I am what I am ; and I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* The life of grace springs only from the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and therefore as I must deny myself, so I must attribute all to him from whom it comes. 3. I must lie at his feet with an humble dependance upon him, and him alone, for the supplies of grace ; this was the apostle's practice : *O that I may be found in him ! O that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection ! O that by any means, I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead !* Christ is the fountain of life, faith is the means of life ; the power and original of life, is intirely reserved to Jesus Christ ; but faith is the

bond on our part, whereby we are tied unto Christ, and live in Christ; and thus saith Christ himself, *I am the resurrection and the life.* Is that all? No, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall live. And I am the bread of life." Is that all? No, "He that cometh to me, shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst."

Therefore pray for an increase of faith, complain to Christ, tell him thou canst not believe as thou wouldst, thou canst not get in so much of Christ into thy soul as thou desirest.

And act thy faith vigorously on Christ's resurrection, for a further degree of quickening. Christ is an overflowing fountain, and he would have believers to partake abundantly of what is in him; he cannot abide that any should content themselves with a present stock of grace; Christ is not as a stream that fails, or as a channel that runs dry; no, Christ is the fountain of life, he is the chief ordinance of life that ever God set up. I know there are other means of Christ's appointment, but if thou wilt live at the spring, drink in there, yea drink abundantly, according to the overflowing of this fountain.

Thus for directions; now for the encouragements of our faith, to believe in Christ's resurrection.

1. Consider of the virtue, and influence of this object, into all that golden chain of privileges; "If Christ be not raised, you are yet in your sins; then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." From the resurrection of Christ flow all those privileges even from justification to salvation. The first is clear, and therefore all the rest.

2. Consider that Christ's resurrection and the effects of it, are nothing unto us, if we do not believe. It is faith that brings down the particular sweetness, and comforts, of Christ's resurrection unto our souls: it is faith that puts us in the actual possession of Christ's resurrection; whatsoever Christ

is to us before faith, yet really we have no benefit by it, until we believe it ; it is faith that takes hold of all that Christ have done for us ; and gives us the actual enjoyment of it ; O let not the work stick in us ! What, is Christ risen from the dead ? And shall we not eye Christ, and take him home to ourselves by faith ? The apostle tells us, ‘ that he that believed not, hath made God a liar, because he believeth not the record that God hath given of his Son.’ Unbelief belies God in all that he hath done for us. O take heed of this ; without faith, what are we better for Christ’s resurrrection ?

3. Or if we are dazzled, hear his voice, “ Fear not, I am the first and last, I am he that liveth, and was dead ; and behold I am alive for evermore. Amen.” As if he had said ; come, cast your souls on me ; it is I that have conquered sin, death, and hell, for you. It is I that have broke the serpent’s head, that have took away the sting of death, that have cancelled the bond of the hand-writing against you, that have in my hands a general acquittance of your sins. Come, take it, take me, and take all with me ; only believe in him who is risen again for your justification.

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## S E C T. VI.

### *Of loving Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation.

1. In his apparition to Mary, Jesus saith unto her, “ Woman, why weepest thou ? Whom seekest thou ? ” Were not these kind words from Jesus Christ ? How often hath thy heart sighed out complaints, O where is he whom my soul loveth ? I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him I am sick of love ?

And then, was not Christ seen in the mount? Was not thy extremity his opportunity? Did not he bespeak thy comforts with these words, "Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? What wouldst thou have that I can give thee? And what dost thou want that I can give thee? If any thing in heaven or earth will make thee happy, it is all thy own: wouldst thou have pardon? Thou shalt have it, I freely forgive thee all the debt; wouldst thou have myself? Behold I am thine, thy friend, thy Lord, thy husband, thy head, thy God." Were not these thy Lord's reviving words? Were not these healing, quickening passages of Christ's love?

2. In this apparition to the ten. "Jesus stood in the midst, and saith unto them, peace be unto you." Lo, here more words of love; in the midst of their trouble Christ stands in the midst, speaking peace to their souls; and hath not Christ done the like to thee? Hast thou not many and many a time been in troubles, that thou knewest not which way to turn thee? And even then, hath not Christ come to thy spirit with an olive branch of peace? Hath he not wrought wonders in the sea of thy restless thoughts? Hath he not made a calm? And more than so, hath he not filled thee with joy and peace, in believing? Hath he not sent thee away from thy prayers and complaints, with a piece of heaven in thy soul?

I might thus go on to consider other passages, in other apparitions; but are not these enough to draw thy love? O what love was this! O what humility was this! That Christ after his resurrection should converse with men forty days; worthy he was after so many sorrows, sufferings, reproaches, after so cruel, ignominious, and bitter a death, immediately to have gone to glory. And for the confirmation of his disciples' faith, he might have commanded the angels to have preached his resurrection; no, he himself would stay in person, he himself would make it out by many infallible proofs;

he himself would by his own example learn us a lesson of love, of meekness and patience, in waiting after suffering for the reward.

Methinks a few of this passages, should set all our hearts on a flame of love; if Christ be risen, set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. O if the love of Christ were in us, it would make us wholly to despise this world; it would make us to forget it, as worldly love make a man forget God: nay, it would be so strong and ardent, that we should not be able freely to think on any thing else but Jesus Christ; we should not then fear contempt, or care for disgrace, we should not fear death, or the grave, or hell, or devils, but we should sing in triumph, "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?—Thanks be to God which gave us the victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

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## S E C T. II.

### *Of Joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his resurrection. This is the great gospel duty, we should rejoice in the Lord; yea, rejoice evermore. A christian estate, should be a joyful and comfortable estate, and have such cause of joy as the children of Zion, "Sing O daughter of Zion, shout O Jerusalem, be glad and rejoice with all thy heart, O daughter of Jerusalem." A thousand reasons might be rendered; but here is one, "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep." A commemoration of Christ's resurrection hath ever been a means of rejoicing in God.

What can be the condition of thy soul, wherein thou mayest not draw sweet from Christ's resurrection?

1. Is thy conscience in trouble for sin? The apostle tells thee, "The answer of a good conscience towards God, is by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

2. Art thou afraid of condemnation? The apostle tells thee, "He was delivered for our offences, and he was raised again for our justification."

3. Dost thou question thy regeneration? The apostle tells thee, "He hath begotten us again by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

4. Art thou distressed, persecuted, troubled on every side? The apostle tells thee, wherein now consists thy confidence, comfort, courage? to wit, in the life of Christ, in the resurrection of Christ. "We always bear about in the body of the dying Jesus, that the life of Jesus might also be made manifest in our body; for we which live, are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."

5. Art thou afraid of death, hell, and the power of the grave? Why now remember that Christ is risen from the dead, and by his glorious resurrection, death is swallowed up in victory. Job was so transported with this, that he eminently breaks out, "O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day, upon the earth; 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." No man ever since Christ did speak more clearly of Christ's resurrection and his own, than Job did here. Observe in it, O my soul, Job's wish, and the matter wished; his wish was, that certain words which had been cordial to him, might remain to memory. 1. That they might be written

2. That they might be registered in a book; enrolled upon records, as public instruments. 3. That they might be engraven in stone, and in the hardest stone, the rock; records might last long, yet time might injure them, and these words he would have last for ever. Moses and Job are said to have lived at one time; now Moses writ the law in stone, and considering that these words were gospel, there was no reason that the law should be in tables of stone, and the gospel in sheets of paper; no, it were fit that this should be as firm and durable as that; "O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a book!"

The matter wished, or the words he would have written, are these, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall live again." Here is first his Redeemer rising. 2. His own rising and his seeing God. This was the matter of his joy, his Redeemer must rise again; and he must rise too, and see his Redeemer. As Christ said of Abraham, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." So it appears of his servant Job, he saw Christ's day; both his first day, and his latter day, and he rejoiced and was glad.

Away all doubtful thoughts; consider what joys were of old, at the fore-sight of Christ's resurrection; but, especially what joy was all the world over, when he rose again from the dead; then came the angels from heaven, and appeared in white; the disciples were exceeding glad, when they saw the Lord; all the primitive saints rejoiced at this news; and because of it, loved the very day on which Christ arose. Certainly, the Lord's day was in high esteem with the ancient church, and the principal motive was, because of Christ's resurrection from the dead. O that on these days we could rejoice in the Lord, and again rejoice! O spend more of this day in spiritual rejoicing, especially in commemo-

ration of Christ's resurrection (yea, and of the whole work of redemption) or else you will not answer the institution of our Lord.

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SECT. VIII.

*Of Calling on Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us call on Jesus.

1. Let us pray that Christ's resurrection may be ours, and that we may be more and more assured of it. Let us say with the apostle, "O that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection." O that the spirit of holiness, which quickened Christ from the dead, would by the same glorious power beget holiness, and faith, and love, and all other graces in my poor soul. O that Christ would by his resurrection, apply his active and passive obedience to me; O that he would be to me the Lord of the living, and the Prince of life; that he would overcome in me the death of sin, and that he would regenerate, quicken, renew, and fashion me, by the power of godliness, to become like himself.

2. Let us praise God for Christ's resurrection, and for all the privileges flowing from it into our souls. Christ is risen, by his resurrection he hath justified, sanctified, quickened, saved our souls; and therefore ("Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.") surely God requires a thousand hallelujahs, and that we should bless him upon a thousand-stringed instrument. Here is fuel enough, the Lord kindled a great fire in every one of our hearts, to burn out all our lusts, and to inflame all our hearts with a love to Jesus Christ. Can we ever too much praise him for all his actings in our behalf? Are not all God's creatures called upon to rejoice with us, and to bless God for his redeeming of us? "Sing O ye heavens, for the Lord

hath done it, shout ye lower part of the earth, break forth into singing ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein, for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." This is the duty we shall do in heaven, and I believe we are never more in heaven (whilst on earth) than when we are in this exercise of praising God, and blessing God for Jesus Christ.

SECT. IX.

*Of Conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**ET us conform to Jesus in respect of his resurrection.—

In this particular, I shall examine these queries: 1. Wherein we must conform? 2. How this conformity is wrought? 3. What are the means of this conformity?

For the first, wherein we must conform? I answer in a word, in vivification. Christ's resurrection was to newness of life; it was a new life, a life different from that which he lived before, and so is our vivification a new life; it is a life from a new principle; of a new income, and of a new kind.

1. It is a life from a new principle; before vivification our principle was the flesh; but now we have a new principle, the spirit of God; even as the soul dwells in the body; so doth the Holy Ghost dwell in the soul of a regenerate person, animating, and actuating, and enlivening it.

2. It is a life of a new income; I mean of grace, power, and light. Before vivification there was no such income: A man before his conversion might hear, pray, and do all duties; but alas! he feels no power, no communication with Christ. But after this, thou wilt in the use of ordinances,

frequently feel the saving incomes of God. In prayer thou wilt feel the spirit carrying thy soul above itself; in hearing the word, thou wilt see the windows of heaven set open, and all manner of spiritual comforts showered down upon thee. In meditation of the promises, or of divine love, thou wilt find quickenings, encouragings, filling thy heart with gladness, and thy mouth with praises and songs of rejoicing. O what fountains of life are the promises to a living man? What food? What strength? What life is a thought of Christ, of heaven, and of God's love? Whereas all these glorious things of the gospel are to the natural man but as a withered flower, a sealed book, a dry and empty cistern; he hath no use of them.

3. It is a life of another kind. Before vivification, we were dead in sin whilst alive; but after vivification we live a spiritual life, an heavenly life, an immortal life. *If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness*; the body indeed is subject to corporal death through the remainders of sin, but the spirit is life here, and shall be life hereafter, even for ever. I shall answer only to the vivification usually wrought. First, in the understanding. Secondly in the will.

First, the understanding lets in the truth of what the gospel hath recorded; and thence inferreth as to a man's own self, that by the assistance of the spirit of holiness, who raised up Jesus from the dead, it is possible for him to attain this life.

Then it hath yet some brighter believing beams; it confidently closeth with this truth, that it is the will of the Lord that he should come, and live, and believe, and lay hold on Christ; that God doth particularly call, and bid him come to Christ, the fountain of life.

2. And now the answer to this call is wrought in the will.—

(1.) The will summons all its confidences, and calls them off from every other bottom, to bestow them wholly upon Christ; and this consists in our voluntarily renouncing all other helps, excepting Jesus Christ alone; now it renounceth its own righteousness; it calls home dependance from every other object.

(2.) Hereupon there is a willing and chearful receiving of Christ, and resignation of ourselves to his actual disposal, to quicken us, and save us in his own way.

(3.) Upon this follows the soul's confidence, and dependance, upon Jesus Christ for life and for salvation; a clear beholding of God in Christ, and Christ in the promises, doth present such variety and fulness of arguments, to bear up hope and affiance, that the heart is resolved, and so resolved that we commit ourselves, and give our souls in charge to Christ, *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day.*

That union which thereby comes to be enjoyed with Christ, is such a union as is fruitful in begetting a quickening power in the heart. Justification and sanctification are twins of a birth; and hence it is, that vivification (which is one part of sanctification) is wrought in the soul after the self same manner. First, the understanding is enlightened. 2. The will is changed. 3. All the affections are renewed. 4. The internals being quickened, there ensueth the renewing of the outward actions, life and conversation. And immediately upon this joy is made in heaven by the angels, God himself applauded it, *for this my Son was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.*

For the third question; what are the means of this conformity, or vivification on our parts?

1. Wait upon God in the ministry of the word, this is a means whereby Christ ordinarily effecteth this vivification: and by this means it is that dead

souls are quickened; the ministry of the word is the trumpet of Jesus Christ; when that sounds, who knows but he may quicken the dead? Harken therefore to this word of God.

2. Exercise faith upon the Lord Jesus, as to justification. As is the clearness of our souls in bottoming ourselves on Christ for righteousness, so will be our quickness, and successful progress in the work of holiness.

3. Trace every ordinance, and every duty for the appearings of the Son of God. Be much in prayer, hearing, reading, fellowship with saints, the sacraments; be much in secret conversings with God, in meditations, enquiries, searchings; and (which is a precious work) be much in diligent watching of, and hearkening to the movings, workings, intimations of the spirit of God; be much in observing the methods and interpreting the meanings and language of God in all his secret dispensations with the soul. Certainly there will be abundance of the life of God conveyed to him that walks in these paths. O for a spirit of prayer, meditation; O for a spirit swallowed up in communion with God! *Thou meetest him that worketh righteousness, and those that remember thee in thy ways.*

4. Look much at Christ raised, Christ glorified; Christ's resurrection was the beginning of his glory; and therein is comprehended both the glory that draws desire towards Christ, and the grace and power that establisheth faith in its dependance. Could we keep our hearts in a more constant view, and believing meditation of the glory of Christ, our faces would certainly bring some beams of divinity with them from the mount; the very beholding of Christ hath a mighty virtue to leave the impressions of glory upon our spirits.

5. See our own personal vivification bottomed upon the resurrection of Christ; when we can by faith get a sight of this, it is not to speak how courageously and successfully the soul will grapple

in the controversies of the Lord against the devil, and our own deceitful hearts: O that I could act my faith more frequently on Christ's resurrection, so that at last I could see it by the light of God to be a principle of my vivification in particular! What a blessed means would this be?

6. Walk, as we have Christ Jesus for an example. This example of Christ yields much to our vivification; who can deny, but that acting with the pattern ever in one's eye, is very advantageous? Come then, and if we would live the life of God, let us live as Christ lived after his resurrection.

## LOOKING UNTO JESUS

IN HIS ASCENSION, SESSION, AND MISSION OF  
HIS SPIRIT.

### CHAP. I.

#### SECT. 1. *Of Christ's Ascension.*

**T**HUS far we have traced Jesus in his actings for us, *until the day in which he was taken up.* That which immediately follows, is his ascension, session at God's right hand, and mission of his holy Spirit; in prosecution of which, as in the former, I shall first lay down the object; and secondly, direct you how to look upon it.

The object threefold. 1. He ascended into heaven. 2. He sat down at God's right hand. 3. He sent down the Holy Ghost.

1. For the ascension of Christ, this was a glorious design, and contains in it a great part of the salva-

tion of our souls. In prosecution of this, I shall shew, 1. That he ascended. 2. How he ascended. 3. Whither he ascended. 4. Why he ascended.

[1.] That he ascended. (1.) The prophets foresaw it, *I saw in the night, visions; and 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, and there was given him dominion, and glory, and kingdom.* (2.) The evangelists relate it, *He was received up into heaven,—He was carried up into heaven.* (3.) The eleven witness it, *For while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.* (4.) The holy angels speak it, *For while they looked stedfastly towards heaven, as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*

[2.] How he ascended. (1.) He ascended blessing his apostles, *while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.* It is some comfort to Christ's ministers that though the world hate them, Christ doth bless them; yea, he parted with them in a way of blessing; as Jacob leaving the world blessed his sons; so Christ leaving the world, blessed his apostles, and all the faithful ministers of Christ, unto the end of the world.

(2.) He ascended visibly in the view of the apostles; *while they beheld, he was taken up;* he was not suddenly snatched from them, as Elijah was, nor secretly and privily taken away as Enoch was; but in the presence of them all, both his apostles and disciples, he ascended up into heaven.

(3.) He ascended principally by the mighty power of his Godhead; thus never any ascended up into heaven but Jesus Christ; for though Enoch and Elijah were assumed into heaven, yet not by their power, nor by themselves, it was God's power by

which they ascended, and it was by the help, and ministry of angels.

(4.) He ascended in a cloud, *While they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.* Hereby he shews that he is Lord of all the creatures; he had already trampled upon the earth, walked upon the sea, vanquished hell or the grave, and now the clouds receive him, and the heavens are opened to make way for this King of glory to enter in.

2. *When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* 1. He led them captive; who had captivated us. Death was led captive without a sting; hell was led captive as one that had lost her victory; the serpent's head being bruised, was led before him in triumph, as was Goliath's head by David, returning from the victory. 2. He gave gifts unto men; this was, as the shutting up Christ's triumph, in his ascension up to heaven: what these gifts were, we shall speak in the mission of the Holy Ghost.

[3.] Whither he ascended, the gospel tells us, into heaven; only Paul saith, *that he ascended far above all heavens.* But the meaning is, he went above all those visible heavens, into those heavenly mansions, where the angels and the spirits of the just have their abode.

[4.] Why he ascended, the reasons are, (1.) On Christ's part, that through his passion, he might pass to glory. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?*—

2. On our part:—

1. That in our stead he might triumph over sin, death, and hell. In his resurrection he conquered, but in his ascension he led sin, death, and the devil in triumph, at his chariot wheels. And the meaning of the Psalmist, and of the apostle, *When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive;* is, he vanquished and triumphed over all our enemies; he overcame the world, he bound the devil,

he spoiled hell, he weakened sin, he destroyed death, and now he makes a public triumphal shew of them in his own person. It is to the same purpose that the apostle speaks elsewhere, *Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in himself*; it is a manifest allusion to the manner of triumphs, after victories amongst the Romans; first, they spoiled the enemy upon the place, ere they stirred off the field; and this was done by Christ on the cross; and then they made a public triumphal shew; they rode through the streets in the greatest state, and had all their spoils carried before them, and the kings and nobles whom they had taken, they tied to their chariots, and led them as captives; and this did Christ at his ascension; *then he openly triumphed in himself*, that is, in his own power and strength.

2. That he might lead us the way, and open to us the doors of glory.

3. That he might assure us that now he had run through all those offices which he was to perform here on earth for our redemption. First, he was to act as our surety, and then he was to ascend as our head, our advocate, as the first-fruits, the captain, the prince of life, the author of salvation, the forerunner of his people.

4. That he might thoroughly convince believers, of their perfect righteousness. *The spirit when he comes (saith Christ) shall convince the world of sin, and righteousness, and of judgment—of sin, because they believe not on me;—of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.* If Christ had not fulfilled all righteousness, there had been no going to heaven for him, nor remaining there; but his ascension to heaven proclaims openly—1. That he hath compleatly finished the work he had to do for us here. 2. That God was pleased with Jesus Christ, and with what he had done and suffered for us. 3. That we have our share in heaven with

him ; he went not up as a single person, but virtually, or mystically, he carried up all believers with him into glory. 4. That he hath a new design to be acted in heaven for us : he is taken up into glory, that he may act gloriously the second part of our righteousness, I mean that he might apply it and send down his spirit to convince us of it. Three great things, Christ acts for us now in glory. First, he is in place of an advocate for us, he liveth to intercede for us. Secondly, he is the great provider for us ; he is laying in a stock of glory for us against we come there ; *In my Father's house are many mansions.—I go to prepare a place for you.* Thirdly, he sends down his spirit to convince us, that Christ's righteousness is ours. Indeed the means of procuring this, was the life and death of Christ, but the means of applying this righteousness, are those following acts of Christ's resurrection, ascension, session, intercession. By his death he obtained righteousness for us, but by his ascension he applies righteousness to us.

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## S E C T. II.

### *Of God's Right Hand, and of Christ's Session there.*

**F**OR the session of Christ at God's right hand, I shall examine, 1. What is God's right hand ? 2. What is it to sit there ? 3. According to what nature doth Christ sit there ? 4. Why is it that he sits at the right hand of God ?

1. What is this right hand of God ? I answer, the right hand of God is the majesty, dignity, dominion, power, and glory of God. *The right hand of the Lord is exalted, the right hand of the Lord doth valiantly.—Thy right hand, O Lord, is become*

*glorious in power : thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.*

2. What is it to sit at the right hand of God? I answer, it is not any corporal session at God's right hand; which Stephen contradicts, saying, *I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.* The words sitting or standing, are both metaphorical, and borrowed from the custom of kings, who place those they honour and to whom they commit the power of government, at their right hand; more particularly, this sitting at God's right hand implies two things. (1.) His glorious exaltation. (2.) The actual administration of his kingdom.

(1.) Christ is exalted, *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow.* This session is the supreme dignity and glory, given by the Father unto Christ, after his ascension; this session is the peerless exaltation of the Mediator of his kingdom of glory. But how was Christ exalted? I answer, [1.] In the regard of his divine nature; not really, and in itself. Impossible it was that the divine nature should receive any intrinsical glory, because all fulness of Glory essentially belonged unto it; but declaratory, or by way of manifestation; so it was, that his divinity, during the time of his humiliation, lay hidden and overshadowed; but now in his session, that divinity and glory which he had always with his Father, was shewed forth and declared, *He was declared to be the Son of God with power,* both at his resurrection and at his session. [2.] In regard of his human nature; and yet that must be understood soberly, for I cannot think that Christ's human nature was at all exalted in regard of the grace of personal union; or, in regard of the habitual perfections of his human soul, because he possessed all these from the beginning; but in regard of those interceptions of the beams of the God-head, and divine glory; and in

respect of the restraints of that sense and sweetness, and feeling operations of the beatifical vision, during his humiliation: in these respects Christ was exalted in his human nature, and had all the glory from the Deity communicated to it, which possibly in any way it was capable of.

(2.) Christ reigns, or actually administers his glorious kingdom; and this is the principal part of Christ's sitting at God's right hand. So the Psalmist. *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy foot-stool; the Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion, rule thou in the midst of thy enemies.* The apostle is yet more large, *God set him at his own right hand, in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* Some describe this session at God's right hand, to be all one with his reigning in equal power and glory with the Father; but the Son hath always so reigned, and the Holy Ghost hath always so reigned, who yet is not said in scripture to sit at the right hand of the Father, I believe therefore there is something in this session or reign of Christ, which doth difference it from that reigning power and glory of the Father, and of the Son as only God, and of the Holy Ghost; and if we would know what that is, I would call it an actual administration of his kingdom, or an immediate executing of his power and glory over every creature as Mediator. And this made Christ say, *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, as Mediator.* You may object, Christ was Mediator immediately after his incarnation, but he did not actually administer his kingdom then. I answer, it is true; Christ for a time did empty himself and laid aside the actual

administration of his kingdom ; but immediately after his ascension, the Father, by a voluntary dispensation, resigned it to the Son again ; “ Come now, saith the Father, and take thou power over every creature, till the time that all things shall be subdued under thee.” This right the one relinquished in the time of that humiliation of himself, and this right the other conferred at the time of the exaltation of his Son.

3. According to what nature is Christ said to sit at the right hand of God ? I answer, according to both natures ; first, he sits at God’s right hand as God ; hereby his divinity was declared, and his kingdom is such, that none that is a poor creature can possibly execute. 2. He sits at God’s right hand as man too ; hereby his humanity was exalted and a power is given to Christ as man, “ He hath given him power, to execute judgment in as much as he is the Son of man.”

### SECT. III.

*Of the Reasons why Christ doth sit on  
God’s right Hand.*

**W**HY doth Christ sit at the right hand of God ? I answer, 1. On Christ’s part, that he might receive power and dominion over all the creatures. “ All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth ;” he speaks of it as done, because it was immediately to be performed ; Christ at his session received a power imperial over every creature.

2. On our part, many reasons may be given :

1. That he might be the head of his church ; in a strict sense, as the head is conjoined with the body and members ; so is Christ the head of his church. To this purpose he sits at God’s right

hand, that having now fulness of grace and glory in himself, he might be ready to communicate the same to his church, who are as the members of his body, that he might give them grace here, and glory hereafter ; when he shall deliver up his kingdom to his Father, and be all in all.

2. That he might be the object of divine adoration ; then especially it was said and accomplished, " Let all the angels of God worship him : and let all men honour the Son, as they honour the Father." After Christ's session, Stephen looked up in unto heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and then he worshipped ; and called upon God, saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit. It is true, the ground of this divine adoration, is the union of the two natures of Christ, and therefore the Magi worshipped him at his birth, and as soon as ever he came into the world, the angels of God worshipped him ; but because by his session at God's right hand, the divine nature was manifested, and the human nature was exalted to that glory which it never had before ; therefore now especially, and from this time, was the honour and dignity of worship communicated to him as God and Man. " God highly exalted him, and gave him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heavn, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue shall confess, that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

3. That he might intercede for his saints. " Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum, we have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of his Majesty in the heavens, and a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not men." He is set on the right hand of God, as an High Priest or Minister to intercede for us. " For as Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true ; but into

heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

4. That true believers may assuredly hope by virtue of Christ's session, to sit themselves in the kingdom of glory. Christ living in heaven is the very figure of us; Christ's person is the great model and first draught, of all that shall be done to his body, the saints; therefore he is said to be the Captain of our salvation, that leads us on, he is said to be our fore-runner into glory. He breaks the clouds first, he appears first before God, he sits down first, and is glorified first, and then we follow.

5. That he might defend the church against her enemies; and at last destroy all the enemies of the church.

6. That he might send down the Holy Ghost; to this purpose Christ told his disciples whilst he was yet on earth, that he must ascend into heaven, and reign there; "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you." Christ is now in heaven, and sits at God's hand, that he may send us his spirit, by whose forcible working we seek after heaven, and heavenly things, where now Christ sits.

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#### SECT. IV.

*Of the Time when, and the Persons to whom, the Holy Ghost was sent.*

**N**O sooner was Christ set down at God's right hand, but he sends down the Holy Ghost. It was an use amongst the ancients, in days of great joy and solemnity to give gifts, and to send presents unto men: Thus Christ in the day of his majesty and inauguration, in that great and solemn triumph,

when he ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

“ And when the day of pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance.” Out of these words I shall observe these particulars: The time when; the persons to whom; the manner how; the measure what; and the reasons why the Holy Ghost was sent.

1. For the time when the Holy Ghost was sent it is said, “ When the day of Pentecost was fully come; ” This was a feast of the Jews; because it was ever kept on the fiftieth day after the second of the passover. Fifty days were the appointed time of the Jews harvest: their harvest being bounded as it were with two remarkable days, the one being the beginning, and the other the end thereof; the beginning was the second of the passover; the end was the fiftieth after, called Pentecost; upon the beginning they offered a sheaf of the first-fruits of their harvest. Upon the Pentecost they offered two wave loaves; the sheaf being offered, all the after-fruits throughout the land were sanctified; and the two loaves being offered, it was a sign of the harvest being ended; and now we find, that as there were fifty days betwixt the beginning and the Pentecost, so there were fifty days betwixt Christ's resurrection, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost. As on the day of Pentecost, the Israelites came to mount Sinai, and received the law; so the very same day is accomplished that prophecy, “ Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; now was the promulgation of the gospel called by James, the

royal law, as given by Christ our King, and written in the hearts of his servants, by this Holy Ghost ; it seems to shadow out the great difference betwixt the law and the gospel ; the law is given with terror, in lightening and thunder ; but the gospel is given without terror, there was no lightning and thunder now ; no, the Holy Ghost slides down from heaven, and with joy sits on the heads, and in the hearts of his saints.

2. For the persons to whom the Holy Ghost was sent ; it is said, " To all that were with one accord in one place ; " who they were, it is not here expressed ; yet from the former chapter we may conjecture, they were the twelve apostles, together with Joseph called Barsabbas, and the woman, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brethren ; these all continued with one accord in one place, for so was Christ's command, " That they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. " It was the great promise of the Old Testament, that Christ should partake of our human nature ; and it was the great promise of the New Testament, that we should partake of his divine nature ; he was clothed with our flesh according to the former, and we are invested with his spirit according to the latter promise. For this promise the apostles and others had long waited, and for the accomplishment they were now fitted and disposed. 1. They had waited for it from the ascension day, till the feast of Pentecost ; he told them at the very instant of his ascension, that he would send the Holy Ghost, and therefore bid them stay together until that hour ; upon which command they continued waiting until the day of Pentecost was fully come. " He that believeth shall not make haste, " saith Isaiah. But, 2. As they waited for the spirit, so they were rightly disposed to receive the spirit, for they were all with one accord in one place. To those that accord is the spirit given ; where is discord, jars, divisions,

factions, there is no spirit of God ; for the spirit is the author of concord, peace, unity, and amity ; and can we imagine that essential unity will enter but where there is unity ? Can the spirit of unity come, or remain, but where there is unity of spirit ? Verily there is not, there cannot be a more certain disposition to make us meet for the spirit, than that quality in us that is likest to his nature ; and that is unity, love, concord. Do we marvel that the spirit doth scarcely pant in us ? Alas, we are not all of one accord ; the very first point is wanting to make us meet for the coming of the Holy Ghost upon us.



## S E C T. V.

### *Of the Manner how the Holy Ghost was sent.*

**F**or the manner how he was sent, or how he came to these apostles ; we may observe these particulars.—

1. He came suddenly ; which either shews the majesty of the miracle that is gloriously done, which is suddenly done ; or the truth of the miracle, there could be no imposture or fraud in it, when the motion of it was so sudden ; or the purpose of the miracle, which was to awake and effect them to whom it came ; usually sudden things startle us, and make us look up. We may learn to receive those holy motions of the spirit, which sometimes come suddenly, and we know not how ; I am persuaded the man breathes not amongst us christians, that sometimes feels not the stirrings, movings, breathings of the spirit of God ; O that men would take the wind while it blows, and the water while the

angel moves it ; as not knowing when it will, or whether ever it will blow again.

2. He came from heaven. The place seems here to commend the gift ; as from earth, earthly things arise ; so from heaven, heavenly, spiritual, eternal, things,

3. He comes down from heaven like a wind ; the comparison is most apt ? Of all bodily things, the wind is least bodily ; it is invisible, and comes nearest to the nature of a spirit : it is quick and active as the spirit is. But more especially the Holy Ghost is compared to a wind in respect of its irresistable workings ; as nothing can resist the wind, so nothing can resist the spirit of God. Again, the Holy Ghost is compared to wind, in respect of its free actings ; the wind bloweth where it listeth, and so the spirit bloweth where it listeth : grace makes no gain of man's work, free-will may indeed move and run, but if it be too good, it must be moved, and driven, and breathed upon by God's free grace.

4. He came like rushing mighty wind ; as the wind is sometimes of that strength, that it rends in sunder mountains and rocks, it pulls up trees, it blows down buildings ; so are the operations of the Holy Spirit ; it takes down all before it, it made a conquest of the world, beginning at Jerusalem, and spreading itself over all the earth,

5. He filled all the house where they were sitting ; there were none there that were not filled with the Holy Ghost ; all the men and women (an hundred and twenty,) in this room were visited from on high ; for the Holy Ghost came upon them, and dwelt in them ; it filled all the house where they were sitting ; to signify that all the other houses of Jerusalem felt none of this mighty rushing wind ; have we not sometimes experience of this in our very congregations ? One sound is heard, one breath doth blow, and it may be one or two, and no more, hears the sound, or feels the breath in-

wardly, savingly ; it may be one here, and another there shall feel the spirit, shall be touched with it sensibly ; but twenty on this side them, and forty on that side them all becalmed, and go their way no more moved, than when they came into God's presence. O that this spirit of the Lord would come daily and constantly into our congregations ! O that it would blow through them, and through ! O that it would fill every soul in the assembly with the breath of heaven ! " Come Holy Spirit ; awake, O North wind, and come thou South and blow upon our gardens, that the spices thereof may flow out.

6. He came down in the form of tongues. The apostles were not only inspired for their own benefit, but they had gifts bestowed on them, to impart the benefit to more than themselves. But why did the Holy Ghost appear like tongues ? I answer, the tongue is the sole instrument of knowledge, which conveys the same from man to man ; though the soul be the fountain from whence all wisdom springs, yet the tongue is the channel whereby this wisdom and knowledge is communicated. In the like manner the Holy Ghost is the sole teacher of all truth ; though Christ be the wisdom of God, yet the Holy Ghost is the teacher of this wisdom to men : and hence it is, that the Holy Ghost appeared in the form of tongues.

And yet not merely in the form of tongues, but

1. They were cloven tongues : to signify that the apostles should speak in divers languages ; if there must be a calling of the Gentiles, they must needs have the tongues of the Gentiles wherewith to call them : if they were debtors not only to the Jews, but to the Grecians ; nor only to the Grecians, but to the Barbarians also, then must they have the tongues not only of the Jews, but of the Grecians and Barbarians, to go and teach all nations.
2. They were fiery tongues ; to signify that there should be an efficacy, or fervor in their speaking ; the world was so overwhelmed with ignorance and

error, that the apostles lips had need to be touched with a coal from the altar: tongues of flesh would not serve the turn, nor words of air, but there must be fire put into the tongue, and life into the words they speak; O that we of the ministry had these fiery tongues! O that the spirit would put live coal into our speeches! may we not fear that the spirit is gone while the people are dead, and we are no more lively in our ministry? It is said of Luther, that when he heard one preach very faintly, colds, cold, says he, this is cold preaching, here's no heat at all to be gotten. O, when the spirit comes, it comes with a tongue of fire; instead of words, sparks of fire will fall from us on the hearts of hearers.

3. These cloven tongues sate upon each of them; to signify their constancy and continuance; they abode still, they continued steady, without any stirring or starting,



## S E C T. VI.

*Of the Measure of the Holy Ghost now given, and the Reasons why he was sent.*

**F**OR the measure, what or how much of the spirit was now given? This question is necessary, because we bring in the spirit's mission after Christ's ascension, as if the Holy Ghost had not been given before his time. That this was the time of the coming of the Holy Ghost, is very plain; but that the Holy Ghost was not given before this time, we cannot say; certainly the prophets speak by him, and the apostles had him, not only when they were first called, but more fully when *he breathed on them, and said unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost.* So that if ye study the reconciliation of

these things, I know not any way better, than to put it on the measure, or degrees of the spirit: here was the difference; before this' the spirit was but sprinkled, (as it were) upon them, but now they were all blown upon with a mighty wind.

3. At first he was sent only in drops and dew, but now he was poured out in showers and abundance: *the Holy Ghost* (saith Paul) *was shed on us abundantly*. As there are degrees in the wind, a breath, or a blast, a stiff gale; we cannot deny degrees in the spirit, the apostles at Christ's resurrection received the spirit, but now they were filled with the spirit of Christ.

4. For the reasons why the Holy Ghost was sent, they are several.

1. That all the prophecies concerning this mission be accomplished. Isaiah speaks of a time when "The spirit should be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness should be a fruitful field." And Zachary prophecies, that "In that day I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication." And Joel prophecies yet more expressly, "It shall come to pass, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy: your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants, and upon the handmaids in those days I will pour out my spirit, and they shall prophecy." But of all the prophecies concerning the mission of the Holy Ghost, our Saviour gives the clearest and most particular; "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the spirit of truth. Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart I will send him unto you." It

was of necessity that all these prophecies and promises must be accomplished, and therefore was the Holy Ghost sent amongst us.

2. That the holy apostles might be furnished with gifts and graces suitable to their estates, conditions, stations, places. To this purpose, no sooner was the spirit sent; but *they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance.* They were filled with the Holy Ghost; not that they were before empty, but now they were more full of the spirit than ever; and they spake with other tongues; other than ever they had learned; probably they understood no tongue but the Syriac, 'till this time, but now on a sudden they could speak Greek, Latin, Arabic, Persian, Parthian, and what not? the wisdom and mercy of God is very observable herein, that the same means of divers tongues, which was the destroying of Babel, should be the means conferred on the apostles, to work the building of Sion; that confusion of tongues should be united to God's glory.

3. That he might fill the hearts of all the saints, and make them temples for the Holy Ghost, *know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God: And ye are not your own? It is said, that after the mighty rushing wind and cloven fiery tongues, they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues.* First, they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and then they spake with other tongues; the Holy Ghost begins inward, and works outward; it first alters the mind before it changes the speech; it first works on the spirit, before on the phrase of utterance; this was the first work of the spirit, it filled them. And thus for the daily ministration, such must be appointed as were full of the Holy Ghost. And Stephen is said to be full of the Holy Ghost; and Barnabas is called a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost. The Holy

Ghost is usually said to fill the saints; only whether it be the person of the Holy Ghost, or the impressions of the Holy Ghost, is a very great question! for my part, I am apt to incline to their mind, who say, not only the impressions of the spirit, the qualities of holiness, the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, or as some think habitual; the Holy Ghost himself doth fill, and dwell, and reign in the hearts of all regenerate men.



## CHAP. II.

### SECT. I.

*Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Ascension, Session, and Mission of the Spirit.*

Let us know Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation in his ascension into heaven, in his session at God's right hand, and in his mission of the Holy Ghost; these are points of great use; if these transactions had not been, where had we been? Here is an object of admiration indeed; the very angels at the sight of it stood admiring and adoring: it took up their heart, astonished their understanding. Come, then, and, O my soul, do thou take a view of that which they admire, the design concerns thee in particular; and therefore study close this argument, and know it for thyself. Study first the ascension of Christ, how, and whether, and why he ascended. Secondly, study the session of Christ at God's right hand; O the riches of that spiritual, heavenly knowledge!

3. Study the mission of the Holy Ghost; not a circumstance in it, but deserves thy study; what endeavours have there been to dive into the secrets of nature; what volumes have been written of physic, metaphysics, mathematics; And is not this subject Christ? Is not every of these subjects, Christ's ascension, Christ's mission of the Holy Spirit, of more value, and benefit than all those! Come study that piece of the Bible, wherein these are written, there is not a line or expression of Christ in the Scripture, but 'tis matter enough for a whole age to comment on; thou needest not to leave old principles for new discoveries for in these very particulars thou mightest find successive sweetness unto all eternity.

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## SECT. II.

*Of considering Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**et us consider Jesus, carrying on this work of our salvation in these particulars:

And to take them in order,—

1. Consider Christ's ascension into heaven. What, shall he ascend, and shall not we in our contemplations follow after him? Gaze; O my soul, on this wonderful object, thou needest not fear any check from God or angel, so that thy contemplation be spiritual, and divine. No sooner had Christ finished his work of redemption here on earth, but on the mount called Olivet he assembles with his disciples, where having given them commands, he begins to mount; and being a little lifted up into the air, presently a cloud receives him into her lap. Herein is a clear demonstration of his godhead; clouds are usually in scripture put for the house or temple, or receptacle of God himself. How often

is it said, that *the glory of the Lord appeared in the clouds*? And that he came to Moses in a thick cloud? And that he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud? And that the Lord descended in the cloud? Is not the clouds God's own chariot? Behold the Lord rideth on a swift cloud! — And O my Lord my God, thou art very great, saith David; great indeed and he proves it thus, *who maketh the clouds his chariot*. Jesus Christ in his ascension to heaven enters by the way into a cloud; this was his chariot, led by ten thousands of his angels. *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them in Sinai in the holy place: thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts from men.*

But stay not thy contemplation in the cloud; he ascends yet higher, through the air, and through the clouds, and through that heaven of fixed stars, nor stood he still 'till he came to the heaven of heavens. In all this triumphant march, some tell us of an heavenly harmony made by the blessed angels; and that this is the meaning of the psalmist, *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet*. In this meditation pass not over thy duty, which immediately follows, *sing praises unto God, sing praises: sing praises unto our king sing praises, — sing unto God, sing praises to his name, extol him that rideth upon the heavens, by the name Jah, and rejoice before him*. Thou hast, cause, O my soul, to praise him, and to rejoice before him, especially if thou considerest that Christ ascended not for himself, but for thee; it is God in our nature that is gone up to heaven; Christ as a public person ascended up to heaven; thy interest is in this very ascension of Jesus Christ, and therefore dost thou consider thy head as soaring up? O let every member praise his name!

And yet stay not by the way, but consider further; Christ being now arrived at heaven doors,

those heavenly spirits that accompanied him began to say, *lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift up yourselves, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in!* To whom some of the angels that were within, not ignorant of his person, but admiring his majesty and glory, said again, *who is the king of glory?* And then they answered, *the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle;* and thereupon those *twelve gates of the holy city of new Jerusalem*, opened of their own accord, and Jesus Christ with all his ministering spirits entered in. O my soul, how should this heighten thy joy, and enlarge thy comforts in that Christ is now received up into glory! every sight of Christ is glorious and in every sight thou shouldest wait on the Lord Jesus Christ for some glorious manifestations of himself. Come, live up to the rate of this great mystery; view Christ as entering into glory, and thou wilt find the same sparkles of glory, on thy heart.

2. Consider Christ's session at God's right hand; no sooner was Christ entered into heaven, but he is brought before his heavenly father; and a dominion was given him above all creatures, above the hierarchy of all the angels: O the glory of Christ at his first entrance into glory! immediately all the angels fell down and worshipped him, immediately his Father welcomed him with the highest grace that ever was shewn. *Come (said he) sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.* O my soul, meditate on this session of Christ at God's right hand, and thence draw some virtue into thyself: what? was Christ exalted? had he a name given him above every name? walk then as becomes those that have so glorious a head; O defile not that nature which in thy Christ was so highly honoured!

3. Consider the mission of the Holy Ghost; *When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* He gave gifts, or the gift of gifts, the gift of the Holy Ghost; O my soul

consider this princely gift of Christ ! Such a gift was never before, but when God gave his son ; “ God so loved the world, that he gave his Son ; ” and Christ so loved the world, that he gave his spirit. But consider especially to whom this spirit was given ; the application of the gift is the very soul of thy meditation ; “ unto us a son is given,” said the prophet ; and “ unto us the Holy Ghost is given,” saith the apostle. And yet above all, consider the reasons of this gift in reference to thyself ; was it not to make thee a temple of the Holy Ghost ? Stand a while on this ! admire, O my soul, at the unspeakable love of Christ in this ! It was infinite love to come down into our nature ; but this is more to come down into thy heart by his Holy Spirit ; he came near to us then, but he comes nearer now ; for now he unites himself unto thy person, now he comes and dwells in thy soul by his spirit ; come ! here’s that which will content thy vast desires ; “ Christ is in thee by his spirit ; ” will not this content the utmost capacity of an heart ? surely he is too covetous whom God himself cannot suffice ; if thou hast Christ, thou hast all things ; and if thou hast the spirit of Christ, thou hast Christ himself, not notionally, but really, essentially, substantially by his spirit ; it is the very spirit of Christ, the spirit itself, the Holy Ghost itself in his own person that is united to thee, and dwells in thee ; nor only comes he in person, but he brings along with him all his train ; hath he not endowed thee with gifts ? hath he not divided a portion to thee in thy place and calling ? observe it, and be thankful, if thou hast a gift of prayer, or prophesy, of wisdom, of knowledge, it flows from this Holy Spirit ; *unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.* Or according to the measure of the spirit ; who is the gift of Christ. And *all these worketh that one and the same spirit dividing to every man severally as he will.* But besides a gift, hath he not endowed thee with his grace ? hath he

not planted in thy soul the power, the principal of grace? hast thou not felt the quicknings, stirrings of the spirit of God, commanding thy faith, love, zeal, and other graces? hath he not many a time at some mighty straight, at some prevailing temptation, when thou wast even ready to yield to satan, come in as betwixt the bridge and water, and given thee grace to help in time of need? O the sweet incomes of the spirit of God! as he is a holy spirit, so he makes holy hearts; and if there be an holiness in thy heart, what is it but an emanation of the spirit of God? hast thou not sometimes felt the joy unspeakable and full of glory? A drop of heaven's joy as the earnest of thy inheritance? why all these are but the workings of the promised comforter: *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter that he may abide with you for ever.* Another effect is the seal of the spirit stamped on thee. I will not say this is absolutely necessary, but hast thou not sometime been assured of thy salvation, by an irradiation of the spirit on thy graces? Sometimes the spirit is pleased to shine with its bright, and glorious, and heavenly beams into our souls, and then we are assured: hence the apostle prays for the "Ephesians, that they might have the spirit of revelation." If the spirit shine upon our graces, then it seals: O consider this shining-sealing work, and leave not 'till the spirit dart in a spiritual light, and give thee a revelation, knowledge, and persuasion of thy effectual calling.

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### S E C T. III.

*Of desiring Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**et us desire Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars: who seeing

Christ to ascend into heaven, would not be glad to ascend up with him? seeing Christ to sit down with him? Who seeing Christ scatter his gifts and spirit amongst his saints would not cry, "come Holy Spirit; O Christ give me thy spirit, thou that givest gifts unto men, come, and bestow these gifts on me! even upon me?" The believing soul cannot hear of Christ in any true discovery of his grace and glory, but it must needs send out many breathings after him, "O that Christ were mine! O that I had any interest in this transaction!" It is true, these transactions are past, but the virtue of them continues still, and accordingly the virtue, power, and influence of these transactions must be the object of our desires; now what is the virtue of Christ's ascension, but that we might ascend? And what the virtue of Christ's session, but that we might sit down with him in his throne? And what the virtue of the mission of his spirit but that we might partake of the Holy Ghost? O let these be the objects of our desires; let us pant and breathe after those things.

1. Let us see Christ ascending, and so desire to ascend with him: when Christ ascended it was not merely for himself but also in our stead; he ascended as a common person; as the high priest ascending into the holy of holies, he carried all the names of the twelve tribes on his breast; so Jesus Christ ascending into heaven, carried the names of all believers in the world on his breast, thereby shewing that they were likewise to come after him, in this case how should we long after him, and cry after him, as Elisha after Elijah when he saw him ascending, "my father! my father! the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!" How should we cry after him, "O my Lord and my God, see that my name be written on thy breast, O that virtually I may ascend with thee, and that really and bodily I may at last ascend after thee!" A desire after Christ, and his ascension is the way

to heaven ; if thou wilt ascend after Christ, set thy desires upon Christ ; if thou wilt arrive at true glory, breath after Christ ascending up into his glory. O when will it once be that by the virtue of Christ's ascension I shall ascend !

1. Let us see Christ sitting down at the right hand of God, and so desire to sit with him : when Christ sat down, it was not in his own right simply, as it is his inheritance, but with relation to his members ; "He hath quickened together, with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He sat down as a common person, thereby shewing that we were to sit down with him in our proportion, him that overcometh, I will grant to sit with me in my throne even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." O my soul, desire this, for this is worthy of thy desire : this is a great thing, an high exaltation, another manner of honour than any this world affords ; only take heed of apprehending it after a carnal way. This very exaltation consists in the image of God, and communion with God ; whatever thou givest or deniest, Lord give me this, and I have enough for ever.

3. Let us see Christ's mission of his Holy Spirit, and desire a share in that gift. We cannot expect to sit with Christ, but we must first have the spirit of Christ. Consider O my soul, all things here below are either temporal or spiritual ; and of things spiritual this is the sum, *the indwelling of the spirit*. O Lord give me thyself, and that contains all gifts ; O give me thy spirit and thou canst not but with him give me all things. O what longings ! O what pantings and gaspings should there be in thy spirit after this spirit ! come Holy Spirit, O come and dwell in my soul ! I know thou wilt make the place of thy feet glorious ; if I have but thy presence, I shall be all glorious within.

## SECT. IV.

*Of Hoping on Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus, carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars ; this was the apostles prayer ; *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing ; that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost ;* could we abound in hope that Christ's ascension, session, and mission of his spirit did belong to us, we should never be ashamed ; O then let us look to our hope, and be sure that it be of the right stamp ? which in reference to every of these passages, we may examine thus :

1. If Christ's ascension be mine, then am I ascended with Christ : for we may ascend into heaven by faith and loves ; though for the present we are on earth ; *if ye 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, and not on things on the earth.* If Christ our head be ascended, then we that are his members must follow after him in our affections ? Christ tells us, *where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also* If Christ our treasure be ascended into heaven, our loves, our affections, our hearts will follow after him, and if our hearts be in heaven, no question but we ourselves both souls and bodies shall at last ascend.

2. If Christ's session be mine, then am I set down with Christ in heavenly places ; I mean not bodily, but by faith, which faith makes it as sure to my soul as if I had a foot already in heaven ; *faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.* By faith I now sit in heavenly places, in that I verily believe I shall do it one day ; my hope is now certain, in that I am as sure

of that I look for, as I am of that I have already received.—The apostle said of Christ, *we see not yet all things put under him*; but he presently answers, *we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour*, and so we may be sure the thing is as good as done; for if he be above, all must come under; in like manner we see not ourselves in present possession, but we see Christ crowned, and ourselves sitting with him virtually; and therefore at last we shall see ourselves actually crowned; and sitting together with Christ in heavenly places.

3. If Christ's spirit be mine, and sent to me, then have I both the person and train of the spirit of Christ. It is the having the spirit, and the working of the spirit in me, that is my evidence of the spirit's mission; I look upon this as the greatest question and the weightiest case of conscience that can be propounded—whether the spirit of Christ doth reside in us? or whether we have a well-grounded hope to say of ourselves that we have the in-dwelling of the spirit of God? *know ye not that ye are the temple of God* (saith the apostle) *and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?* and again, *know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?* In this he seems to put it out of question, that true Christians know the spirit of God dwells in them; if we know not this, we cannot know that we have any part in Christ; because the Holy Spirit is the principal bond of our union; if we know not this, we cannot know that we are justified, for we have nothing to do with Christ's righteousness, by which we are justified, until by our spiritual union Christ is made ours; if we know not this, we cannot know that we are the adopted children of God, for it is the spirit of adoption, whereby we *cry in our hearts Abba Father*: If we know not this, we cannot know that we are sanctified, for it is the spirit which is the beginner and perfecter of our sanctification: if we know not this,

we cannot know that our prayers are heard, for it is *the spirit that helps our infirmities, and that makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*; if we know not this, we cannot know whether we are in error or truth; or whether our religion be true or false, for it is the spirit who enlightens and leadeth us into all truth; if we know not this, we cannot know our own comforts, for he is the only true comforter. Come then, and put we ourselves to the trial; let us search whether we have the spirit of Christ; which we may resolve (if we will not deal deceitfully with our own hearts) by these following signs.—

1. The spirit of Christ is the spirit of illumination. If he dwells in us he will enlighten our eyes, reveal to us those saving truths of God as they are in Jesus. *But the comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things,—But ye have an unction from the Holy one, and ye know all things.—But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you all things; and hence it is that this Holy spirit is called the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God.*

2. The spirit of Christ is a spirit of prayer. *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication.—Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered.* It is not said that the spirit teacheth us words, and fluent phrases, but it teaches us to pray in the heart with sighs and groans,

3. The spirit of Christ is a spirit of sanctification. The apostle having told the Corinthians that they had been notorious sinners, saith further, that *they were washed and sanctified by the spirit of God.* Hence the Holy spirit is called *the spirit of holiness*;

because he makes us holy. If we have this spirit, it inclines our hearts to things above, it mortifies our lusts it brings us nearer to God: the spirit therefore that is impure and encourageth men in sin, and cries up carnal liberty, is certainly none of the spirit of Christ; and by this one sign many carnal pretenders of our times may be convicted.

4. The spirit of Christ is a spirit of love. *God is love and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him; as the spirit is love, so it begets love in hearts of his people; the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.* All these graces are the fruits of the spirit, but the first grace in the link is love: by his spirit we are taught to love God, not only for his benefits, but in respect of his nature; for his goodness, justice, holiness; by his spirit we are taught to love any thing that hath the stamp and image of God upon it: *but as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.*

5. The spirit of Christ is a witnessing spirit. *The spirit itself, beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: and every one that believeth hath the witness in himself.*

The witnessing of the spirit is an office of the spirit, whereby it works the soul into a knowledge, persuasion, or conclusion of its acceptance with God in Christ.

2 How doth the spirit thus witness; I answer, 1. Immediately. 2. Mediately.

1. Concerning the immediate testimony of the spirit there is some controversy: Antinomians would have no other testimony but this; all other evidences (say they) are deceiving evidences; or if not deceiving, yet to make use of them were but to light a candle to the sun; for what are the graces of the spirit in comparison of the spirit's own testimony; and it may be the running into this extreme

hath caused others absolutely to deny any such testimony; or at last to say, for these enthusiasms or inspirations, let them boast of them that have them, we know no such thing. Methinks a middle betwixt these is most consonant to truth; for neither can I reject the graces of our assurance; neither dare I deny but there is something of the work of spirit's testimony which is an immediate work.

Certainly there is a work, wherein the spirit acts as in illumination; and infusion of good notions into us, wherein by a secret influence upon the heart, he quiets and calms the troubled soul concerning its condition by his own immediate power, without any grounds from scripture without, or graces within.

There is a three-fold work of the spirit, saith Mr. Caryl; 1. To convey and plant grace in the soul. 2. To help us to exercise the graces which are planted there. 3. To shine upon and enlighten those graces. This last work the spirit fulfils two ways: 1. By arguments and inferences, which is a mediate work. 2. By presence and influence, which is an immediate work; this the apostle calls, *witness bearing*; *there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit and water, and blood*; the spirit brings in the witness of water and blood, which is a mediate work; but besides, and above these, he gives a distinct witness of his own, which is his immediate work, and is in a way of peculiarity and transcendency, called the witness of the spirit.—As it is with the motions of the spirit, many a time the spirit excites a man to such and such duties, by laying his hand immediately upon the heart, and thereby inclining it to obey those motions; so in this case when a poor soul sits in darkness, and sees no light, sometimes it is as it were, taken up into the third heaven; and this is in such a way, that tho' the spirit of a man is immediately calmed by it, yet it cannot tell how it came to pass.

But for fear of mistakes in this case observe we these rules.

1. That although the spirit may immediately testify without express or formal application of a word, yet he never testifies but according to the word. If a man that never felt sin a burthen, that throws away all duties of religion, that never prays, reads, hears, or meditates, shall say, that he is filled with joy, peace, and the assurance of God's word, it is certain the Holy spirit is not the author of this, because the promise of peace belongs to none of his stamp; see *Mat. xi. 28. Isaiah lvii. 15. Mal. v. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.*

2. That ordinarily the spirit brings in his testimony either in duty, or after duty. "I have seen his ways, and I will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comforts to him and to his mourners; I create the fruits of the lips, peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will heal him," I know there may be a case of grievous temptation, and at such time the spirit of God may come in by a sudden irradiation, and cheer the soul wonderfully, though it knows not how; yet usually the spirit brings in his testimony either in duty, or not long after duty.

3. That such testimonies of the spirit beget only an actual assurance during the present exigency, or in order to some present design that God is working thereby.

2. The spirit witnesseth immediately; and that either without, or with argumentation. But both from the word.

1. Without argumentation, and that is when the spirit applies some suitable word to the soul, and without more ado enables the soul to close with that word. As for the instance, thou art burthened for sin, and thou hast prayed earnestly for pardon of sin, and even then a secret whisper of the spirit casts that word into thy heart, *I will heal thy back-*

*slidings, and love thee freely*, or such a voice as that *come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*. Now this is a direct testimony; only I dare not leave it without a caution. Some can relate extraordinary passages of providence attending the coming in of such and such a word: as that they did not know there was any such scripture, nor did they know where it was: and yet in opening the book, it was the very first place they cast their eye upon; or they wanted a book, and in the use of some other means unexpectedly a word was spoken, or remembered, so pat to the case, as if it had been a message from heaven, certainly the spirit's hinting of words thus is very observable; yet a bare giving in of a word is no warrant that it comes from the spirit unless the soul come up to some end which the word itself pointeth at; for the ends it aimeth at, as quickening, comforting, supporting, acting of some graces, or such like; and by this we may know that the testimony is true, and proceeds from the spirit of God.

2. With argumentation, and that is when the spirit brings in the testimony of blood and water, I may call it a testimony of graces, written in our hearts, and brought out by the spirit by way of argument; as thus—*He that believeth hath everlasting life; but I believe, therefore I have everlasting life*. The first proposition is the gospel, and in this way it is the first work of the spirit to open our eyes, for the understanding thereof. The second proposition is thy case, or my case; and here the spirit enlightens the soul to see itself under that condition, but I believe.

In all cases, the assurance that the spirit gives, maintains a soul in a way of reliance and dependence, when it sees no reason why it should do so; or it may be when he sees the reason why it should not be so; as it is said, of Abraham in another case, that *he believed in hope, against hope*; faith told him there was hope that he should be the father of

many nations, when reason told him there was none, again, the assurance that the spirit gives, is attended with an high esteem of prayer, duties ordinances; and in the issue (which is the most sure mark it purified the soul, "He that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure," he is ever washing himself from sin, and watching against sin, and taking all possible care to keep himself pure and unspotted in this world; it keeps the soul humble, and lowly, it being impossible that such a testimony of the spirit, and so intimate a converse with God, and the light of his countenance should not reflect low thoughts upon a man concerning himself; such a man cannot but say, "Lord, what am I that thou hast brought me hitherto; What for such a peevish, unbelieving, impatient soul as mine, to be carried in thy arms, and cheered with thy smiles, and to enjoy the comforts of thy spirit; O what a wonderful, merciful, gracious God have I"?

O my soul, try now the hope of the spirit's indwelling by these several signs; art thou enlightened savingly in the knowledge of God, and of Christ? hast thou a spirit of knowledge and supplication? a spirit of sanctification? a spirit of love? hast thou ever had the immediate testimony of the spirit? hast thou ever had the mediate testimony of the spirit without any argumentation? hast thou unexpectedly lighted on some places of scripture that hast satisfied thy soul as with marrow and fatness? or if not so neither, hast thou the immediate testimony of the spirit with argumentation? Canst thou argue thus: "He that believeth shall be saved, but I believe, therefore I shall be saved." Or if any doubt be made of the assumption; canst thou prove it by such other graces as accompany faith, and are the fruits of faith? Canst thou say by the help and shinings of the spirit, that these and these graces are in me, I love God and Christ, I repent of my sins, surely

then thy hope is well grounded; thou hast the indwelling of the spirit; it is thine even thine.

SECT. V.

*Of believing in Jesus in that Respect*

**L**et us believe on Jesus as carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars, many scruples are in many hearts, "what? is it possible that I should have any share in Christ's ascension, Christ's session, Christ's mission of his spirit? Was it ever in God's heart that I should partake with Christ in all these glories? What is this that earth should go up to heaven, that men should ascend to God? Yea, that my soul with Christ, and by Christ, should ascend to God, and sit down with God in heavenly places? That my soul should have for its inmate the very same spirit that Christ himself hath? O I cannot, I dare not believe."

Scrupulous souls, be not faithless but believing; there is none of these particulars for which we have not a warrant out of the word of God; and therefore believe: I shall lay down. 1. Some directions, and 2. Some Encouragements of Faith.

1. For directions of faith, observe as before these particulars.

1. Faith must directly go to Christ.
2. Faith must go to Christ as God in the flesh.
3. Faith must go to Christ as God in the flesh made under the law.
4. Faith must go to Christ, not only as made under the directive part of the law by his life, but under the penal part of the law, by his death.

5. Faith must go to Christ not only as put to death in the flesh, but as quickned by the spirit.

6. Faith must not only go to Christ as quickned by the spirit, but as going into glory, as sitting down at God's right hand, and as sending the Holy Ghost. Faith should eye Christ as far as he goes; if he be ascended, so should faith, if he go into glory, and sit down there, and act there for his people, so should faith, and so should we in a way of believing follow after him, and take a view of all his transactions where he is; we have heard before how faith should go to Christ as dying, and as raising again; but yet faith is low, while it doth not go within the vail, and see him in glory; it is not enough to have only a faith of justification, but of glorification. O come let us see Christ in heaven, and we can have no less than a glorious faith! how many are there that never yet came to Christ as a glorified Christ? We are still in the lower form; many of us take in no more of Christ than what was done on the cross, we seldom follow Christ into heaven, to see what he is doing for us, O my soul O my faith! mount up, and be upon the wing: Christ is gone up to heaven, Christ is sat down at God's right hand; Christ hath sent down his holy spirit. He gave the gift of gifts, even the gift of the Holy Ghost himself. What? art not thou a partaker of this gift? O then look up unto Jesus in reference to all this, set him before thee: Christ in all these particulars is a right object for thy faith.

7. Faith in going to Christ, his ascension, session and mission of the Holy Spirit, is principally to look to the design of Christ, in each of these particulars: Christ did nothing but he had an end in it for our good; and here is the life of faith, to eye the meaning of Christ in all his doings. Now the ends of Christ's ascension, session, and mission of his spirit were several; I shall instance only in these few,

1. Christ ascended that we might ascend. Look what ever God acted on Christ's person, that he did as on our behalf, and he means to act the same on us. Was Christ crucified? So are we: Is Christ risen again? So we are risen with him: Is Christ gone up into glory? So are we. Heaven is now opened and possessed by Jesus Christ for us, and at last we shall ascend even as he ascended. How should faith pry into this? As we must go through all ordinances and creatures of Christ 'till we come to Christ, so through all conditions of Christ until we come to glory.

2. Christ sat down that we might sit with him in heavenly places, what is the end of Christ's session, but that we might invest all his saints with the same priviledge? In this height of glory, Christ is the pattern of what we shall be; surely this is the very top of heavens; Christ is exalted above the heavens, that we might in our measure be exalted with Christ; it was Christ's prayer, that his Father, and he and we, might be one, *as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.* O how should faith stand, and gaze on Christ in that respect? What? is he on God's right hand? and is he there preparing a mansion for my soul? what shall I sit at the right hand of Christ; Admire, O my soul, this aim of Christ, the meaning of his exalting himself, it was to exalt thee; and the meaning of his exalting thee on this manner, is to manifest to all the world, what the Son of God is able to do, in raising so poor a creature, to so rich a glory.

3. Christ sent down the Holy Ghost, that he might dwell in our souls, endow us with gifts, and graces that he might comfort us, seal us unto the day of redemption; fit us for glory; amongst the many ends for which Christ sent down his Holy Spirit, I shall insist only on these two—

1. That he might help us to cry *Abba Father*; and make us come boldly to the throne of grace, as

children to a father. It is the spirit that takes us by the hand and leads us to the Father, when others stand at a distance, and cannot come near. Though others are kept out, yet the adopted child, who hath received the spirit of adoption, can say, "let me come to my Father; guards are appointed to keep out strangers, but not sons."

2. That he might guide us into all truth; I mean into all necessary, fundamental, saving truths: In this respect we have need of the spirit, He it is that dictates to us which is the true religion; he it is that writes within, is a permanent, settled, standing witness that transcribes upon our hearts, that which was before only written in our books; but it is that not only reveals truth from without, but imprints it also upon the soul, as a man doth a seal by impressing it on the wax; as the written word is the testimony without us, so are these impressions of the spirit the testimony within us, by which we may know every necessary truth as it is in Jesus; unbelievers have a testimony without them, but believers have a double testimony, one without, and one within; and this witness within us will go with us and accompany us through all streights and difficulties. Men may take from us our bibles, teachers, friends? or imprison us where we cannot enjoy them: but they cannot take from us the spirit of Christ: this witness; O what excellent help is here to a poor christian, beyond all the furniture of the most learned men, that want this testimony of the spirit of Christ! surely this advantage will exceedingly furnish us against all temptations to any error, that is plainly contrary to the essentials of religion.

2. For the encouragement of our faith to believe in Christ in reference to his ascension, session, and mission of his spirit.

1. Consider the excellency of this object. What is it but Christ? Christ in his ascendant, regnant power? Christ in his marching, conquering, triumphing postures? in his free, and large, and

magnificent gifts? *When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* O the glory, O the excellency of Christ in these respects; I believe this is the top of heaven's glory, to see and wonder at the virtues of him that sits on the throne at the right hand of God; to be filled, but never satiated with the glory of Christ.

2. Consider the power, virtue, and influence of this object unto our soul's salvation. O what a stately tower have we here erected to see heaven on? Faith may stand as it were, on this mount, and see itself in glory; O the flowings, the rich emanations of grace and glory that come from hence! O why do we toil ourselves in gathering sticks, when to-morrow we shall be out of this world, and go to Christ.

3. Consider of the suitableness of these objects to our several conditions; "Behold he comes leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills," Cant ii. 8. Gregory that measured his leaps, thus gives them; he first leaps from his Father's mansion to his mother's womb; from her womb to the manger, from his manger to his cross; from his cross to his grave; from his grave up again to heaven; great leaps indeed, that shewed both his readiness to love and willingness to save: O believe? believe thy part in Christ's ascension, Christ's session, Christ's mission of his Holy Spirit, and thou mayest go singing to thy grave? a lively faith in such particulars would set a soul in heaven, even whilst on earth.

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## SECT. VI.

*Of loving Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars. Much have been

said already of Christ's conception, birth, life, death, resurrection; such arguments of love as are enough to swallow up soul sin love; but if all those were not enough for God, see here new mines, never known in the world before, opened in Jesus Christ. See! Christ for us and for our salvation is gone up to heaven, is set down at God's right hand, and hath sent down the Holy Ghost into our hearts. In the pouring out of these springs of heaven's love, how should our souls but open the mouth wide, and take in the streams of Christ's honey, and milk; I mean his precious love-breathings?

Two things I shall instance in, which may be as the load-stones of our love to Christ; the first is his glory, and the second his bounty.

1. For his glory: No sooner was he ascended, and sat down at God's right hand, but John the divine had a sight of him, and O what a glorious sight! "He was clothed with a garment down to the feet and girt about the paps with a golden girdle; his head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters; and he had in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was the sun that shineth in his strength;" when John saw him thus, he swoons at his feet. But Christ for all his glory holds his head, "saying, fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, amen, and hath the keys of hell and death." A glorious Christ is good for dying sinners: would sinners but draw near and come and see this king in the chariot of love, and come and see his beauty, he would certainly draw their souls unto him, nay, say that all the damned in hell were brought up with their firey chains to the door of heaven; could we let them look in, and behold the throne, and

the lamb, and the troops of glorified spirits clothed in white, with crowns of gold upon their heads, and palms in their hands, singing the eternal praises of their king; O how would they be sweetened in their pain, and ravished with those joys that are in Christ's face for evermore? O who can think of the glory that is in this delightful one, and not be swallowed up in love? Who can think of Christ's sitting at God's right hand, and sparkling in his glory round about, and casting out beams of glory through East and West, and North, and South, thro' heaven and earth, and hell, and not love him with a whole heart. I remember one dying, and hearing some discourse of Jesus Christ: "O [said she] speak more of this, let me hear more of this; be not weary of telling his praise, I long to see him, how should I but long to hear of him?" Surely I cannot say too much of Jesus Christ: O the loveliness, beauty, and glory of his countenance? can I speak or you hear of such a Christ?—And are we not all in a burning love, O my heart! how is it thou art not love-sick? how is it thou dost not charge the daughters of Jerusalem as the spouse did, "I charge ye O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved that ye tell him I am sick of love?"

2. For his bounty: No sooner was he ascended, and sat down at God's right hand, but *he gives gifts unto men*; and he sends down the Holy Ghost. I shall only weigh two circumstances in this gift, either whereof both dignifies, and cast a beam of bounty from the giver, into the heart of the receiver to move him to love.

[1.] One circumstance is the greatness of the giver; O my soul, how shouldst thou but love Christ the great emperor of heaven and earth: It was he that gave thee his spirit, it was he that took off the spirit which is upon him, so is the expression of God to Moses and put it upon thee; and doth not the person of Christ, the dignity of Christ, enhance the value of the gift? As all gifts are signs

of love, so the love of a great personage, and the gift issuing from such a love, ought more to be accounted than any gifts of any meaner person whatsoever.

(2.) Another circumstance is, the greatness of the gift: this argueth the greatness of the good will; and consequently deserveth a correspondence of affection. Now what greater gifts had Christ in store than to give his own spirit? The spirit proceedeth from him, and is the same essence with himself; the spirit is the third person of the true and only, godhead, proceeding from the Father and the Son, and cœternal, cœqual and consubstantia with the Father and the Son; this appears by those divine attributes and properties which are attributed to the Holy Spirit. As 1. Eternity, "in the beginning God created heaven and earth and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. 2. Omnipotency, because he, together with the Father and the Son createth and preserveth all things, *by his spirit he hath gained the heavens; the spirit of God hath made me; and all these things worketh that one and the self-same spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.* 3. Omniscieny, or the knowledge of all thing, *for the spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.* I might add miracles and the institution of sacraments, and prophecies, and gifts, and graces as the effects of his divinity; "I cast out devils saith Christ by the spirit of God; and baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost. And the spirit speaketh expresly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith. And we are changed into same image from glory to glory, even as "by the spirit of the Lord." See now how the Holy Spirit is God, cœternal, coequal, consubstantial with God the Father, and God the Son? is not this a great gift? Yea, as great a gift as possible can be given; what can he do more, than to give himself,

and to give his spirit? O the bonds of love that are upon man towards Christ in this respect!

Come, my soul, and take a view of the glory and bounty of Jesus Christ! If thy heart be not all brass and iron, how shouldest thou but chuse to love? If either beauty or bounty, if either majesty or magnificence can draw thy affection, Christ will have it; for in him is all; O let me be thy all! surely if thou hast any thing besides himself, he is the donor of all, he is the beauty of all, the sum of all, the perfection of all, yea, he is the author, preserver, and finisher of all.

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## SECT. VII.

### *Of Joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**et us joy in Jesus as carrying on the great work of our salvation in these particulars; there is not a particular under consideration, but 'tis the object of a christian's joy.—

1. How should it heighten my joys, and enlarge my comforts, when I consider that Christ is ascended into glory? By this it is clear that Christ is accepted of the Father for me, or otherwise he should never have been received into heaven: O what joy is in this?

2. How it should heighten my joys, and enlarge my comforts, when I consider that Christ is set down at God's right hand. Now he hath the keys of heaven delivered into his hands; *All power is given unto him in heaven and earth, in* and now he can do what he will; God the Father hath given away, as it were, all his prerogative unto Jesus Christ. *All judgment is committed to the Son, for the Father judgeth no man.* Now he is in a capa-

city of acting all his love to me in the most glorious way; he is highly advanced, and thereby he hath the advantage to advance me, and to glorify me: O what joy may enter into this poor, dark, desolate soul of mine, whilst I think over these glorious passages of Christ in glory!

8. How should it heighten my joys, when I consider that Christ hath sent down his Holy Spirit into my heart? O what comfort is this, to know that the spirit of Christ is my inmate? That my soul is the temple, the house and dwelling of the spirit of God? That Christ is in me of a truth, and that not only by the infusion of his grace, but by the indwelling of his spirit. Christ in his bodily presence went away, but Christ in his spirit continues still: *Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;* He is with us, and which is more, he is in us: *Christ in you the hope of glory.* Not Christ in sermons which we hear, nor Christ in chapters which we read, nor Christ in sacraments which we receive; but Christ in our hearts by his spirit, is unto us the hope of glory.

And now, O my soul, spread thyself on this great good, Christ's ascension, Christ's session, and Christ's mission of his Holy Spirit. There is not any particular here before thee, but 'tis fuel for joy, O what joy was in heaven when Christ ascended, and when Christ sat down at God's right hand, and when Christ sent down the Holy Spirit? Suppose thyself to have been in heaven, when he first entered into it, and when he first sat down at God's right hand, and sent down the comforter to his saints, was not heaven full of joy? Methinks the very thought of Christ's bright face, and white throne, and Christ's harpers, and heavenly troop, surrounding the throne, and Christ's welcome to his Father, both for himself and all his saints; and his carrying thy name upon his breast before his Father, should fill thy soul as full of joy, as possibly it can hold. O the first-fruits of Emanuel's land that lies

beyond time and death! O the joys that were in heaven at Christ's first entrance into heaven! O any soul, why dost thou not check thyself and lay aside thy sad complaints and forget this earth, and earthly troubles! Why dost thou not look up to Jesus Christ, and rejoice in him who hath done all this for thy salvation? Either the spirit of God is not thy comforter, or thou canst not but receive comfort in these passages.



## SECT. VIII

### *Of Calling on Jesus in that Respect*

**L**et us call on Jesus: I mean—

1. Let us pray that we may have our part in these transactions; or let us pray for more and more assurance thereof unto our souls, for though we do not believe, yet may we not be without our doubts, and in case of doubts, if once we are but assured what better means than prayer?

2. Praise God for these great transactions of his Son? Are they not mercies like mountains lying one upon another, and reaching up to the very heavens? Did not love break out first in a direct line, and as it went along, hath it not wound up itself, in such a variety of unthought of discoveries, as that it amazeth man and angels? What? That Jesus Christ should not only act for us, here on earth, but also ascend for us into heaven, and sit down, there at God's right hand, above the heavens; that all this should be done for us and our salvation, and to that purpose that he should send down his spirit into our hearts, to prepare us for his glory? 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,*



## SECT. IX.

### *Of Conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**et us conform to Jesus in the aforesaid respect. A serious beholding of Jesus in his ascension, session, mission of his spirit, is enough to change us into the same image from glory to glory. It was the sweet saying of an experienced saint, "View a glorified Christ, see him as in the relation and condition, and you will soon have the sparkles of the same glory on your hearts," Christ is now exalted; he is now in glory at the right hand of God: O let all our actions be glorious, let all our walking joys, breathings be as in glory. I shall not in this transaction lay out our many particular conformities to Christ, but gather all into one, which is heavenly conversation; seek things above, set your affection on things above? Christ is gone up, and Christ is sat down at God's right hand; and herein if you will conform, let your hearts be in heaven, let your affections be in heaven, let your conversation be in heaven.

In prosecution of this, I shall examine

1. What do we mean by our conversation in heaven?
2. Why must our conversation be in heaven?
3. By what means must we come up to this conversation in heaven.

1. By our conversation in heaven, I mean our aim at heaven: as heaven is our home, so our eye is there; whatever we do, our end, our scope is

to fit us for heaven, and to lay in heaven, " We look  
 " not at things which are seen, but at things which  
 " are not seen, for the things which are seen are  
 " temporal, but the things which are not seen are  
 " eternal.

By our conversation in heaven, I mean, our communion with Christ in heaven. " Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ." As it is among friends that converse together, they act mutually for the comfort one of another; there is a communion, or a mutual acting of the soul upon Christ, and of Christ upon the soul.

By our conversation in heaven, I mean, our affections on heaven, or on Christ in heaven; " Set your affections on things above," that is, set your desires, loves, hopes, joys, on heavenly things. Our affections are precious things, and are only to be set on precious objects. O what a shame is it to set our affections on the things in this life! Have we not a kingdom, a God, a Christ, a crown in heaven, to set our affections upon? And shall we set them upon dross; and dung? Are not all our pleasures and vanities base in comparison of Christ? O be not we so base to set our affections on earthly things but rather on God and Christ; and this is our heavenly conversation.

By our conversation in heaven, I mean, we carry and behave ourselves in this life as free denizens of the city of heaven our city, whereof we are citizens, and whereunto we have a right, is in heaven above; in this respect we trade not on trifles, as other men do, but we trade for great things, for high things; we merchandize for goodly pearls, even for God, and for Christ, who sitteth at the right hand of God. We see now what is meant by our conversation in heaven.

2. Why is the conversation of the saints in heaven?

1. Because they know that the original of their souls, came from God in heaven ; the body indeed was of the dust of the ground, but the soul was the breath of God ; so it is said of the first man, *God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.* The soul had a more heavenly original than any of the other creatures that are in the world ; and when God works grace in the soul, and it begins to know itself, it looks on all things here below as vile, and contemptible ; it then looks upward and begins to converse with things suitable to its original.

2. Because their best and choice things are already in heaven. As their Father is in heaven, and their Saviour in heaven, their husband is in heaven, their elder brother is in heaven, and their king is in heaven ; their treasure is in heaven ; their inheritance is in heaven, their hope is in heaven, their mansion is in heaven, their chief friends are in heaven, their substance is in heaven, their reward is in heaven, their wages are in heaven : And all these things being in heaven, no marvel their conversations be in heaven.

3. Because they are going towards heaven even whilst yet they are on earth. If the nobleman do once know his condition, and begins his travel homeward towards his Father's court, will he not every morning that he rises, converse with them that come from his Father to conduct him home ? Doth it not do him good to hear any man speak of his father's country ? Is it not in his thoughts, in his talk, in his eye, at every step ? O my soul, if thou art indeed travelling towards heaven, how shouldst thou but have it in thy motions, affections, conversations ?

3. By what means should we come to have our conversation in heaven ?

1. Let us watch opportunities for heavenly exercises. God now by his ministers calls, *Come ye to the waters, come buy and eat ; come, buy wine and*

*milk without money: come to me and your souls shall live. Why, now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation:* Whilst ministers calls, and we live under the droppings of the word; these are opportunities from heaven; O then he that never prayed, let him pray; and he that never heard, let him hear; the Lord is now near to us; Christ Jesus is calling, and mercy is entreating, and love is beseeching, and wisdom is crying after us; O lay hold on these opportunities for heavenly exercises, and then we shall come to heavenly conversations.

2. Take heed of resting in the formality of duties, Many souls that have enlightenings of conscience, dare not but take opportunities for heavenly duties; but then comes in the temptations of the devil, and corruptions of their own hearts, and then they say, Now the duty is done, and what needs more? Alas! It is not what we have done? But where have we been? What, have our souls been in heaven, with God and with Christ? Have we had communion with the Father, and with the Son in our duties? O take heed of formality! it will exceedingly hinder our conversation in heaven! O keep our eyes still upon our heart? Ask in duty, what affections have been? How much are we got nearer heaven thereby? And by this means we shall come to an heavenly conversation.

2. Look up unto Jesus as hanging on the cross, and as sitting on the throne: This is the apostle's rule. ' Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, that is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.— These two are the objects of a christian's look, who studies an heavenly conversation, viz. Christ's cross, and Christ's session; by the cross he is author, and by the throne he is the finisher of our faith; in the first is set down his love to us, in the second is set down our hope of him; come then, and settle your thoughts and looks on this blessed object; a sight

on Christ's cross, but especially of Christ's throne, is a blessed means to wean us from the world, and to raise our affections to things above, yea to form our conversation towards heaven.

4. Let us wait for the appearing of Jesus Christ. Our conversation is in heaven (saith the apostle) from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Where his expectations are, there a man's conversation will be; if we expect ere long, that the Lord Jesus will appear in glory, and that we shall see him not with other, but with the same eyes, the very waiting for these things will help our conversation to be heavenward. Certainly the day is coming, when Jesus Christ shall come with his angels in his glory, and then shall the bodies of the saints shine gloriously before the face of God, and Jesus Christ: O the wonder of this day! the glory of Christ shall then darken the glory of the sun and moon, and stars; but my body shall not be darkened, but rather it shall shine like the glorious body of Christ Jesus.

5. Let us observe the drawings, and movings of the spirit, and follow his dictates: to this purpose Christ ascended, and sat down at God's right hand, and sent down the Holy Spirit, that the Holy Ghost being come down, he might do his office in bringing on our souls towards salvation; and if ever our souls get above this earth, and get acquaintance in heaven, it is the spirit of God that must be the chariot of Elijah, yea, the very living principle, by which we must move and ascend: O then take heed of quenching its motions, or resisting its workings. Take we heed of grieving our guide, or of knocking off the chariot wheels of his Holy Spirit. We little think how much the life of grace and the happiness of souls doth depend upon our ready and cordial obedience to the spirit of God; when he forbids us, and we will go on, when he tells us which is the way, and we will not regard: no wonder if we are strangers to an heavenly conver-

sation ; if we will not follow the spirit, how should it lead us to heaven, or bring our hearts unto the presence of God? O learn we this lesson, and let not only the motions of our bodies, but the very thoughts of our hearts be at the spirit's beck! if we cherish these notions, and hearken to the spirit, O what a help should we find to this heavenly conversation.



## Looking unto Jesus

*in his Intercession.*

### CHAP. I.

#### Sect. I.

*What the Intercession of Christ is.*

**W**e have spoken of Christ's entrance into heaven, and of his immediate actings after his entrance there, that transaction which yet remains, and will remain until his coming again, it is his intercession for the saints. In these actings of Christ in heaven, if we follow him, we must go from glory to glory, no sooner come we out of one room of glory, but presently we step into another: One would think enough had been said already of the glory of Christ, and our glory in Christ; who would not willingly sit down under the shadow of this happiness, and go no further? But yet this is not all; so thick and fast doth the glory of Christ break in upon us. O what a blessed thing is it to be looking up to Jesus Christ! Saints might do nothing else but ravish their hearts

with the diversity of heavenly light and comfort, which breaks forth from the bosom of Jesus Christ. Here is now another mystery as great and amazing, as the former, which springs out before our eyes in this transaction of Christ's intercession.

And in prosecution of this, as in the former, I shall first lay down the object, and secondly direct you how to look upon it. The object is Jesus carrying on the great work of our salvation in his intercession: In ordering of which, I shall examine these particulars;—

1. What is this intercession of Christ?
2. To whom is Christ's intercession directed, and for whom?
3. What agreement betwixt Christ's intercession, and the intercession of the high priests of old, and what difference?
4. What are the properties of this intercession?
5. Wherein it doth more especially consist?
6. How powerful Christ's intercessions are with God.
7. What are the reasons of this great transaction of Christ's intercession for his people?

1. What is the intercession of Christ? Some define it thus: "Christ's intercession is that part of his priestly office, whereby Christ is advocate, and intreater of God the Father for the faithful." I shall give it thus: "Christ's intercession is his gracious will, fervently and immoveably desiring, that for the perpetual virtue of his sacrifice, all his members might both for their persons and duties be accepted of the Father." 1. I call the intercession of Christ his own gracious will; for we must not imagine that Christ in his intercession, prostrates himself on his knees before his Father's throne, uttering some submissive form of words; that is not beseeming the majesty of him that sits at God's right hand; when he was but yet on earth, the substance of his request for his saints ran thus, "Father I will, that they also whom thou hast

given me be with me where I am ;” and much more now he is in heaven, is this the form of his intercession, Father I will this. 2. The foundation of Christ’s intercession, is the death of Christ; and hence we make two parts of Christ’s oblation; the one expiatory, when Christ suffered upon the cross; the other presentatory, when he doth appear in heaven before God for us; the one was finished on earth, when Christ suffered within the gate; the other is performed in heaven now Christ is within the city; the one was a sacrifice indeed, the other is not so much a sacrifice as the commemoration of a sacrifice; the first was an act of humiliation, and this latter is an act of glory: the first was performed once for all, this latter is done continually; the first was for the obtaining redemption, and this latter is for the application of redemption.

The matter interceded for, is, that all the saints and their service, might find acceptance with God; first, Christ’s intercession is for our persons, and then Christ’s intercession is for our works; by Christ’s intercession, is Christ’s satisfaction applied to our persons, and by consequence the defect of our duties, is covered and removed; and both we and our works are approved and accepted of God the Father.

Christ intercedes; according to both natures. 1. According to his humanity, partly by appearing before his Father in heaven, and partly by desiring our salvation. Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us, and I say not unto you that I will pray, or desire the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you. 2. According to his deity, partly by applying the merit of his death, and partly by willing the salvation of his saints; and as the effect thereof, by making requests in the hearts of the saints with sighs unspeakable. Elect, through sanctification of the spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; this sprinkling is the applying of the blood of Jesus, and

that is an act of intercession. Again, Father I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; he desires as man, but he wills as God; and as the effect of this, he gives the spirit. The spirit itself makes intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. But what are the intercessions of the spirit, to the intercessions of Christ. I answer, much every way; the spirit's intercessions are as the effect, and Christ's intercessions are as the cause; the spirit's intercessions are as the echo, and Christ's intercessions are as the first voice, the spirit intercedes for men, in and by themselves, but Christ intercedes in his own person; there is a dependance of the spirit's intercession in us, upon Christ's intercession in himself. First, Christ by his intercession applies his satisfaction made, and then sends down his Holy Spirit into our hearts, to help our infirmities; and to teach us what to pray; and how to pray as we ought. Now this he doth as God, for who shall give a commission to the spirit of God, but God himself.

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## S E C T. II.

*To whom is Christ's Intercession directed,  
and for whom?*

**T**o whom is Christ's intercession directed? I answer, immediately to God the Father; If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. In the work of intercession; are three persons, a party offended, a party offending, and the intercessor distinct from them both; the party offended is God the Father, the party offending is sinful man, and the intercessor distinct from them both, is Jesus Christ. I deny not but Christ's intercession is made

to the whole trinity, but yet immediately, and directly to the first person, and in him to the rest.—  
(i. e.) *Three persons, and but one God.*

This intercession is made, in one sense for the world; so Christ upon the cross, prayed for the bloody Jews, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* But in a particular manner for all, and every faithful man. As the high priest went into the sanctuary with the names of the twelve tribes upon his breast, so Christ entered into the holiest of all, with the names of all believers upon his heart, and still he carries them upon his breast, and presents his will and desire unto his Father for them; nor doth he only intercede in general, but whatever thy name is, John, Peter, Thomas, Mary, Martha, if thou art a believer, Christ prays for thee, it is our common practice to desire the prayers one of another; but O, who would not have a share in the prayers of Jesus Christ? Why certainly if thou believest in Christ, Christ prays for thee.

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### S E C T. III.

*What agreement there is betwixt Christ's Intercessions, and the Intercessions of the High Priest of old, and what difference?*

**W**hat agreement is there betwixt the intercessions of Christ, and the intercessions of the High Priests of old? Among the Jews in the times of the Old Testament, they had an High Priest, who was in all things to stand betwixt God and them. Now as the Jews had their High Priests to intercede for them, so the Lord Jesus was to be the High Priest of our profession, and to intercede for us; it will therefore give some light to this doctrine of inter-

cession, if we compare these two : And first, consider what agreement betwixt Christ, and the High Priests of old ; betwixt Christ's intercession, and the High Priests intercession ?

1. Christ and the High Priests of old, agreed in name ; not only they but Christ himself is called an High Priest ; *We have such an High Priest, who is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*—

2. They agree in office ; that consisted of two parts, oblation and presentation : first, they offered a sacrifice ; and secondly, they presented it in the holy of holies, with prayer and intercession unto God ; the one was done without, the other within the holy of holies : and in answer there unto there are two distinct parts of Christ's priesthood. (1) The offering of himself a sacrifice upon the cross. 2. The carrying of himself, and of his blood, into the holy of holies, or in the heaven of heavens ; where he appears and prays in the force of that blood : And indeed this part his priest-hood, is of the two the more eminent ; and therefore it is held forth to us in the types of both those two orders of priest-hood that were before him, and figures of him, both that of Aaron and Melchizedech. [1.] This was typified in that Levitical priest-hood of Aaron, and his fellows : The highest service of that office, was the going into the holy of holies, and making an atonement there ; yea, this was the height of the High Priest's honour, that he did this alone, and it constituted the difference betwixt him as he was High Priest, and other priests ; for they killed and offered the sacrifices without, as well as he ; but only the High Priest was to approach the holy of holies with blood, and that but once a year. 2. This was typified by Melchizedech's priest-hood, which the apostles argues to have been much more excellent than any of Aaron's, in as much as Levi, Aaron's father, payed tythes to this Melchizedech in Abraham's loins ; now Melchizedech was his

type, not so much in respect of his oblation, or offering sacrifice, as in respect of his continual presentation and intercession in heaven; and therefore the same clause, *for ever*, still comes in when Melchizedech is named; *Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedech*. Here then is the agreement betwixt Christ, and the High Priests of old; in respect of name, both were priests; and in respect of office, both had their oblation, and presentations, or intercessions with God in glory.

3. In the point of intercession they agree in these particulars:—

1. The High Priests of old, usually once a year, went into the most holy place within the veil; and so is Christ our great High Priest, passed into the heavens within the veil, even into the holy of holies.

2. The High Priests of old, had, a plate of pure Gold upon their foreheads, which was *to bear the iniquity of the holy things, that they might be accepted before the Lord*; and so doth Christ bear the iniquity of our holy things. Spiritual Christians! here is your comfort, you are not able to perform any duty to God, but there is a great deal of sin in the same; you cannot hear, nor pray, nor confer, nor meditate without much sin; but Christ bears all these sins, even the iniquity of your holy things, and he presents your persons, and prayers, without the least spot to the Father; he is *the angel of the covenant that stands at the altar, having a golden censer with much incense; to offer it with the prayers of his saints*, and so they are acceptable before the Lord.

3. The Jewish High Priests, bore the names of the children of Israel on a breast-plate upon their hearts, for a memorial before the Lord; and so doth Christ our great High Priest, bear the names of his people upon his heart before the Lord continually.

1. In presenting them to his Father without spot, as righteous in his own righteousness ; *Christ loved the Church, that he might present it to his Father, and in him, to himself, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

2. In remembering them : *The righteous shall be had in continual remembrance ;* this is the soul's comfort in a time of desertion, or in an evil day ; if any cry out, as sometimes David did, *How long wilt thou forget me, Lord ? For ever ? How long wilt thou hide thy force from me ?* Let such a one remember, that Christ's redeemed ones are upon his heart, and he cannot forget them. But *Zion said the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me ; O no ! Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee.*

3. In loving them ; they are near and dear unto him, he hath set them a seal upon his heart ; so was the prayer of the spouse, *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm ;* and then it follows, *for love is strong as death.* Christ hath an entire love to his saints, he died for them, and now he intercedes for them ; he keeps them close to his heart, and there is none shall pluck them out of his hand. Thus far of the agreement betwixt Christ's intercessions, and the intercessions of the High Priests of old.

The difference betwixt Christ and them, and betwixt Christ's intercessions and their intercessions, may appear in these particulars :—

1. The High Priests then were but for a time, but Christ is a *Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedech.* *Melchisedech* (saith the apostle) *was without father, without maker, without descent, having neither beginning of day, nor end of life.* That is, as far as it is known ; and so is Christ without a father on earth, and without a mother

in heaven; without beginning, and without end; he abides a priest perpetually, even to the end of the world; yea, and the virtue of his priesthood is infinitely beyond all time, even for ever and ever.

2. The High Priest then entered only into that place that was typically holy, but Christ is entered into that place which is properly holy; he is entered into the heavens.

3. The High Priests then did always intercede for the people; only once a year the High Priest entered into the holy of holies; but our great High Priest is ascended into the holy of holies, never to put off his princely, priestly garments. Nor does he only once a year sprinkle the mercy seat with his sacrifice, but every day; he lives for ever to intercede. O what comfort is this to a poor dejected soul! He intercedeth ever, 'till he shall finish thy salvation; the smook of his incense ascends for ever without intermission.

4. The High Priests then interceded not for sins of presumption: If a man sinned ignorantly, there was indeed a sacrifice and intercession for him, but *if a man sinned presumptuously, he was to be cut off from among his people*; no sacrifice, no intercession by the High Priest then; but we have such an High Priest as makes intercession for all sins; every sin, though it boil up to blasphemy, (so it be not against the Holy Ghost) shall, by virtue of Christ's intercession, be forgiven. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness" (*i. e.*) for sins of all sorts, "Verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men" (*i. e.*) scarlet sins, or crimson sins; sins of the deepest dye, shall by Christ's intercession be done away; the voice of his blood speaks better things than the blood of Abel; it intercedes for the abolition of bloody sins.

5. The High Priests then interceded not without all these materials; *viz.* a temple, an altar, a sacrifice, a censer of burning coals taken off the altar, a putting the incense upon the fire, that the cloud of the incense might cover the mercy-seat, a sprinkling of the mercy-seat with the blood of the bullock and of the goat; but Jesus Christ in his intercession now needs none of these materials; but rather he himself, and his own merits, are instead of all. As, 1. He is the temple; *Destroy this temple* (saith Christ), *and I will build it again in three days*; it was destroyed; and God found it an acceptable sacrifice, and smelt in it a sweet savour, as in a temple. 2. He is the altar according to his deity, for as the latter sanctifies the gift, so doth the Godhead sanctify the manhood. 3. He is the sacrifice properly, according to the manhood; for although by communication of properties, the blood of the sacrifice is called the blood of God, yet properly the human soul and flesh of Christ, was the whole burnt-offering, roasted in the fire of his Father's wrath.

6. His merits are the cloud of incense, for so the angel Christ is said, "to have a golden censer  
 " and much incense, that he should offer it with the  
 " prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which  
 " was before the throne, and the smoak of the in-  
 " cense which came with the prayers of the saints,  
 " ascended up before God, out of the angel's hand."  
 The merits of Christ are so mingled with the prayers of his saints, that they perfume their prayers, and so they find acceptance with God his Father. We see now the difference betwixt Christ's intercessions, and the intercessions of the High Priests of old.



## SECT. IV.

*What the Properties of this Intercession of Christ are ?*

**W**hat are the properties of this intercession of Jesus Christ? I answer:—1. It is heavenly and glorious; and that appears in these particulars:

1. Christ doth not fall upon his knees before his Father, as in the days of his humiliation; for that is not agreeable to that glory he hath received; he only presents his pleasure to his Father, that he may thereto put his seal and consent. 2. Christ doth not pray out of private charity, as the saints pray one for another in this life, but out of public office of mediation. “There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” 3. Christ prays not out of humility, but out of authority, which is the desiring of a thing, so as withal he hath a right of bestowing it as well as desiring it. 4. Christ prays not merely as an advocate, but as a propitiation too; Christ’s spirit is an advocate, but only Christ is advocate and propitiation; Christ’s spirit is out advocate on earth, but only Christ in his person applieth his merits in heaven, and furthers the cause of our salvation, with his Father in heaven. In every of these respects we may see Christ’s intercession is heavenly and glorious.

2. It is ever effectual and prevailing: As he hath a power to intercede for us, so he hath a power to confer that upon us for which he intercedes. “I will pray the Father, and he will give you another comforter. If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you.” If Christ prayed on earth, he,

was ever heard ; but if Christ prayed in heaven we may be sure the Father ever heareth and answereth there ; when Christ as man prayed for himself, he was heard in that which he feareth ; but now Christ as Mediator, praying for us, he is ever heard in the very particular which he desireth.

3. It is of all other the transactions of Christ, 'till the very end of the world, the most perfect and consummate ; without it all the other parts of Christ's mediatorship would have been to little purpose. As the sacrifices under the law had not been of force, had not the high priest entered into the holy place to appear there, and to present the blood there unto the Lord ; so all that ever Christ did or suffered upon earth had been ineffectual unto us, had he not entered into heaven, " to appear there in the presence of God for us " In his life and death Christ was the meritorious cause, but by his intercession Christ is the applying cause of our soul's salvation.



## SECT. V.

### *Wherein the Intercession of Christ consists.*

**W**herein more especially doth the intercession of Jesus Christ consist ? I answer, In these particulars :—

1. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting of his person for us ; he himself went up to heaven, and presented himself ; the apostle calls this, " an appearing for us ; Christ is not entered into the " holy place made with hands, but into heaven, now " to appear in the presence of God for us." I believe

there is an emphasis in the word "appearing for us" But how appears he for us? I answer,

1. In a public manner; whatsoever he did in this kind, he did it openly and publicly; he appears for us in the presence of God the Father; he appears for us in the presence of his saints and angels; heaven's eyes are all upon him in his appearing for us.

2. He appears for us as a mediator; he stands in the middle betwixt God and us; hence it is, that he is God-man, that he might be a mediator betwixt God and man.

3. He appears for us as a sponsor, and a pledge; surely it is a comfort for a man to have a friend at court, that may own him, and appear for him; but if a friend be both a mediator and surety, a mediator to request for him, and a surety to engage for him, O what comfort is this! Thus Christ appeared in every respect; he is a mediator to request for us, and he is a surety to engage for us: as Paul was for Onesimus, a mediator, "I beseech thee for my son, Onesimus," and a sponsor, "If he hath wronged thee, or owe thee ought, put that on my account, I will repay it." So is Jesus Christ for his saints; he is "the mediator of a better covenant, Heb. viii. 6. And he "is a surety of a better testament." Heb. vii. xxii.

4. He appears as a solicitor, to present and promote the desires and requests of his saints, in such a way as that they may find acceptance with his Father.—5. He appears as an advocate: "If any

man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." An advocate is more than a solicitor; an advocate is one that is of council with another, and pleadeth his cause in open court; and such an advocate is Jesus Christ unto his people.

1. He is of counsel with them; that is one of the titles given him by the prophet Isaiah, *wonderful*, counsellor; he counsels them by his word and spirit. 2. He pleads for them, and this he doth in the high court of heaven, at the bar of God's own justice; there he pleads their cause, and an-

swereth all the accusations that are brought in by satan, or their own consciences. But of this anon.—6. He appears as a public agent, or ambassador; what that is, some tell us in these particulars; 1. His work is to continue peace; and surely this is Christ's work, "he is our peace" (saith the apostle) that is, the author of our peace; he purchased our peace, and he maintains our peace with God; to this purpose he sits at God's right hand, to intercede for us, and to maintain the peace and union betwixt God and us; *therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God and through our Lord Jesus Christ.* 2. His work is to maintain intercourse and correspondence; and surely this is Christ's work also. *By him we have an access unto the Father.—In him we have boldness, and access with confidence.* The word [access] doth not only signify coming to God in prayer, but all that resort and communion which we have with God, as united by faith to Christ; according to that, *Christ had once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* This benefit have all believers, in and by Christ; they come to God by him, they have free commerce and intercourse in heaven.—3. His work is to reconcile and take up differences; and this is Christ's work also: *He maketh intercession for transgressors;* he takes up the differences that our transgressions make betwixt God and us.—4. His work is to procure the welfare of the people or state where he negotiates; and this is no less Christ's work, for he seeks the welfare of his people, he sits at God's right hand to intercede for them, and commending their estate to his Father; he makes it his request that his members may have *a continual supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ,* that they may be strengthened in temptations; confirmed in tribulations, delivered from every evil work, enabled to every good duty; and finally preserved to his heavenly kingdom.

2. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting of his wounds, death, and blood, as a public satisfaction for the debt of sin, and as a public price for the purchase of our glory.

We read in the law, that "when the High Priest went within the veil, he took the blood of the bullock, and sprinkled it with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward; and before the mercy-seat he sprinkled the blood with his finger seven times." Surely these were "patterns of things to be done in the heavens." Christ that was slain "without the gate," carried his own blood into the holy of holies, or into the heaven of heavens, for, "by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us:" And thither come, he sprinkles it, as it were, upon the mercy-seat (*i. e.*) he applies it, and obtains mercy by it: By the blood of Christ, God's mercy and justice are reconciled in themselves, and reconciled unto us. Christ's blood was shed upon the earth, but Christ's blood is sprinkled now he is in heaven, Heaven is all besprinkled, as the mercy-seat in the holy of holies was: the earth is all besprinkled, as the altar out of the holy of holies was. Heaven and earth are all besprinkled with the blood of Jesus, so that the saints, and the people of God, are no where, but their doors, and their posts, and their houses, (I mean their bodies and souls) are all besprinkled with the blood of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, Why, this is that "blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel." Mark that; Christ's blood hath a tongue; it speaks, it cries, it prays, it intercedes; —*Christ's* blood crieth out, it makes a loud cry, it fills heaven and earth with a noise; yea, the Lord's ears are so filled with it, that it drowns all other sounds, and rings continually in his ears.

I will not say, that the very blood which *Christ* shed on the cross, is now in heaven, nor that it speaks, in heaven; these cryings are merely metaphorical;

yet this I maintain as real and proper, that the power, merit, and virtue of Christ's blood is presented by our Saviour to his Father, both as a public satisfaction for our sins, and as a public price for the purchase of our glory.

3. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting of his will, his request for us, grounded upon the virtue of his glorious merits. "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." This was a piece of Christ's prayer while yet he was on earth; and it is a summary of Christ's intercession, which now he makes for us in his glory; he prayed on earth, as he meant to pray for us when he came to heaven; he hints at this in the beginning of his prayer, for he speaks as if all his work had been done on earth, and as if then he were beginning his work in heaven; "I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thy ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

4. Christ's intercession consists in the presenting our persons, in his own person, to his Father; so that now God cannot look upon the Son, but he must behold the saints in his Son; and this was shadowed out by that act of the High Priest, who went into the holy of holies, with the "names of all the tribes of Israel upon his shoulders, and upon his breasts; and this the apostle speaks yet more plainly; "by him we have an access unto the Father, and in him we have boldness and an access with confidence." We find in the law, "that Aaron was to put two stones upon the shoulders of the Ephod, for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel, and so Aaron was to bear the names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial." And again; "Aaron was to bear the names of the children of Israel in the breast plate of judgment upon his heart

“ when he went into the holy place for a memorial  
 “ before the Lord continually.” Here we find the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraven in stones, which the High Priest usually took with him into the holy place, when he appeared before the Lord; a lively type of Christ’s intercession, who being entered into the heavens, there appears in our behalf, and he presents our persons to his Father, bearing them (as it were) upon his shoulders, and upon his heart; thus Christ takes our persons into heaven, and represents them in his own person to his Father. Secondly, we find in the gospel a gracious promise, that “ by Christ we have access  
 “ unto the Father, and in Christ we have access  
 “ with confidence.” Where the word access, signifies properly a manuduction, or leading by the hand to God; an introduction or bringing into God; alluding to the custom in princes courts, where none may come into the presence chamber, unless they be led, or brought in by some favourite, or courtier there; thus none may have access into the presence of God, unless they are brought in by this favourite of heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ; whose very office it is to bring men unto God; he takes us by the hand, and leads us to the Father.

5. Christ’s intercession consists in the presenting our duties unto God. Not only doth he take our persons, and lead into the presence of God, but together with our persons he presents all our services in his own person. Alas! “ all our righteousness are as filthy rags;” but Christ draws out the evil of duty, and failings in duty, before he will present them unto God. And he observes what good there is in any of our duties or performances, and with that he mingles his own prayers and intercessions, and presents all as one work interwoven or mingled together to God the Father. It is Jesus, and only Jesus, that presents our prayers, and sanctifies our prayers, and mingles our prayers, with his

merits, and so makes them penetrate sweetly before his God.

6. Christ's intercession consists in presenting our plea, or answer in heaven, to all those accusations that are brought in against us. And this I take to be the meaning of the challenge, "who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies, 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." Christ intercedes, and who shall condemn? Christ takes off all accusations; and who shall charge? if sin, or satan, shall dare to accuse, our Jesus is ready at God's right hand, to answer all. And in this respect he is truly called our advocate; "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." We have an advocate that pleads for us, that answers for us; that in a way of equity (grounding all upon his own merits) calls for the pardon of our sins, and for the salvation of our souls.

## SECT. VI.

*How powerful Christ's Intercessions are with God.*

**H**ow powerful is Christ's intercession with God. This will appear if we consider:

1. That Christ is our great High Priest to God; "We have such an High Priest, who is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" now 'twas the way of God to lend his ear in an especial manner to the High Priests; Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day. And all the people said to Samuel

“ pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God.—  
 “ And Samuel said unto the people, God forbid,  
 “ that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to  
 “ pray for you.” Now such an High Priest as this  
 (though with far more eminency) is Christ to God;  
 he intercedes for his people, (*God forbid that he  
 should ever cease to pray for his people*) and he hath  
 God’s ear in an especial manner; if ever God lend  
 his ear to any one, it must needs be to this High  
 Priest, because of his office to intercede betwixt  
 God and his people. Christ stands next to God,  
 as our great High Priest; and therefore he must  
 needs prevail with God in every petition he puts up  
 for us,

2. That Christ was called to this office by God.  
 “ Christ glorified not himself, to be made an High  
 “ Priest;” no, no; but “ he was called of God, as  
 “ Aaron was;” it was God the Father that design-  
 ed him to it, and that furnished him for it, and that  
 invested him in it; *The Lord hath sworn and will  
 not repent, thou art a priest for ever, after the order  
 of Melchizedech.* Now to what purpose should  
 God call him to this office, but especially to inter-  
 cede for them, to whom God was willing to com-  
 municate salvation? Surely the Father is engaged  
 to hear the Son, in that he is an High Priest to God,  
 and called to his office by God.

3. That Christ is God’s Son; and that is more  
 than God’s High Priest; he is his beloved Son, his  
 Son that never gave him the least offence; sure  
 then when he comes and intercedes for a man, he  
 is most like to speed; if a child do but cry, *my  
 Father, my Father,* he may prevail very much,  
 especially with a father that is tender hearted; Jesus  
 Christ is the precious Son of God the Father; and  
 God the Father is a dear and kind-hearted Father,  
 how then should the intercessions of Christ but be  
 most powerful with God? All the relations of son  
 and father in the world, are but a shadow of this  
 relation betwixt God and Christ; it is so near

that though they are two, yet Christ speaks of them as One, *I and my Father are one*; if then the Father should deny him any thing, he should deny himself; or cease to be one with his Son, which can never be. Christ is God's Son, his natural Son, his beloved Son. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*, saith God. O then how prevalent must Christ's intercession be with God!

4. That Christ is God himself; how powerful in this respect, must his intercession be unto the Father; it is true, that Christ is another person, but one and the same God with the Father; Christ is the very essential, substantial representation of God himself; Christ is the very self of God, both God sending and God sent; Christ is the fellow of God. *Awake O sword, against my shepherd and against the man that is my fellow*; nay, Christ is God, and not another God, but one God; *God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made*. Can we imagine now that God himself, should be denied any boon of God himself? If God sometimes spoke to his servants, "Ask of me, command ye me, concerning all the work of mine hands;" will not God much more say to Christ, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession?" We have brought it now so near, that if God be God; and God be omnipotent, that he can do, and can have whatsoever he pleases; then Christ being one God with his Father, he must needs prevail.

## SECT. VII.

*Of the Reason of Christ's Intercession.*

**W**hat are the reasons of this great transaction of Christ's intercession for his people? I answer:

1. It is the Father's will that it should be so; he called Jesus Christ to his office, the command of God is upon Jesus Christ; *Ask what thou wilt for thy redeemed ones, I willingly engage myself to grant, only it is my pleasure thou should ask: As sometimes he said to the house of Israel, I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it; notwithstanding I will yet for this be enquired of, by the house of Israel, to do it for them: so saith God to Christ, I the Lord have spoken and will do it; only my Son, I will be enquired of by thee.* I look upon this as the main reason of Christ's intercession, *Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.*

2. It is Christ's own inclination to do this office. What is the will of the Father, is the will of Christ; so that what the Father would have Christ own, he cannot but own; for the same spirit is in Christ, which is in the Father; and in the self-same measure. As God is captivated with love towards all captives, so am I, saith Christ. As God would have all be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, so would I too, saith Christ; the same bottomless sea of love that fluctuates in my Father's breast, is in my breast; *for I and the Father are one.*

3. It is Christ's love to his saints; he intercedes for them for ever. They are in covenant with Jesus Christ, and therefore in nearer relation than any others; hence it is, that they are called the portion of God, the treasure of God, the peculiar people of God, those that God and Christ satisfy themselves in, those that God and Christ

have set their hearts on, the children of God the Father, the very spouse and bride of God the Son, in some respect nearer than the angels themselves, for the angels are not so married to Christ in a mystical union, as God's people are. Now, is it any wonder, that those who are so very dear to Christ, should be in the prayers of Christ? If they were so much in his heart, that he shed his blood for them, will he not now intercede for them? O yes! to this end he carries them on his breast or heart, as near as may be, that they may be in a continual remembrance before the Lord for ever; his very love compels him to this office, to intercede for them.

4. It is Christ's compassion that causeth intercession. *Christ is such an High Priest, (saith the apostle) as cannot but be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* When he was on earth, he felt our infirmities, frailties, miseries! and as a man that hath felt the stone, or gout, or fever; or especially that hath felt soul troubles, cannot but compassionate those that are in the like condition; so Christ having had the experience of our outward and inward sufferings, cannot but compassionate us; and hence it is (his very compassion is moving) that he intercedes to his Father in our behalf. It is observed that the very office of the High Priest, was to sympathize with the people of God; only in the case of the death of his kindred, he was not as others, to sympathize or mourn; but Jesus Christ goes beyond all the High Priests that ever were before him; he doth fully sympathize with us, not in some, but in all conditions; *In all our afflictions he is afflicted.* I believe Christ hath carried a man's heart up with him to heaven: and though there be no passions in him as he is God; yet the flower, the excellency of all these passions are infinitely in him, as he is God; he striketh, and trieth, and yet he pitieth; when Ephraim bemoaneth himself, God

replies, *Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I speak against him, I do earnestly remember him still, therefore my bowels are troubled for him.* Surely there's a violence of heavenly passion in Christ's Heart, as God-man, which makes him to break out into prayer to God, and into compassions towards men. O that tempted souls would consider this! It may be Christ is giving you a cup of tears and blood to drink, but who knows what bowels, what turning of heart, what motions of compassion are in Jesus Christ all the while? Those who feel the fruit of Christ's intercession, know this; and cannot but subscribe to this truth. O ye of little faith, why do we doubt of Christ's bowels? Is he not our compassionate high priest? he is touched, saith the apostle, with the feeling of infirmities; it is an allusion to the rolled and moved bowels of God, in Jeremiah xxxi. 20. Christ in heaven is burning and flaming in compassion towards his weak ones; and therefore he pleads, intercedes, and prays to God for them.

## CHAP. II.

SECT. I. *Of knowing Jesus as carrying on the great work of our salvation, in his intercession.*

Let us know Jesus carrying on this great work of our salvation, in his Intercession. Ever since his ascension into heaven, he hath been doing this work; it is a work already of above sixteen hundred years; and summer and winter, night and day, Christ hath been still praying, still interceding; Christ's love hath no vacation, no cessation at all: Yea, even now whilst you read this, Christ is acting as an advocate for you, Christ hath your names engraven,

as a seal on his Heart, and standing right opposite to the eye of his Father, the first Opening of the eyelids of God is terminated upon the breast of Jesus Christ; is not this worth the knowledge? O my soul, leave off thy vain studies, if they do not conduce to the right understanding of this, they are not worth the while; what is it for an Aristotle to be praised where he is not, and to be damned where he is? O the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ! Such a knowledge, if true, is no less than saving. Come, study his intercession in all the former particulars; only remember this, that in Christ's intercession are many secrets, which we must never know on this side heaven; O take heed of entering into this labyrinth, without the clue of the word; above all, desire the guidance of the Spirit, to enlighten thy darkness, and whatever thou knowest, know it still for thyself.

## SECT. II.

### *Of considering Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**et us consider Jesus carrying on this work of our salvation, in his intercession; is it not as incense, a sweet odour with God himself? And shall not each thought of it be sweet to us? Come, let us be serious in this duty; and that we may do it thoroughly, let us consider it in these particulars:

1. Consider the nature of Christ's intercession; what is it, but the gracious will of Christ's fervently desiring, that for the virtue of his death and sacrifice thy person and performances might be accepted of God? As Christ on earth gave himself to the death, even to the death of the cross, for the abolition of

sin; so now in heaven he prays the Father, *By his agony and bloody sweat, by his cross and passion, by his death and sacrifice*; that thy sins may be pardoned, thy service accepted, and thy soul saved. This is the will of Christ, even thy justification, sanctification; and salvation; accordingly he represents his will, "Father I will that all those privileges flowing from my death, may be conferred on such a person; such a soul is now considering my intercession, and my will is, that his mediation may find acceptance with God." O what workings would be in thy heart and spirit, if thou didst but consider that Christ even now were speaking his will, that thy person and duty both find acceptance, and be well-pleasing with God!

2. Consider the person that intercedes for thee; it is Christ in both natures; it is thy mediator, one betwixt God and man; in this respect, thou mayest consider him as one indifferent, and equally inclining to either party. *A mediator is not of one*, saith the apostle; Christ indifferently partook of both natures, Godhead and manhood, that so he might be fit to stand in the gap, between his Father and us.

3. Consider the person to whom Christ intercedes; is it not to his Father? Thou art sure to speed well, O my soul, for God is the Father of thy Intercessor. If I had a suit to some majesty, and the prince would but mediate, I might hope to speed; Christ is God's prince, as I may call him, and in respect of us, *the first begotten of many brethren*; and herein is thy rejoicing, that the party offended is Christ's own Father; and fathers cannot be cruel to their own dear children.

4. Consider the persons for whom Christ intercedes; it is for all believers, and in particular for thee. O that ever the world, or flesh, or devil, should steal this mediation out of my heart! O that ever I should forget that Christ is gone to heaven, that he is entered into the Holy of Holies, and that he carries my name into the presence of God the

Father! I speak the same to thee that readest, if thou art a believer, there is no doubt but Christ is speaking to his Father in thy behalf; he can no more forget thee in his intercessions than a mother can forget her suckling child. Look up to Jesus, and never leave looking, until thou spiest thy own name written on his heart.

5. Consider the agreement and difference between Christ's intercessions, and the intercessions of the high priests of old; they did both intercede, but Christ is more faithful than ever high priest was; Christ is more compassionate than ever high priest was; and hence it is that he hath the title of *One of many commiserations*; all is mercy, and love, and sweetness, and more than motherly affection that comes from Christ. O my soul, why should thou say with Israel, *My way is hidden from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over by my God?* As if Jesus Christ had left thee out of the count of his people, and out of the roll of those whom he is to look after. No, no; he is a faithful and merciful priest; far above all the high priests of the Old Testament; and if they were so careful not to leave out of their breast-plate one name of all the twelve tribes; how much more careful is Christ not to leave out thy name in his intercession!

6. Consider the properties of Christ's intercession; is it not heavenly and glorious; effectual and prevailing? O give me the intercession of Christ above all the intercessions of men or angels. I know the saints on earth pray mutually one for another, but they pray not in their own names, or for their own merits, but in the name and for the merits of Jesus Christ! and as for the saints and angels in heaven, Cyprian and Jerom seem to grant, that they pray for the state of the church militant; but if so, they do it only out of charity, as brethren, not of office as mediators; such an intercession as this, so heavenly, so effectual, is proper only for Christ. I would be glad of the prayers of saints up-

on earth ! but above all let me have a property in those prayers and intercessions that are proper only to Christ, such as are heavenly, glorious and effectual.

7. Consider the particulars wherein more especially Christ's intercession consists ; is it not in presenting of his person, blood, and prayers ? Is it not in the presenting of our persons, performances, pleas or answers to the accusations of satan ? Men little think how busy our Mediator, Sponsor, Solicitor, Advocate is now in heaven for us ; men little think that Christ is appearing, and his blood crying, and his prayers are ascending, and his robe of righteousness is covering us, and the iniquity of our holy things : O my soul look up, consider Jesus thy Sav iour in these respects ! I am persuaded if thou didst but know, if thou couldst but see what a deal of work Christ hath in hand, and how he carries it on for thy salvation, it would melt thy heart into tears of joy. O think on it, that Christ and Christ's blood, and Christ's prayers, are all at work ! that Christ pleads thy cause, and perfumes thy duties in this incense ; and takes thy person to God his Father, and cries, *O my Father, be merciful to this sinner, pardon his sins, and save his soul for the sake of Jesus : O blessed mediation ! O blessed is the man, that knows how to meditate on this day and night !*

8. Consider the power of Christ's intercessions with his Father. Is he not to this purpose a Priest to God, and called thereto by God ? Is he not the Son of God, yea God himself ? Is not the Father's heart as much towards us as our salvation, as Christ's own heart ? As sure then as Christ is gone into heaven with thy name engraven on his heart, so sure shalt thou follow him, and be with him where he is.

9. Consider the reasons of Christ's intercession ; many are given, but this may be sufficient, " It is " God's own ordinance ; the very wisdom of God found out this way, that a high-priest should be ap-

pointed, who should die for sinners, and afterward present his death to his Father by way of intercession on their behalf. Now then, if God himself found out this way, and hath said, *This is my pleasure, that Christ my Son shall be a priest, and that he shall offer himself, and present himself, and his offering and his prayer to me for his people*: O my soul dispute not, but rest on this, admire the contrivance of God; say, *O the depth!* question no farther, only meditate and ponder, and consider it, 'till thou feelest Christ's intercession darting its influence and efficacy on thy sin-sick soul.

### SECT. III.

#### *Of Desiring Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**et us desire Jesus carrying on this great work in his intercession. O my soul, rouse up, and set this blessed object before thy face! Take a full view of it, until thy affections begin to be warm, and thou beginnest to cry, *O for my part in Christ's intercession! O I would not be left out of Christ's heavenly prayers for ten thousand worlds!* Come and be serious! the object is admirably precious; long for it, pant after it! God understands the rhetoric of thy breathing, as well as of thy cry. But what is there in Christ's intercession that is so desirable? I answer—

1. In Christ's intercession lies the present transaction of our soul's salvation. Such passages as hitherto we have spoken of, or done and past; the virtue and influence of all these transactions continue; and will continue for ever and ever, but the several actings had their periods; and only Christ's session, and mission of his spirit, and his blessed

intercession both were, and now are the present employment of Jesus Christ. Now he prays, now he presents his person, merits, intercession. This is the present transaction of Jesus Christ, and therefore most desirable; methinks I long to know what Christ is now doing in heaven for my soul; and is it not this, is not all his time spent either in reading pardons, for his redeemed ones, or in presenting petitions for them, and pleading for them? Surely he is still interceding every day, it is his present work for our souls, O desirable work!

2. In this precious transaction lies the application of all Christ's former actings, whether of his habitual righteousness, or of his active and passive obedience. All these passages of Christ's incarnation, conception, birth, life, and death, which more especially we look upon, as the meritorious causes of our salvation, had been nothing to us, if they had not been applied by Christ: Christ purchased Salvation by those acts, but he possessed us of our salvation by this consummate act of his intercession. But if Christ's intercession be the applying cause, if it bring home to my soul all the former transactions of Christ, saying, All these are thine, even thine, O how desirable must this intercession be?

3. In this application lies that communion and fellowship which we have with the father and the Son: "I pray for these, that as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, they also may be one in us. Understand this soberly, we cannot think that there should be that oneness in equality betwixt God and us, as betwixt God and Christ; no, but there is oneness in similitude, even in this life; by virtue of Christ's intercession we have oneness with God and Christ, not only in comforts, but also in graces; I pray you mark this; When I speak of communion with God in this life, I mean especially the communion of grace between God and the soule

on God's part there's a special influence of grace and favour to man ; and on man's part there is a special return of grace and honor to God. Some trembling souls are apt to think, that all communion with God and Christ consists only in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, whereas Christians may as really have communion with God in secret conveyances of grace, inward supports, in the hidden drawings of the soul godward; as in the more open, and comfortable manifestations of God unto the soul; communion with God is a familiar friendship [I speak it in an holy, humble sense]: now do we not as usually go to a friend for advice as for comfort? In a friend's bosom we intrust our sorrows as well as our joys. Suppose a soul even overwhelmed, and ready to break, betaking itself unto God, and venting itself before the Lord; if after the soul hath no more ease, than by the bare lancing of the sore, if God pours in no balm at all, but only gives support; shall we say that this soul in this case hath no communion with God? O yes! that soul lives, the sun shines, though a cloud interposeth; God smiles, though the soul doth not perceive it; thou hast his strengthening presence, if not his shining; now this is the fruit of Christ's blessed intercession; and this is the subject matter of Christ's intercession, "O my Father, that these may be one in us; I in them, and thou in me; I in them by the influence and power of my spirit, and thou in me by the fulness and power of the Godhead." And is not this a most desirable thing?

4. In this communion lies the fruition of Christ in glory, grace brings to glory; if communion here, we shall have communion hereafter; and this also is a part of Christ's prayer and intercession, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." This communion with Christ is above all desirable; the communion which the saints shall have with Christ,

never will wander after any other objects; O the intimacy that will be then betwixt Christ and Christians! O what communication of glory will there be to each other! *These shall walk with me* (saith Christ) *for they are worthy.*

O my soul, if this be the business of Christ's intercession, if all these particulars are contained in the bowels of this one transaction, how is it that thou art not gasping, groaning, sick unto death with the vehement thirst after thy portion of Christ's intercession? If there be such a thing as desire in this heart of mine, O that now it would break out! O that it would vent itself with mighty longings, and infinite aspirings after this blessed object; Lord, I desire, but help thou my faint desires; blow on my dying spark, it is but little; and if I know any thing of my heart I would have it more! O that my spark would flame! Lord, I desire that I might desire; O breathe it into me, and I will desire thee.



#### SECT. IV.

##### *Of Hoping in Jesus in this respect.*

Let us hope in Jesus carrying on this great work of our salyation in his intercession. O my soul, hope in Jesus, but rest not 'till thou canst give a reason of thy hope, 'till thou canst prove that they are the hopes which grace, and not only nature hath wrought; that they are grounded upon scripture promises and sound evidences; that they purify the heart; that the more thou hopest, the less thou sinnest; that they depend upon sure and infallible causes, as on the truth, power, and mercy of God; on the merits, mediation, and intercession of Jesus Christ; is this among the rest the spring

of thy hope? Canst thou follow the stream, 'till it brings thee to this fountain, that now thou canst say, O this intercession is mine!—Come, search, and try; it is worth the pains.

1. If Christ's intercession is thine, then is the Spirit's intercession mine: in this case we need not to ascend up into heaven to learn the truth, rather let us descend into our own hearts, and look whether Christ hath given us of his spirit, which makes us cry unto God with sighs and groans which cannot be uttered; O come and let us ransack our own consciences; let us search whether we feel the spirit of Christ crying in us Abba Father: Certainly these two are as the cause and the effect; Christ's intercession in heaven, and his spirit's intercession are as twins of a birth; or rather Christ's intercession in heaven breeds another intercession in the hearts of his saints. It is the same spirit dwelling in Christ and in all his members, that stirs them to cry, Abba Father. Here then is my argument, if Christ hath put his spirit into thy heart, and if the spirit hath set thine heart on work to make incessant intercessions for thyself, then is Christ's intercession thine. O my soul, hath God sent forth the spirit of his Son into thy heart? Hast thou the indwelling of the spirit; and now by the help of the Spirit canst thou pray with earnestness, confidence, and an holy importunity? Canst thou cry, Abba Father? Canst thou cry, [with earnestness? Father] with confidence? And Abba Father [or Father, Father] with an holy importunity? These are the signs of the spirit's intercession. O that thou wouldst deal faithfully with thyself; canst thou by the help of the Spirit go to thy Father in the name of Christ? As Christ is gone before into the Holy of Holies to intercede; so canst thou with boldness follow after, and enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus? Canst thou say, God hath given me his spirit, and his spirit hath shewn me Christ as my Mediator at the right hand

of God ; and now under the wing of such a Mediator, I can with the spirit's assistance go with boldness to speak any thing in the ears of God ? Surely this is the fruit, the effect of Christ's intercession, and therefore thou mayest comfortably conclude, *Christ's intercession is mine.*

2. If I feel a holy disposition to pray and intercede for others, especially for the distresses of the church of God, then is Christ's intercession mine. We should, as near as we may, in every thing conform to Christ ; and this conformity is an evidence of our interest in Christ : O my soul go down into the inmost closet of thy heart, look what disposition there is in it towards the members of Christ ; and thou mayest conclude, there is in Christ's heart the very same disposition towards thee. Can I think that my narrow, straitened, sinful bowels are larger than those wide, compassionate, tender bowels of Jesus Christ ? As a drop of water is in comparison of the ocean, and as a gravel stone is in comparison of the sand, so is my heart to Christ's, and my love to Christ's, and my bowels to Christ's. Come then, and try by this sign ; *Hereby we know that we are translated from death to life if we love the brethren ; he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death—Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for the brethren.* Is not this plain, if I love the brethren, Christ loveth me, if I feel in my heart an holy disposition to go to God, and to pray, and cry, and intercede for a saint in misery, surely the Lord Jesus hath as much bowels towards me, to go and intercede for me, and to present my prayers unto God the Father ; his intercession is mine.

## SECT. V.

*Of Believing in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us believe in Jesus as carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession: Silence, unbelief! be not tyrannical to thyself, for Christ will not; sin shall do thee no hurt, nor satan, no nor God himself, for Jesus Christ can work him to any thing; if he but open his wounds in heaven, he will so work his Father that thy wounds on earth shall close up presently.

Go to Christ as interceding for his saints; this act of Christ is for the application of all the former acts on Christ's part; and our faith closing with it, is for the application of this and all other the actings of Christ on our part. Now is our faith led up very high; it may at once see earth and heaven; it may see all that Christ hath acted for it here, and all that Christ doth act, and will act in heaven for it hereafter. It is not an ordinary, single, particular act of faith that will come up to this glorious mystery; it is a comprehensive act, it is such an act as puts the soul into a condition of glorious triumph; *And being made perfect*, (saith the apostle) *He became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him*; now therefore lead up thy faith to this blessed object, and thou hast under consideration the whole of Christ's actings in this world from first to last; in respect of meditation this is the upshot, the period, the consummation, the perfection of all.

In going to Christ as interceding for us, look to the purpose, end, intent, and design of Christ's intercession: Now the ends of Christ in the reference unto us, are these:—

1. That we might have fellowship with the Father, and the Son ; *I pray for these, that as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, they also may be one in us.*

2. That we might have the gift of the Holy Ghost ; *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the spirit of truth.*

3. That we might have protection against all evil ; *I pray (saith Christ) that thou wouldst keep them from evil.*

4. That we might have free access to the throne of grace ; so the apostle, *Seeing then we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession and come boldly to the throne of grace. And again, Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in a full assurance of faith.*

5. That we might have the inward intercession of the spirit, which is, as it were, the echo of Christ's intercession in our heart : *The spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* It is the same spirit groans in us which more distinctly in Christ prayeth for us. *These things I speak in the world (saith our Saviour) that they might have my joy filled in themselves.* I have made this prayer in the world, and left a record and pattern of it in the church, that they feeling the same heavenly desires kindled in their own hearts, may be comforted in the workings of that spirit of prayer in them, which testifieth to their souls the quality of that intercession which I made for them in the heaven of heavens ; certainly there is a dependence of our prayer on Christ's prayer : As it is with the sun, though the body of it abide in the heavens, yet the beams of it descend to us here on earth : so the intercession of Christ, though it is

made in heaven ; yet the groans and desires of the touched heart, as the beams thereof are on earth.

6. That we might have the sanctification of our services : of this the Levitical priests were a type. *For they bear the iniquity of the holy things of the children of Israel, that they might be accepted ; and he is the angel of the covenant, who hath a golden censer to offer up the prayers of the saints.* Some observe a threefold evil in man, of every of which we are delivered by Christ : First, an evil condition under the guilt of sin : Secondly, an evil nature under the corruption of sin : Thirdly, an evil in all our services by the adherence of sin ; for that which toucheth an unclean thing, is made unclean thereby. Now Christ by his righteousness and merits justifieth our persons from the guilt of sin ; and Christ by his grace and spirit doth purify our faculties from the corruption of sin ; and Christ by his incense and intercession doth cleanse our services from the adherence of sin ; so that in them the Lord smells a sweet savour ; and both we and our services find acceptance with God.

7. That we might have the pardon of all sin. It is by virtue of Christ's intercession that a believer sinning of infirmity, hath a pardon of course, for Christ is his advocate to plead his case ; or if he sin of presumption, and the Lord give repentance, he hath a pardon at the hands of God the Father by virtue of this intercession.

8. That we might have the salvation of our souls in the day of Jesus ; *Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they might behold my glory.* O to see the Lord Jesus Christ glorified, must be a glorious thing ; what is it to see his glory, but to behold the lustre of his divinity thro' his humanity ? We may be sure God shall appear through the humanity of Christ, as much as is possible for the divinity to appear in a creature ; and therefore men and angels will be continually viewing of Christ. I know

there is another glory of Christ which the Father will put upon him; *Because he humbled himself, therefore God will exalt him, and give him a name above every name;* and we shall see him in this glory. O the ravishing sight! Christ is so lovely, that the saints cannot leave, but they must, and will *follow the lamb wheresoever he goes*; there shall be no moment to all eternity, wherein Christ shall be out of sight to so many thousand thousands of saints. Is not this a blessed end of Christ's intercession? Hither tend all the rest; and for this above all Christ intercedes to his Father, *Father, I would have my saints with me. O that all the daughters of Zion may behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith thou hast crowned him in the days of his espousals and in the day of the gladness of his heart.*

Let our faith then act dependantly upon the intercession of Christ, in these very ends; this is the very nature of faith, it relies upon God in Christ, and upon all the promises of Christ: So then is there a desirable end in Christ's intercession which we aim at? O let us act our faith dependantly; let us rely, stay, or lean upon Christ to that same end! let us cast ourselves upon the very intercession of Jesus Christ: *Saying, O Christ there is enough in thee, and in this intercession of thine, and therefore there will I stick, and abide for ever.*

Faith also must ever and anon be crying, wrestling with God, that virtue may go out of Christ's intercession into our hearts. "I have heard, Lord, that there is an office erected in heaven, that Christ, as priest, should be ever praying and interceding for his people; O that I may feel the efficacy of Christ's intercession! and now in prayer, O that I could feel in this prayer, the warmth, and heat, and spiritual fire, which usually falls down from Christ's intercession into the heart! Lord, warm my spirit in this duty; give me the

" kisses of thy mouth ; O that I may now have  
 " communion with thee, thy spirit upon me, thy  
 " protection over me ! O that my pardon may be  
 " sealed, my grace confirmed, my soul saved in the  
 " day of Jesus !

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## SECT. VI.

### *Of Loving Jesus in that Respect*

**L**et us love Jesus, as carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession. Now two things more especially will excite our love, 1. Christ's love to us, 2. Our propriety in Christ. For the first, many acts of Christ's love have appeared before, and every one is sufficient to draw our love, to him again.

1. In the beginning of time he loved man above all creatures, for after he had made them all, he then spake as he never did before. " Let us make man after our own image, after our likeness, and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over all the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth ;" and though man unmade himself by sins, Christ's love yet was not broke off, but held forth in a promise 'till the day of performance, the " seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."

2. In the fulness of time his love was manifest ; the seed then blossomed, and the birth then came out in an high expression of love ; the love of Christ was born and saw the light. *After that, saith the apostle, the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared.* I shall not need sure to instance in succeeding passages ; so far as we have gone, we have clearly seen Christ's life was a perfect mirror of his love, as there is no beam in the

sun, in which there is no light, so there was no act in the life of Christ, but to a spiritual eye it shines with the light of love.

3. At this time there is a coal of burning love in the breast of Christ : this fire was indeed from everlasting, but the flames are as hot this day as ever ; now is it that Christ loves and lives ; and wherefore lives ? But only to love us, and to intercede for us. Christ makes our salvation his constant calling ; he is ever at work, yesterday and to-day, and for ever : there is not one hour in the day, nor one day in a year, nor year in an age, wherein Christ is not busy with his Father in this heavenly employment of interceding for us. He loved us before he died for us, his love being the cause why he died for us ; and he loves us still, in that now he intercedes for us : It is as much as to say, *Christ hath loved us, and he repents not of his love* : love made him die for us, and if it were to do again, he would die over again. O the love of Christ towards our poor souls ! how many thousands of particulars might I draw out of Scripture, expressing Christ's love to us in this respect ?

2. Another motive of our love to Christ is our propriety in Christ, *Ye are not your own*, said the apostle of us ; *And he is not his own*, may we say of Christ. If any ask how this may be ; I answer, that the soul in loving Christ is not her own, and in regard of loving, Christ is not his own ; every one makes over itself to another ; and propriety or interest to itself on both sides ceaseth : *My beloved is mine and I am his*, saith the spouse ; not as if Christ should leave off to be his own, or to be a free God, when he becometh ours ; no, but he so demeans himself, in respect of love, as if he were not his own ; he putteth on such relations, and assumes such offices of engagement, as if he were all for us, and nothing for himself ; thus he is called a saviour, a redeemer, a king, a priest, a prophet, a friend, a

guide, an head, an husband, a leader, ransomer, intercessor ; and what not of this nature ?

O my soul, come hither, if thou hadst as many hearts in one, as there are men and angels in heaven and earth, all these would be too little for Jesus Christ : Only go as far as thou canst, and love him with that heart thou hast, yea love him with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy might ; and as Christ in loving thee, is not his own, so let thy soul in loving Christ be not her own ; come love thy Christ, and not thyself ; possess thy Christ, and not thyself ; enjoy thy Christ, and not thyself ; live in thy Christ, and not in thyself ; solace thyself in Jesus Christ, not in thyself ; say with the apostle, “ I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet “ not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Certainly, if ever thou comest to love Christ truly, thou canst not but deny thyself and all created lovers. This love will screw up thy soul so high above the world, and above thy flesh, and above thy life, and above all other lovers, that nothing on this side Christ, whether in heaven or earth, will come in competition with him. O for a soul filled with the fulness of God ! O for a soul stretched out to its widest capacity for the entertainment of God ! O my soul that thou wert but “ able to comprehend with all “ the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and “ depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ “ that passeth knowledge !

## SECT. VII.

### *Of Joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**et us joy in Jesus, as carrying on this great work of our salvation in his intercession.

O I am much opposed [says one] *Dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me*; they persecute, reproach, revile, so that I am killed all the day long—And what then? What matters opposition of men, so long as Christ doth intercede for thee in heaven? And tell me, hast thou no experience of this truth? Doth not relief come in strangely now and then? Why, write upon the forehead of such favours, *I have a merciful, and compassionate mediator in heaven.*

O I am much opposed [says another] that I cannot pray; alas! my prayers are dull, weak, and dry, and without spirit and life. If so, be humbled for it; and yet now this, that when thou canst not pray, Christ prays for thee, and he prays that thou mayest pray: And tell me, hast thou no experience of this truth; hath not sometimes thy spirit been enlarged in prayer? Hast thou not sometimes felt thy heart warmed? Hast thou not sometimes in prayer been lifted up above thyself, and above the world? Conclude then, my intercessor above hath sent me this gift; it is not I, but Christ's intercession, that by a secret operation hath given me the spirit to help mine infirmity; these are the intercessions of the spirit of Christ, and they are the very echo of the intercession of Christ in his own person.

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## SECT. VIII.

*Of Praying to, and Praising Jesus in  
that Respect.*

**L**et us pray, and praise our Jesus in that respect.

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1. Let us pray or sue our interest in this intercession: call on Jesus, or on God the Father, in and through Jesus, that Christ's intercessions may be ours, and that he should make it out to us in a way of assurance every day more and more.

2. Let us praise, let us bless God and Christ for every transaction in heaven for us. Heaven is full of his praises; why should not earth ring with the sound thereof? *Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name.*

## SECT. IX.

### *Of Conforming to Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**et us conform to Jesus in respect of his intercession. I cannot think but in every action of Christ there is something imitable of us. As to the present, I shall instance only in these particulars.

1. Christ appears in heaven for us; let us appear on earth for him. Is there not equity, as well as conformity to this duty? O my soul consider, what Christ is doing, consider wherein the intercession of Jesus Christ consists! is not this the first part of it? He appears in heaven before saints and angels, and before God and his Father in thy behalf; and art thou afraid of worms, mortals, dust and ashes, in his cause, or for his truth? shall Jesus Christ own thee in heaven? and wilt thou not own Jesus Christ here in this world? O what a mighty engagement is here to stand to Christ, and to appear for Christ, and to own his cause in these backsliding times; in that Christ who sits at the right hand of God, is ready to appear in person for us, both as a mediator, sponsor, solicitor, advocate, and ambassador?

2. Christ spends all his time for us and our salvation, let us spend all our time for him, and in his service. The apostle tells us, that "he ever lives to make intercession for us;" it is not for a day, or a month, or a year, but he lives for ever upon this account; for ever (*i. e.*) during all the time from his ascension, until the end of the world, he is still interceding; surely people do not think what Christ is doing in heaven for them. If you would but seriously consider, that Christ, without any weariness or intermission, is ever interceding; how would this engage you in his service? Ah Christians! if you should continue praying, praising, reading, hearing all this day without any intermission; how would you say, "When will the day be done, when will the sabbath be at an end?" Well, but Christ is not weary of serving you: When you have done your duties, he takes your persons, and duties, and presents all unto his Father; he prays over your prayers, continues praying, and saying, "Lord accept of a short, poor, imperfect service done on earth, for my sake, and for those merits sake, which I am continually presenting to thee in heaven." O why do we not come up to this conformity? O why are we so un-conformable to the actings of Christ? We cannot but judge this to be most equal; that, "they who live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who ever lives to make intercession for them."

3. He prays for us, and for all believers, to his Father. Let us pray for ourselves, and for all our brethren, and for all sorts of men, though they be our enemies, for we were no better to Jesus Christ. "Learn of me," saith Christ, and so far as he is imitable let us follow him. Doth Christ pray? Let us pray. Doth he pray for us and others? Let us pray for ourselves, and then let us pray one for another.

4. Christ takes our prayers, and mingles them

with his own prayers, intercessions, incense, and so presents, all as his own work unto God the Father. O let this be our care, to put up all our prayers to God in the name of Christ; and to stay ourselves upon the intercessions of Christ: When all is done, let us beg the acceptance of our prayers, not for our sakes, but for his sake, who perfumes our prayers, by interweaving them with his prayers. Many a poor soul is afraid to pray to God, for want of the due consideration of this conformity. Such a one goes to prayer, and he looks upon it as it lies upon his own heart, or as it comes from himself, and then he cries, "O what a poor, weak, sinful, prayer is this?" Well, but if this weak prayer of thine be once mingled with the glorious and heavenly prayer of Jesus Christ, the weakness will soon vanish, and thy prayers will find acceptance with God. O conform to Christ in this point; he will not present thy prayers to God, but he will first mingle it with his own prayers; no more shouldest thou present a prayer to God but in Christ's name, considering that all thy prayers find acceptance in, for and through the intercession of Jesus Christ.

5. Christ by his intercession, "saves us to the uttermost." O let us serve him to the uttermost; surely all we can do is too little to answer so great a love as this. O Christians! why should it be esteemed a needless thing to be rigorously and exactly circumspect? Christ payed our debt to the uttermost farthing, drank every drop of our bitter cup, and now presents all unto his Father, by way of intercession, and saves us "thoroughly to the uttermost; why should not we labour to perform his service, and to fulfil every one of his commandments, thoroughly and to the uttermost also? certainly there is a duty which concerns us, to be "hot in religion," Rev. iii. 16. To be "zealous of good works," Tit. ii. 14. To "walk circumspectly," or precisely, as the word carries it, Ephes. v. 15. To be "servent in spirit," Rom.

xii. 11. To "strive to enter in at the strait gate, Luke xiii. 24. To "contend for the faith," Jude iii. With an holy kind of "violence to lay hold " upon the kingdom of heaven," Mat. xi. 12. O that ever men should be afraid of taking God's part too much, or fighting too valiantly under the colours of Christ; of being too busy about salvation, of being singular, as they call it, in the duties of religion; I observe, men are content to be singular in any thing, save in the service of God; you desire and labour to be singularly rich, and singularly wise, and singularly proud; but you can by no means endure singularity, or eminency in zeal, and the Lord's service; in matters of religion you are resolved to do as the most do, though in so doing you damn your own souls! O come and learn this lesson of Christ, he saves us to the uttermost; let us serve him with all our hearts, and with all our souls, and with all our might.

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## LOOKING UNTO JESUS,

IN HIS SECOND COMING.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I.

*Of Christ's preparing for Judgment,*

**A**nd is not all done yet? O the unwearied patience, love, mercy, free grace of Christ in carrying

on this mighty work ! He begun it before the beginning of the world ; since then he hath been labouring in it about six thousand years ; and now the time of restoring being come, he will perfect what he hath begun. In this also, as in the former, we shall first lay down the object, and then give directions how to look upon it.

The object is Jesus, carrying on that great work of our salvation, in his coming again to earth ; and taking up with him all his saints into heaven. In this work I shall set before you these particulars :

1. Christ's preparing for judgment,
2. Christ's coming to judgment.
3. Christ's summons of the elect, to come under judgment.
4. Christ and the saints meeting at the judgment-day.
5. Christ's sentencing or judging the saints for eternal glory,
6. Christ and the saints judging the rest of the world.
7. Christ and his saints going up into heaven ; when shall be the end of this world.
8. Christ surrendering up the kingdom to God, even the Father.
9. Christ's subjection to the Father, that God may be all in all.
10. Christ (notwithstanding this) being all in all to his blessed, saved, redeemed saints, to all eternity.

1. For his preparing for judgment. When once the number of his elect shall be completed, and the work of his intercession shall be at an end, then immediately will follow these particulars :

(1.) "A great voice comes out of the temple of heaven, saying, it is done." It comes out of the temple of heaven, that we may understand it to be the voice of Christ. And if this speech be directed unto God, it is as if Christ had bespoke his

Father thus: "And now, O my Father, I have done; that office of the priesthood which we erected, is at an end; I have sat at thy right hand, interceding for my saints ever since my ascension; and now their number is completed, I am resolved to unpin the fabric of the world, and take it down; it stands but for their sakes, and therefore now let the seventh angel blow his trumpet, that the mystery of God may be finished. *I swear by him that lives for ever, that time shall be no longer.*"

(2.) No sooner is this said, but "the seventh angel sounds." This seventh angel, saith Pareus, is the arch-angel that proclaims Christ's coming, with a great and mighty shout; "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God." The Lord shall descend with a shout! but before he descends, and I believe upon the very discovery of his coming down, there will be a shout in heaven; for so it follows, "And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven; the voices of blessed souls, and blessed saints, and blessed angels in heaven;" no sooner Christ bids the angel sound, that is, summon all souls, and all angels, and bid them wait on me; now I resolve to go down, and to judge the world. No sooner, I say, Christ bids the angel sound, but presently at the joy of his command, all the voices in heaven gave a shout; this is the long looked for day, the day of perfecting the number of the saints; the day of joining the souls and bodies of the saints together; the day of convening all the families both of saints and angels; the day of bringing up the Bride unto the Lamb, and of completing the marriage solemnity; And therefore no wonder if at this news, great voices and cries (such as are used by mariners, or gatherers of the vintage) were made in heaven. Now they shout and sing a new song, "The kingdoms of this world, are become, the

“ kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.”

(3.) After this shout, “ The four and twenty elders which sit before God on their seats, fall upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, we give thee thanks ; O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come ; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.” By these we understand all God’s saints of the Old and New Testament, comprehended under the twelve patriarchs, and twelve apostles ; first they praise and then they pray. 1. They praise God for taking to himself his own power. 2. They pray Christ to go to judgment.

4. God the Father is well pleased with Christ’s purpose of judging the world. “ The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” I know these words were spoke to Christ at his ascension into heaven, yet that hinders not, but that now God speaks them again to Christ ; for “ as yet” saith the apostle, “ we see not all things put under him ;” and God’s purpose was that Christ should rule, until he had put all things in subjection under his feet. There is a difference bewixt Christ’s reign before, and his present reign ; at the day of judgment Christ hath a double throne, wherein he sits and reigns, “ To him that overcomes, will I give to sit with me in my throne, I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” That kingly rule that Christ hath from his ascension, is upon his Father’s throne, but the kingdom that Christ shall have at the day of judgment and ever after is the joint reign of him with the Father ; he shall have a throne himself, and the saints shall sit with him in his own throne. And now saith the Father, “ Sit thou at my right hand,” sit on thy own throne by me ; go on to judge the nations, I will not judge them, but only in thee, and by thee ; “ Lo I have committed all judgment unto the Son,”

and do thou judge them, until thou hast rewarded thy friends, and made thine enemies thy foot-stool.

Christians, I cannot but wonder at this joy in heaven, and that we have so little of this on earth ; we say with cold lips, and frozen hearts, *Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven ;* but if our prayers were real and fervent, if we could but imitate those heavenly citizens, what longings would be in our hearts after Christ's coming ? How should we rejoice at the very thoughts thereof ? Christ comforting his disciples in respect thereof, speaks these words, *When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.* The fulness of our redemption is a ground of consolation ; all the spirits above are sensible of this ; God, and Christ, and the angels and saints rejoice. *The Spirit and the Bride say, Come ;* and Christ himself saith, *Surely I come quickly ; O let us say Amen to it ; even so come, Lord Jesus.*

## SECT. II.

### *Of Christ coming to Judgment.*

**N**O sooner is Christ prepared, and all in readiness, but he descends from his throne to the judgment-seat. In this passage I shall observe these particulars :

1. He descends with his train. He comes with his royal attendants out of heaven. " Behold the Lord comes with mighty angels. Behold the Lord comes with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment unto all." Certainly a numberless number shall wait upon him. Daniel tells us of a thousand thousand, that this day minister

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unto Christ; "A thousand ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." Or, if heaven have more, I believe heaven will empty itself of all the saints and all the angels; not one spirit shall stay when Christ descends: "The Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him." O what a glorious day will this be! If one sun make the morning sky so glorious, what a glorious morning will that be, when so many thousands of suns shall shine over our heads, the glorious body of Christ surpassing them all in glory? Here's a new heaven of suns and stars, such as this nether world never saw, "Lo the sun of righteousness with all his morning stars singing and shouting for joy." Heaven now empties itself of all its created citizens, and cleaves asunder to make way for Christ and all his train.

2. In his descent through the heavens, he shakes the heavens. *And the powers of heaven shall be shaken.* The whole frame of heaven, the mighty bodies thereof, most mighty in their substance, motion, and operation, shall be shaken. *At his nod the pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished.* As yet they are subject to vanity, and therefore 'tis no wonder, if at the coming of Christ they tremble. In this shaking, the evangelist adds, that the glorious lights of heaven shall be altered, *The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall.* The coming of Christ shall bring with him such a light, that the splendor of the sun and moon shall be obscured.

3. As he passes through the elementary world, a fire doth usher him. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.—Behold the Lord will come with fire and with his chariots like a whirlwind.—And the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire." In which respect,

Daniel saw " his throne like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire ; a fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him." And at last this fire shall have that effect, that the very " elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." O Christians! What cause have we to make the apostle's use of this point, " Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? Looking for, and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat."

He descends lower and lower, 'till he is inwrapt with clouds. " Hereafter shall you see the Son of Man, sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." When he went up into heaven, it is said that " a cloud received him out of their sight ;" and the angels then said, " Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up into heaven, shall so come, in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven." He went up in clouds, and he shall come down in clouds. " I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven." Here is the first sight of Christ, to men on the earth ; when once he is come down into the clouds, then shall they lift up their eyes, and have a full view of Jesus Christ ; a cloud first received him out of their sight ; and a cloud now discovers him to their sight ; " then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Is it not plain that the first appearing, and sight of Christ at his second coming from heaven, is in the midst of clouds? " Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." Shall

not we at the first view of him in his clouds, cry out, O yonder is he, whose blood redeemed us, whose spirit cleansed us, whose prayers prevail for us, whose law did govern us: Yonder comes he in whom we trusted, and now we see he hath not deceived our trust: Yonder is he for whom we waited long, and now we see we have not waited in vain.

I verily believe, thus it will be with us one day; we shall have comfort then. O let us comfort ourselves with these words; and ever and anon cry, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! make haste, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountain of spices.

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### SECT. III.

#### *Of Christ's summoning of the Elect to come under Judgment.*

**N**o sooner is he in the clouds, but "he sends his holy angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heaven to another."

1. "He shall send his angels." This was their office from their first creation; they were still sent of God this way, and that way; and indeed herein is one difference betwixt Christ and the angels, he was to sit at God's right hand, but they were sent abroad, to minister to the saints and people of God,

2. The commission given, the angels immediately sound the trumpet, so it follows, "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet; some would have it to be a material trumpet, others more probably look upon this as a metaphor? or

a sound formed in the air, like the sound of a trumpet. A voice it is without all controversy, and metaphorically, it may be called a trumpet, both from the clearness and greatness of the sound; so loud shall it be, that it will pierce into the ears of the dead in their graves; "it will shake the world, rend the rocks, break the mountains, dissolve the bonds of death, burst down the gates of hell, and unite all spirits to their own bodies." The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout "with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trumpet of God." In these words is shewed the coming of Christ in three particulars; "with a shout, with a voice, and with a trumpet." It is agreed by most, that the transactions at the giving of the law on mount Sinai, were a representation of the proceedings which shall be at the great day of judgment; now in that transaction we read of a three-fold voice, "The voice of God, the voice of thunder, and the voice of a trumpet. (Exod. xix. 16. compared with Exod. xx. 1.) and accordingly we find the apostle speaking of a three-fold voice, "Of the voice of Christ, of the voice of thunder, and of the voice of trumpet."

1. The Lord himself shall descend "with a shout." Lyra and others think this to be the voice of Christ himself, saying, with a loud voice, *Arise ye dead, and come to judgment.* Thus Jesus cried with a loud voice, *Lazarus come forth*; and with such a voice will he call on the dead at the last day. So much Christ himself hath taught us; "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." The hour is, because by the voice he raised some at his first coming. And the hour is coming, because in the like manner he will raise up all men at the last day. "Marvel not at this," saith Christ, for the hour is coming, in the which "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth." As at the creation of

the world he said, " Let there be light, and there was light ; so at the dissolution of the world, he will say, " Let the dead rise, let the sea give up the dead that are in it, and death and hell deliver up the dead which are in them ;" and it will be so.

2. The Lord shall descend, " with the voice of the arch-angel."

Some argue this arch-angel to be Gabriel, others Raphael, others Michael. The Jews have an ancient tradition, that there are seven principal angels that minister before the throne of God, and therefore called arch-angels. The scriptures seem to speak much that way, calling them, " Seven lamps of fire burning before the throne ; and seven horns, and seven eyes of the lamb ; and the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth ; and seven eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth ;" and yet more plainly, " seven angels that stand before God." Now which of these seven is the arch-angel here spoken of, is hard to determine ; only probably it is, that all the arch-angels, and all the angels, are hereby understood, as comprehended under that one.

But what is this voice of the arch-angel ? I conceive that thereby we are to understand thunder. Here is a manifest allusion to the proceedings at the giving of the law ; now the voice there mentioned, besides the voice of God and the voice of a trumpet, is the voice of thunder ; " And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, there were thunders."

2. The Lord shall descend, " with the trumpet of God." Such a voice was used also at the giving of the law, and so it will be now, when men are called to account for the keeping or breaking of it. For the understanding of this, our last translation tells us, that " Christ shall send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet ; in the margin of our translation it is read, that " Christ shall send his

“ angels with a trumpet, and a great voice ;” that is, “ with a great voice, like the voice of a trumpet.”

But why is this sound as of a trumpet, called “ the trumpet of God ?” I answer, for the greatness of it ; for it is usual in the Hebrew language, for the setting forth of the greatness of a thing, to add the name of God to the word, whereby the thing is signified ; as Gen. xxiii. “ A Prince of God,” that is, a mighty Prince, Gen. xxx. 8. “ With the “ wrestlings of God,” that is, with great wrestlings, Psal. xxxvi. 6. “ Mountains of God,” that is, great mountains, Psal. lxxx. 10. “ Cedars of God,” that is, very high cedars. So here, “ the trump of “ God,” that is, a very great sound, like the sound of a trumpet. It is said in the law that there were *Thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount ; and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that were in the camp trembled ;* and if there was trembling at the giving the law, O what trembling will be at the general as- size, when sinners shall be condemned for breaking of it ?

3. No sooner is the shout made, but the saints arise ; it is true, the saints that are alive need no resurrection, but upon them will this trumpet have its effect. Something like death shall seize upon them, and they shall be changed. The order of this is given in by the apostle from the Lord ; *This we say unto you by the word of our Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep, for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven in a shout ; with the voice of an arch-angel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first ; then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up, together with them, in the clouds.* The first that shall be called, are the saints that sleep, and then the saints that are alive. O what a day will this be ? What a strange sight to see all the dead, ever since the beginning of the world, rise out

of their graves? The bodies of saints "were sown  
 " in corruption, but they are raised in incorruption;  
 " they were sown in dishonour, but raised in glory;  
 " they were sown in weakness, but raised in power;  
 " they were sown natural bodies, but raised spiri-  
 " tual bodies."

4. No sooner are the saints raised, and their souls and bodies re-united with excellent majesty, but all the elect of God, from first to last, are gathered together from the most hidden, inward, secret bosom of the earth, all shall be gathered; howsoever their dust may be scattered into a thousand thousand parts, yet the power of Christ shall restore all those dusts, and bring them together into their several compacted bodies.

The elect must resort to Christ wheresoever he is; and the apostle is express that Christ "is in the  
 " air," and "in the clouds:" And therefore thither must the elect be gathered; they shall be caught up by the holy angels into the clouds, "to meet  
 " the Lord in the air."

Is it possible that such a meditation should pass without some tincture on our spirits? If my ears shall hear that sound, and if my eyes shall see these sights, is it not time for me to lay these things to heart, that I may be found faithful and well-doing? As sure as I have this book in my hand, I must be one of those that shall hear the sound of the trumpet, and away I must from the mouth of my grave, wherever I shall be buried, to the cloud where Christ doth sit; how would I rise? O my God! set this home on my soul! O where is my lamp? And where is my oil? Are all ready, and am I ready and prepared to meet the Lord in the air?

## SECT. IV.

*Of Christ and the Saints meeting at the  
Judgment Day.*

**N**o sooner are the saints lifted up, and set before the judge, but these things follow:—

1. They admire the infinite glory, and beauty, and dignity, and excellency that is in Christ. So the apostle, *When he shall come, he shall be glorified in his saints, and shall be admired in all them that believe.* All that believe shall break out into admiration of Jesus Christ; they shall at the first sight observe such an excellency in Jesus Christ, as they shall be infinitely taken with it; here we speak of Christ, and in speaking we admire; but how will they admire, when they shall not only speak or hear, but see and behold him, who is the *express image of God, and the brightness of his Father's glory?*

2. They adore and magnify the grace and glory of Jesus Christ; as it is said of the twenty-four elders, that *they fell down before him that sat on the throne, and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* So all the saints, now advanced to stand before the throne, fall down before Christ and worship him that lives for ever, shouting and singing about Jesus Christ, and setting out his glory, grace, and goodness. *After this I beheld (saith John) and lo a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues,*

*stood before the Lamb—and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb; and all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God saying, Amen; blessing and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

3. Christ sets them on his right hand; *Upon thy right hand doth stand the queen in gold of Ophir.* When he himself ascended up into heaven, then said the Father to him, *Son, sit thou down at my right hand;* and no sooner the saints are ascended up to Christ, but he speaks the same to them, *Sit down at my right hand;* Christ entertains them, as God the Father entertained him; he at the right hand of God, and they at the right hand of Christ. The Lord now puts upon his saints heaven's glory; he adorns them with all his ornaments for the marriage-day, and indeed here is the beginning of the solemnity of the marriage of the Lamb; not but that the contract was before, but the solemnity was reserved for this day, and all the glory of this day is for nothing else but to set out the solemnity of the marriage.

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## SECT. V.

### *Of Christ's sentencing his Saints.*

**N**O sooner are they set on his right hand, but he prepares for sentence.

1. The book must be opened. “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the

“ books were opened, and another was opened which “ is the book of life.” It is spoken after the manner of men, in whose public judgment are produced all the writings of the process, informations, depositions of witnesses, to show that all actions, even the most secret ones, shall then be rehearsed and made manifest. The books of the Old and New Testament, wherein all things either to be done, or omitted, are prescribed by God. And the books of our consciences, which now are shut up, and concealed from men; but then shall be made manifest to all the world. Likewise, another book, which is “ the book of life:” This book contains in it, the names of all that are saved from first to last.

2. All the actions, demeanours, graces, duties, and (it may be) sins of saints, shall be produced and laid open; the Holy Ghost tells us, that “ the dead were judged out of those things, which “ were written in the book.” It appears hence, that not only names, but things were written, and these things were produced, and accordingly they were judged.

Then shall the king say to them on his right hand, “ Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the “ kingdom prepared for you from the foundation “ of the world.” Every word here is full of life and joy; 1. *Come*. This is the king’s invitation of his saints to his court; he hath summoned them before to his presence, and now they are about him, they must come nearer yet they must go with him into his presence chamber. 2. *Come ye blessed of my Father*; Christ blessed them when he went up to heaven, and whilst yet on earth he pronounced them blessed many a time; but now he calls them *the blessed of his Father*; it is the Father’s will as well as Christ’s, that they should be blessed, *Ye blessed of my Father*. 3. *Inherit the kingdom*] Christ had told them before, “ *It is your Father’s “ pleasure to give you the kingdom;*” but then they

were only servants, or as children under age, now they are heirs, "heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ;" and therefore they must have the inheritance in possession; they must all be kings. This world is the anointing, the setting of the crown upon the heads of the saints; "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not for me only, but unto them also that love his appearing." 4. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you. In the beginning God created heaven; his first work was to make heaven for himself and his saints to dwell in; he prepared it for them, and then he prepared them for it: but why for them? Were not angels the first creatures that possessed it? Nay, were they not created in it, or together with it? Yes, but yet the angels are not properly the heirs, sons, members, spouse of God and Christ, as the saints are; the angels are but ministering spirits, and the servants of the bridegroom; but the saints are the bride himself, heirs, and co-heirs with Christ, as the saints are. 5. Prepared for you from the foundation of the world. This was the great design of God and Christ from all eternity.

## SECT. VI.

### *Of Christ and his Saints Judging the Rest of the World.*

**N**O sooner shall the saints be acquitted, anointed, crowned; but presently they must be enthroned, and sit with Jesus Christ to judge the world.

1. As Christ is on a throne, so must the elect be set on thrones; "To him that overcometh will I

“ grant to sit with me on my throne.” Thrones are for kings and judges ; and in that Christ hath now lifted up his saints to this condition, he will have them sit with him as so many judges, and as so many kings ; or if it be more honour to have thrones for themselves than to sit with Christ on his throne, John in his vision saw many thrones ; *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.*

2. The goats on the left hand shall then be called to receive their doom. Now shall their hearts fail them for fear ; now shall they seek death (O how gladly would they die again !) but shall not find it ; now they shall cry to rocks and mountains, *Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb ;* but all in vain ; the command is out, angels and devils will force them to the bar, for the Lord hath spoken it ; *Those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither.*

2. They shall look on Christ, and his saints, now sitting on their thrones, as prisoners that stand at the bar in the face of the judge ; so must these reprobates look the judge and all his assessors in the face.

1. For the judge, they shall look on him, *Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.* And this very sight will be as convincing as if they heard Christ say, “ Thou art the man that didst murder me, “ thou art the man that hast pierced me ; this “ wound, this scar, and this print of the nails in “ my hands and feet, were thy doings, in sinning “ against me. I am he whom you did crucify “ afresh ; I am he whose person you despised, “ whose commands you disobeyed, whose minis- “ ters you abused ; whose servants you hated, whose “ offers you rejected ; and of whom you said,

“ there is no beauty in him that we should desire  
 “ him.”

2. For the saints, they shall look on them. In the apocriphal book there is a plain description of this: “ Then shall the righteous man stand in great  
 “ boldness before the face of such as have afflicted  
 “ him, and made no account of his labours; and  
 “ when they see it they shall be troubled with terrible  
 “ fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness  
 “ of his salvation, so far beyond all that they looked  
 “ for; and they repenting and groaning for anguish  
 “ of spirit, shall say within themselves, This  
 “ is he whom we had sometimes in a derision, and  
 “ a proverb of reproach; we fools accounted his  
 “ life madness, and his end to be without honour;  
 “ how is he numbered among the children  
 “ of God, and his lot is amongst the saints!”  
 Here is a sight that will trouble and amaze the wicked, that those who sometimes were their footstools should now be on thrones; that poor Lazarus, who lay at the gate of that rich man, should now shine like a star near the sun of righteousness; that they who were reproached, reviled, massacred, murdered by them, should now be their judges, joining with Jesus Christ to sentence them to hell.

4. A particular, strict account shall be then required and given,

1. Of sins: *Come, (will Christ say) now confess all your sins before all the world;* time was that you concealed your sins, but now every sin shall be laid open before God, angels, and men; and now is the book of their consciences opened, wherein appear all their sins, original and actual; of omission and commission. O the numberless number of evil thoughts, words, and deeds that are now laid open. In the book are not only written all sins done, but all such sins as were intended to be done; all the projects of the heart, though never acted, those very thoughts, secrets, purposes, and

projects shall come to light; or if there be any thing more hidden or secret, as the very bent, and frame of your hearts, the very inclinations of your souls to this or that evil, shall then be manifest to all the world. Nay, yet more, such sins, as by the sinners themselves were never taken notice of, either before, or at, or after the commission of them, shall this day come out. Conscience is such a kind of notary, that it keeps records of all acts and deeds, whether you observe them or no; conscience hath the pen of a ready writer, and takes in short-hand from your mouths, as fast as you speak, and from your hearts as fast as you can contrive. O what a day will this be, when not a sin committed by any reprobate from the beginning of the world, but now it shall be rehearsed.

2. As an account of all sins, so an account of all temporal gifts which God hath imparted to reprobates must now be given. Some have the gifts of the world; as riches, honours, places of authority; others have the gifts of the body, as health, strength, beauty, life; others have the gifts of the mind, as understanding, wisdom, learning; now of all these gifts they must give an account. Come, you that are rich (saith Christ) render an account of your stewardship; how have you spent your riches? The like will he say to others according to the talents bestowed on them: You excelled in strength, beauty, health of body, length of days; and now tell me, and publish it to all the world, how were these improved? I believe many a sad answer will be given to Christ of these things.

3. Christ and his saints proceed to sentence, First, Christ the chief judge shall pronounce it, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* Every word breathes out nothing but vengeance and woe; to depart from that glorious presence of Christ were

hell enough, but they must go with a curse; nor only so, but into fire; and that must be everlasting; and therein they shall have no other company, or comforters, but devils, and they insulting over them with hellish spite, and stinging exprobrations.

2. The saints shall judge the very self-same judgment, *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?* That they as well as Christ shall judge the world, is without controversy; *And judgment was given to the saints of the Most High. Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment upon all. Know ye not that we shall judge the angels?* Nor only shall we judge the world, but the God of the world, the principalities and powers that captivate wicked men at their pleasure; even they must be judged by those whom they formerly soiled; so then there is no question but they shall judge.

Only how the saints shall judge together with Christ is a very deep question. For my part I am apt to think, that it shall not be directly known, ere it be seen or done.

O what terror it will be to all wicked men, when not only Christ, but all the saints, shall say of them, *Away with them, let them be damned.* You that are fathers, it may be that your children will thus sentence you. I remember when the Jews told Christ, that *He cast out devils through Belzebub the prince of devils*, he answered, *If I through Belzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges.* They liked well enough of the miracles of their children, but they could not endure them in Christ, and therefore he tells them that their children, whom God had converted, and to whom he had given power to do the same work as he did, even they should be their judges to condemn them.

And so it may be with you, if any of your children be converted to the Lord, and you remain still in a natural estate, your very children shall be your judges, and condemn you to hell.



## S E C T. VII.

*Of Christ and his Saints going up into Heaven, and of the End of this World.*

**N**o sooner are the reprobates gone to their place, but the saints ascend ; now Christ ariseth from his judgment-seat, and with all the glorious company of heaven, marches toward the heaven of heavens. O what a comely march is this ! what songs of triumph are sung ! Christ leads the way, the cherubim attend, the seraphim wait on, angels, arch-angels, principalities, powers, patriarchs, prophets, priests, evangelists, martyrs, and confessors of God's law and gospel, following, attend the judge, and king of glory ; singing with melody, as never ear hath heard, shining with majesty, as never eye hath seen, rejoicing without measure, as never heart conceived. O goodly troop of captains ! each doth bear a palm of victory in his hand, each doth wear a crown of glory upon his head ; the church militant is now triumphant ; with a final overthrow have they conquered devils, death and hell ; and now must they enjoy God, life, and heaven.

No sooner Christ and his company are in heaven, but this whole world is set on fire.

*The heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth*

also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.

Christians! what is the matter that we are so busy about this world? Look about you, not one of these visible objects shall that day remain or have a being; that glorious heaven which rolls over our heads, shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all the hosts shall fall down as a leaf falleth from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree—the heaven shall vanish away like smook. Alas! what do we do toiling all the day (it may be all our life) for a little of this little, almost nothing—earth? you that have an hundred or two hundred, or a thousand acres, if every aere were a kingdom, all will be at last burnt up; so that none shall say that here was Preston, or here was London, or here was England, here was Europe, or the globe of the earth on which man trod; let others boast as they will of their inheritances, but Lord, give me an inheritance above all these visibles, heaven shall remain when earth shall vanish. Here we have no abiding city, but O let us seek one to come, even that which will abide for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## S E C T. VIII.

*Of Christ's Delivering up the Kingdom to God, even the Father.*

**N**o sooner is he in heaven but

1. He presents the elect unto his Father; of this the apostle speaks, *You hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouceable in his sight:*

To this end Christ died that he might wash us and cleanse us by his blood, and then present us without spot unto his Father.

2. He presents all his commissions to his Father. So now he comes with all his commissions in his hand, and he delivers them all up to his Father again. In this case it is with Christ as it is with some general, whom the king sends forth with regal authority to the war, who having subdued the enemy, returns in triumph, and all being finished, makes a surrender of his place; thus Christ having discharged all his offices imposed on him, now the work is finished, leaves his function by delivering up his commissions to his father.

Christ is said to deliver up the kingdom.

1. Because he ceaseth to execute that authority, which nevertheless he hath; as a judge that goeth from the bench is a judge still, although he giveth no judgment, but employeth his time about other occasions.

2. Because the manner of his kingdom after the judgment-day shall be wholly changed; there is no need in heaven of good laws to keep men from starting into wickedness; the orders of this life are changed into a new kind of government, and in that respect he is said to give over the kingdom.

3. He presents unto his Father not only his offices, but Christ himself is presented, and subjected unto God. Christ is considered either as God, or as man, and mediator betwixt God and man, Christ as God hath us subject to him, and is subject to none; but Christ as man and mediator is subject to his father together with us.

In the same way as Christ delivers up the kingdom to the father, is Christ also to be subject to his father; but Christ delivers up his kingdom as man, and as mediator betwixt God and man; in these respects Christ (as we have heard) must reign no more, at that day his mediatorship shall cease and by consequence in respect of his mediatorship, or

in respect of his humanity, he shall that day be subject to his Father. Now it is God reigns over us, but only by Christ as mediator. God's immediate reign we discern not so clearly for the present, but when the end shall come, and Christ shall surcease his office of mediatorship, then shall the glory of Christ's divinity appear more eminently, not only above all creatures but above the brightness of Christ's humanity itself; and in this respect Christ shall then be subject, if not by a new subjection, so as never was before.

O my soul, where wilt thou stand? Or what wilt thou say, when Christ shall take thee by the hand, and bring thee into the presence of his glorious Father; when he shall present thee, and present all his commissions which he received for thee, and present himself unto his Father with thee and all saints, saying, O my Father, here we are all before thy glorious godhead; welcome me, and welcome mine, we all stand here before thy glorious throne, and expect every way as high an entertainment as heaven, or the God of heaven can afford,

S E C T, IX.

*Of Christ's subjection to the Father, that God may be all in all.*

**C**hrist therefore subjects himself unto his Father, that God himself might be all in all; here we enjoy God by means as in the use of the word, and sacraments, but when that kingdom (where these administrations are made use of) shall be deli-

vered up, then shall God himself be all in all, without means, without defect, without end.

In prosecution of this, I shall discuss; 1. The meaning, what it is for God to be all in all; 2. The particulars, wherein more especially is God all in all.

1. For the meaning; it is a periphrasis of our complete enjoyment of God: That God may be all in all, is as much as to say, that we may enjoy God alone to all intents and purposes, neither wanting nor willing any thing besides himself; thus God is to the saints in glory, he is their exceeding great reward; they had need nothing besides himself, their draughts of happiness are taken in immediately from the fountain, and they have as much of the fountain as their souls in their widest capacity can possibly hold.

2. For the particulars wherein more especially is God our all in all? I answer;

1. In our enjoying God immediately; here we enjoy God by means; either he communicates himself unto us, through his creatures or through his ordinances, and hence it is, that we know him but in part, we see him but in a glass darkly; but when he shall be our all in all, we shall see him face to face; we shall then see God as he is, clearly and immediately.

2. It consists in our enjoying God fully. *Now I know in part* (saith the apostle) *but then I shall know, even as I am known*; our enjoyment of God is but here in its infancy, there it will be in its full age; here it is in drops, there it will be in the ocean; here we see the back parts, and we can see no more, but there we shall see his face, not his second face (as some distinguish) which is his grace and favour enjoyed by faith, but his first face, which is his divine essence, enjoyed by sight.

3. It consists in our enjoying God solely. Not as if there were nothing else in heaven but only God;

but that God in heaven shall be all in all, and instead of all: it is God in heaven that makes heaven to be heaven; the saints blessedness, and God's own blessedness doth consist in the enjoyment of God himself; we shall not properly enjoy any thing else but God; and indeed what can we imagine to be in heaven which is not eminently in God himself; If it be greatness, power, glory, victory, or majesty, all these are his; if it be joy, love, peace, or beauty, or any thing amiable or desirable, all these are in him. It is he only that fills the whole capacity of the soul, it is he that so fills it that it can hold no more, it is he only that is the object of love, and therefore he only is properly enjoyed, he only is possessed with full content as portion enough, and as reward enough for the soul for ever.

But shall not the saints have to do with something else in heaven? O yes! I believe there shall be in heaven a communion of the blessed spirits in God, an association of the saints and angels of God: Yet this shall not take away the sole enjoyment of God, that he should not be their all in all. For they shall not mind themselves or their own good or created things, but altogether God; they shall not love them or one another as for themselves, but only for God; here we love God for himself, and it is gracious love; but there we shall love ourselves for God, and 'tis a gracious love; this is to enjoy God solely, and in this respect he is all, and in all; *whom have I in Heaven but Thee?*

## S E C T. X.

*Of Christ's (notwithstanding this) being all in all to his Redeemed, to all Eternity.*

**S**ome may object, if God be all in all, what then becomes of *Christ*? Is not this derogatory to *Jesus Christ*? I answer no, in no wise; for—

1. It is not the Father personally and only, but the Deity essentially and wholly that is our all in all, when we say God is all in all, we do not exclude the Son, and the Holy Ghost for the whole Godhead is all in all to all the saints, as well as the first person in the Trinity; the Father is all, the Son is all, the Holy Ghost is all; and in that *Christ* is God and the Son of God, we may say of *Christ*, that he is all in all; Only the truth of this position is not from the human nature, but from the divine nature of *Jesus Christ*.

2. It is not derogatory to *Christ*, but rather it doth exceedingly advance *Christ*, in the thoughts of all his saints; while it was necessary *Christ*, veiled his Deity, and when his work of mediation is fully finished, *Christ* then shall reveal his Deity to his saints more than ever before. It is true, that God only and God fully, and God immediately is all in all; but doth that hinder that *Jesus Christ* is not also only, fully, and immediately all in all? See how the Scripture joins them together, *I saw no Temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple of it, and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*

Now then, as I have spoken of God, so that I may speak of *Christ*, and conclude all with *Christ*,

I assert this doctrine, *that the glory of Christ which the saints shall behold in Christ to all eternity, is their all in all.* In the discussion of which I shall open these particulars: 1. What is the glory of *Christ*? 2. How the saints shall behold his glory. 3. Wherein is the comprehensiveness of this expression, That the beholding of *Christ* is our all in all.

1. What is the glory of *Christ*? I answer, that the glory of *Christ* is either human or divine.

1. There is an human glory, which in time was more especially conferred upon his manhood:

2. There is an essential or divine glory, which before time and after time, even from everlasting to everlasting issueth from the godhead; I shall speak to both these, that we may rather take a view of *Christ* in those glories (as we are able) wherein he will appear to his saints to all eternity.

1. For his human glory, that is either in regard of his soul, or body; for his soul, *Christ* was from the first instance of his conception full of glory, because even then he received grace, not by measure. It is true, that by the special dispensation of God, the fullness of glory was withheld in the time of his passion, and the redundancy of glory from his soul unto his body was totally deferred until the exaltation of *Christ*; but *Christ* was no sooner exalted, and set on the right hand of God, but immediately the interruption of joy in his soul, and the interception of glory from his soul to his body was altogether removed. Then it was that his soul was filled with all joy which could possibly flow from the sight of an object so infinitely pleasing, as is the essence, majesty, and glory of God. And then it was that his body was replenished with as much glory as was proportionable unto the most vast capacity of any creature. Surely *Christ's* manhood is exalted unto an higher degree of glory than the most glorious saint or angel ever was, or shall

be; principalities, powers, mights, and dominions fall short of his glory.

2. For his essential, divine glory, it is that glory which Christ hath as God: this he never laid aside, but as the sun in a dark gloomy day may not send forth his beams, as Christ the sun of righteousness in the time of his abode upon earth, except a little glimpse only in his transfiguration, did not send forth his glorious beams; but hereafter the body or humanity of Christ shall not hinder the breaking forth of all his divine glory. But what is the essential glory of Christ? I cannot answer; it is a question not to be resolved by all the men in the world; we know little of the glory of saints, how should we know any thing of the essential glory of Christ as God?

2. How shall the saints behold this glory? I answer, as Christ hath a two-fold glory, so there is a two-fold manner of beholding it, that is, ocular and mental.

1. There is an ocular vision, and sight of Christ with our very eyes, *whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold him*; with these eyes in our heads we shall one day behold the human glory of Christ; I doubt not we shall behold the beauty of heaven, the shining bodies of the saints, but above all our very eyes shall delightfully contemplate Christ's glorious body; and indeed this shall drown all other sights.

2. There is a mental vision, a sight of Christ by the eyes of our understandings; and surely this exceeds the former, the eye of the body is only on the body of Christ, but the eye of the soul is on the body and soul, on the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ. This is the very top of heaven, when saints shall be enlightened with a clear and glorious sight of Christ as God; divines usually call it beatifical vision.

3. Wherein is the comprehensiveness of this

expression, that *the beholding of Christ is our all in all*; I answer—

1. It comprehends the immediate seeing and looking upon all that majesty and glory which Jesus Christ hath.

2. It comprehends the enjoyment of Christ in his glory. Surely the saints shall not be mere idle spectators of the glory of Christ, but they shall enjoy him, and be taken into fellowship with him: It was said of Moses, that he did see the land of Canaan: but he was not admitted into it; it is otherwise with the saints, they shall see heaven, and they shall enter into heaven, *Come thou faithful servant, and enter into thy master's joy*; not only behold it, but enter into it; they must behold Christ, and take possession of Christ, and enjoy him as their own. In this respect more especially is Christ our all in all. He is all in himself, and if we enjoy him, he is all in all unto us.



## CHAP. II.



### SECT. I.

*Of Knowing Jesus as carrying on the great Work of our Salvation in his Second Coming.*

**L**et us know Jesus, carrying on the saints' salvation in his second coming and taking them to heaven. Many excellent things are in this transaction; is it not of high concernment that he that now sits at God's right hand interceding for us, should thence come

again to judge the world, and after judgment take up the saints with him into glory? Cast thyself at the feet of Christ, and cry out, "O the depth of glory and majesty, and goodness, and grace in thee! O the riches of love, thou shouldst let out thyself in these admirable dispensations! Come, be exact in this study; gather up all the crumbs and filings of this gold; the least beams of the glory of Christ (especially as it shines and glitters at his second coming) having so much light, and love, and splendour in them! every part of this knowledge will be of special use and worth, yea the low and imperfect knowledge of this mystery, of infinite more value than the high and perfect knowledge of ten thousand things besides.

## SECT. II.

### *Of Considering in Jesus in that Respect.*

Let us consider Jesus, carrying on this great work of our salvation in his second coming. It is not enough to know, but we must meditate and seriously consider of it. When the understanding works seriously and spiritually, it will fetch things into sight, hold them there, and fasten upon them; so a man eyes Christ, 'till he have more of Christ, more of his presence, of his light, of his favour, and of his image. O let this be our work; let us consider Jesus in reference to his second coming to judgment. And that we may do it in order—

1. Consider Christ's preparing for judgment; realize it as if thou sawest or heardst the same; no sooner the time determined which God hath appointed, but Christ commands, "Make ready ye

angels, souls that now are with me; it is the Father's pleasure, and it is my pleasure to go down into the nether world, and to call before me all the men and women that ever lived in it; there will I pass my doom upon all flesh, and reward every one according to his works." O what a shout may I imagine in heaven at this news! What joy is in the souls of saints, that now they must go to their bodies, and enter into them, that both their souls and bodies, which sometimes lived together, may now dwell together with Christ in glory, and never part more! If those that live on earth are commanded by Christ, to *lift up their heads because their redemption draweth nigh*; how much more shall they joy in heaven, who also have *waited for their adoption, to wit, the redemption of their bodies*, that now the long looked for day is come! It is come! O the exultation of the angels at these tidings!

2. Consider Christ's coming to judgment; all now in readiness; the Son of God comes forth with all his glorious attendants; *For the Son of Man shall come forth in the glory of his Father with his angels*, and with the souls of saints, that for a time have been in paradise. O what a goodly sight is here! In this meditation I may see with John, *the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*. Down comes Christ, and the angels, and spirits of the just made perfect: And as they come along see how they shake the heavens, and dim, and dark the very lights of heaven! see what a flood of fire goes before them! see how they pass into the cloud, where Christ makes a stand, and erects a throne for himself to sit on! Sure it will be a glorious cloud, when Christ with all his celestial servants shall sit upon it.

3. Consider Christ and the saints judging the rest of the world. No sooner are the saints sentenced, but Christ turns to the wicked, and bids them go

*into everlasting fire* ; in which sentence the saints shall join with Christ himself, *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world ?* When the saints appear, it is not only by a summons, but with commission ; not only to be judged, but to judge ; not only shall they stand at Christ's right hand, but they shall sit down on the throne of the Son of God, to judge the wicked angels and the world.

4. Consider Christ and his saints going up into heaven. No sooner hath he done his work with the world and sent them away, but he shall go with all his troops following him into heaven. Hath not Christ said so ? *If I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there you may be also.* O those songs of Joy, and shouts of praise that will fill the world at that day ! and thus as they go along, heaven opens unto them, and they enter in. What welcomes they have here is past my telling.

1. *It is the day of adoption, and the redemption of our bodies.* It is the day of our sonship and deliverance ; I deny not but that the saints are adopted and redeemed before this day ; but this adoption and redemption is not consummate before Christ come again to judgment, then shall Christ say, *These are my sons whom I have redeemed, and as I have set them free, so now shall they live and reign with me for ever and ever.*

2. *It is the day of Christ's coming.* He was here not long since, travelling about the earth, and about our business ; which done, he went away to heaven, upon a special errand for his saints ; and there now he is to intercede for them, to be their advocate ; and withal there now he is to prepare their mansions for eternity. And no sooner shall he have dispatched his business there, but he will come for earth again ; he will bow the heavens, and come down to give a report of his transactions there ; hath he not left us a letter to that effect, *I*

*will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also.* O why are his chariots so long a coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?

3. It is "the day of Christ's bright and glorious appearing" When he was upon the earth, he appeared in our dress.. Many then saw him, who said, "There is no beauty in him, that we should desire him." O! it was a sad sight to see him crowned with thorns, and scourged with whips, and nailed to the cross. But in his next appearing we shall see him in his best attire, arrayed in white, attended with the retinue of glory, riding in his chariot of light, and smiling upon all his saints. Now is not this desirable? The apostle tells us of the saints "looking for the glorious appearing of the great God, and of our Saviour, Jesus Christ;" therefore surely they desire it.

4. It is the "marriage day of the lamb." The saints are betrothed to Christ, when first they believe in Christ; that is Christ's word, "I will be-troth thee unto me, my sister, my spouse," not my wife: thou art not yet married, only contracted here. But the day the marriage of the Lamb will be complete, and then will the voice be heard, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." O the joy that Christ, and saints and angels; and all that belong to heaven, will make at this marriage! "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

5. It is "the day of Christ's Glory." What glorious descriptions have we in Scripture of Christ's coming to judgment! "The Son of Man shall come from heaven with power and great glory; and the work no sooner done, but he shall return again into heaven with power and great glory. Not to mention the essential glory of Christ, O the glory of Christ as mediator; all the glory that Ahasuerus

could put upon his favourites, was nothing to this spiritual and heavenly glory, which the Father will put upon the Son ; it is a glory above all the glories that ever were, or ever shall be ; it is an eternal glory ; not but that Christ shall at last give up his kingdom to his Father ; he shall no more discharge the acts of an advocate, or intercessor for us in heaven, only the glory of this shall always continue ; it shall to all eternity be recorded, that he was the mediator, and that he is the Saviour that hath brought us to life and immortality ; and upon this ground, the tongues of all the saints shall be employed to all eternity, to celebrate this glory. This will be their everlasting song : “ Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” O what desire should the spirit and the bride have to hear what Christ shall say to his angels, “ Make ready for the journey, let us go down and divide the skies, and bow the heavens ; I gather my prisoners of hope unto me, behold I come quickly to judge the nations.” I conclude this with the conclusion of the Bible : “ He that testifieth these things, saith, surely I come quickly.” *Amen, Even so : Come Lord Jesus.*

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### SECT. III.

#### *Of Hoping in Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**et us hope in Jesus as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his second coming, let us say, on certain grounds, “ we hope Christ will

come again, and receive us to himself, that where he is there we may be also.

Such an hope is a sure anchor, that will hold the ship in a storm? only because our souls lie upon it, we had need to look to it that our hopes be true; the worst can say, they hope to be saved as well as the best; but the hopes of many will be lamentably frustrated. To clear this point that our hopes are right, and not counterfeit hopes, I shall lay down some signs, whereby we may know that Christ's coming is for us, and for our good, and for the grace that is to be given us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1. If we are born again, then will his glorious coming be, to glorify us, "blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible." Come then, you that hope for glory, try yourselves; is there a change in your hearts, words, and lives? Is there a mighty work of grace upon your spirits? Are you experienced in the great mystery of regeneration? Why here is your evidence, that your hopes are sound, and that you shall sit upon thrones to judge the world.

2. If we long for his coming, then will he come to satisfy our longings. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst, for they shall be satisfied;" how satisfied, but in being saved? "Christ was offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin to salvation;" unto them that look for him, or long for him, shall he appear the second time unto salvation; this looking for Christ, is in scripture a frequent description of a true believer in Christ. Who are sound Christians, but such as live in a perpetual desire and hope of Christ's blessed coming? They are "ever looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God." Here are two signs in one verse, "looking for, and hastening

“unto;” true believers are not only in a posture, looking for the coming of Jesus Christ, but also, as it were, going forth to meet Jesus Christ with burning lamps. Dost thou look and long for the coming of Christ in the clouds? These are firm grounds of an assured hope. Content not thyself with an hope of possibility, or probability; but reach out to that plerophory, or *full assurance of hope*. The hope of possibility is but a weak hope, the hope of probability is but a fluctuating hope, but the hope of certainty is a settled hope. Such an hope sweetens all the thoughts of God and Christ, of death and judgment, of heaven, yea, and of hell too, whilst we hope that we are saved from it. And are not the Scriptures written to this very purpose, *that we might have this hope? We are justified by his grace, that we might be heirs in hope, heirs according to the hope of eternal life!* And was not this David’s confidence, *Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation? Why then art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.*



#### SECT. IV.

*Of Believing in Jesus in this respect.*

**L**et us believe in Jesus as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his second coming.

Go to Christ, as coming again into this nether world, to judge the quick and the dead. This is the last act of faith, in reference to Christ, *From thence he shall come to judge both the quick and the*

*dead.* The coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the change of the living, the last judgment, and the glory of Christ with his saints to all eternity, is that transaction which must be dispatched at the end of the world; now this is the object of faith, as well as the former; Christ's work is not fully perfected, 'till all these be finished; nor is our work of faith fully completed, 'till it reach to the very last act of Christ in saving our souls.—O what an excellent worker is Jesus Christ? He doth all his works thoroughly and perfectly. The greatest work that ever Christ undertook, was the work of redemption; that work would have broken men and angels, and yet Jesus Christ will carry it on to the end; and then will he say, not only prophetically, but expressly, *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*

1. Faith must principally and mainly look to the design and end of Christ in his second coming. Now the ends are....1. In respect of the wicked, that they may be destroyed, for he *must reign 'till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.* He shall come with flaming fire, and then he will *take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.* O the fearful sounds that will then be heard! Sure that noise must needs be terrible, when millions of men and women at the same instant shall fearfully cry out, and when their cries shall mingle with the thunders of the dying and groaning heavens, and with the crack of the dissolving world, when the whole fabric of nature shall shake into dissolution and eternal ashes. “Now consider this, ye that forget God; lest he tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver you.

2. In respect of the godly, that they may be saved, that they may see and enjoy Christ to all eternity. This is a main end of Christ's coming, “I will come

“ again, and receive you unto myself, that where I  
 “ am, there ye may be also.—And Father, I will that  
 “ those whom thou hast given me, be with me  
 where I am, that they may behold the glory which  
 thou hast given me.

3. In respect of Christ himself, that he may be glorified. Now in two things more especially will he be glorified at that day: 1. In his justice. 2. In his mercy.

1. His justice will be glorified, especially in punishing the wicked; on earth little justice is done on most offenders; though some public crimes are sometimes punished, yet the actions of the closets and chambers; the designs and thoughts of men, the businesses of retirements and of the night, escape the hand of justice; and therefore God hath so ordained it, that there shall be a day, wherein all that are let alone by men, shall be questioned by God; then all thoughts shall be examined, and secret actions viewed on each side, and the infinite number of those sins which escaped here, shall be blazoned there. O how will God glorify his justice at that day! Surely his justice shall shine, and be eminently glorious in every passage.

2. His mercy will be glorified in rewarding the saints. And this is the main, the supreme end of his coming to judgment, *He shall come* (saith the apostle) *to be glorified in his saints*; not but that the angels shall glorify the riches of his grace, as well as saints, but because the angels never sinned, [*they have now kept their robes of innocency above five thousand years, without one spark of dirt or change of colour*;] therefore the glory of his grace is more especially fastened on saints that sometimes were sinners. Is not this their everlasting song, which they begin at this day, “Glory to the Lamb, “ and glory to his grace, that sitteth on the throne “ for evermore?

Thus for directions; one word of application,

or a few motives to work faith in you in this respect.

1. Christ in his word invites you to believe ; these are his letters from heaven. "Come all to the marriage supper of the Lamb! Ho, every one that thirsts "come in;" heaven's gate is open to all that knock, but fools, foolish virgins, foolish souls, which have no faith, nor will have any, to render them fit for heaven. There is Rahhab the harlot, and Manasseh the murderer, and Mary that had so many devils. A man that hath many devils may come where there is not one. Ah! poor soul, why dost thou make exceptions, where God makes none? Why shouldst thou exclude thyself out of these golden gates, when God doth not? Believe, only "believe "in the Lord Jesus," and the promise is sure, and without all controversy, "thou shalt be saved."

2. Christ, by his ministry, entreats you to believe. Come, say they, we beseech you believe in your judge! It may be you startle at this. What? to believe in him who is a coming to be your judge? But if your judge be Jesus, if the same person who died for you, shall come to judge you, why should you fear? Indeed if your judge were your enemy, you might fear; but if he who is your Lord, and who loves your souls, shall judge you, there is no such cause. Will a man fear to be judged by his dearest friend? a brother by a brother? a child by a father? or a wife by her husband? Consider! Is not he your judge who came down from heaven, and who being on earth was judged, condemned, and executed, in your stead? And yet are ye fearful, "O ye of little faith?"

3. Christ by his Spirit moves, excites, and provokes you to believe. Sometimes in reading, and sometimes in hearing, and sometimes in meditating you may feel him stir. Have you felt no gale of the Spirit all this while? "It is the Spirit that convinceth the world of sin," especially of that great sin of unbelief; and then of righteousness, which

Christ is procured by going to his Father. Observe here, it is the work of the Spirit to convince, so that all moral philosophy, and the wisest directions of the most civil men, will leave you in a wilderness; yea, ten thousands of sermons may be preached to you to believe, and yet you never shall, till you are overpowered by God's spirit. It is the Spirit that enlightens, and directs you, as occasion is, "saying, This is the way, walk in it." It is the Spirit that rouseth, and awakeneth you by the effectual motions, "Arise my love, my fair one, and come away. He stands at the door and knocks;" if while I press you to "believe in Jesus," you feel the Spirit in his stirrings, surely it concerns you to believe, it concerns you to yield, it concerns you to co-operate with the Spirit; say with him in the gospel, "I believe, Lord help my unbelief:" I believe what? I believe when Jesus comes again, he will receive me to himself, and I shall be "for ever with the Lord." *Amen, Amen.*



## SECT. V.

### *Of Loving Jesus in that Respect,*

Let us love Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his second coming. In prosecution of this, I must first set down Christ's love to us, and then our love to Christ.

1. Christ will come. Is not this love? As his departure was a rich testimony of his love; "It is expedient for you that I go away;" so is his returning, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you;" O how can we think of Christ's returning, and not meditate on the greatness of his love?

might he not send his angels, but he must come himself? O the love of Christ in this one act, he will come again; he is but gone for awhile, but he will come again in his own person!

2. Christ will welcome all his saints into his presence; and is not this love? After he is come down from heaven, he stays for them awhile in the clouds, and commanding his angels to bring them thither, anon they come; and O how his heart springs within him at their coming!

3. Christ will sentence his saints to eternal life; here is love indeed! every word of the sentence is full of love; it contains the reward of his saints, a reward beyond their work, and beyond their wages, and beyond their promise, and beyond their thoughts, and beyond their understanding; it is a participation of the joys of God, and the inheritance of the judge himself. Never was more love expressed in words, than Christ expresseth in this sentence, "Come ye blessed," &c.

4. Christ will take up all his saints with him into glory; where he will present them to his Father, and then be their all in all to all eternity. This is the height of Christ's love; this is the immediate love that comes out from the precious heart and bowels of Jesus Christ.

5. And if Christ loves thus; how should we love again for such a love? Can we love as high, as deep, as broad, as long, as love itself; or as Christ himself? No, no; all we can do is but to love a little; and O that in the consideration of his love, we could love a little in sincerity! O that we were but able feelingly to say, "Lord I love thee, I feel I love thee, even as I feel I love my friend, or as I feel I love myself. O thou who art the element or sun of love, come with thy power, let out one beam, one ray, one gleam of love upon my soul, shine hot upon my heart, remember thy promise to circumcise my heart, that I may love the Lord my God with all my heart, and with all my soul,

## SECT. VI.

*Of Joying in Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**et us joy in Jesus, as carrying on the great work of our salvation in his second coming. Christ delights to have his people look upon him with delight; for a soul to be always under the spirit of bondage, and so to look upon Christ as a judge, a lion, or an offended God, it doth not please God. The Lord Jesus is tender of the joy of his saints, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad," saith Christ; "Rejoice evermore—Rejoice in the Lord always; and again, "I say rejoice. Let the righteous be glad, let them rejoice before God, yea let them exceedingly rejoice." All that Christ doth to his saints tends to this joy, as the upshot or end of all; if he cast down, it is but to raise them up; if he humble, it is but to exalt; if he kill, it is but to make alive; in every dispensation, still he hath a tender care to preserve their joy. If you find it an hard thing to joy in Jesus, in reference to his second coming, think of these motives,—

1. Christ's coming is the Christian's encouragement; so Christ himself lays it down, "You shall see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory; and when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh," The signs of his coming, are the hopes of your approaching glory, and what should we do then, but prepare for it with exceeding joy? Many evils now surround yon every where; Satan hath his snares, and the world his baits, and your own hearts are apt to betray you into your enemies hands; but when

Christ comes, you shall have full deliverance, and perfect redemption; and therefore "look up, and lift up your heads." The apostle speaks the very same encouragement. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air,"—wherefore comfort one another with these words.

2. Christ will lead us into glory. As the bridegroom, after nuptials, leads his bride to his own home, that there they may live together: so Christ, our royal bridegroom, will lead us into the palace of his glory. And is not this joy of our Lord enough to cause our joy? O what welcomes shall we have in this city? There shall we see Christ in his garden, there shall we be set as a seal on Christ's arm, and as a seal upon his heart; there shall we be filled with his love, enlightened with his light, encircled in his arms, following his steps, and praising his name, and admiring his glory! there shall be joy indeed, "For in thy presence there is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures evermore."

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## SECT. VII.

### *Of Calling on Jesus in that Respect.*

**L**et us call on Jesus, as carrying on our soul's salvation, at his second coming.

1. Let us pray for the coming of Christ; this was the constant prayer of the church, "Come

Lord Jesus, come quickly. The spirits and the bride say come." Well knows the bride that the day of Christ's coming is her wedding day, the day of presenting her unto his Father, and therefore no wonder if she pray for the hastening of it; "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart; thy kingdom come."

2. Let us praise him for his coming. Our engagement to Christ is so great, that we can never enough extol his name; at that day the books shall be opened, and why not the book of our engagements to Jesus Christ? I can surely tell you it is written full? the page and margent both within and without. O then let our hearts be full of praises? let us join with those blessed elders that fell down before the Lamb, and sung, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

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## SECT. VIII.

### *Of Conforming in Jesus to that Respect.*

Let us conform to Jesus, as coming again to judge the world. *Looking to Jesus*, contains this. When the apostle would persuade Christians to patience under the cross, he lays down first the cloud of witnesses, all the martyrs of the church of Christ; and secondly, Jesus Christ himself, is of more virtue than all the rest.

But how shall we conform to Christ in this respect? I answer:

1. Christ will prepare for judgment. O! let us at all times prepare for his judging of us; doth it

not concern us to prepare for him, as well as it concerns him to prepare for us? If Christ come, and find us careless, negligent, unprepared, what will become of us? The very thought of Christ's sudden coming to judgment might well put us into a waiting, watching posture, that we might be still in readiness. It cannot be long, and alas, what is a little time, when it is gone! Is it not high time then to prepare our lamps, to trim our souls, to watch, and fast, and pray, and meditate, and to remember that for all our deeds, good or evil, God will bring us to judgment? O! let us, against his coming, prepare for him!

2. Christ at his coming will summon all his saints to arise, and to come to him in the clouds. Let us summon our souls to arise, and to go to Christ in the heavens. What Christ will do really at that day, let us do spiritually on this day. Alas! we had need to be continually stirring up the gifts and graces that are in us. It is the Lord's pleasure that we should daily come to him, he would have us on the wing of prayer, and on the wing of meditation, and on the wing of faith; he would have us to be still arising, mounting up in divine contemplation to his majesty.

3. Christ will at the last judge all our souls, and judge all the wicked to eternal flames; O let us judge ourselves, that we may not be judged of the Lord: but in what manner should we judge ourselves? I answer:—

1. We must search out our sins. "Winnow yourselves, O people, not worthy to be beloved." There should be a strict scrutiny, to find out all the profaneness of our hearts and lives, all our sins against light, and love, and checks, and vows; "Winnow yourselves." If you will not, I pronounce to you from the eternal God, that ere long the Lord will come in the clouds, and then will he open the book wherein all your sins are written; he will search Jerusalem with candles, he will come with a sword

in his hand, to search out all secure sinners every where, and then will all your sins be discovered to all the world.

2. We must confess our sins before the Lord; we must spread them before the Lord, as Hezekiah did his letter; only in our confessions observe these rules; as—

1. Our confession must be full of sorrow, *I will declare my iniquity* [said David] *I will be sorry for my sins.*

2. Our confession must be a full confession; we must pour it out. Thus David stiles one of his Psalms, *A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.* We must pour out our complaints, as a man poureth water out of a vessel. *Arise, cry out in the night, in the beginning of the watches, pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord.* Water runs all out of a vessel, when you turn the mouth downward, never a spoonful will stay behind: so should we pour out our hearts before God; and [if it were possible] leave not a sin unconfessed, at least for the kinds, if not for the particular sins.

2. Our confession must be with full aggravation; we should aggravate our sins by all the circumstances, that they may shew them odious; O my sins were out of measure sinful. They were sins against knowledge, and light, against many mercies received, against many judgments threatened, against many checks of conscience, against many vows and promises. Thus oft, and in this place, and at that time, and in that manner, I committed these and these sins; but of all the aggravations, let us be sure to remember how we sinned against the goodness, and patience, and love, and mercy of God. Surely these circumstances will make our sins out of measure sinful. Say, "O my God, thou art my Father; was I ever in want, and thou didst not relieve me? Was I ever in

" weakness, and thou didst not strengthen me ?  
 " Was I ever in straits, and thou didst not deliver  
 " me ? Was I ever in sickness, and thou didst not  
 " cure me ? Was I ever in misery, and thou didst  
 " not succour me ? Hast thou not been a gracious  
 " God to me ? All my bones can say, Who is like  
 " unto thee : Lord, who is like unto thee ? And  
 " shall I thus and thus reward the Lord for all his  
 " mercies towards me ? Hear, O heavens, and  
 " hearken, O earth ; sun stand thou still, and thou  
 " moon be thou amazed at this ! Hear angels and  
 " hear devils ! Hear heaven, and hear hell ! And  
 " be you avenged on such a sin as this is !"

4. We must condemn ourselves, or pass sentence  
 against our souls ; " Lord, the worst place in hell  
 " is too good for me ; Lord, here is my soul, thou  
 " mayest, if thou pleasest, send Satan for it, and  
 " give me a portion among the damned.

5. We must plead pardon, and cry mightily to  
 God in Christ, for the remission of all our sins.  
 This is the way of judging ourselves ; we see no-  
 thing but hell and damnation in ourselves ; but then  
 we fling down ourselves at God's gate of mercy.  
 We despair not in God, though in ourselves. God  
 in Christ is gracious and merciful, forgiving iniquity,  
 transgression, and sin, and hence we make bold to  
 intreat the Lord, for Christ's sake to be merciful to  
 us. " Lord pardon, Lord forgive for thy name's  
 " sake, promise sake, mercy's sake ; and for the  
 " Lord Jesu's sake : O let free grace have its work ;  
 " Lord glorify thy name, and glorify the riches of  
 " thy grace in saving us."

6. Christ at his coming will be glorified in his  
 saints ; not only in himself, but in his saints also ;  
 whose glory, as it comes from him, so it will re-  
 bound to him. O let him now be glorified in us,  
 let us now in some high way conform to the image  
 of his glory, let us look on Christ 'till we are like  
 Christ, not only in grace but in glory ; and this  
 glory, as it comes from him, so let it rebound to

him. Let us so behold the glory of the Lord in the glass of the gospel, as that we may be changed into the same image from glory to glory; from a lesser measure to an higher measure of glory.

O that something of the glory of Christ might rest upon us! O that having this glory in our thoughts, we could now feel a change from glory to glory! Is it so that the Lord Jesus will be glorified in all his saints? And shall we have inglorious souls; base and unworthy affections and conversations? Or shall we content ourselves with a little measure of grace? O be we holy, even as he is holy; let our conversation be heavenly, let us purify ourselves even as he is pure; let us resemble him in some high measure of grace. And lastly, let us glorify him in bodies and spirits; all our glory is from him; and therefore let all our glory rebound to him; let us now begin that gospel tune of the eternal song of free grace, which one day we shall more perfectly chaunt in glory; *Allelujah! and again Allelujah! and Amen Allelujah! salvation and glory, and power, and praise, and thanksgiving, and obedience, be unto him that sits on the throne, the Lamb blessed for ever and ever. Amen.*

Now all is done, shall I speak a word for Christ, or rather for ourselves in relation to Christ; if I had but one word more to speak in the world, it should be this. O let all our spirits be taken up with Christ? Surely Christ is enough to fill all our thoughts, desires, hopes, loves; joys, or whatever is within us, or without us. Christ alone comprehends all the circumference of all our happiness, O the worth of Christ! Compare we other things with him, and they will bear no weight at all; cast into the balance with him angels, they are wise, but he is wisdom; cast into the balance with him men, they are liars, lighter than vanity, but Christ is the amen, the faithfulness; cast into the scales kings, and all kingdoms, they are but their glory; cast in two worlds, and what is but millions of

heaven of heavens, and the balance cannot down, the scales are unequal ; Christ outweighs all. Shall I yet come nearer home ? What is heaven but to be with Christ ? What is life eternal but to believe in God, and in his Son Jesus Christ ? Where may we find peace with God, and reconciliation with God, but only in Christ ? All the goodness of God comes out of God through this golden pipe, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is true, those essential attributes of love, grace, mercy, and goodness are only in God, and they abide in God, yet the mediatory manifestation of love, grace, mercy, and goodness is only in Christ. Christ alone is the treasury, storehouse, magazine of the free goodness and mercy of the Godhead. In him we are justified, sanctified, saved. *He is the way, the truth, and the life* ; he is honor, riches, beauty, health, peace, and salvation ; all the spiritual blessings wherewith we are enriched, are in and by Christ : God hears our prayers by Christ ; God forgives our iniquities through Christ ; all we have, and all we expect to have, hangs only on Christ ; he is the golden hinge, upon which all our salvation turns.

O how should all hearts be taken with this Christ ? Christians, turn your eyes upon the Lord ; *Look and look again unto Jesus*. Shall I speak one word more to thee that believest ? Remember how he came out of his Father's bosom for thee, wept for thee, bled for thee, poured out his life for thee, is now risen for thee, gone to heaven for thee, sits at God's right hand, and rules all the world for thee ; makes intercession for thee, and at the end of the world will come again for thee, and receive thee to himself, to live with him for ever and ever. Surely if thus thou believest, and livest, thy life is comfortable, and thy death will be sweet ; if there be any heaven upon earth, thou wilt find it in the practice, and exercise, of this gospel duty, *in Looking unto Jesus*.

THE  
MINISTRATION OF  
and  
COMMUNION WITH ANGELS.

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CHAP. I.

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SECT. I.

HEB. I. 14.

*Are they not all Ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of Salvation*

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*The Coherence and Division of the Words.*

The apostle is here making a comparison betwixt Christ and the angels; as the world is wonderfully inclined to superstition; so it is wont many times to darken the glory of Christ, by too much exalting of angels: good reason it is therefore that they should be put in their place; the angels are excellent, but Christ more excellent; the angels are glorious, but Christ more glorious: now the prelation of

Christ before the angels, the apostle proves by several arguments: as 1. From the name of Christ: he is called God's son; so are not the angels. 2. From the rule and dominion of Christ: he is the head and prince; so are not the angels. 3. From the office and place of Christ: "He sits at God's right hand" (*i. e.*) he hath the second place given him after the Father, he is the Father's Lieutenant, or his chief Ambassador, to exercise all power; so are not the angels; and therefore it follows that Christ is more excellent and glorious than them all. Indeed they are spirits, and therein they have a title of great excellency given them; but they are ministering spirits, and that takes off, and holds them within the compass of their degree; if they but minister, they must needs be inferior to Christ, who is Lord over all; and though it may be objected, that Christ is sometimes called a Minister, and "that he came to minister;" yet that is not in regard of need, but of good will; the angels do it of necessity, but Christ voluntarily: it is natural in the angels, but only by accident in Jesus Christ; and therefore in all things Christ hath the pre-eminence. Yet let not this doctrine pass without some consolation to the saints and people of God; be it known to you, that as angels are ministering spirits, so they are sent forth to minister for you; "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation!"

You see I had need to be careful what I say of the angels; lest that honor which should be given to God and Christ, may in any sort rebound to them. This hath been the error of former ages; and of all errors there is almost none more ancient than this. Paul himself had much to do with some, who so advanced the angels, that in a manner they would have brought Christ under subjection, *Let no man beguile you of your reward [saith he] in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels.* Indeed there shines in them such a brightness of the

majesty of God, that there is nothing whereunto we are more easily drawn, than with a certain admiration to fall down in worshipping of them; this very thing John in the Revelation confesseth of himself, but he addeth withal, that he received this answer, *see thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren, that have the testimony of Jesus, worship God*, there is no worshipping of angels: and yet we must not throw away the comfortable doctrine of angels: I hope before I have done to convince you of a wonderful pledge of Christ's love to your persons in the administration of angels, *Are not all administering spirits, &c.*

In this text is a description of angels, wherein.

1. Of their nature, *Are they not spirits?*
2. Of their office, *Are they not ministering spirits?*
3. Of their conjunction in this office, *Are they not all ministering spirits?*
4. Of their commission and execution of this office so undertaken, *Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister?*
5. Of the object about which the execution of their office is most conversant, *Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*

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## S E C T. II.

*Of the several Doctrines deduced from the Words.*

**F**rom every part I may deduce a several doctrine; as, 1. That *the angels are spirits.* 2. That *the office of the angels is to minister and serve.* 3. That *the highest angel is not exempted from this office.*

4. That *they have their commission from God and Christ to execute their office of ministration.* 5. That *the ministring office of the angels is not for all, but only for heavens heirs.* On the four first I shall only give a touch, but on the last I shall insist, and (if the Lord help) enlarge my discourse to the full of my design.

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## C H A P. II.

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### S E C T. I.

#### *Of the First Doctrine.*

**T**HE *angels are spirits*: And so is God, and so are the souls of men, but with this difference, God is a spirit most simple, without any composition at all; the souls of men are spirits conjoined with flesh and blood; thus the philosopher describes the soul to be the act of the body: Now betwixt these two spirits are the angels, who are neither without all composition, as God is, nor are they covered with flesh and blood as the soul of man is, I know it is a question, whether the angels have bodies? And—

1. The peripatetics and school men are for the negative; “The angels” say they “are altogether incorporeal:” And for this opinion are brought in by others these very texts, “Who maketh his angels spirits,”—And “are they not all ministring spirits.”

2 The Platonics and many of the ancients are on the other side: "The angels have their proper bodies," saith Tertullian, and although invifible to us, yet visible to God. Augustine is of the same mind: And herein, saith Lombard, he followed many famous authors, as all the Platonics, Orgien, Lactantius, Basil, with all the writers almost of his time: And some more modern agree with them herein; all spirits have their bodies, saith Bernard, as need is, excepting only God himself; and the need that the angels have, he proves from his text, "Are they not all ministring spirits? For how can they excute their ministry," saith he, "without a body, especially amongst them that are in the body? Besides they could not discourse, nor move from place to place, without a body." Nor speaks he of bodies assumed, but of bodies proper and peculiar to themselves.

Methinks a middle betwixt both these comes nearest truth, "That in comparison of God they are bodies, but in comparison of us they are pure and mighty spirits." Certainly the angels are not simply spirits as God is, who is a spirit most simple, without any composition at all; nor are they infinite or immense, as God is, but are terminated in their dimensions, and move from place to place as bodies do. Hence Zanchy approves rather of the ancients, than of the school-men, "That angels are not simply and altogether incorporeal, only their bodies," saith he, "are not earthly, nor airy, nor heavenly, as the Stoicks would have them, for all such bodies were created of that Chaos, Gen. 1. 1. but rather as the imperial heaven is a corporeal substance far different from these nether heavens visible to us, so the angels made together with that heaven, are corporeal substances far purer, and more subtil than either earth or air, or fire, or the matter of these visible heavens." I will not say they are of the same body, but they may have like bodies to that glorious body of the

highest heaven, or seat of the blessed; and so in respect of us or of our cress bodies they may be called pure and mighty spirits,

CHAP. III.

*Of the Second Doctrine,*

**T**he office of the angels is to minister and serve; It is true, they are called principalities, powers, mights, thrones, dominions; so the apostle speaks of Christ; That " he was set at God's right hand in " heavenly places, far above all principalities, and " powers, and might, and dominion. And by him " were all things created in heaven, whether " thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers:" by all which, though we understand not divers dignities of angels, whereby in nature they excel one another, yet we must needs understand the dignity, excellency, authority, and power, of every one of the angels.

And yet this hinders not, but that these mighty powers are *ministring spirits*; and therefore in other places of scripture we find other titles given to them; as sometimes they are called watchers, " I saw in the visions of my head, and behold a " watcher and an Holy One came down from heaven." And sometimes they are called soldiers, " and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly soldiers," or of the heavenly host, " praising God." Most frequently they are called angels, which is not a name of their nature, but of their office; the word signifies a messenger, as if they were ever running errands, betwixt heaven and earth: So " Jacob dreamed of a ladder set on earth,

“ whose top reached to heaven, and behold the  
 “ angels of God ascending and descending on it.”  
 Now this is clear, that watchers, soldiers, and mes-  
 sengers, are but ministers and servants. If it be  
 demanded what is their ministry, or service? It is  
 either to God, or to men; in respect of God, they  
 are said “ to do his commandments, to hearken to  
 “ the voice of his word, to behold the face of God,  
 “ to celebrate the praises of God, and of Jesus  
 “ Christ;” and in respect of men, they do them  
 many offices of love and service, which we shall  
 discover in the last point, for “ are they not mini-  
 “ string spirits sent forth to minister unto them,”  
 I say unto them, “ Who shall be heirs of salvation.”

#### CHAP. IV.

##### *Of the Third Doctrine.*

**T**he highest angel is not exempted from this of-  
 fice. Are they not all ministring spirits? It is not  
 one, nor ten, nor an hundred, nor a thousand, but  
 all angels and arch-angels, principalities and powers,  
 thrones and dominions, are “ all ministring spirits.”  
 A question there is, 1. Of the order of angels;  
 and if that be admitted. 2. Whether the chief  
 of that order may be considered as ministring  
 spirits?

For the first, Dionysius (I will not say the  
 Areopagite) tells of nine orders because of nine  
 words in the scripture relating to the angels as  
 seraphims, cherubims, thrones, powers, hosts, domi-  
 nions, principalities, arch-angels, and angels; and at  
 large he describes their several natures, distinctions,

properties; as that the first three orders, are for immediate attendance of the Almighty, and the next three orders, for the general government of the creatures; and the last three orders, for the particular good of God's elect; that the arch-angels surpass the beauty of angels ten times, principalities surpass the arch angels twenty times, powers surpass the principalities forty times, &c. How he, or any other, came to this learning, is yet unknown, yet hath this hierarchy, in these several orders, passed for currant through many ages of the church.

Learned Mede in his *Diatribæ* of the angels, tells of seven principal angels, which minister before the throne of God, and therefore are called arch-angels some of whose names we have in scriptures, as Michael, Gabriel, Raphael; to this purpose he cites several texts: "As I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which stand and minister before the glory of the Holy One." And "these seven are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth." And "I saw," saith John, "seven lamps before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;" and "I beheld, and lo in the midst of the throne stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth." And "I saw the seven angels which stood before God." And the arch-angel Gabriel, speaks of himself to Zacharias in the very same language, "I am Gabriel, that stands in the presence of God."

That there is order amongst the angels, I do not doubt, God is the God of order, and as he orders all things below, so no question he observeth a most exact order in the court of heaven: amongst us some are superior, and some inferior, some greater, and others lesser; equality hath no place either on earth, or in hell, and in this visible heaven, "one star," saith the apostle, "differs from another in glory, how then should we imagine any ataxye

or confusion to be in heaven? Certainly there is a most beautiful distinction and order amongst the blessed angels, yet I am apt to think, and do believe, that the difference of those glorious spirits in heaven, is not in their nature, but in their offices; for as among men there is a parity and equality in the respect of nature, and the excellency of one above another is but by accident, so it is with angels, they are equally spiritual substances, all equally created good, and pure and perfect, and their imparity is because of the divers kinds of their offices, wherein they are employed: Hence "some are simply called angels, some arch-angels, some principalities, some dominions, &c."

But 2. admitting this order and distinction of angels, whether are not the highest angels ministering spirits? The Platonics that first divided them into three orders, as some above heaven, called supercælestes, others in heaven called cælestes, and others under heaven called subcælestes, do suitably give them several offices: As 1. They above heaven (I mean this visible heaven) continually stand before God (as they say) praising, and lauding, and magnifying his name. 2. They in heaven are there seated, to move, and rule, and govern the stars. 3. They under heaven, are some to rule kingdoms, others provinces, others cities, others particular men. Many christians that write of the hierarchy of the angels, follow these opinions. Now by this surmise, the highest angels do not minister to the saints, but only and immediately to God himself. But on the contrary, did not "Michael," one of the seven, "contend with Satan about the body of Moses?" And was not Gabriel, "who stands before the presence of God," sent to speak to Zacharias, and to Mary, and to shew the glad tidings of the gospel? And were not those seven arch-angels, called, "seven eyes, and the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth? Surely then neither seraphims, nor cherubims, nor

thrones, nor powers, are exempted from this office, they are all "ministring spirits."

CHAP. V.

SECT. I.

*Of the Fourth Doctrine.*

**T**HEY have their commission from God and Christ to execute their office of ministration; they will not go, unless sent forth: as Christ would not do the office of mediator until he was called, Heb. v. 4. 5. so neither will the angels execute their office without a call: In this respect the angels are said to wait on Christ, they stand behind him, and receive deputations to their several offices: "I saw  
 " by night, and behold a man——and behind him  
 " were there red horses, speckled and white,  
 (i. e.) ministring spirits, prepared for judgment and mercy. When Zachary knew not who they were, the man that stood among the myrtle trees, Christ (the captain of the Lord's host) " answered  
 " and said, these are they whom the Lord hath sent  
 " to walk to and fro through the earth:" The Lord first sends them, and then as agents and spies, they give intelligence of all things done in the world: they will not stir without a commission, but if he sends them they run, they fly. "I saw the Lord sitting on his  
 " throne," saith Micaiah, "and all the host of heaven  
 " standing by him, on his right hand, and on his

“ left ; and the Lord said, who shall persuade *Ahab*,  
 “ that he may go up and fall at *Romath Gilead* ?  
 “ and one said on this manner, and another said on  
 “ that manner, and there came forth a spirit, and  
 “ stood before the Lord, and said, I will per-  
 “ suade him, and the Lord said unto him, where-  
 “ with ? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be  
 “ a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets ;  
 “ and he said, Thou shall persuade him, and pre-  
 “ vail also, go forth, and do so.” All this discourse  
 is by way of resemblance, as it is with kings and  
 princes, so it is said of God, all his host (good and  
 bad angels) stand about him, and receive their com-  
 missions from him : no sooner is any design agreed  
 on, but he gives out the word of command, *go*  
*forth, and do so*. See here the commission, *go forth*,  
 said God : *are not they all ministering spirits sent*  
*forth ?* said the apostle.

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## S E C T. II.

### *A Transition to the last Point.*

**O**N these four several doctrines I have no mind to  
 insist, and the rather, because they are so very spe-  
 culative, and so full of controversy : for my part I  
 shall never forget what *Graserus* said he had found  
 in his visiting the sick, and in his own preparations  
 for well dying ; *that most of the controversies in di-*  
*vinity were utterly useless, and did entangle the con-*  
*sciences of the simple, just as the human inventions*  
*in popery formerly did ; and therefore he began with*  
*full bent of mind to shun or abhor them, and in his*  
*public preaching to propound only those things which*  
*tended to the kindling of true faith in Christ, and to*

the exercise of true godliness according to the word of God, and to the procuring of true consolation both in life and death: nor, shall I forget what is writ of Abraham Buchaltzer, whose care in his public ministry was to avoid those questions that do but gender unto strife, and to instruct his auditors how to live well and die well. Some indeed blamed him of cowardice, for that being endowed by God with such excellent abilities, yet he would never enter into the lists with the fanatic adversaries of those times; but the reason was, because he always affected peace, having no delight in wrangling, which caused him to say to a friend, *Desi disputare, capi supputare, quoniam illud dissipationem, hoc collectionem significat.* Besides, he saw that the greatest antagonists to the churches peace had not so much as one spark of grace in them, and that there came no profit, but much hurt to the church of Christ by those continual quarrels amongst divines. I will not deny, nay I dare not but acknowledge, that in our pulpits may, and must (as occasion is) propound such a subject as this of the angels, and no question but out of it we may draw matter for faith, and life, and comfort; but as to these particulars of the angels, that they are spirits, ministers of several orders, and all delegated (as the Lord pleaseth) to this or that office, they are very abstruse points wherein we may wrangle, and do as boys in sport, who strive to strike most sparks out of their flints, but never intend to kindle thereby for use; so we may dispute and jangle about words, or strive to strike out the most subtil and finest spun notions that we can invent, but alas they will not profit our souls, nor tend much to practice, which is the life and spirit of religion; upon this I verily believe it is, that we have far less written in God's word of the nature of angels than of God himself; because the knowledge of God is far more practical, and less controversial, and more necessary to salvation, than the knowledge of an-

gels or archangels; only if there be any thing of angels revealed in scripture, and most worthy of our knowledge (as certainly there is) I take that to be it, which the school-men in all their learning took the least notice of, and that is of the ministrations of angels, in reference to God's people: *with this one use 'saith Zanchius' could the apostle content himself, as knowing that in the doctrine of angels, this was the most principal, and indeed most practical, and therefore on this point I mean to enlarge, and the other points I shall leave to others.*

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## CHAP. VI.

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### SECT. I.

#### *Of the last Doctrine.*

**T**HE chief point yet remains, viz. that *this ministering office of the angels is not for all, but only for Heaven's heirs*: on this I mean to insist, and to enlarge my discourse, wherein I shall 1. Confirm 2. Apply. 1. for confirmation, we have scripture and reason.

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S E C T. II.

*Scriptures for Angels' Ministration.*

“ **H**E shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.”

In this scripture we may observe these particulars,——

1. That the elect are so precious with God that for their sakes he gives out commands.

2. That he commands the angels [his choice and chief servants] for the good of his chosen: “he shall give his angels charge over thee.” It is the usual way of his providence, to command the strong in behalf of the weak, and commend the weak to those that are more strong: thus it is between children and parents, wives and husbands, the sick and sound, the saints and angels; he commands the angels over saints, or he commends the saints unto his angels.

3. That the end or meaning of the command, is for the elect's custody, *to keep thee*: They must not exercise a power or dominion over them, they must not exact adoration or worship from them, as the evil spirits do from all their followers: but the command is to preserve them, defend them, and deliver them, keep them.

4. That the keeping of saints is limited to their ways. *they shall keep thee in all thy ways*: i. e. in all thy necessary lawful ways, not in thy sinful devious wanderings.

5. That the obedience of the angels to this com-

mand, is precise, exact, and diligent, *they shall bear thee up in their hands*, i. e. they shall accompany thee, go before thee, wait upon thee, follow thee, as the shadow follows the body, compass thee round, lead thee, observe thee, and in all straits or necessities lend thee an hand.

6. That the issue of this obedience is safety and security; *lest thou dash thy foot against a stone*.—By this one danger we understand by a synecdoche and other dangers, q. d. not any hurt, be it never so little, shall befall the elect: So far shall they be from harm in the head, that it shall not reach the foot; indeed neither foot nor head, nor an hair of their head shall perish to their prejudice, Luke xxi. 18.

The sum of all this is, As nurses and mothers deal with their children, so must the angels deal with the children of God, that is, they must keep them in their ways, they must bear them up in their hands: children often stumble and fall, unless they be led and carried in hands and arms; and therefore God hath given his angels a charge over his children, to keep them, and carry them as in arms, lest they dash their feet against the stones.

“The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them:” they that sometimes are compared to nurses and mothers, are other whiles compared to soldiers that encamp themselves about the saints; thus when the young man had his eyes opened at *Elisha's* prayer, he saw, and *behold the mountain was full of horses, and chariots of fire round about Elisha*. Many military services are they ever and anon performing for the saints; they are watchful centinels, giving a timely alarm to prevent the enemy: “Arise and take the babe and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be there until I bring thee word, for *Herod* will seek the babe to destroy him.” They are faithful life-guards, preserving the saints in the midst of dangers: “There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling, for he shall give his angels charge over

thee." They are safe convoys bringing the saints through their wilderness to their heavenly *Canaan*, *Jacob* had experience thereof, " And *Jacob* went on his way, and the angels of God met him ; and when *Jacob* saw them he said, This is God's host, and he called the name of that place *Mahanaim*," i. e. two hosts or camps, the one before and the other behind, or the one on one side, and the other on the other side ; or they placed themselves in such fort, as to give *Jacob* assurance of safety every way.



### SECT. III.

#### *Reasons for Angels' Ministration.*

**B**UT why should they minister for the saints? the reasons are: 1. In respect of God. 2. In respect of them. 3. In respect of us.

1. There are some reasons in respect of God ; as—

1. It is his will and pleasure that they should so minister. Thus *Nebuchadnezzar* could acknowledge, *He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven.* The Lord's will is the rule of all justice, and a most perfect law, whereby he governs the army of heaven, that is, the angels: hence they are described to be God's ministers that do his pleasure, they enquire no further what is to be done, or why it should be done, but acquiesce in the discovery of his will and pleasure. Indeed all things and actions are resolved into this first principle, the good pleasure of his will: " He worketh all things after the counsel of his will." This is the supreme reason.

2. It is his command that they should so minif-

ter; every thing that God wills, he doth not command, he wills sin to be in the world, but he doth not command it, for then he would be the author of sin; but as for angel-ministration, he wills and commands them to it: " Bless the Lord ye his angels that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word:" Upon this ground is the Lord very often called, the Lord of hosts, i. e. the Lord of angels, for so Jacob called the two armies of angels, God's host, and the multitude of angels that praised God at Christ's nativity are called a multitude of the heavenly hosts. Look as commanders say to their soldiers, go, and they go; so saith God to his angels, go, and they go; go and minister to my saints, and presently they minister.

3. It is goodness that they should so minister.— Alas if the Lord should deal with us according to our demerits, rather tygers and dragons should wait upon us, than the angels: It is more than we can challenge, that any creature after the fall should be serviceable unto us, but that all the hosts of heaven should be abased to so low a work, as to be sent forth to minister for the meanest saint, even for us poor sinful wretches dust and ashes; Oh! what goodness is this! Upon this account, of the love, mercy, and goodness of God, we read so often of the Lord's sending his angels to attend his saints: thus Abraham told his servant, " The Lord before whom I walk will send his angel with thee: And thus God told Moses, ' I will send an angel before the: ' And thus Daniel told the king, ' My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions mouths, that they have not hurt me.' So gracious is that King of heaven, that he will spare his own courtiers out of heaven, and send them on errands to his saints for their preservation; whence David reasons, *Oh taste and see that the Lord is good!* Oh the goodness of God!

2. There are other reasons in respect of the angels. As—

1. It is their duty; not the brightest angel but is

subordinate unto God, and therefore must act and move as the Lord appoints, " This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel, and I knew that they were the cherubims." The cherubims are glorious angels, of great wisdom, strength and agility, and yet they are subservient to the Lord, and therefore are said to be under the God of Israel: Surely that word of the Psalmist (*They do his pleasure*) is the very image of true obedience, q. d. they minister not at their own pleasure, but at God's: now what is God's pleasure but the saint's welfare? " He hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants." The angels that know this, stand not upon terms with God, all they do is but to hearken to the voice of his word, and then they fly. " Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels besides them:" It is a note of a divine upon these words; " All things are under the God of Israel, he hath the pre-eminence, he is above wheels, and angels are under him, at his disposal; if he give out the word, the cherubims move, lift up their wings, and order the wheels: If he say, go and minister beyond fairs, presently they go, as it is their duty.

2. It is their delight to attend the fairs, they know that one day they shall live together, and sing together, and rejoice together; they know that the fairs shall supply the room of the fallen angels, and when they meet, O the joy that will be betwixt them. In the mean time, it is their desire and delight to attend their partners in heaven's joy, for they are acquainted with God's design and purpose to save them; they know what Christ hath done and suffered for them, the mystery of godliness is seen of angels; it is so seen, that they take great delight to behold it, yea, they are ravished in the very beholding of it, as at some new and strange object, *they look into it*, saith Peter, their whole spirits are taken up with it, as if it were the blessedest sight that ever they could behold, and they that are so ravished at the work of our redemption,

how should they but with delight attend the redeemed ones of Jesus Christ?

3. It is their honour to wait on the saints. It is true, in some respects they are of an higher form, they come nearest to God of all the creatures in the world, and they have kept their cloth of gold unstained six thousand years: O the purity, agility, beauty, glory, sanctity, and excellency of the angels! Man in his greatest honour, advanced to the highest pinnacle of happiness, is yet in many things below the angels; Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and yet it is no indignity for them to attend the saints, for herein they are but fellow workers with God and Christ, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.* My Father is beneficent in preserving saints: and I work by the same power, saith Christ. At first I created; and still I preserve. Now if God and Christ thus work and wait, well may the angels co-work with them. It was Paul's honour that he wrought together with God; *We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also.* Servants of God [such as men and angels] cannot but look on it as their glory, to put to their hands in the same work with their sovereign Lord, the King of Glory: If Christ himself came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, the angels may well think it an honour to imitate him, and to minister also.

3. There are other reasons in respect of saints. As—

1. It is for their consolation, a mighty comfort it is, that other creatures should do them service, that heaven and earth, and all therein should be made for them, and be continued and preserved for their sakes, and yet as if all this were not enough, except the angels also were subservient: that creatures of the highest order, of the finest make, of the noblest spirits, who behold the face of God himself, and are taken up with the immediate enjoyments of his

fulness, that they, even they should be destined by Christ the King of saints, to minister to his saints: Oh what a comfort is this! "If whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope:" surely this that is written of the angels, as concerning their office and ministration, must be full of comfort: indeed reprobates and unbelievers have none of this comfort, alas they are not within the verge of this blessed text, they have nothing to do with the scripture of heaven's heirs, it is for them, and only for them, who shall be heirs of salvation.

2. It is for their benefit both of body and soul: some observe, that were it not for the angels, the devils that are ever seeking to devour, would quickly tear the bodies of the saints into atoms.— We read, how afore Christ's death, the bodies of many were possessed of devils, and when they had torn them, by the command of Christ they were dispossessed: but after the great work of our redemption, the devils were more restrained in their power, *Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*— Christ so bound him in chains by his holy angels since that time, that now he hath not his liberty as before to hurt the saints: it is true, that he is still in the world, and rules in the air, but the good angels so defend our bodies against the evil angels, that they cannot touch an hair to our hurt, and as for our souls, they are in their special care; it is not to tell how many are the benefits they administer that way, they teach us truths, they open God's will, they reveal the secrets and mysteries of grace, and by these means they promote the salvation of souls: thus they did sometimes by dreams in the night, and sometimes by conference in the day, when they assumed bodies; but now still they admonish our minds, and in a secret unperceivable way, they persuade us to the reading, hearing, and

obeying of God's word. But of these, and the like soul services of the angels we shall enlarge another time.



SECT. IV.

*Use of Terror.*

WELL then; is the ministring office of the angels not for all, but only for heaven's heirs? What terror is this to be wicked? Alas, they have no angels to them, or take care of them, they are devoid of the presence and ministry of the heavenly angels; or if they have any inspection of them, it is but a general inspection, such as Hagar and Ishmael had, who are set out in scripture as the types of those that are rejected of the Lord. And this I take it is the reason why reprobates live, and are not all suddenly struck dead, to wit, because the angels have some general charge and care over them, that they may be preserved to their condition, but they are not properly guardians of any such men: O woe, woe, woe to the wicked world, *when one woe is past, behold there come two more woes after.* As it was with Saul, when God was gone from him, then the Philistines made war against him, and he was sore wounded of the archers, and at last he fell on his own sword and died: so where the angels of God stand aloof of, and will not rescue, one woe follows after another, there the evil spirits keep their rendezvous, the devil works in them mightily, they are hoodwinked, and besotted and blinded by the God of this world, having no power so much as to groan, or to wish for deliverance; we may say of all reprobates as it was said of Saul, *An evil spirit is upon them, and God is not with them:* they

are already taken in the snare of the devil, he hath them in a string and leads them captive at his will : and no wonder, for they have not those aids, those contrary whisperings, they have not the good angels to conflict with the bad, they have not the spirit, a new nature, much less the external helps and guards of holy and blessed angels ; ah woe to these men.



## SECT. V.

### *Use of Encouragement..*

**W**HAT encouragement is this to the godly ?— Though the wicked have not such guards, yet the godly are the proper objects of the angels' ministry.—Are they not ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them ? It is a question that puts all out of question : the wicked indeed are left to the wide world, but God is at charge of giving the saints tutors, and governors, and guardians ; here is a mighty encouragement to the people of God ; I know not the condition that any saint in the world may be in, wherein we cannot find in Scripture some encouragement or other drawn from an angel : art thou in a journey ? so was Abraham's servant when Abraham told him, *he shall send his angel before thee, and prosper thy way* : Art thou in battle, or ready to march against the enemy ? so was Israel, when the Lord told Moses, *For mine angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, &c. and I will cut them off* : Art thou in oppression, under the tyranny of wicked men ? so Moses told Edom the Israelites were, *Thou knowest of all the travail that hath befallen us, how our fathers went down into*

*Egypt, and the Egyptians vexed us, and our Fathers, and when we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: Art thou in persecution for religion, and forced to fly for thy life? so was Elijah, when he requested for himself that he might die, and said, "It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life for I am no better than my fathers; and as he lay and slept under the juniper tree, behold an angel touched him, and said unto him, arise, and eat."—* Art thou traduced, maligned, censured, imprisoned, and condemned to death for righteousness sake, or for the truth? so was Daniel, whom God yet delivered by an angel: "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions mouths, that they have not hurt me, forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me:" And so it was with Peter, "For behold the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison, and when Peter was come to himself, he said, now I know of a surety that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod:" Art thou amidst a people, whom God for sin hath decreed to destruction? so was Lot, whom the angels hastened out of Sodom lest he should be consumed in the iniquity of the city. But I am saved this labour of searching any further into scripture; a worthy author hath framed us the variety of their assistance in this same scheme: "One while they lead us in our way, as they did Israel, another while they instruct us, as they did Daniel; one while they fight for us, as they did for Joshua, another while they purvey for us as they did for Elijah; one while they fit us to our holy vacation, as they did Isaiah, another while they dispose of the opportunities of our calling for good, as they did of Philips to the eunuch; one while they foretel our danger, as to Joseph and Mary; another while they comfort us in our afflictions, as they did Christ and his apostles; one while they resist our offensive courses, as they

did Moses, another while they encourage us in our devotions, as they did Paul ; one while they deliver us from durance as they did Peter ; another while they preserve us from death, as the three children ; one while they restrain our presumption, as the cherub before the gate of paradise ; another while they excite our courage, as to Joshua, Gideon, and the other judges ; one while they cure our bodies, as at the pool of Bethesda ; another while they carry up our souls to heaven, as they did to Lazarus. It were endless to instance in all the gracious offices which the angels perform." And is not here great encouragement to all the saints ? The children of princes are not without their guard, no more are God's children ; as they have an heavenly Father, so they have an heavenly guard to wait upon them, and to minister unto them. O mighty encouragement.

## SECT. VI.

### *Use of Admiration.*

**H**OW may this angel-administration cause the saints to admire at the kindness of the Lord towards them ? You darlings of the Almighty, if others regard not, you have cause to wonder at this, that the angels, those created citizens of glory, should receive you in your straits, march after you in your ways, counsel you in your doubts, defend you in your dangers ; in a word, that God should charge all his elect angels to shew love and respect unto you, yea, to serve and to minister unto you : stand amazed at this, O ye saints ! The angels are the most glorious creatures in the world, they are the glittering courtiers of heaven, the beautiful compa-

nions of Jesus Christ, Job calls them morning stars, in that being newly created they gave glory to the creator, even as the birds in spring begin their notes, and sing at break of day: and he calls them sons of God, in that he doth use them as children, they are very near to him, they do always attend him, and continually see his face, they have the privilege of sons: "The morning stars sing together, and the sons of God shout for joy." Now that such creatures should wait on sinful wretches, dust and ashes, worms and not men, it is enough to cast any man in the world into an amazement or astonishment. A wonder it is, that any creature, though inferior, should be serviceable to man, that by sin hath lost his dominion over the creatures, a wonder it was that the ravens should minister unto Elijah, but that all the host of heaven should be abased (if we may speak after the manner of men) to so low a work, that angels should perform offices of respect to the meanest creatures; that an angel cloathed with light and glory should come to Zachary, to Mary, and to the shepherds? What, angels of God to wait upon those who are the most despised and rejected of men? Stand and wonder at this! "When I consider the heavens (saith David) the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him? for thou hast made him a little lower than the angels." This indeed is applied to Christ, Heb. ii. 6, 7, 9, 11. "Who was made a little lower than the angels by the suffering of death, but now is crowned with glory and honour." "Yet (saith the apostle) He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Christ and we are of the same nature, which though in some respects it be lower, yet it is but a little lower than the angels; nay, in some respects are we higher than the angels, for the angels wait on the saints, and the angels are not

so married to Jesus Christ in a mystical union, as the saints and people of God restored to his image are. Admire at this all ye saints! verily there is somewhat in holiness more than the world seeth or knoweth, there is some worth, or excellency, or consanguinity in the saints to Christ, or I cannot think that Christ would set such a guard upon them as his own courtiers. The angels are indeed near in alliance to Christ, but the saints are nearer: the angels are God's progeny, the sons of God, and so Christ is their brother, but man is allied nearer to Christ than so, in that man is of God's lineage, and Christ is of man's lineage: and hence it is, that the angels must now stoop, and bow, and wait, and serve, and minister to the saints. Are they not nearer allied than all the angels? Unto which of the angels said he at any time, you are my sons, my kinsmen, brethren, mother, sister, spouse? An angel is constantly called a ministering spirit, but is no where read a friend of God, the son of the Father, the delight of the son of man, the temple of the Holy Spirit, wherein the thrice glorious Trinity takes up his mansion. Christians, admire, here is enough to cast you into an extacy: come view the saint's pedigree, and tell me what you think of it.

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*The Saint's Pedigree.*

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|                  |   |                              |
|------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Christ is to us, | { | Our Lord, 1 Cor. ii. 2.      |
|                  |   | Our Friend, Cant. v. 16.     |
|                  |   | Our Flesh and Blood, Heb.    |
|                  |   | ii. 14.                      |
|                  |   | Our Brother, Heb. ii. 17.    |
|                  |   | Our Father, Isai. lxiii. 16. |
|                  |   | Our Husband, Rom. vii. 4.    |

We are to Christ, { His Servants, Rom. vi. 22.  
 His Friends, John xv. 14.  
 His Kinsmen, Mark iii. 21.  
 His Brethren, Job vii. 3.  
 His Sons, Gal. iii. 26.  
 His Spouse, Sister, Love, Dove,  
 &c. Cant. iv. 9.

We are both { One Vine, John xv. 1.  
 One Seed, Gal. iii. 16.  
 One Temple, Ephes. ii. 15.  
 One Body, Rom. xii. 5.  
 One Spirit, 1 Cor. vi. 17.  
 One Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 12.

Upon the view of this line, genealogy, pedigree, (call it what you please) methinks (my brethren) we should all cry out, " Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him? for thou hast made him higher than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour, thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet; O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the world?"



## S E C T. VII.

### *Use of Magnanimity.*

**D**O angels wait on heaven's heirs? Come then ye holy ones, and take an holy state upon you, think yourselves too good to abase yourselves to the world, or to sin, or to be slaves of men: why you are kings, and have a mighty guard, and therefore

you should carry yourselves answerable. Little do the men of this world think of this, or believe this truth; if they see a man to have at his heels a long train of earthly followers, in silks, sattins, golden chains, and such like braveries, Oh how such sights are gazed on, and how are such men usually titled, your Greatness, Highness, Excellency? Alas, alas! all is but beggary to the glory of the least of the saints of God, and of their attendants. I see indeed a great deal of glitter in some of these earthly state solemnities, yet in all their pomps they had need of a fair day, and clear sun-shine, or else half their shew will be lost: But angels (the saints' attendants) enlighten the greatest darkness, Luke ii. 2. Acts xii. 7. "Is not their countenance as lightning, and their raiment white as snow? Matt. xxviii. 3. Oh then! how should this greaten the spirits of God's people? Why, think of it you whom it most concerns; it was an high favour for Mordecai, a poor porter, to have Haman, the great pompous peer of the empire, to be his attendant, his lacquey, or his footman for an hour: how much more honour is it for you poor worms, to have those mighty peers of heaven, little royes, demigods, to wait upon you continually? King Solomon, in all his royalty in the midst of his two hundred targets, and three hundred shields of beaten gold, was not like one of the lilies of the field, much less like a faint environed, and encompassed with a wall of angels: hence was that saying of Christ, "Despise not one of these little ones:" and why so? because in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father. The brightest angels that look in the face of God, despise not to attend on the meanest saints, and how then should any despise them whom the angels honour? How should any think them unworthy of their company, or countenance, whom the great angels think most worthy of their service and attendance? But especially, how should any presume to wrong the saints, or to rush into God's

paradise, such as every true christian is, where stands the angels of God with a flaming sword which turns every way? It is enough, one would think, to affright all the men in the world from offering any violence to any of God's people; but howsoever they carry, let christian's carry as heaven's heirs, let them walk worthy of God, who hath called them to his kingdom and glory: let them consider what servitors and ministers God hath appointed to wait on them, and in the name of God let them carry themselves answerably, and be holily magnanimous. Plutarch tells of Themistocles, that he accounted it not to stand with his state to stoop down to take up the spoils of the enemy, whom he had scattered in flight, but says to one of his followers, You may, for you are not Themistocles. If others mind the earth and earthly things, as the swine that follow the trough, and can look no higher, yet let the saints, (which the angels wait on) walk above the world, and above all things that are here below. Citizens of Rome might not accept of any other freedom in any other city; they accounted it a dishonour to the freedom of Rome, to take freedom any where in the world besides: You that are free of the kingdom of heaven, and that have the created citizens of heaven to be your life-guards, Oh do not entangle yourselves with the things of earth, seek not to be free here, as if you had no better portion: surely if you understand your own privileges, you are spiritual kings and queens of an otherwise kingdom than this world: you have the privileges of a council, to wit, God's testimonies, Psal. cxix. 24. and the privileges of a guard full of state and strength, to wit, God's angels: O how should this greaten your spirits?—  
 " Let the saints be joyful in glory, let them sing aloud upon their beds, let the high praises of God be in their mouths, and a two-edged sword in their hands, to execute vengeance upon the hea-

then, at whose command is a legion of angels."—  
This honour have all his saints.

## SECT. VIII.

### *Use of Exhortation.*

**I**S the ministering office of the angels for heaven's heirs? then do your duties of communion with them. Oh improve this ordinance! Why, here is an ordinance of Jesus Christ scarce thought on; the angels minister to saints, and the saints almost, if not altogether, forget their duties which they owe to God and Christ in that respect. What my brethren are you ignorant of such an ordinance? Or do you know it, and yet are you negligent? If you are simple ignorant, and that your ignorance is of pure negation, and not of evil disposition, it is then high time to discover this mystery of godliness to you, that you may be in the exercise of such duties yet unknown, or if you know them, and are negligent of them, it is then high time to rouse up your spirits, and to "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of the apostle, of our Lord and Saviour." Howsoever the case stands with you, I beseech you here, learn, practise, and make use of this present book and work; it is another message that I have from God, another ordinance that I would discover; therefore "Set your hearts to all the words that I testify to you this day, for it is not a vain thing, but it is for your lives."

The motives I use, shall be only these—

1. Angel administration, and our communion with them, is an ordinance of Jesus Christ; it is an institution of Christ, which hath connected to it some kind of spiritual efficacy to work on souls. Amongst other intervening mediums (saith one) there is one great ordinance, which we have not so much considered of, viz. That the good angels (the chariots and horses) should relieve us, as they did Elisha; nor is their relief only as to outwards, but in relation to our religious walking, and to our inward man. Were it not sad to lose an ordinance of Jesus Christ? Or if it be not lost in respect of the living instruments of their parts, yet is it not sad that we should make no use of them? Ministers are an ordinance of Christ, they are messengers, interpreters (even as the angels, and therefore are called angels, Rev. i. 20.) their office is to declare unto man his righteousness; to pray men in Christ's stead to be reconciled unto God; to gather together the saints, to be Christ's paronyms, to deal about getting of a wife for the Lamb, to cater for heaven, to bring in custom for the kingdom of God. Ministers and angels are in the very same employment. Now were it not sad, that the ministers of Christ should be neglected or despised? What if you have ministers? Is there no use to be made of such an ordinance? The apostle tells you, you cannot have saving knowledge, regeneration, or faith, without their use; I do not speak what God may do extraordinarily, but this is God's ordinary way: *How can they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how can they hear without a preacher?* I may say the same of angels in their way, for they are rational and living instruments, they are ministers of God, and they administer to us saving truths: an angel told that first news of the gospel, *Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.* And shall this or-

dinance of Christ be without any consideration how we may receive good from it? God forbid.

2. The angels are an ordinance ever present; some other ordinances may be taken from us: men may take from us our bibles, teachers, pastors, or they may imprison us where we cannot enjoy them, but they cannot take from us the holy angels: *when the high priest, and all that were with him, laid hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison, then the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, go stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when Peter was in prison, sleeping between two soldiers bound with two chains, and the keepers before the door kept the prison, behold the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison, and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly.* No prison is so close, no keepers are so vigilant as to keep out angels: though we want and may want other ordinances, yet we have the angels as an ordinance to walk up and down with us, wheresoever we are, or withersoever we go.— I cannot but remember that speech of a great divine, which a first reading exceedingly struck with me: “The good Lord forgive me, for that amongst my other offences, I have suffered myself so much to forget, as his Divine presence, so the presence of his holy angels: It is I confess my great sin that I have filled my eyes with other objects, and have been slack in returning praises to my God for the continual assistance of those blessed and beneficent spirits, which have ever graciously attended me without intermission, from the first hour of my conception to this present moment, neither shall ever, I hope, absent themselves from my tutelage and protection till they shall have presented my poor soul to her final glory.” If a good man of an holy gracious spirit was so forgetful of them, that

he was fain to cry peccavi, I confefs my great fin, and the good Lord forgive me. Methinks it should be a prevailing motive to work on us, so to converse with them, and to perform our respective duties to them, as being ever present, without intermission they wait on us, how is it that days without number who should forget them, and their ministrations ?

3. The angels are an ordinance improving other ordinances of Jesus Christ : in this respect there is no fear of clashing with other ordinances : it is true that the Lord never calls any assembly to two divers employments at one and the same time, unless they be subservient the one to the other. Hence it is, we blame them, who coming into our congregations when some public ordinances are in hand, they betake themselves to their private devotions, and will not reverently (without more a-do) compose themselves to join with the assembly in that ordinance of God which is in hand : we would not have ordinances clash, only angel-ministration in religious affairs will not hinder, but further our religious services ; and angel-administration in civil affairs will not hinder, but further our civil business.

1. In religious services the angels are assistant ; it is said, that they suggest suitable, seasonable, and pious thoughts at such a time : when Cornelius was praying, he saw an angel, saying unto him, thy prayers and thy alms are come up for a memorial before God : and while Zacharias was executing the priest's office before God, there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord on the right side of the altar of incense, saying, thy prayer is heard. 2. In civil affairs the angels are assistant ; they shall keep thee in all thy ways, in thy vacation, or particular calling. Now herein is the excellency of such an ordinance, that it is an addition and improvement to all other ordinances, an argument sufficient to bind us to our duties in reference to it.

4. Angel-ministration, and our communion with them, is an ordinance in opposition to satan's temp-

tations, and our communion with them, it were enough to amaze poor souls to consider the powers and principalities that are against them; were they but weak, they were less considerable; but we wrestle not against flesh and blood (saith the apostle) but against spirits, yea, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places. And yet as great as the power and policy of devils are, they are less in power than the holy angels: "There was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not.—And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and satan, and bound him a thousand years." Now here is the encouragement to our duties; not only God and Christ, who is the author and finisher of our faith, but even spiritual substances of good angels, proportionable to the other of bad angels, contend with them, and stand most valiantly on our side.

But what are those duties of communion we owe the angels in this respect? I answer, 1. In general. 2. In special.

1. In general: as is their ministration, so is our duty of communion with them. Now in several ways do they administer to us, and so in several respects do we owe duties to God and them. There is a proportion (if we can find it out) betwixt their ministration and our duty, and they answer one another, as in the glass, face answers face: if they serve us, certainly there is something of service that we owe God and them: as the Lord could say, *If I be a Father, where is mine honour? And if I be a master, where is my fear?* So if the angels stand in any such relation towards us, it cannot be, but proportionable or suitable duties are to be performed by us.

2. In special: as the kinds of their ministration

differ at several times, so are we to observe their ministrations at these times, and to return suitable duties. At the first they minister in one kind, and anon they minister in another kind: as our several needs are at several times, so are their several ministrations at those times. *Ex. gr.* When I was in my mother's womb, they ministered thus; and when I was born, and yet an infant, they ministered thus; and when I was grown, and come to riper years, they ministered thus; and when I die, and go out of the world, they will minister thus; and when I shall rise again, and come to judgment, they will minister thus. Now here is my duty: 1. To consider their several ministrations at those several times. 2. To return suitable duties at times seasonable, as I am in their season to perform all other duties.



## S E C T. IX.

### *Use of Direction.*

**A**ND this is that special use which I aimed at, and which I had at first in my eye when I began this work; it is an use of direction, wherein I shall first lay down the office of angels, and then our office. First, what they do in their times, and then what we must do in our times, in answer to them and their ministrations. And O that the Lord would bless this work to thee that readest! O that he, on whose errand I come, would speak himself to thy soul, for he is able to instruct, yea, when he teacheth, all are scholars.

## MINISTRATION OF,

AND

## Communion with Angels.



## CHAP. I.

## SECT. I.

*Of the Time when the Angels first begin their Ministration.*

**T**HE first period wherein the angels minister to heaven's heirs, it is from their quickening in the womb, till their birth. Come then, and first, see the ministration of angels at this time; and secondly, learn, and practise we those several duties that especially concern the faints in that respect.

1. For the ministration of angels in that period, most probable it is, that then they begin their ministration. The exact beginning is indeed questionable; some would have it to begin at the first hour of conception. They have ever graciously attended me (saith one) without intermission from the first hour of my conception to this present moment. Others at the first infusion of the soul. Their care begins (say they) as soon as the child is quickened in the womb, for that they have then another distinct charge to look after. Others at the birth of the elect; God revealing to the angels who are such, by requiring their attendance on them then: From their birth to the end of their life, saith Zanchius, angels are assigned of God to wait on the

elect. Others at the baptism of infants: Origen, recounting many opinions, doth mention this; which is very improbable, for then it is in the power of parents, who set the time of baptism, to say, when the angels shall begin their office over their children, but the elect are precious and dear to God before, as after the ordinance of baptism. Others at the time of conversion. Of which two reasons are given.

1. Because the angels know not the decrees before that election be declared in conversion: but this we deny.

2. Because in the state of nature a man is under the wrath of God, and is vexed with evil spirits that hurry him to sin, and rule in the children of disobedience; but although this cannot be denied, yet God is resolved that all his elect shall have invisible supports against satan, to preserve them charily, as chosen vessels, against the time that he shall manifest himself unto them; and it is sufficient to angels, that God wills their attendance, and that hereafter they shall discern some fruit of their attendance. For my part, amidst all these differences, I close only with them who say, that the angels begin the execution of their charge when the soul is infused: and the reasons are solid——

1. Because the child hath then a distinct being of his own.

2. Because then it is a person consisting of soul and body.

3. Because God's providence over soul and body (of which the angels are servants) taketh date thence: *Thou hast covered me*, saith David, *in my mother's womb*: The Lord in framing our bodies, and creating our souls in our mother's womb, did then cover his tender work with his mighty power from all inconveniences, as with a shield; and therefore then did the angels begin their ministrations.

R r 2

## S E C T. II.

*Of the Manner of Angel-ministration at that Time.*

**B**UT how do the angels minister at such a time? I answer, they keep, preserve, defend, deliver, sustain, and strengthen the babes, even in the womb. I cannot think, that they have only one office at such a time, but that sometimes they attend them for good, and sometimes they deliver them from evil. The case stands thus; in the creation or infusion of the soul (which is all one, for *creando infunditor & infundendo creatur*) the angels receive their commission, as if the Lord should say, Come, blessed angels, here is a creature that shall at last fill up the room of some fallen angel, and then it shall be like to yourselves, and you shall love it as you love yourselves, but in the mean time, it is my pleasure that you should minister unto it, and keep it safe; which is no sooner said, but they are prompt and ready to do God's will.

We may wonder at this, that the angels should thus minister to man after his fall which they never did before. In that collation betwixt innocent Adam, second Adam, renewed Adam, and old Adam, it is said, that the angels did neither minister unto, nor keep the first Adam, before the fall, because he was in no danger, only they loved him: The angels indeed ministered to Christ, the second Adam, and loved him, but did not keep him, for he was Comprehensor as well as Viator; Christ is the head of angels, and therefore he is not kept by them; the angels now minister to the renewed Adam, yea, they love him, and keep him, and yet this argues not any prerogative that the saints have

above Christ, but rather their weakness and wants, that they have need of the angels to preserve them, as young children stand in need of nurses to wait upon them: but as for old Adam, or wicked reprobates, the angels neither minister to them, nor love them, nor keep them, in respect of any special and particular keeping: it may be the angels are sometimes ministers of outward things even to the wicked, as the angels brought down manna in the wilderness to the bad Israelites, as well as good; but they have not that particular care of the wicked, as they have of the elect of God; they come not up and down the ladder, Christ, to minister to them, as they do to the elect. Now this keeping of the elect, is not only in this life, but all the while that they are in the mother's womb,



### SECT. III.

#### *Experiences of this Truth.*

**O**F this, as of all the rest, I would give in some experiences for further clearing.

1. An ancient matron having many children, and having left bearing for about the space of twelve years, the Lord then unexpectedly gave her to conceive; she wondered, and apprehended nothing but ill health, purposed on such a day to take physic; but the night before (if I mistake not) she felt the child stir in her womb, and then she brake out, as Sarah did; *What! after I am waxed old, shall I bear a child, my lord being old also?* Hereupon the physic was removed, the child preserved, and rightly called Isaac in imitation of old Abraham and Sarah,

who laughed at the news of the angel, that they should have a son in their old age. Gen. xvii. 17. xviii. 12.

2. Three godly women in the island of Guernsey, were condemned to be burnt for their religion, and though one of them was great with child, yet found she no favour: as they were all three in the fire, the belly of the woman breaking with the vehemency of the flame, the infant (being a fair man-child) fell into the fire; which being caught, and carried to the bailiff, he commanded it to be had back, and thrown into the fire; whereby after it was born, and preserved by the angels, it died a martyr, *Clarke*.

#### S E C T. IV.

*Of the Duties that concern us in this Respect.*

2. **T**HE duties that concern us in this respect, are either parents' duties, or children's—

1. For the parents.

1. Parents may rejoice at this, that the holy angels attend them, and those little pieces and pictures of themselves. You that are mothers great with child, are you not sometimes in trouble, fear, and peril? Be not discouraged, for the angels attend your motions, and all occurrences for the safety and preservation both of you and yours. It is observed, that when Mary saluted Elizabeth, the babe sprang in her womb for joy, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. Some think that this springing of the babe was by the presence of an angel with John, otherwise that little embryo had been incapable of such effections and motions, according to the course of nature; and immediately it follows, Eli-

zabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. A serious consideration of the angels ministering to such embryos, may be a blessed means to fill you with the comforts of God's Spirit. O rejoice in this! Nor is that all: For——

2. Parents ought to pray, not to the angels, but to the God of angels, for the favour, assistance and protection of the angels to their infants. I know such prayers are not usual, but is not that a neglect of duty to our babes? When David prayed against his enemies, he could say, *Let the angel of the Lord chase them; and let the angel of the Lord persecute them*: How much more may we say for our tender infants in the womb, *Let the angel of the Lord guard them, and let the angel of the Lord keep them*. Manoah and his wife were very careful what to do for the babe which must be born to deliver Israel out of the Philistines' hands; and therefore after the angel had appeared to the woman, and told her, then Manoah intreated the Lord, and said, *O my Lord, let the man of God, (or the angel of God) which thou didst send, come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born: and God hearkened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again*: Indeed when he came, he would have no burnt offering offered unto him, but gave direction, *If thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord*. Angels would not be prayed unto, nor worshipped, Rev. xix. 10.—xxii. 29. But yet in reference to the angels, we find Manoah praying and offering unto the Lord, and if he prayed for angel direction, how much more may we turn the promises into prayers for angel-protection, and ministration to these poor infants yet unborn!

2. For the children or parties themselves, when grown.—

1. Let them know and be acquainted with their angel keepers. When David considered how he was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the

lowest parts of the earth, and covered in his mother's womb, he cried out, *Marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knows right well.* It is not enough to have angel-keepers, before we are born, but in time we should endeavour to know them: it is sad to be ignorant still of such a glorious truth; surely God would have us acquainted with his works, and to bear witness of what we know for his glory.

2. Let them praise God for the angels ministering to them in the womb. *Thou art he* (saith David) *that took me out of the womb:* and thou art he that preserved me in the womb. The Lord doth many things for us, which at that time when he doth them, we cannot observe; it is our duty therefore to look upon them afterwards, that they may furnish us with matter of praise to God. But why is not praise rendered to the angels, as well as to God? Because God will not give his glory to another: angels must have their due, but they must not rob God of his praise; whatsoever instruments and means the Lord makes use of, the spiritual eye pierceth through them, and looks on God, and gives him all the glory. You that hear of this angel ministration in the womb, O praise the Lord! It is, if you rightly apprehend it, a smothered wonder, and so glorious a work of God, that he deserves perpetual praise from you for that one work. "Thou art he that preserved me in, and took me out of my mother's bowels; my praise shall be continually of thee."

3. Let them act their faith, and trust in God, even because of this: to this end are all the experiences of God's love to his saints, that they might store up their faith, and trust God more: O then among other experiences of God's dealings, make use of this, for strengthening of your faith! "Thou art my hope O Lord God; thou art my trust from my youth; by thee have I been holden up from the womb." As satan makes assault after assault against faith, so should we raise bulwark after bulwark, for defence thereof: after we have looked

upon other men's experiences, we should recount our own experiences of God's care towards us, and make use of all God's dealings for our strengthening. " Thus Lord thou didst for me in my youth, and childhood, and infancy. Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breast, I was cast upon thee from the womb, thou art my God from my mother's belly : yea in the womb before I was born, thou didst cover me, and guard me by the angels, and therefore how should I but believe ? How am I forced to acknowledge that the Lord never leaves me, even when I least perceive his presence ? " Here is mighty encouragement for faith.

4. Let them love God and his angels, for this early ministration of the angels. Ancient love is a load-stone of love ; were it but a little love, yet long love might beget love again. Why, God hath loved us from everlasting, and the angels have loved us from our first beginning, and therefore how should we but love them again ? David's consideration of God's mercy towards us in the womb, took up his heart and ravished his spirit ; yea, he was so exceedingly taken with it, that he could not off it.— " Thine eye did see my substance, yet being unperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them ; how precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God, How great is the sum of them ? If I should count them, they are more in number than sand : when I awake, I am with thee." Oh that our souls were awakened, and oh that our spiritual senses were renewed, that upon a serious consideration of God's love, and of the angels' love to us in the womb, we might love again, and in a holy pang cry out, How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God ? and how precious are your thoughts unto me, O ye angels of God ?

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## C H A P. II.

## SECT. I.

*Of the Ministration of Angels in our Infancy and Childhood.*

**T**HE second period wherein the angels minister to heaven's heirs, it is from their birth to their youth, or riper years; this takes up the time of infancy, and childhood. And in prosecution of this, first, set we the object before us at this time, and secondly, learn and practise we those several duties that will naturally flow from such an object.

1. For the object, viz. The ministration of angels in our infancy and childhood. The scriptures are express: "Take heed that he despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven, their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." By little ones, I do not exclude the adult, who resemble little children in some imitable qualities: nor would I exclude little children, whom our Saviour propounds as a pattern for the imitations of the adult, Matt. xviii. ver. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. But I would rather take all in, and say, that by little ones is meant either those who are little in stature, as the child set in the midst of them: or, little in grace, parts, esteem, as some of the disciples were; or little in their own eyes, as all the elect are or must be: all these have their angels, and therefore none of these must be despised. When Christ was but a babe, *The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be there, until I bring thee word.—*

And when Herod was dead, *the angel appeared again unto Joseph, in Egypt, saying, arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel.* Thus was Christ provided for in his cradle by an angel. When Hagar had not wherewithal to feed her child, *she cast the child under a shrub, and she went and sat her down over against him a good way off, saying, let me not see the death of the child: and she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept, and God heard the voice of the lad, and when the angel of the Lord called to Hagar out of heaven and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is, arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand, for I will make him a great nation; and God opened her eyes, she saw a well of water, and she went and filled her bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.* Here was an angel calling, comforting, and directing Hagar in her child's behalf: or if Hagar and Ishmael were not elect: when Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph, he said, *The angel which redeemed me from all evil bless (or keep) the lads.* Many think this was the great angel of the covenant to whom Jacob prayed for a blessing on Joseph's sons, and the rather because he is said to redeem him from all evil, which is properly peculiar to Jesus Christ; but others say that this form of prayer was only an interpretative kind of imploration, that God would bless, or keep Joseph's sons by his angels; and for that of redeeming, if this was spoken of eternal redemption, it were indeed peculiar to Christ, but Jacob (saith a late writer) speaks here of redemption, and deliverance from temporal evils, which is confessed to be a main office of angels.—And Chrysostom, Basil, Rivius, Mercurius (as he cites them) quote this very place for the deputation of angels.

## S E C T. II.

*Of the Manner of Angel-ministration at that Time.*

**B**UT how do the angels minister to us in our childhood? I answer—

1. They keep us from evil: were it not so, into how many dangers should we fall? Indeed, a wonder it is, that most children are not disfigured, and lamed with bruises and fearful miscarriages, with cutting and burning themselves, as hundreds and thousands of opportunities are offered, but that angels are very diligent to keep them out of harm's way: *When father and mother forsake me* (saith David) *then will the Lord take me up*: When parents are without natural affection, when nurses are careless, and children of restless, stirring, and climbing dispositions, then doth the guardianship of angels especially appear. To this purpose is Chemnitius cited by the aforesaid author, saying, That infants are obnoxious to such and so many dangers, that no anxiety of parents, or diligence of servants, can secure them without the tuition of angels. And Gerson observes the like, whence is it (saith he) that little children are conserved from so many perils of their infancy, as fire, water, falls, suffocation, but by the agency of angels?

2. They keep us in health: some say, that much physic should not be administered to infants, it is not safe to be too much tampering with such tender things, and I suppose there is less need, in that angels themselves are instead of physicians to such

weak patients. It is Mr. Dyke's saying, angels help to remove diseases and evils, as the devil helps to bring them on us : and to that purpose they may have an hand in the use of such means as are for our bodily health. Angels are the rockers (saith the same author) of babes and sucklings, their invisible hands are doing for them, when we little think of any such matter. It may be some are sick, and yet recover, and we attribute it to this or that means, when indeed the instrument was an heavenly angel. ' Certainly (saith our divine Seneca) ' there are many thousand events wherein com- ' mon eyes see nothing but nature, which yet are ' effected by the ministration of angels : as when ' sudden cures were wrought at the pool of Be- ' thesda, it might perhaps be attributed by many to ' some beneficial constellation, but we know out of ' the evangelist, that an angel descended and moved ' the water, and made it sensative : where we find ' a probability of second causes in nature, we are ' apt to confine our thoughts from looking higher, ' yet even then there are many times unseen hands." How much more when the work is above the power of any secondary cause? this carries its own evidence, without dispute, that if it be not of nature, it must needs be of an higher efficacy. *Ex. g.* Have we seen a poor weak child raised up from deadly sickness, when all natural helps have given him up, then have the angels of God been his secret physicians.

3. They teach and tutor us: some think, that angels do help little infants to speak and go, but howsoever, they are as tutors and schoolmasters to them. Zanchy compares them first to nurses, and then to schoolmasters, that they may instruct them, admonish them, correct them, comfort them, defend them from all evil, and provoke them to all good. Amidst all their offices (which are almost infinite) this I believe is the angel's care of little

children, that they be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Heaven is the place whence many good angels are fallen, and the good angels would have these places filled up again with saints. Hence they take care especially of their soul, tacitly revealing to them the mysteries of grace, not so as if the angels' office were to preach the word; that ministry is not committed to them, but to the apostles, and others called to it; but it is at least the angel's care that both children and adult should be taught in the church by men appointed and prepared by the angels: Thus the angel spake to Philip, when he was to preach the gospel to the eunuch, saying, *Arise, and go towards the south*: and another angel speaks to Cornelius, saying, *Send to Joppa, and call for one Simon Peter, who shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do*. If the angels are not our ordinary preachers, lest they dazzle us (their brightness being unsuitable to our weak conditions) yet are they God's instruments to provide preachers for us, that by them we may be instructed in the law of God, and mysteries of the gospel. And something more the angels do, in that they suggest to infants' pious thoughts, and tacitly provoke them to a pious life, and draw out of them such gracious holy words, that the Psalmist's saying is verified, *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength*. Thus when the children cried in the temple, *Hosannah to the Son of David*, and therefore the priests and scribes were sore displeased, Jesus made their apology, saying, *Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise?* Certainly those Hosannas of the children were above nature, or acquired parts, or parents' education, and therefore they were taught them by the angels.

## S E C T. III.

*Experience of this Truth.***E**XPERIENCES.

1. For keeping us from evil.

An infant being laid in his bed with some servants, he was near morning found out of the bed among wooden and iron tools, enough to have killed him, he was taken up cold, yet without any harm, and being laid in the warm bed he revived, and so was graciously preserved.

A child fell into a river of water, and being carried down the stream, was at last taken up for dead, but after some time he revived, and the next day I saw him, and telling him that God had given him a new life, the child wept, I desired him to remember it, improve it, and to thank God for that mercy all his days.

A child playing by the side of a pond, fell into it, where it was like to perish: near the pond was an house, where only one man was reading in a book, but it pleased God that he was suddenly so troubled, though he knew not for what, that he could read no longer; whereupon he walked up and down the room, but could not be quiet; then he walked forth, and espied a straw hat swimming upon the water, and looking earnestly, he saw the child rise to the top of the water, and so catching hold of it, drew it out, and saved its life. *White.*

There was a maid, who lived with her mother in Bargamus, and was in one and the same night by a strange wonder brought into the city of Venice; they in the family where she arrived, were near allied to her, and coming in the morning into the chamber where she was, and finding her unexpectedly stark naked, without any linen, not so much as

a rag to cover her, gently demanded of her how she came thither? Where her clothes were? And what was the cause of her coming? The poor girl being much ashamed, and mixing her blushes with many tears, made answer to this purpose: "This very night, said she, when I lay betwixt asleep and awake in bed, I perceived my mother steal softly from my side, thinking I had not seen her, and stripping herself from all her linen, she took from her closet a box of ointment, which opening she anointed herself therewith under the arm-pits, and some other parts of the body, which done, she took a staff, which stood ready in a corner, which she had no sooner bespied, but in the instant she rid (or rather flew) out of the window, and I saw her no more; at which being much amazed, and the candle still burning by me, I thought in myself to try a childish conclusion, and rising from my bed, took down the same box, and anointing myself, as I had before observed her, and making use of a bed-staff in the like manner, I was suddenly brought hither in a moment, where I was no sooner entered, but I espied my mother in the chamber with a knife in her hand, with purpose (as I thought) to kill this my young nephew (pointing to a child in the cradle) but she was hindered by finding me here, who no sooner saw me, but she began grievously to threat me, and came near to strike me, in which fear I began to call upon God to help me, whose name I had no sooner uttered, but she instantly vanished, and I am left here, even as you found me." Whereupon her kinsman, the master of the house, writ down, and keeping the maid still with him, sent to the inquisitor of the place where the mother of the girl, his kinswoman, lived in good reputation, and no way suspected: before whom she was called and questioned, and (as the manner of that country is, upon the like probability and suspicion) put to the mercy of the tormentor, and at length she confessed

every particular before mentioned ; to which she added, that she had no less than fifty fundry times been transported by the devil, only with a malicious intent to kill that young child ; but she found him always at her arrival so guarded (by angels and) by the blessings and prayers of his devout and religious parents, that she had no power over him. *Barthol. Spinæus.*

2. For preserving of health and life.

A child being begotten and born of ancient, sickly and diseased parents, was hereditarily infirm, and so oppressed with children's maladies, that the physician concluded he could not be long-lived ; whence the father drawing nigh to his death, and making his will, gave him such a portion in case he should live to the age of fourteen years : weak he was, and many sicknesses he had, and yet still the Lord raised him up : and unexpectedly restored him to health and strength, that he passed over those fourteen years and yet lives. Oh that it may be to God's glory, and the churches edifying.

At the taking of Bolton by prince Rupert, amongst others then slain, there was one William Isherwood and his wife ; and Felice their daughter, being then but eleven weeks old, lay pitifully crying at the breast of her dead mother ; but it so pleased God, that an old woman, the wife of one Ralph Helne, of the same town, aged above seventy years, who had not given suck above twenty years before, seeing and hearing the child, compassionated, and took it up, and having neither food for herself, nor for the infant in that common calamity, to still the child, she laid it to her breast ; and behold the goodness of God, who provides for the young ravens that cry ! the child sucking, milk came into her breast, wherewith she nourished it, to the admiration and astonishment of all beholders.

Isenbard, an earl in Swevia, had to wife one Jermentrudis, who grievously accused one of her neighbours for adultery, because she had been de-

livered of six children at a birth ; but it so fell cut afterward, that herself (her husband being abroad in the fields) was delivered of twelve children, all males : she fearing the like infamous punishment, that by her instigation had been inflicted on the former woman, commanded her nurse to kill eleven of them : the nurse going to execute the will of her lady, was met by her lord, then returning homewards ; he demanded what she carried on her lap ? she answered, puppies : He would needs see them, and opening her apron, found the infants ; whereupon he examined the matter, found out the truth, enjoined the nurse to be secret, and to put the children to some nurse abroad ; and when they were six years old, he made a feast, apparelled the young boys alike, and presented them to their mother, she misdoubting the truth, confessed her fault, obtained pardon, and owned her children. *Heylin.*

A minister in the late rebellion of Ireland, flying for his life to Dublin, his wife and children followed after him ; in their journey being very weary, they all agreed when night came, to sit down together, under the lee of an Irish mountain, for it was frost and snow : The minister's wife had a young child, called John Teate, hanging upon her breasts which were become dry through her manifold griefs and want of sleep three nights together ; the child cried and groaned, and for want of nourishment was ready to die : in such sort, that the sad mother not being able any longer to endure the groans and cries of her babe, arose up from the company (who sat all together as close as they could, with children in their laps, to keep one another warm) purposing to leave the child by himself, that he might be freed from those heart-piercing sobs and wailings. And here behold the Lord who hath promised to be seen of his servants in time of need, appeared even literally in this mount ; for as she stooped down with a bleeding heart, and eyes full of tears, there to leave her little one upon the ground, she spied, or rather

felt upon the rock (it being then something dark; only the snow cast some little light) a sucking-bottle, which she opening, tasted of what was within it, and found it to be full of good milk, which the Irish call bonny clabbo; she put it into her child's mouth, with fear lest he, never having sucked before out of any bottle besides her breast, would not draw it; but he readily sucked his belly full and fell asleep: The mother hereat astonished, returned unto the company, and shewed them what she had found; who much admired at it, how or whence the bottle came thither, considering that the place was far remote from any habitation at all, and the vessel lay upon the top of the snow lately fallen; but some of them called to mind Hagar's story, and related it to the rest, how that *when she was wandering in the wilderness of Beerseba, the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast her child under one of the shrubs, and went, and sat her down a good way off; for she said, let me not see the death of the child, and she lift up her voice and wept; and then God heard the voice of the lad, and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water whereat she filled the bottle, and gave the lad drink.* These things compared and laid together, afforded them matter of thankfulness to God, for his providence, and of more comfort than any feast could have done: from thence they concluded (as if the angel had spoke to them as well as Hagar) that they should not fear, and that God who had so wonderfully preserved the infant, would in like manner preserve them all:—which accordingly came to pass; for the next day they came to Virginia, where they all found free, unexpected and plentiful refreshment, even a table in the wilderness; and within two or three days after, they came safe to Dublin, their desired harbour.—*Dr. Teate.*

3. For teaching or tutoring of infants.

A child being very young, much affected his an-

cient and reverend father with his reading of the bible, and with his questions and answers, which drew from the father these very words, that if the child but lived, he verily believed he would suck in learning as a child doth milk. This minds me of what was said of Origen (in whom was certainly much of the angels' tutoring) that his father brought him up from his childhood most studiously, in all good literature, but especially in the reading and exercise of the holy scripture, wherein he had such inward and mystical speculation, that many times he would move questions to his father of the meaning of this place or that place in scripture; inso-much, that his father divers times would uncover his breast, being asleep, and kiss it, giving thanks to God, who had made him so happy a father of such an happy child. This Origen being but yet a child, would needs have suffered martyrdom with his father Leonidas, had not his mother privily in the night season conveyed away his clothes and his shirt; whereupon more for shame to be seen, than for fear to die, he was constrained to remain at home; yet then he wrote a letter to his father with these very words; *Cave tibi, ne quid propter nos aliud quam Martyrii constanter faciendi propositum cogites.* Eusebius, L. 6. c. 3.

In the primitive persecutions, we read of one Romanus, who first being scourged with whips, with knaps of lead at the end, instead of tears, sighs, and groans he sung psalms all the time of his whipping, and after, his face being buffeted, his eye-lids torn with nails, his cheeks cut with knives, and his teeth struck out, that his pronounciation, at least, might be impaired, whilst he preached Christ, he only said, I thank thee O persecutor, that thou hast opened to me many mouths, whereby I may preach my Lord and Saviour: look how many wounds I have, so many mouths I have to praise my God. But being reviled, that Christ his God was but of yesterday, and that the gods of the Gentiles were of great

antiquity ; he made a long oration of the eternity of Christ ; which done, he said, Give me a child but of seven years old, which age is free from malice and other vices, wherewith riper age is commonly infected, and you shall hear what he will say : His request was granted, a pretty boy was called out of the multitude, and set before him : Tell me, my babe (quoth the martyr) whether thou thinkest it reason that we worship one Christ, and in Christ one Father, or else that we worship infinite Gods ? Unto whom the babe answered, that certainly whatsoever it be that men affirm to be God, he must needs be one, which with one is one and the same, and inasmuch as this one is Christ, of necessity Christ must be the true God, for that there be many Gods, we children cannot believe : And after this was the babe martyred. *Fox's Martyrology.*

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## S E C T. IV.

*Of the Duties that Concern us in this Respect.*

2. **F**OR the several duties that concern us in this respect, they are such as these.—

1. Let us know our privileges which God in Christ give us from our birth : The angels were appointed our guardians in the womb, and they have guarded, preserved, and tutored us in our infancy and childhood : many a time were we in great danger of fire, and water, and falls and suffocations : many a time have we been in the extremity of sickness, and very near to death : many a lesson have we had taught us, and many a motion and holy thought hath been suggested to us, and is

not all this worthy our notice, knowledge and understanding? Did we but see little children of poor men waited on by a guard of rich, noble, strong, and valiant men, would not all admire? But if we knew this to be our own condition, that when we were babes and sucklings, and could not discern between our right hand and left, that we had then a guard full of state and strength, even of angels themselves, would not this fill us with the sense of the goodness of God? Certainly it concerns us to know thus much, that we may better know the goodness of our God in thus providing for us: *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him*, saith David; and then, *O come and taste, and see that the Lord is good*. God would not have his favours unregarded; for if we know them not, never shall we attain to conceive of God himself, especially in his goodness, love and mercy towards us. But of these more particularly in another section.

2. Pause a while, and to every particular ministration in our infancy, set we a *selah*: this was the manner of David in his psalms; when some especial thing worthy attention or observation was delivered, he added *selah*; that by a little stop or pause of the breath, the matter, worth, or excellency of the thing might be considered. Methinks it is sad that the angels should do such excellent offices for us, as mothers, nurses, physicians, tutors, and that either we should forget them, or not seriously consider and pause upon them; in other things of lesser consequence, we can speak with delight *olim meminisse, juvabit*, but are not these passages of God's providence, whereof the angels are especial instruments (as to keep us from evil, to preserve us in health, to teach us God's will in our infancy or childhood) of far more excellency, profit and delight? O then let us set a star at the margin of such notes, and whilst we either read or sing them let us stop awhile, that we may dwell upon them, and see the want of them

on all sides; let us say with Jacob, when he saw the ladder on which angels ascended and descended, *Surely the Lord* (or the angel of the Lord) *was in this place* (or in this passage) *and I knew it not.*

3. Bless we God for this free love to us in our first and ignorant times: whilst we were infants, we could neither deserve nor desire such a glorious guard, and yet even then had the angels a charge to keep us from evil, to keep us in health, and to be our tutors: O adore we this free grace! Say we as the sweet singer of Israel, "O Lord, our Lord; how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens: out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou sounded praise." Very children themselves could sing Hosanna to Christ by the help of angels, which occasioned him to cite the text, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise."—Most rightly is it said, out of the mouths, because they speak not from their own understanding; but by his virtue, and ministration of the angels, their tender tongues were led to speak those words: how much more should we, that are adult and of capacity to understand our duty; I say, how much more should we praise him by the help of angels for the help and ministration of his angels? Come, and sing we an Hosannah to him, set we the crown upon the head of free love, free grace: let us join with angels to bless God for his angels, and for their ministration in our infancy and tender years. Is there not cause in regard of the freeness of his love? It was bestowed on man unmerited, undesired, and placed on him in the infancy, yea, even in the dark womb.

4. Live we up to the mercies we received when we discerned little or nothing of them. If any friend do me a kindness unknown to me, I shall take it kindly and exceeding kindly when I know it; and if before, I was unable to requite, yet when I am able, I should think myself strongly engaged

to retaliate : surely thus it is with the people of God ; our friends, the heavenly angels waited on us, in our infancy and childhood, but we neither saw them, nor had them in our thoughts ; notwithstanding they went on in the discharge of their office, and sometimes they were as nurses ; otherwise as physicians, and otherwise as tutors and schoolmasters to us : and now that we know this, now that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, and of his angels, shines in our hearts, oh how should we live up to these mercies ? How should we gratify the angels, who have been thus, to us, and have done all this for us ? The angel that appeared to Gideon under an oak, was for the present unknown, but “ when he had caused fire to rise up out of the rock, and to consume the flesh, and the unclean cakes, then Gideon perceived that he was an angel, and said, Alas, O Lord God, for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face : Upon this, God was pleased to encourage him, saying, peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die.” And then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and threw down the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove by it ; and afterwards became a judge of Israel till he died. Angels’ presence and encouragements once discovered and made known, are enough through the blessing of God, to work in us a fear of God, and obedience to his laws.



### C H A P. III.

#### SECT. I.

*Of the Ministration of angels in our Riper Years.*

**T**HE next period wherein the angels minister to heaven’s heirs it is from their riper years unto their death. And in order to this, we shall first observe their ministration, and secondly, our duties.

1. For their ministration, I shall follow the same method as before.

1. That it is so the scriptures abundently prove, Psal. 34. 8. Psal. 91. 11. 12. Gen. 19. 15. 16. 2 Kings 6. 16, 17. If I may give instances, Lot was led out of Sodom by an angel; Daniel was taught by an angel; Cornelius was answered by an angel; an angel appeared to Joseph, Mary, Zachary, Peter, Paul, on several errands. Scarce any remarkable thing befel the people of God, but it was accomplished by the ministry of angels. But what needs more? *Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*

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## S E C T. II.

### *Of the Kinds of Angel-ministration at that Time, as to our Bodies,*

2. **F**or the kinds of their ministration, it runs in several streams; as first, to our bodies; secondly, to our souls.

1. For our bodies.

1. They keep us from evil: so they did in our infancy, but now they do it with this limitation, *they keep us in all our ways*; (i. e.) in all those courses appointed us by God. The devil left out that clause in the psalm, when he set Jesus Christ on a pinnacle of the temple, and tempted him to cast himself down; he told him the promise, that the angels should keep him, but he omitted the main point, in all his ways. Certainly there is some special treasure inclosed in this, or the devil would never have concealed it from our Saviour; then we may expect

angel-protection, when we are in the ways God hath appointed us : It was no way for Christ to cast himself down headlong from the pinnacle, for the way lay down the stairs : if we keep not in our ways, neither will the angels keep us from external evils : the prophet that went out of his way, and beyond his bounds appointed him by God, *a lion met him by the way, and slew him.*

But do not many external evils befall God's people, even walking in their ways and courses appointed them by God ? I answer,——

It cannot be denied, but that sometimes such things do befall the godly : Mephibosheth, a child of five years old, son to a good father, and afterwards a good man himself, was lamed by a fall from his flying nurse. Satan was permitted by God, to destroy the goods, children, and health of Job, though by the spirit of God he was styled *a perfect and an upright man, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil, and that there was none like him in the earth,* 'The Lord (say some) can countermand angelical protection, and give instruction to those powers (in some cases,) to suspend their attendance and care of us, yet the promise is not null, and of none effect : For—

1. Angelical attendance doth mitigate the evil, so that God's people do not utterly miscarry ; they may be *troubled on every side, yet not distressed ; perplexed, but not in despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed.* Angels are not always to keep us from, but sometimes in troubles ; Christ could have prayed that many legions of angels should have kept him from suffering, this he did not, yet the angels ministered unto him in the wilderness, and in the garden, where he sweat drops of blood.

2. The promise of angel-protection, (as all temporal promises) runs with this tacit reservation and condition, always provided, that God in his infinite wisdom, for reasons, best known to him—

‘ self, do not judge the contrary more conducing to  
 ‘ his glory, and our inward good : we know Job  
 ‘ was afflicted, that he might be tried, and the Lord  
 ‘ doth sometimes suspend the protection of his an-  
 ‘ gels, that we may the more depend upon himself :  
 ‘ as the nurse gets behind the screen, that the infant  
 ‘ may go into the mother’s arms without crying ; if  
 ‘ the angels do not help us, it is that we may call  
 ‘ upon God for aid.

2. They keep us in health ; so they did in our in-  
 fancy, but the promise runs without limitation to  
 every age of our life. “ Surely he shall deliver thee  
 from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome  
 pestilence ;—A thousand shall fall at thy side,  
 and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not  
 come nigh thee :” And the reason follows, “ for he  
 shall give his angels charge over thee :” And the  
 conclusion is this, “ With long life will I satisfy  
 him, and shew him my salvation.” It is the opinion  
 of good divines, that good angels help to remove  
 diseases, and to conserve bodily health ; and on the  
 contrary, evil angels are God’s instruments of in-  
 flicting sore and grievous maladies. As in the midst  
 of his agonies, the Lord Jesus (saith one) was com-  
 forted and refreshed by an angel, Luke 22. 43. so are  
 the angels with the faithful, helping and easing them  
 in their sickness.—For my own part (saith another)  
 I believe that God’s works in the world are usally  
 by instruments, and not immediate, and that good  
 angels are his instruments in conveying his mercies  
 both to soul and body, and that evil angels are in-  
 struments of inflicting his judgments both corporal  
 and spiritual. Hence God is said to send his evil  
 angels among the Israelites, Psal. 78, 49. Hence  
 satan did execution on the children, cattle, and body  
 of Job : so then I judge that satan is the instrument  
 in our ordinary diseases, &c. And I may add on  
 the same grounds, that the angels are the instru-  
 ments in continuing or restoring our bodily health.  
 The ministry of angels (saith a third) is for the pro-

moting of our health, I mean not only of the health of the soul, but of our bodily health : no question but the devils, who are our enemies, and continually stand about us, would quickly rush upon our bodies, and either tear them, or affect them with divers maladies, but that the good angels do defend us by divine command. I cannot deny, but that sometimes God afflicts men by the ministry of his holy and blessed angels, for Sodom was destroyed by the angels, and Senacharib's host was slain by the angels ; and David saw the angel of the Lord, having a drawn sword in his hand, and stretched out over Jerusalem ; and an angel of the Lord smote Herod, and he was eaten of worms ; but this is not God's ordinary dispensation towards his saints. Surely their ordinary employments, and wherein they delight, is according to the promise, *He shall give his angels charge over thee.*

3. They carefully furnish us with all other necessities for this life. Thus when the Israelites were in the wilderness, they were provided for by the angels : *Man did eat of angel's food, he sent them meat to the full :* or as others translate, *Man did eat the bread of the mighties, he sent them meat to satiety :* It is all one, for what is the bread of the mighties, but the bread of the angels, which are mighty strength ? And manna is called their bread, either because it came from heaven, the habitation of the angels, or because it was excellent, so as the angels (if they needed any food) might eat it, or especially (as I think) because God sent it by the ministry of angels, they were the purveyors of it for the Israelites. Thus when Elijah went into the wilderness, and lay and slept under a juniper tree, *Behold an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat : and he looked and behold there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruise of water on his head, and he did eat, and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise, and eat.*

The same God that provided for him in the time of drought by the ministry of ravens, now again fed him by the ministry of angels. I know these provisions were miraculous, but where no miracles are, the angels have an hand even in ordinary provisions. *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him:* And what then? O fear the Lord ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him; the young lions do lack, and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. I know we see not the angels providing for us, but what then? Abraham's servant saw no angel going along with him, and yet Abraham could say, *The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, he shall send his angel before thee:* The Israelites saw no angel going along with them, and yet the Lord could say, *I will send an angel before thee, and I will drive out the Canaanites, &c.* For my part I see no angel removing me from place to place, yet I am fully persuaded, that no minister of Christ removes his station, or goes to a people as their pastor, but an angel of God, or the God of angels doth so order it: This is the office of angels (saith Zanch) by a command of God to send the doctors of the church to such or such a people: accordingly it was an angel that appeared to Paul in a vision by night, saying, *Come over to Macedonia and help us.* Eusebius tells a like story of Alexander bishop of Jerusalem, that after his agonies, and constancy of confession shewed in the persecution of Severus, he was admonished by a vision in the night season to make his journey up to Jerusalem, and drawing near to the city, a vision, with plain words was given to certain chief heads of Jerusalem to go out of the gates of the city, and there to receive the bishop appointed them by God: And though vision or revelation, I have none, yet (as the most reverend doctor said) Since I am convinced that the unfelt hands of the angels are in many occurrences of my life,

I have learned so much wit and grace, as rather to yield them too much, than too little stroak in ordering all my concernments for this life. It is true, their appearings are ceased, but not their workings; their converse is not so sensible, yet it is as real as ever it was before.



### S E C T. III.

#### *Of the Kinds of Angel-ministration at that Time, as to our Souls.*

2. **F**or our souls.

1. The angels declare to us what is the will and mind of God. Thus Daniel being troubled with the visions of his head, he went near unto one of the angels which stood by, and asked him the truth and meaning of them. *So he told me, (saith Daniel) and made me know the interpretation of the things.* And in another vision, when Daniel sought the meaning: *Behold there stood before me (said he) as the appearance of a man, and I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.—And he said unto me, understand O son of man.* And at another time, the man Gabriel, whom he had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched him about the time of the evening oblation, and informed him, and talked with him, and said, *O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding:* Nothing is more usual in God's word, than for angels to inform the saints what is the will and mind of God; the conception of Christ, and the birth of Christ, and the death of Christ, and the resurrection of

Christ, and the ascension of Christ, and his return to judgment, were all told by the angels, only you may look upon these as extraordinaries, and apparitions of angels, and such teachings, or enlightenings of our understanding in these days you cannot expect. All this I grant, and yet withal I had, that if visibly they do not teach us, they may do it invisibly; yea, and I very believe they do in ordinary, though invisibly, teach and instruct all the people of God.

But how can that be, when they do neither speak to us, nor reason with us after the manner of men?

I answer; They have other ways of speaking, or of reasoning with us. As——

1. They understand us, though we neither speak to them, nor reason with them: One of our light, in his *Child of light, walking in darkness*, tells us, that evil angels know much within us, and to that purpose they have more advantages than we men have to know one another by. For——

1. Those spirits can discern all corporeal actions, and though the species, in them, and their manner of knowing corporeal things differ from ours, yet they are anological with ours.

2. They make it their business to study men, it is their trade to go up and down, and consider men; *Hast thou not considered (says God to Satan) my servant Job?*

3. They are, and can be present at all our more retired actions; they are with us at bed and board, in all companies, and in all solitary places.

4. By what they see outwardly of our actions, they may guess at our inwards, which are as the principles of them.

5. They have an insight into the infancy, and the images therein, which follow and imitate the inward thoughts of the mind, as the shadow doth the body: in this respect they go into a room further than we can go, yea, into a room next to the privy cham-

ber, which yet remains fast locked up unto them. This last goes beyond all the former; and yet (saith my author) all divines grant, that the devils may know and discern our phantasms intuitive, as we do things which are present before us.

6. As they may see into the fancy, so if God permit, evil angels may go into the head, and see those very images and species in the fancy, that are for present in direct conjunction with the understanding, and which is then thinking and musing of. Indeed the immediate knowledge of our thoughts, and hearts and understandings, is proper only to God; *I the Lord, search the heart, I try the reins*; yet arguitive, and as they do transpire, and appear in the images of the fancy, and so *quasi in aliis*, and mediately, they may be very far discerned, and looked into by evil angels, and so by discerning those very phantasms, which the understanding actually at present vieweth, and maketh use of, they may then judge what it is, that the mind for the present is musing on; all this is discussed at large concerning the evil angels.

And if the evil angels may know thus much of what is within us, do not the good angels know thus much? The evil angels have by their sin lost much of their knowledge, and therefore are called darkness, and the power of darkness, because they are exceeding dark in themselves, and in comparison of the holy angels, but the good angels never sinned, and therefore never were deprived of the least measure of knowledge conferred on them. I must therefore conclude, that without speaking to them, or reasoning with them after the manner of men, they understand as well, or wherein they do not, God is pleased often to discover it to them by an especial dispensation, of favour and grace: as to the angel in Daniel, was revealed the mystery of the seventy weeks.

2. We may understand them, though they never speak to us, or reason with us, and so we are capable

of their teaching: you will say, how may we do that? I answer——

1. Observe we their work upon our fancies, there they are busy day and night, to set together the images for our understanding of them: Look, as a compositor in printing, takes his letters that lie confused afore him, and orders, and sets them in words and sentences, to represent to the reader's eye what he would have read by him: so do the angels set and compose the images in our fancies to represent to our understanding such things as they would have us know; it is good therefore to observe their work day and night, for they may work on our fancies in our dreams.

2. Set we ourselves to think or muse upon those images set together by them. Thus when the angel Gabriel saluted Mary, it is said, that *she cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.* And after the angels had appeared to shepherds, and that all wondered at those things which the shepherds told them, it is said, that *Mary kept all those things, and pondered them in her heart.* Certainly it is our duty, when angels have been communicating their minds to us, to ponder, and muse, and meditate, and to cast in our mind, what manner of communication this should be.

3. Try we their work upon our fancies, whether it be agreeable to the word of God: It were sad, if we should take that for the speaking of angels, which is the very voice of devils: now though evil spirits can transform themselves into angels of light, yet they may be discerned, if we will try their work by the word. The good angels are distinguished from the bad, either by their apparitions, or by their actions; the former I omit, for the latter poet gives them in thus.

Who so will sift their actions, he shall find  
By their success, if well or ill inclin'd.

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XX

The one from other ; for the blessed still  
 Square all their actions to th' Almighty's will,  
 And to man's profit :————  
 The Cacodæmons labour all they can  
 Against God's honour and the good of man.

Indeed, this is a sure and indubitable character ; the good angels never speak any thing contrary to the word, or which is all one, the good angels are employed in nothing save the honour of God, and the profit and preservation of good men ; but evil spirits aim all their enterprizes and endeavours to derogate from God's worship, and to assume it to themselves, and by their flattering deceptions, and oily insinuations with man, to work the utter subversion both of body and soul : It is good therefore to try their works upon our fancies, and if we find it agreeable to God's word, or if it aim at God's honour and man's profit, we may conclude, this was the speaking of an angel of God.

But methinks I hear some object, You tell us of a work of angels upon our fancies day and night ; and indeed in the night we can more easily observe some such like impressions, or work upon us in our dreams : but are not these things spoken against ? Was not this the way of false prophets, to observe their dreams, and by them to delude the people ; saying, *I have dreamed, I have dreamed*, Jer. 23. 25.

I answer, such dreams as tend to the leading of men from the holy word of God, to wicked doctrines or opinions, which are painted over with the pretence or colour of revelations and divine visions, when they are indeed the mere delusions of satan, transforming himself into an angel of light, are not to be heeded, but rejected ; and such were the dreams of the false prophets tending to idolatry, against whom God spake ; *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to*

*pass, whereof he spoke unto thee saying, Let us go after other Gods (whom thou hast not known) and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken to the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart; and with all your soul.*

Yet this hinders not, but such dreams as come into us by God's special, and sometimes extraordinary work of providence, which must needs be directed unto some weighty and good end: as we must conclude, if we either consider the first mover, which is God, or the instruments, which are his holy angels, such dreams will challenge our very serious consideration, and diligent care to take notice of what they offer unto us, and the neglect or contempt thereof cannot be committed without great impiety; and therefore we have not only a warrant, but an unavoidable and inviolable obligation in point of duty, to take notice of such dreams, and to make use of them, according to their importance and purpose. *In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instructions.*

But because dreams are of several sorts, some proceeding only from the constitution of the heavens, or from the disposition of the air, or from precious cogitations, or from the temper of the body, or from the affection of the mind, or from the procurement of the devil, and only some few from the operation of good angels; it is therefore worthy our pains to know some such marks or characters, whereby we may distinguish these last, from all others of the former dreams.

A learned writer, in his book of the baptized Turk, hath laid down these marks of those dreams procured by angels.

1. When they move unto that which is truly and eminently good, or from the contrary evil, and have

nothing in them that stands opposite to the truth of holiness of the word of God, or sound reason, nor that addeth any thing to God's words, as a new way of righteousness or salvation.

2. When they are of a wise, sober, just, and orderly frame and composure, without any tincture of lightness, gingling, or vanity in them.

3. When they come unto us, being in an holy temper, and disposition of spirit.

4. When they leave both an holy, and humble, and also a strong and certain impression upon the mind, moving it not upon carnal, but spiritual principles and motives; to which we may add, an holy clearness and consolation in the spirit, an increase of vigour and readiness to godly obedience and holiness.

5. When they agree with some work that God hath in hand, and have something in them that seems to be above humane inventions, and have an excellent agreement in the several parts thereof, presenting the same or several things.

6. When they come unsought and unexpected; for if any man doth purposely seek divination by dreams, composing himself thereunto by superstitious rites or ceremonies, this were expressly against the word: For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, let not your prophets and your diviners that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.—But enough of this matter.

2. The angels persuade us to that which is good, they do not only declare to us what is God's will, but they advise us to it. This is the ordinary office of blessed angels, to instil good motions, to suggest good thoughts, to admonish and persuade us on all occasions to that which is good. As satan is ever compassing the earth, seeking whom he may devour, here and there laying his snares to catch poor souls in, tempting and enticing them to all sorts of sin, as he espies occasion and opportunity for it;

so are the good angels ever and anon suggesting good and pious thoughts ; they tacitly admonish our minds, and provoke us to good duties of holiness and obedience ; this makes some affirm, that whatsoever the evil angels can do in evil, the elect angels can do in good : if the devils can suggest sin, surely the angels of God are stronger and wiser than devils.

But how do the good angels suggest good ?

I answer : 1, They inspire, inject, or cast into our minds some holy motions ! seldom passes the day over our heads, but we may feel these injections ; come, this is the way, walk in it, strive to enter in at the strait gate, &c.

2. They provoke and stir us up with much importunity to this or that duty ; *Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, &c.* They know well enough our sluggish, dull, and heavy dispositions, our spiritual laziness, and therefore they add stirring, quickening, soul enlivening expressions ; or exclamations, *Ho come ye to the waters ; ye, they double it, or treble it, come ye to the waters ; and come ye buy and eat ; and come ye, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price :* They are not willing to give over, till they have made us willing to yield to their motions for our own salvation.

You may object, Surely this is the genuine work of the Holy Ghost, thus to inspire and provoke us to good : Very true, and yet that hinders not but that the good angels may be instruments, or agents : We say, the Holy Ghost is the prime Spirit, and yet the angels are as ministering spirits ; the Holy Ghost is the fountain, or head of water, but the angels are as cisterns and channels of water ; it is the will of the Holy Ghost to employ the angels, and to communicate himself to us by the ministry of angels, and therefore the Holy Ghost and angels need not clash. Indeed motions, inspirations, and holy suggestions are ever originally and primarily from the spirit of Christ ; and hence it is, that com-

monly we put them all on that score, we give them all to Christ's spirit; yet I cannot forget the author's opinion I cited before, 'That God's works in the world are usually by instruments, and not immediate; and that good angels are his instruments, in conveying his mercies both to soul and body. Another speaks as confidently every whit; For my part (with the good leave of my learned and religious brethré, be it spoken) I doubt not but good angels suggest good counsels, tender holy motions, offer pious thoughts, yea, refresh the often parched spirits of gracious men with inward joy.—*Shall the devil work in the children of disobedience?* Ephes. 2. 2. *Enormously disquiet the affections,* 1 Sam. 16. 15. *Yea, inject wicked thoughts into godly men with success,* 1 Chron. 21. 1. And shall the good angels be excluded from all actings and operations upon the inward senses of man—I can never believe it.

3. The angels repel temptations, or prevent occasions of sin. This was the meaning of Michael's contending with the devil about the body of Moses; It was the devil's design to discover Moses's grave, and the arch-angel was ready to resist him: but why should the angel resist him? To what end was the dispute about the body of Moses? Why might not the body and burial-place of Moses have been discovered to all? Surely the angel would not have it known, lest the people should have idolized and worshipped it in after-times. The devil loves idolatry, and of all kinds of idolatry, the devil abuseth the world most with idolatrous respects to the bodies and relics of dead saints. Now the archangel knew his design, and therefore he would by no means have those burial places known. Thus Aynsworth paraphraseth on that text of Deuteronomy, *He was buried in a valley of Moab, over against Beth Peor, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.* The angel would have no occasion of superstition or idolatry thereby: Oh what blessed steps have we for preventing of sin? How busy are the angels in

our behalf (when we little think of it) to repel temptations, and to prevent occasions of evil? As our good endeavours are often hindered by satan, *I would have come to you, even I Paul, once and again, but satan hindered us*: So are our evil actions hindered by the heavenly angels, else were not our protection equal to our danger. A good angel opposed Balaam in an evil way; and if an heavenly spirit obstruct the course of the evil, and stand in the way of a socerer's sin, how much more ready are those spiritual powers to stop the spiritual miscarriages of God's dearest children.

4. The angels quicken our dulness, encourage our weakness, and comfort us in our sorrows: all these we may read together in one chapter, "I was in a dead sleep (saith Daniel) on my face, and my face toward the ground, and behold an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees, and upon the palms of my hands; and he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright, for unto thee am I now sent; and when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling, then said he unto me fear not Daniel—And there came again and touched me, one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, and said, O man greatly beloved, fear not, peace be unto thee, be strong, yea be strong; and when he had spoken unto me I was strengthened, and said, Let my Lord speak, for thou hast strengthened me." In like manner we find an angel quickening, encouraging, and strengthening Elijah to his work, 2 Kings 1, 3, 15. and Isaiah to his work, Isa. 6. 6, 7. and Paul to his work, Acts 27. 23, 24. But especially in the sufferings of his saints, how usual was it with God to send down his angels for their comforters? When Christ was in his agony, *there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him*: When Peter was in prison, *Behold the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the*

*prison*: When Paul was in his dangerous voyage, *There stood by him that night the angel of God, whose he was, and whom he served, saying, fear not Paul*, Acts 27. 23. In the succeeding times of the church, how frequently did the angels appear to blessed martyrs for their comfort and encouragement? Thus Theodorus saw and felt the refreshing hand of an angel: Thus Theophilah, Agnes, Lucia, Cecilia, and others, saw the good angels as their comforters, and protectors of their chastity. And although they do not appear to us now in bodily shapes, as in those times, yet the same offices are performed by them in their spiritual and mysterious ways; now they quicken our dullness, encourage our weakness, and comfort us in heaviness.

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#### S E C T. IV.

*Whether the Angels Contribute any thing to our Conversion.*

**B**efore I pass this, I would propound a question or two: As—

1. Whether the angels contribute any thing to our conversion? We have heard at large, that devils do what they can to hinder our conversion: and are the angels less active to good than they are to evil, I cannot think it? We may be sure, that as the bad angels do bad offices, so the good angels are in their way prompt and ready to do all the good offices they can, as to our good; and my reason is, their will is conformed to the will of God, *They do his commandments, they hearken to the voice of his words*: Whatsoever God wills, they will: now God

wills the conversion of sinners; *As I live, I desire not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live*; and therefore they will it, and as they will it, so they reduce that will into several acts, or else it were in vain. But what those acts are, may be another question,

S E C T. V.

*Wherein do the Angels Contribute, as to our Conversion.*

**T**he several acts of angels as to our conversion, are such as these.—

1. They inform our judgments: we have heard before, how they invisibly teach us, instruct us, enlighten us, and herein do they contribute to our conversion: for what is the first work of conversion, but illumination? As in the first creation, the first-born of God's works was light, *God said, let there be light, and there was light*; so in new creation, the first work is light; *God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*. Hence the state of nature is called darkness, and the state of grace is called light; *Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: And he hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light*. Now if in this work the angels are assistant, they must needs contribute to our conversion in the first work of it, which is illumination.

2. They move our will: This is that we said before, that the good angels persuade us to that which is good, they instil good motions, they suggest good

thoughts, they provide us to duties of holiness and obedience, and especially to this main work of conversion and regeneration, well they know, that without this, all is nothing; "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" And their desires are strong, that the places made void in heaven by the fallen angels, should be supplied by men and women, and therefore they do what they can to move and persuade us to a change: I know they cannot efficiently move, or turn the will; we leave to Christ and his spirit the efficacy and blessing of all, they only move, and persuade, and make use of arguments to do this or that, but the Holy Spirit makes effectual, and gives the issue to what they move. If you say, what needs this ministration, for Christ can move or persuade, without them? I may as well ask what need ministers, preaching, sacraments? It is enough to silence and stop our mouths, when we hear these are God's ways of administration, these are God's ordinances, of which the angels are a great part, and according to the good pleasure of God, they act, and stir, and move, and persuade us to conversion.

3 They work on our affections, endeavouring to settle them, and keep them on right objects: It is true, they cannot turn the stream and current of our affections back (God only can turn this Jordan back) but they can drive them faster, and cause them to swell above their natural channels; it is the spirit of bondage which worketh fear, but when fear is wrought, they can blow it up, and intend it more, as the spirit's instruments: Sometimes you have heard how evil angels could work further and deeper fears than the Holy Ghost by himself intended, and cannot the good angels do regularly, what the evil angels can do irregularly? If the evil angels cannot only propound such objects as shall move us to fear, but also can stir up such humours in the body, which such a passion doth act and stir in, *Ex. gr.* If they can electively work upon melan-

choly, so as to put a man into a timorous and trembling disposition; how much more can the good angels propound objects, and stir up humours, and so work on the affections, whether of fear or hope, or sorrow, or joy, or love, or hatred?

4. They repel temptations. You have heard abundantly how the soul is haunted with several temptations; when the work of conversion is passing upon it, then is satan busy, by way of revenge, for the souls revolt from him: but are not the good angels as busy as satan? and if they resist him, what can all the troops of hell hurt us? We know the good angels have as much advantage of their strength over satan, as they have of their station; how then should that evil one stand in the encounter; Or what need we fear in so mighty and sure hands? He that passeth with a strong convoy through a wild and perilous desert, scorns the dangers of wild beast, or robbers, no less than if he were in a strong tower at home; so may we the onsets of the powers of darkness, whilst we are guarded by the angels who both defend us, and resist satan in all his fiery darts.

5. They joy in the conversion of sinners, so that heaven rings with the joy: "Likewise I say unto you (saith Christ) there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth:" What manner of joy this is, is unknown to us, and so shall be until that time, that time shall be no more; only this we believe for the present, that the conversion of sinners, is the jubilation of angels, and this, I take it, is the plain sense or meaning of Christ's words, that when they see the ranks and files of lapsed angels filled up with new recruits, men and women, penitent for their sins, this is matter of joy, of extatical joy to the holy angels of God.

## S E C T. VI.

*Experiences of this Truth, as to our outward Man.*

**F**or some experiences of this blessed truth, in respect of our bodies.—

1. They keep us from evil.

One going seasonably to bed, about midnight he awoke, and could not sleep; thereupon he awaked his wife, and talking with her, suddenly he espied a light in his chamber, which came through a box hole; he demanded of her what that light was, she opened her eyes but could not tell: anon she arose out of bed, and looking through the box hole (which by a gracious Providence was that night open, though usually shut) she espied a fire kindled on some wood in the house, which quickly would have set all on a flame, that no way they could have escaped with life, but they both hastened out of their chamber, and coming into the house, they timously quenched the fire, and admiring at God's providence, in each circumstance, they returned in safety to bed, and found that rest and sleep after, which before they could not obtain.

The same person riding over a deep water, his horse in the midst of the stream laid him down under him: Thus man and horse both plunged in; the man with much ado having recovered himself, and getting through, he rode home wet and cold, which cast him into a fever, yet in time he recovered, and blessed that God, who by the ministry of his angels, delivered him from the danger both of fire and water.

The same person being at home, a daughter came to visit him, who one evening was very im-

portunate to go more early than ordinarily they used to bed; her importunity so far prevailed, that presently they went to prayers, and commending themselves to God for his custody, all in the family made up the stairs to several lodgings; no sooner were they dropped asleep, but presently a noise, like thunder awaked them all, he wondered, and asked his wife if she heard the thunder; who answered, that she being last in bed, was scarcely asleep, but could not tell whether it was a clap of thunder, or a fall of some part of the house; and rising out of bed to go to the chamber where their daughter and a servant maid lay in two beds; at the entrance into the chamber, the daughter cried, Stay mother, or you endanger your life, for I believe the chamber floor, and chamber adjoining, is fallen down. By that caution she trembling stayed her foot, and drew back to tell her husband the news; he desired her to go down stairs into the house, light a candle, and to see the matter; but endeavouring to open the door below into the house, the passage was stopped, with the floor of the chambers fallen down; their daughter, that lay in one of the two chambers, seated over the house, cried, that her bed cracked, and she was afraid to lie in it; thereupon they advised her to hasten out of it, and with the maid to creep into a corner of the chamber, which was most secure. In the mean time, a cry or call was made through a casement for some neighbour's help; by this means a candle was brought, but no passage being possible through the doors, the stanchion of a casement was cut, and one came in at the window with his light, then it was seen how two chambers over the house were suddenly fallen, with all the weight of wood, and clay, and furniture above, and that nothing remained unfallen, but a little room of one chamber, where the two beds stood, wherein the two women lay. At first view they all stood amazed, but recollecting themselves, the two women were by a ladder safely brought down from the corner of

the fallen chamber, and being brought into another chamber, they took their rest till the morning. At day light they saw their wonderful preservations, and viewing the circumstances, it appeared: 1. If that night all had not gone to bed before their ordinary time, they had been all sitting in the house, which then would have fallen upon them, and have slain them all. 2. If his wife had not then stayed her step, when the daughter cried, stay mother, she had fallen down into the nether room amongst rubbish, and probably had lost her life. 3. If those two beds had not stood wherein the two women lay when all besides fell with one crash, they had both perished, especially the daughter with a child in her belly, being yet but an embryo. In every circumstance appeared the finger of God, and the promise was minded, "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways, they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."

Simon Grinæus, a learned and holy man, coming from Heidelburgh to Spire, was desirous to hear a certain preacher in that city, who in his sermon did then let fall some erroneous propositions of popish doctrine, wherewith Grinæus, not being a little offended, craved speedy conference with the preacher, and laying before him the falshood and danger of his doctrines, exhorted him to an abandoning and retraction of those misopinions; the preacher gave good words, and fair semblances to Grinæus, desiring farther and more particular conference with him, each imparted to other their names and lodgings, yet inwardly, as being stung with that just reproof, he resolved a revenge, by procuring the imprisonment, and (if he might) the death of so sharp a censurer. Grinæus misdouting nothing, upon his return to his lodgings, reports the passages of the late conference to those who sat at the table with him, amongst whom Melancthon being one, he was called out of the room to speak with a

stranger, newly come into the house; going forth accordingly, he finds a grave old man, of a goodly countenance, seemly, and richly attired, who in a friendly and grave manner tells him that within one hour there would come to their inn certain officers, as from the king of the Romans, to attack Grinæus, and to carry him to prison, willing him to charge Grinæus, with all possible speed, to flee out of Spires, and requiring Melancthon to see that this advantage were not neglected; which said, the old man vanished out of his sight: Instantly Melancthon returning to his companions, recounted unto them the words of this strange monitor, and hastened the departure of Grinæus accordingly, who had no sooner boated himself on the Rhine, than he was eagerly sought for at his said lodgings. Of this Melancthon, in his commentary on Daniel writes, and acknowledges God's fatherly providence in sending this angel of his for the rescue of his faithful servant.

John Spangenberg, pastor of Northense, was no sooner stept out of his house, with his family to go to the bains, but the house fell right down in the place.—Our own experience at home is able to furnish us with divers such instances, If a man by some strong instinct be warned to change that lodging, which he constantly held for some years, and finds his wonted sleeping place that night crushed with the unexpected fall of an unsuspected contiguation, to what cause can we attribute this, but to our attending angels?—Or have we been preserved from mortal dangers which we could not tell how by our providence to have evaded? Our invisible guardians have done it.

In the true portraiture of his sacred majesty Charles the second, it appears, that by God this king reigns, in that he hath exercised those providences over him that are hardly exercised over ten thousands of us: That star in the east, at his highness's birth, speaks much this way; the

powers in heaven, that so watchfully guarded him through those sad days, wherein thousands fell at his right hand, and ten thousands at his left, aimed at some great prize; his royal life (the care of angels) must not go out privately, and be lost unprofitably in a corner.—Oh how the angels forbad those millions of profane hands, that would rudely have touched the Lord's anointed! His escape at Worcester was almost miraculous: he sought his way all along five miles from Worcester, then he turned to the less frequented ways that could be, until he came to the borders of Staffordshire, then he removed to an adjoining wood, where he, and one only with him, walked securely a while, until they found an oak for majesty, in the hollow of which he lodged himself for three days and nights, until my lord Wilmot providing for his majesty a safe lodging, and then seeking him in the wood, with much ado found his sacred person guarded, and (as I may say) fed by angels.

2. They keep us in, or restore us to health.

One going to London, inned and lodged all night at the Maiden-head in Cateaten-street, where the same night died a young wife of the pestilence; as another had died before, the sickness and death of the parties being concealed, he arose in the morning, took some repast, and went about his occasions; but at his return in the afternoon, as he was going into the inn, a friend called him back and told him the truth; in the midst of the discourse, he saw the gates shut before his eyes, and presently was written upon them, Lord have mercy upon us. This hath minded him of God's providence and promise, "surely he shall deliver thee from the noisome pestilence, for he shall give his angels charge over thee."

John Trelille, a poor cripple in Cornwall, that for sixteen years together was fain to walk upon his hands, by reason of the close contraction of the sinews of his legs (upon three monitions in his dream

to wash in a well called Maderness) was suddenly so restored to his limbs, that I saw him, (saith my author) able both to walk, and to get his own maintenance.—Marcus Aurelius Antonius, in his dream, received the prescript of a remedy of his disease, which the physicians could not cure; whence came this, but by the suggestion of angels? Have we been raised up from deadly sickness when all natural helps have given us up? God's angels have been our secret physicians. *Bishop Hall.*

3. They furnish us with all necessaries for this life.

Mr. Samuel, a godly minister in Queen Mary's days, was convented before Bishop Bonner, who committed him to prison, and there chained him up to a post, in such sort, that standing on tip-toes he was fain to bear up all the weight of his body in that manner, to his intolerable pain; besides he allowed him but three morsels of bread, and three spoonfuls of water a day, so that he was extremely tormented with hunger and thirst, and had his body so miserably dried up, that he would fain have drunk his own water, but he could not make one drop: But after he had continued in this miserable case three days, he fell asleep, and one clad all in white seemed to stand before him, telling him, that from henceforth he should neither hunger or thirst any more; which also came to pass, though he was not burnt till many days after. *White's Power of Godliness.*

A doctor of divinity, of singular learning and piety, sent his maid to the market, to get provision for the following week: But all the money he and his wife could make, was but five shillings; his wife fell a weeping, and told her husband, that there was little likelihood they could live together, and that therefore she would take one or two of her children with her, and live among her friends, if he could provide for himself and the rest of his children? Nay, dear wife, said he, we he lived

thus long together, let not us now part, let us rely on God's providence: She in her grief and haste answered, Well, send providence to market, and see what it will bring home. It was so that day, a nobleman, who knew this doctor very well, dining with divers gentlemen at an inn, looking out of the window, saw the doctor's maid, whom being an ancient servant, he knew, and sent for her up, asking her how her master did; she answered, very well, and fell a weeping; he enquiring the cause, she told him what straits they were brought to; he wondering, and being troubled at it, called the inn-keeper, and wished him to give that maid ten pounds, and every one of the gentlemen gave twenty shillings a piece: So the doctor sending providence (of which the angels are servants and instruments) to market, it brought him home fifteen pounds: Doubtless it is because we do not trust, not because God either cannot, or will not give, that makes us so often want mercies; and such providences would be usual, if our confidence in God were but so.

*Idem ibidem.*

There was a certain poor family, who being in great want, and having little or nothing for the children in it; when dinner came, they put them off with play-things, and told them they would see if they could get them something for supper; and when supper came, they would give some small piece of bread, and so get them to bed; and thus they used them so long, while at last the children would not go to bed, but cried for bread: That night it was so, the Lord Faulkland waking before midnight, could not sleep, and then it came into his mind that his family was in great want, insomuch that he called up some of his servants, and sent them with a great loaf and a cheese to the house; when they came, they found the children crying for bread, and the parents weeping by them, who with a great deal of joy and eagerness received that un-

expected provision. Thus the Lord ordered it by his providence, that they were not only then relieved, but their necessities being related to the Lord Faulkland, he took care of them for the future. *Idem ibidem.*

Luther hath this story : A certain woman in the time of famine, having nothing at all for her children, and herself to eat, being brought to very great extremity, she resolved upon this course ; she made herself and all her children ready, and with a great deal of comfort and confidence she walked to a spring, not far from her house ; as she was going, one met her, who asked her whither she was going with her children : she told him, that all her provision was quite spent, and she was going with her children to such a fountain close by, being confident, that God that had provided drink for her and her children, would there provide food for them also ; and he that heard the young ravens, and provided for them, would much more take care of her, and her little ones : he that met her, wished her to return home, for she should meet with provision that was ready for her there ; she returned, and found a considerable quantity of meal, which was food for her, and her children, but whence this provision came she knew not, nor knew the man who told her of it.

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## S E C T. VII.

### *Experiences of this Truth, as to our Inward Man.*

3. **F**or some experiences of this blessed truth, in respect of our souls.

1. They declare to us God's will ; of old they did so to Abraham, Lot, Moses, Jacob, Manoa'h,

Gideon, David, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zachary: And in the new testament they did so to Joseph, Mary, Zachariah, the shepherds, Mary Magdalen, Peter, Philip, Cornelius, Paul, John the evangelist, and to all the apostles. At this time they do not invisibly declare God's will, nor must we trust to visions, or revelations; yet many times they teach us by dreams, and many times they coin impressions on our fancy and imaginations while we are waking: They can make rare and wonderful compositions of what they find in us; so that to me, here is the difference between the converse of men and angels; men can speak to the understanding by the meditation of our external senses, but the angels go a nearer way to work, and speak first of all to the internal senses, making such compositions there as the understanding presently takes off, and reads what is written: Do we not, waking and sleeping, see impressions in our fancy, of things that we thought we had forgotten? This is done by the angels.

One being a long while trained up in ceremonies, notionals, fables, unprofitable matter, rather than sound and saving knowledge, which is in faith; at last conversing with some godly men, and with practical books, he found some impressions in his fancy of another kind of divinity, and so inclined, that divinity was rather practical, than speculative; and that such kind of preaching as was usually delivered in an affected spruceness of language, and vain-glorious trimness of the windy and dead letter, would never save souls. These impressions were more and more fixed in him, and at last he was satisfied, that many poor illiterate souls that felt the power of godliness on their own hearts, had more true knowledge of divinity, than many learned doctors and rabbies, that had nothing but orthodoxy, or a swimming knowledge of truth; and that many unlearned snatched heaven, and took it by violence,

while many learned with their learning perished, and went down to hell : The efficacy of this light he gives to the spirit, but the instrumentality of it, as working upon the fancy or imagination, he ascribes to the angels.

A godly woman, falling into great dissertations, at last the Lord in secret prayer came in with abundance of light and comfort ; but within a month after, she being to receive the Lord's supper, all her former tears and troubles returned upon her, insomuch, as a little before the bread was administered to her, though she could not say that the devil appeared to her in a bodily shape, yet he seemed to her as if he did, and told her, that she should not eat ; but then the Lord was pleased to bring into her mind that passage in the canticles, *Eat, O my friends* : Notwithstanding, satan still continued terrifying of her, and when she had eaten, told her, she should not drink ; but the Lord brought that second clause of the verse into her mind, *Drink, yea drink abundantly my beloved* ; and so she drank also, and presently was filled with such unspeakable joys, that she knew not how she got home ; which soul-ravishing joys continued for a fortnight after, and filled her mouth with songs of praise, so that she could neither sleep, nor eat, more than she forced herself to do out of conscience of duty. *White.*

2. They advise us to that which is good.

The light presented to one as before, many blessed motions came in to begin with the beginning of saving practical truth ; and this he understood was the doctrine of regeneration ; and therefore if ever he would be happy, he must have some feeling of that ; Many objections were raised, that the wind bloweth where it listeth ; and we are not sufficient of ourselves to think ; and it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, &c. The objections are not formally now remembered : But notwithstanding them, the motions to fall on the

work continueth afresh, and finding them daily upon his spirit, at last he submitted willingly to those inspirations, and every day set some time apart to be in the duty; it proved tedious and difficult at first, but afterwards sin appeared very sinful, and the spirit set it home on his soul, and by degrees successively, he was led from a sense of misery, to some hope of mercy in Christ: and before he had done, (though many a day it continued) the Holy Spirit infused faith, whereby he closed with Jesus Christ, as Saviour, and as Lord, and King, and Husband. This work begun by the angels, by instilling good motions, was the joy of angels, when it was perfected: *There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.*

One, about the time of reformation of religion, desired much of God the guidance and assistance of an angel; and from the thirty-seventh year of his age he had sensible manifestations of a spirit that assisted him, and followed him till his death. In his dreams or visions, he was sometimes admonished of this or that vice, and sometimes advertised of this or that danger, and sometimes resolved of this or that doubt, and sometimes persuaded to this or that duty: Once I heard a voice from heaven, saying, *I will save thy soul.* Usually in the morning, about the fourth hour, the angel would have beat at his door to have awaked him, and if he had done any good or evil, he would have manifested the approval, or disapproval of it by some sign: If in company he had spoke any unwary words, he was sure to be advertised and reprov'd of it by a dream in the night following: if he had read any book that was not good, the angel would have struck upon the book, to have caused him to have left it, and laid it aside: Often would the angel have provoked him to prayer, and alms-deeds, and other duties. Bodinus asking him, whether ever he had seen the form of this angel? He answered, that he

never saw any thing, but only a bright and shining light in a round orb; and once after prayer upon his bed, that he saw a sweet boy, in white apparel, of admirable beauty. *Bodinus de Magorum demonomania.*

3. They repeal temptations, or prevent occasions of sin.

One having many temptations offered him, especially in his dreams in the night, he observed, that at the same times such thoughts have come in, that in these very dreams he confidently cried, Avoid satan, and again, Avoid satan, for it is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve;" which he believes were put in by the angels.

One Natalius, that had formerly suffered great persecutions for the cause of Christ, was seduced by Asclepiodotus, and Theodorus, two sectaries, to be the bishop of their sect, promising to pay him an hundred and fifty crowns of silver every month, and so he joined himself to them; but the Lord in mercy not intending to lose him that had suffered so much for his sake, admonished him by a vision, to adjoin himself to the true church again, which the good man for the present, blinded with lucre and honour, did not regard as he ought to have done. The night after he was scourged by angels, whereupon, in the morning, putting on sackcloth, with much weeping and lamentation, he went to the christian congregation, praying them, for the tender mercies of Christ, that he might be received into their communion again; which request was accordingly granted unto him. *Clarke's general Martyrology.*

Cyprian relates a story of one of his fellow ministers, who in the midst of his torments began to faint, being greatly afraid of death, and desired to be released; at which time there appeared to him a young man of admirable beauty, and so

bright, that man's mortal eye could scarce endure to behold him; who angrily said to him, *Pati timetis, exire non vultis, quid faciam vobis?* To suffer you dare not, to go out you will not, what shall I do with you? Idem ibid.

4. They quicken, encourage, and comfort us.

A certain godly woman riding behind her husband, who was a persecutor of Mr. Bolton, as they were riding, it thundered and lightened extraordinarily, so that he trembled exceedingly; his wife with a cheerful voice said, Husband, what ails you? why do you tremble thus? He answered, Do you not hear how terribly it thunders? She answered, Yes, I hear it: And said he, Do you not tremble also? She answered, No, she was not at all afraid, for she knew it was but the voice of her Father. He was amazed at her cheerfulness and answer, and began to think with himself, Surely these puritans have something within them, that they are able to bear up in such storms, and that they have peace, and are cheerful, while I tremble. And being not far off, immediately he did ride to Master Bolton, beseeching pardon that he had persecuted him, and desired that he would tell him what he should do to be saved.

Thomas Ward of Tiso in Warwickshire, was all his younger days very loose and dissolute, an enemy to goodness, and an hater of good men; but it pleased God at last to convert him, after a strange and wonderful manner, which was thus: In a morning, as he lay in his bed, plotting and contriving how to molest and persecute some of his godly neighbours, there appeared a vision to him of a city, wherein there were many poor ragged lambs in the streets, and a man driving of them, and he heard a voice saying to him, What are these? To which he answered, sheep: Then said the voice again, These are my sheep whom thou persecutest. Presently after he saw another vision of a pile of

faggots, and heard the voice saying, What are these ? He answered, faggots : Then said the voice, As these are bound up for the fire, so thou deservest to be bound hand and foot, and cast into everlasting fire, He answered, Truth Lord ; yet withal, he cried earnestly to the Lord for mercy : and presently after he saw in another vision a pillar of brass, but so bright and glorious, that he was not able to look upon it ; then said the voice, Be of good comfort, for thou art a chosen vessel, which shall suffer many things for my name's sake To which he said, Lord if it be thy will, let it be now : and presently he had a blow given him on his side, as with a dagger, the mark whereof he carried with him to his grave. After this, it pleased God to raise him up with comfort, and he became an eminent professor, and was very zealous for the truth.  
*White.*

A little before the eighth persecution began, God by a vision revealed it to Cyprian, saying to him, Be quiet, and of good comfort, for peace will come, albeit a little stay there is for a while, for that some remain yet to be proved, and tried. *Clark.*

Theodorus, for singing a psalm at the removing of the body of Babilas, being apprehended, was examined with exquisite torments, and so cruelly excruciated from morning till almost noon, that hardly he escaped with life, and being afterwards asked by his friends, how he could endure such extreme torments, said, That at first he felt some pain, but afterwards there stood by him a young man, who as he was sweating with the pain, wiped away his sweat, and oft times so refreshed him with cold water, wherewith he was so delighted, that when he was let down from the engine, it grieved him more than before. *Clark.*

Whilst Augustine was yet a Manichee, his mother Monica had a dream, that she was standing upon a wooden rule, and being very sad, saw a

glorious young man very joyful, and of a cheerful countenance coming unto her, and that he asked her the cause of her sadness, and when she had declared that it was by reason of sorrow that she had for her son, who was then in the way of destruction, he bid her be of good cheer, and wished her to mark and observe, and that she should see her son to be with her where she was, and so she saw her son, standing with her upon the same rule. *August. Confess. l. 3.*



## S E C T. VIII.

### *Experiences of this Truth, as to Conversion.*

**F**or some experiences of the angels contributing to our conversion. On a time, Augustine being in great heaviness, and deep contrition of heart, cried out, Oh! what is this? what suffer I under the tyranny of sin? Unlearned men take heaven by violence, and we, with all our learning, lie groveling in flesh and blood. After this he had a great conflict, for all his past pleasures represented themselves before his eyes, saying, What wilt thou depart from us and shall we be no more with thee for ever? And then a marvellous tempest of weeping came upon him, so that he cast himself on the ground under a fig-tree, and gave full scope to his eyes, which brought forth presently whole floods of tears; and then, behold he heard a voice, as if it had been of a boy or maid singing, and saying, *tolle & lege, tolle & lege; Take up and read, take up and read;*

Wherefore repressing the force of his tears, interpreting that this voice came from heaven, and was spoken by angels, he took up the book of Paul's epistles which he had with him, with a purpose to read the first chapter that he should find, and opening it, his eyes fixed on these words, "The night is spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light ; let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, &c." And by this means he was converted. *Aug. l. 8. Confess. c. 12.*

A woman telling me of her great trouble and grief, and of her long continuance in the pangs of the new birth, she said, that she heard at last a voice : plainly and distinctly saying to her as she was bewailing her sins, If thou will forget, I will forget ; If thou will forget, I will forget.

A man labouring in the pangs of his new birth, began to despair of salvation, and at last concluded he should be damned ; whereupon plotting and contriving what was best to do, he resolved to make away with himself, and not to live any longer : For these reasons, 1. Because he conceived, the longer he lived, the more and greater would be his sin. And 2. The more would God by his sin be dishonoured. And 3. The more and greater would his torment proportionably to his sin be in the fire of hell : And even now going to the place where he had appointed the execution and self-murder, there suddenly came into his mind (as if a dart of light had been injected) this very word, Who knows ? on which, pondering and ruminating, he asked himself, Who knows what ? and presently was thrown in (as he conceived) the end of the sentence, Who knows what is God's decree, or mind concerning me, neither angels, devils, nor men. On which words pausing and considering a while he reasoned

thus with himself, If I know not God's mind, it may be I shall be saved. Upon this he staid his purpose, put on by satan, and probably prevented by an angel, and so went to prayer; and within three days after he received comfort.



## S E C T. IX.

### *Of the Duties that concern us in this Respect.*

1. **I**n all dangers let us stir up faith, and exercise it on the promises of angel protection : Art thou a soldier ? do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with thy wages, march, charge, retreat, do duty according to command, God shall cover thy head in the day of battle, for thou art in thy ways ; but if thou invadest the ministerial office, presuming to preach, who never was sent, look to thyself, thou canst not without usurpation pretend to God's keeping, for thou art out of all thy ways : Nor do I fear the frowns of any if offended hereat, and reproving me for giving this just reproof : I am sure I am in my calling, in my ways ; and therefore with comfort and confidence may rely on God, and his angels protection, only that we abuse not the promise as the devil did ; let us keep in our ways, that we may be kept safe by the angels, then only is angel protection to be expected, when we are in the ways God hath appointed ; that is to say, within the compass of our general and particular callings ; they shall keep thee in all thy ways, or in all thy bounds, or in all thy

courses appointed thee by God. Surely we have need to look to ourselves in all our actions, as in eating, drinking, riding, sporting, for even in these God hath set us our ways: We hear of many sad disasters of God's dearest servants, and we need not wonder, if we but consider their wanderings: Alas they keep not within compass, they are out of their ways, or otherwise they might walk safely without any danger. If Jacob keep but in his ways, he may safely meet with his brother Esau coming against him with four hundred men. Mr. Dod would say, he cared not where he was, if he could but answer, these two questions well: Who am I? and what do I here? am I a child of God? and am I in my way? If we were careful of these things, we might free ourselves from all other cares: Oh let us look to our ways!

2 In our sicknesses, sores, dangers of plague or pestilence, let us eye the promise of angel-ministration; "Surely he shall deliver thee from the noisome pestilence;—Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day; a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee:—There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling for he shall give his angels charge over thee." Many other promises we have, both to prevent and qualify, and to remove sicknesses, as Exod. 15. 26. Deut. 7. 15. Psal. 41. 3. Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8. Isai. 40. 31. And well may we live by faith on such promises as these: But why should the promises of angel-ministration be out of use? To what end are these promises, if we may not rest or roll ourselves upon them as well as others? Should God say in our sicknesses, Send to such a physician, and make use of him, and you shall be cured, we should

submit : And are not these heavenly physicians of more value ? And have we not an express promise, that in their ministrations we shall have health ? Oh let us eye these promises !

3. In our outward wants let us have some thoughts of angel-ministration, as to supplies. It is a wonder how all the creation is serviceable to man, the very plants and herbs administer to his food, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, are for his sustenance ; the sun and stars contribute to his being and preservation ; if any piece of the creation should escape his ministry, one would think it should be the mighty and blessed angels ; and yet behold an angel provides bread for Elijah, and water for Ishmael, and all other necessaries for God's children : The world is yours, saith the apostle ; God would never have made this field (the world) were it not for the corn (the godly) growing in it ; and as of this corn the angels are the reapers, so they have care of it for its nourishment and preservation : Art thou a saint, and in want ? Surely it concerns thee to shake off idleness, to take the opportunity, and to observe God's providence in all affairs, and amidst those several providences of his ordering, forget not the ministrations of the angels : For my part, if together with the word, my own experiences may be any encouragement : I do verily think, that rather than thou shouldst die for thirst, an angel will open thy eye, to see a fountain, out of which thou mayest fill thy bottle with water, and take and drink.

4. In learning the whole counsel, will, and mind of God, let us turn over those leaves which speak of angels ; these are the invisible attenders of the blessed Deity, and without some knowledge and apprehension of them, we shall never attain to conceive of their God and ours, as we ought to do : but in this knowledge let us mind especially their ministrations to our inward man ; herein are many

depths, yet are they sweet, delightful, and most profitable truths : they come to our phantasms (the species of sounds, of shapes, or whatsoever else, as they are kept and preserved by the inward senses) and they move them at pleasure, and put together such conceptions or apprehensions, as are most accommodate and fitted for the knowledge of that truth, which they would suggest to our minds : is not this worthy our knowledge ? Shall the angels take pains to speak to us, and to acquaint us with the knowledge of saving truths, and shall not we willingly hearken to them ? O let us listen to what they say ; and that they may have matter to work upon, and to speak to us about, let us be ever ready and prompt to receive good images and impressions of things into our fancy : It is said, that the angels cannot put into our fancies what never was there before, as they cannot make a man born blind to dream of colours, and their differences ; but they can make many compositions and deductions of the images they find there, to the saying of what they will ; and therefore let us hear all the good we can, and take heed of receiving ill impressions by our ears, or eyes, or any other way : If any one tell us an ill story once, the devil will tell it us a thousand times ; it is a great happiness to this purpose not to know ill : And on the other side, if we see or hear good objects, and that our memories (which are as treasures of all we see or hear) be stuffed and filled with many such good things, then may we comfortably hope, that the angels will make use of all those images to converse with us, and tell us over and over what is the will and mind of God.

5. In the many motions, inspirations, and holy suggestions to this or that good, let us stop a while, and seriously consider whence these come, certainly if they are of good, and tend to good, they come either from the spirit of God, or from his holy and blessed angels. I confess the efficacious power

on the heart, belongs only to the spirit of God; It is the Holy Ghost that over-rules, and melts, and new moulds us, that so persuades us to charm, and turn, and captivate our souls; yet the angels are ordinances, means and helps of God's own appointment; they are ministering spirits sent from God to counsel and persuade us to this and that duty: And whether the good motions instilled proceed from the Holy Spirit, or from these ministering spirits, it is good for us to listen, and hearken to these movings, workings, hints, intimations. Me thinks we should hearken to the advice of a friend, how much more to God and his angels? O how sad is it for my soul by sin to counter-work the actings of angels, and breathings of the spirit! that the angels should knock at our heart, and that the Spirit should put in the hand by the hole of the door, and yet that neither should be yielded unto, but both resisted; this must needs grieve the Holy Ghost, and grieve the holy angels that would persuade us, and seal us up unto the day of redemption.

6. In the occasions of evil, or temptations to this or that sin, observe we the stops and lets which often are made by the holy and blessed angels, we little think how busy the angels are for our good? the devil, we know, is like a roaring lion, and the day passeth not over our heads, wherein he offers not this or that temptation to ensnare our souls: And are not the good angels at counter-work? Do not they as often pull us back? Or do not they at least very often hedge and block up our ways, by withstanding the occasions of many a sin? O then say as Jacob did, "Surely the angels of the Lord were in the preventing of this temptation, and I knew it not." It were enough to strike us into a dread, and to break forth into praises of God, if in the overcoming of any temptation, we had some thoughts of the protection and ministration of angels: surely, should we say, The Lord and his an-

gels have helped and relieved us, or satan had prevailed, and we had been quite foiled.

7. In our deadness, fears, sorrows, afflictions, let us remember the words of Elisha to his servant, "Fear not, for they that be with us, are more than they that are against us." Seldom did the angels appear to any, but this was their language, *Fear not*; as, *Fear not, Daniel*; and, *Fear not, Zacharias*; and, *Fear not, Mary*; and, *Fear not, Shepherds*; and, *Fear not, Paul*; it is one of their prime offices, *to strengthen the weak hands, to confirm the feeble knees, and to say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not; Behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence. he will come and save you.* When David said to Abiathar, that may we imagine the angels say to us, "Fear not ye sons and daughters of the Almighty, we are your protectors, strengtheners, comforters; and with us, and by us, you shall be in safeguard." O the many quickenings, encouragings, comfortings, that the saints have by the ministration of angels! Next to my God, and my Saviour (saith one) I shall ever place my greatest comfort and confidence in the angels of God, neither hath earth nor heaven any creature comforters like unto these; there is none like them, or to be compared with them.

8. At all times and seasons, let us think and carry ourselves, as in the presence of God, and sight of his angels. If I may instance in some times: As 1. In time of temptation, let us think of it then. Seneca gave Lucilius this counsel, Whatever he was doing, that he should imagine some of the Roman worthies did behold him, and then he would do nothing dishonourable. Surely, if the eye of God, and of his angels were ever in our eye, this would be a supersedeas, and counter-

poison against all sin : Tell me, how dare you sin in their presence, or do that in their view, which you would not dare to do in the sight and presence of some earthly man ? *I charge you before God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels,* saith Paul, q. d. Consider God's presence, and Christ's presence ; or if they work but little with you, consider the presence of the elect angels : surely, the nearer things come to the manner of our presence, the more they will affect us ; and therefore consider, that the angels are present with us, in the very room where we are acting our very wickedness, I blush to think (said the author above cited) how often I have done that whereof the angels were ashamed for me ; I abhor myself to recount their just dislikes, and do willingly profess how unworthy I am of such friends, if I be not hereafter jealous of their just offence. 2. In time of public service, and public duty, think on it then : *For this cause* (saith the apostle) *ought the woman to have power over her head* (that is to say, to be modestly veiled) *because of the angels.* Elect angels are exact and careful observers, and eye-witnesses of our behaviour and deportment in the public ordinances. To this end were the curtains of the tabernacle pictured full of cherubims, to signify, that about our solemn meetings, whole troops of angels take notice of our carriage : surely, if this were considered, we should be very serious in God's worship ; yea, how spiritual and heavenly should we be, if our hearts were but fixed on these glorious angels ? O ye blessed spirits (said a saint) ye are ever by me, ever with me, ever about me, but especially in God's house I do as good as see you, for I know you to be there, I reverence your glorious persons, I bless God for you, I walk awfully, because I am ever in your eyes ; I walk confidently, because I am ever in your hands. My brethren, we are even now at this time of public

meeting; amidst watchful and waking overseers; we are looked and looked through in all our ways, as if heaven were all eyes round about us: Oh then, with what fear and trembling, with what reverence and devotion, should we stand, or wait here before God, and his holy angels?

9. In reference both to others and ourselves, let us learn to imitate angels.—

1. For others, let us imitate thus, they are as our guardians, physicians, purveyors, tutors, instructors, soldiers, quickeners, encouragers, comforters; so let us in our several stations and places aspire to angelical work: if the angels guard us, let us be as guardians of one another; if they study our health, let us wish health, and endeavour it as we may one for another; if they purvey for us, let us relieve the necessity of the saints; if they tutor us, let us acquaint one another with the mysteries of grace; if they instruct us, and persuade us to our duties, let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works: *Exhort one another daily, while it is called to day*: If they fight for us, and take part with us against the evil angels, let us take part with the saints against the oppressions and violence of all wicked men; if they quicken, encourage and comfort us, let us quicken the slothful, confirm the weak, and comfort the feeble minded. Surely the way to have angels reward, or to see the face of God, is to do the work of angels. Oh let us improve this piece of the creation to our use, as well as all the rest!

2. For ourselves, let us imitate thus: 1. Reverence the Majesty of God as they do, Isa. 6. 2. 2. Stand ready prest to execute the will of God, as they do, Psal. 103. 20. 3. Let us study holiness, as they do; they are of a most holy nature,

B b b 2

and therefore are they called holy angels. So be we holy, even as they are holy. It is but equal, that we who expect to be like the angels in glory, should be like them in grace : Many would strive to be like them for gifts and parts, but not for holiness, which yet is the special thing propounded to our imitation : When we say, *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven* : no question, this principally is intended, that we should lead here angelical lives ; that is, in heaven they are ever doing God's will, there is no sin there, so we should keep harmony with the angels of heaven, and do his will here.

10. To conclude, in all our duties, in reference to the angels, let us *look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith* : They are as the means and instruments of our good, but he is the author and finisher, and all the efficacy flows from him. Hence it is that we must chiefly apply ourselves to him, *Trust not in man, no, nor in princes*, saith the Psalmist ; so may I go on, trust not in princes, no, nor in angels, nor archangels absolutely, but still in subordination unto Jesus Christ. This use the Psalmist teacheth us of angel-protection ; *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him* : And what then ; O taste, and see that the Lord is good ; *blessed is the man that trusteth in him* ; not in them, but in him : our chief confidence must be in none that is on this side God. When God promised Moses that an angel should go before Israel, and yet withal threatened the subduction of his own presence (*I will send an angel before thee, but I will not go up in the midst of thee*.) No marvel if Moses were no less troubled, than if they had been left destitute and without a guard ; and that he ceased not his importunity, till he had won the gracious engagement of the Almighty for his presence in that whole expedition ; *If thy presence go not*

*with us, carry us not up hence: For what is the greatest angel in heaven without his Maker? O then let us eye God, and eye Jesus Christ in all, above all, and beyond all angel-ministration. It was a sweet saying of one we mentioned before, Blessed be God for the angels, as the author of them and their protection; and blessed be the angels under God, as the means used by him, for our protection, and other blessings: Let the angels have their due, but let God in Christ, be our all in all; for as by him the angels were created, so were they created for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist,*

~~undoubtedly~~

C H A P. IV.

S E C T. I.

*Of the Ministration of Angels at our Death.*

**T**hus far have we observed the angel's ministration, even until death; and yet they have not done, for no sooner death seizeth on the elect, but they minister to them, and in some respects continue their ministration till the resurrection-day. In order to this, we shall first observe their ministration, and secondly, our duties.

1. For their ministration, that known place is most obvious; *And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.* And we read of Michael the arch-angel, contending with the devil about the body of Moses.

Whence some observe, that angels have a care not only of the souls, but of the bodies; yea, even of the dead bodies of the saints.

~~unpublished~~

S E C T. II.

*Of the Manner of Angel-ministration at that Time.*

**F**or the manner of their ministration, it relates both to bodies and souls.

1. For the bodies of the faithful.—

1. In the very agony of death they help and ease them: Thus was Christ refreshed in the midst of his agony by an angel. In like manner are they serviceable to the saints; for if ordinary physicians have their electuaries, how much more can the angels minister cordials in their way?

2. After death they guard the bodies of the saints: The devil would have abused the dead body of Moses, but Michael the archangel contended with him, and rescued the body out of his hands: satan's malice is without end, and therefore hath he stirred his instrument to abuse the dead bodies of many martyrs; he loves not that dust wherein the Holy Spirit dwelleth, but the angels take care of every dust, so that not one shall be lost at the general day: suppose them scattered up and down the world, yet are they but thrown and sown in the earth, that they may spring out again to a glorious incorruption; and in the mean time the

angels are a guard, and have a regard to them in their sleep, till the morning of their resurrection day.

2. For the souls of the faithful.—

1. The angels, in the very article and point of death, are vigilant over them, and oft-times inspire the parting souls with a spirit of divination, or consolation, surpassing all human knowledge. Thus Gregory could say, That sometimes souls before their departure, came to the knowledge of things by revelation, and sometimes by heavenly inspiration they penetrate with their spiritual eyes the very secrets of heaven itself. Do we not see by experience, that when the soul is drawing into a separate condition, it is in a great part delivered from bodily operations, and from the business of the outward senses, and from the commerce with external and worldly matters which puts it, as it were, into a kind of sabbath, or state of rest? Now the more quiet the soul is, and the more sequestered from earthly and outward things, the more apt it is to enjoy the benefit of internal light, and the better fitted for spiritual commerce with God himself, or with his angels, which (saith one) may also lead us to understand something towards a reason, why men drawing near their departure, are observed to be disposed to presage and prophecy, to be full of comfort, as if heaven entered into them, before they could enter into heaven.

2. The angels stand ready to receive souls separate from their bodies, into their embraces. Macarius, a learned monk, could say, that immediately after death, the choirs of angels received the souls of saints into their own side, into the pure world, and so brought them unto the Lord: Wicked men, when they die, shall have a black guard of angels to receive them, and to haul them down to hell:

but the godly shall have a white guard, the same angels that were said before, to bear them up in their hands, will then receive them into their arms, and fall upon them with hugs, and kisses and embraces.

3. Angels convey souls in their hands, or on their wings, through the air and middle region, up into heaven: we cannot go from earth to heaven, but we must needs pass through the devil's territories, or through the air (for so is satan called, *The prince of the power of the air*; that is to say, of the airy dominion, or principedom) thither were devils, with satan their prince, exiled from heaven: whence the Jews have a tradition, that all the space betwixt the earth and the firmament, is full of troops of evil spirits. And it is the opinion of all doctors (saith Hierome) that devils have their mansion and residence in that space between the heaven and the earth. And although some against this alledge those texts, *For if God spared not the angels which sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.*—*And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, be hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day:* Yet learned Mede hath expounded the first text thus, That he cast them down to hellward, or to this lower orb, there to be reserved for chains of darkness at the day of judgment: And the latter text thus, That the evil spirits which fell into this lower region, were there to be reserved, as in a prison, for everlasting chains of darkness at the judgment day. This is the valley of the shadow of death, through which the souls of saints are to go to heaven; and because of the dangerous voyage, the angels scour and clear the passage for them; they go with them, and fight for them, and with speed and triumph at last convey

them to their Father's house. Oh in what pomp and triumph did Lazarus's soul ride on the wings of angels ! Never was Dives so honoured in his life, as was Lazarus at his death ; he might ride in some chariot drawn with horses, but Lazarus was, and the souls of all believers shall be drawn at their deaths in fiery chariots ; they shall be carried and conveyed into heaven by the angels of God.

4. The angels welcome the souls of saints, in this heavenly progress, to their heavenly Canaan : they are not only porters to carry souls, but they are porters also to receive souls, they stand ready at heaven's gates, to set open the doors, and to bid them enter into their Master's joy. In that vision which John had of the great city, the holy Jerusalem, he saw twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels : Our English annotations say, that these angels are as porters to receive men into heaven : howsoever Adam was kept out of paradise by the cherubims, yet cherubims, and seraphims, and all the host of heaven, are ready to receive the saints into this glorious city : O what a joy will be in heaven at the first admission of these souls ! what clasping, closing, kissing, embracing, will be at this entrance betwixt saints and angels ? Welcome, say the angels ; and welcome, say arch-angels ; yea the principalities triumph, and powers rejoice, and virtues shine, and thrones glitter, and cherubims give light, and seraphims burn in love at the soul's arrival ; what congratulations are those amongst the angels, that now the worst of their service is past, that now the poor souls they had in charge, are by their good help escaped, and freed from all the miseries of the world, and snares of the devil, and pains of hell, and are now entered through the gates into the city, where they and their charge shall live together, and love together, and sing together Jehovah's praise ? Never had the saints such welcome in this

world, as at this day they have, or shall have by the angels of God into the kingdom of God.

5. The angels present the souls of saints before Christ in his throne, and there immediately they receive their sentence. This must needs follow, the angels cannot leave their charge, till they bring them to him, who gave them the charge of them; away therefore they fly to the Lamb in his throne, and covering their faces with their wings, there they present with cheerfulness of spirit his redeemed ones, *q. d.* 'Glorious King of saints, hither we  
 ' bring these souls which thou gavest us in charge  
 ' to keep, their dusts are indeed returned to  
 ' earth as they were, but their spirits must needs  
 ' return to God who gave them; come, take them  
 ' into thy bosom, and glory, they are spirits; yea  
 ' spirits sublimated (as being born again of water,  
 ' and of the spirit) and therefore assimilated to thy-  
 ' self; they are pure sparks, now freed and severed  
 ' from their dust and ashes, and therefore they  
 ' fly up, or they come up hither on our wings, unto  
 ' thee the great Spirit, that element of spirits; Oh  
 ' that they may find union and coalition with thee!  
 ' O that they may be with thee where thou art,  
 ' and that they may for ever behold the glory which  
 ' thou hast given them! To whom answer is given,  
 ' as from the throne, welcome, dear souls, into this  
 ' glorious kingdom of mine, this is that inheritance  
 ' I prepared for you before the foundation of the  
 ' world: Why, you are they whom I created in  
 ' my own image, after my own likeness; you are  
 ' my off-spring; created immediately by my hand,  
 ' and in my image, as to your very substance. It is  
 ' true, I made all the world, and something I made  
 ' out of nothing, as the chaos was made, but my  
 ' image other creatures did not bear; you only are  
 ' spiritual substances, and vital-light; you only  
 ' have those luminous substances, or substantial

lights, from the gift of your creation, which is  
 a degree above the angels, for they have not any  
 light genial and inherent to their essence, but are  
 only mirrors of the increased light : And though a  
 taint came upon you by reason of sin, so that this  
 image wherein you were created, was exceedingly  
 marred, yet by works of grace I renewed this  
 image, and thereupon, that original affinity to  
 me, the God of spirits, is not only restored, but  
 endeared. And now this is my sentence, *Well  
 done, good and faithful servants, you have been  
 faithful over a few things, I will make you rulers  
 over many things, enter you into the joy of your  
 Lord.*

6. The angels now begin to join in consort with  
 the souls of saints, and to sing those hallelujahs that  
 never shall have end. "And round about the throne  
 were four beasts, full of eyes before and behind—  
 and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy,  
 Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and  
 is, and is to come : And when these beasts give  
 glory and honour, and thanks to him who sits  
 on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the  
 four and twenty elders fall down before him that  
 sits on the throne, and worship him that liveth for  
 ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the  
 throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to re-  
 ceive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast  
 created all things, and for thy sake they are, and  
 were created.—And I heard the voice of many  
 angels round about the throne ; and the beasts, and  
 the elders, and the number of the angels was ten  
 thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of  
 thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the  
 Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches,  
 and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory,  
 and blessing.—After this I beheld, and lo a great  
 multitude, which no man could number, of all na-

tions, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb; and all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen; blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might be unto our God, for ever and ever, Amen." Lo here, all God's saints of the old and new testament, called twenty four elders, comprehended under the twelve patriarchs, and twelve apostles, and all the ministers of Christ called four beasts, or living weights, comprehended under the four evangelists; and all the angels of heaven, an innumerable company of angels, all joining in one consort; Oh what joys are here? what harmonies are these? what warbling of saints and angels; If Francis (as Bonaventure stories it) hearing but one angel play upon an harp, was so transported with the melody, that he thought himself in another world; how are the souls of saints transported, who no sooner arrive into glory, but they hear more than twelve legions of angels, accompanied with a numberless number of glorious saints, all singing at once, hallelujah; Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, praise, and honour, and glory, and power be unto God, and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ for ever and ever?



## S E C T, III.

*Of the Experiences of this Truth.*

**I** shall add some experiences of this blessed truth.

1. They help us and ease us in the pangs of death.

Mr. Hawks being intreated of his friends, that in the midst of the flame, wherein he must die, he would shew them some token, if he could, that the fire was not so intolerable, but a man might therein keep his mind quiet and patient; this he assented to and promised, that if the rage of the pain were tolerable, he would lift up his hands above his head, before he gave up the ghost; At the stake, he mildly and patiently addressed himself to the fire, and after his fervent prayers made to God, fire was put to him; in it he continued long, and when his speech was taken away by the flame, his skin drawn all together, and his fingers consumed with the fire, so that all men thought he had been dead; he being mindful of his promise, suddenly lifted up his hands burning of a light fire, and with great joy clapped them three times together, whereupon there was such shouting amongst the people, especially by those who knew the meaning of it, as the like had scarce been heard; and so the blessed martyr, presently sinking down into the fire, gave up his spirit unto God. *Fox Martyr.*

Mr. James Bainham, being at stake to be burnt, in the midst of the flames which had half consumed his arms and his legs, he spake these words: O ye

papists, behold ye look for miracles, and here now ye may see a miracle, for in this fire I feel no more pain, than if I were in a bed of down; yea, it is to me as a bed of roses. *Idem ibid.*

There was in Mechlin one Andrew Thissen, who had three sons, whom he carefully brought up in the knowledge of the truth, two of them were condemned to the fire, and one of them feeling the violence of the flame, said, O what a small pain is this, compared with the glory to come! and so committing their spirits into the hands of God, they finished their race.

Henry Voes and John Esch, being brought to the stake, for their testimony to the protestant religion, when the fire was kindled at their feet, one of them said, Methinks you do strow roses under my feet; and presently after they quietly slept in the Lord.

William Cowper, being ready to die, said, Now my soul be glad, for at all parts of this prison the Lord hath set to his pioneers to loose thee; head, feet, milt, and liver, are fast, failing, yea, the middle strength of the whole body, the stomach is weakened long ago, arise, make ready, shake off thy fetters, mount up from the body, and go thy way.

2. They inspire our souls with divination, or comfort.

A child of a christian gentlewoman was so given to prayer from its infancy, that before it could well speak, it would use to get alone, and go to prayer; and as it grew, it was more frequent in prayer; at last, when the child was but five years old, and whipping of his top, on a sudden he flung away his scourge, stick, and top, and ran to his mother, and with great joy said unto her, Mother I go

to God, will you go with me? She answered, My dear child, how dost thou know thou shalt go to God: He answered, God hath told me so, for I love God, and God loves me: mother will you go with me? She answered, Dear child, I must go when God pleaseth; but why wilt thou not stay with me; The child answered, I will not stay, I must go to God: And the child did live about a month after, but never cared for play more, and then fell sick, always speaking, that he must go to God, and died in that sickness. *White.*

Charles Bridgeman prophesied his departure, and how strange a prophecy! not only that he must die, but fore-telling the very day; On the Lord's day (said he) look to me; neither was that a word of course, which appeared by his often repetition, every day asking, till the day came indeed, What is Sunday come? At last the looked-for day came on, and no sooner had the sun beautified that morning, but he fell into a trance: What (think you) meant his blessed soul, whilst the body itself used such an action? his eyes were fixed, his face cheerful, his lips smiling, his hands and arms clasping in a bow, as if he would have received some blessed angel, that there was at hand to receive his soul; but he comes to himself, and tells them about him; how he saw the sweetest boy that ever eyes beheld, and bids them be of good cheer, for he must presently go with him: One standing near, as now suspecting the time of his dissolution, bids him say, Lord into thy hands I commend my spirit: Yes, said he, Lord into thy hands I commend my spirit, which is thy due, for why thou hast redeemed it, O Lord, my God most true. And presently after he died.

If a man, without all observation of physical criticisms shall receive and give intelligence, many

days before, what day or hour shall be his last, to what cause can we attribute these but to our attending angels.

A good gentlewoman, lying on her death-bed, Mr. Dod was sent for to her, who spake of heaven, and to fit her for that glory, she told him, that she felt the comforts of God, and that she could as hardly at that time forbear singing, as formerly in child-bearing she could forbear crying, and shortly after she died. *Clark Mart.*

Mr. Holland, the day before his death, calling for a bible, continued his meditations and expositions on the eighth to the Romans, for the space of two hours, but on the sudden he said; O stay your reading, what brightness is this I see? and they said, it is the sunshine: Nay, (saith he) it is my Saviour's shine, now farewell world, welcome heaven, the day-star from on high hath visited my heart; I doubt not but you all see that light, but I feel a light within me, that none of you all can know: And then turning himself to the minister who preached his funeral sermon, he said; Sir, I desire you would preach my funeral sermon, for this night I die, and speak this from me, that God deals familiarly with man; I feel his mercy, I see his Majesty, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God he knoweth, but I see things that are unutterable. And being thus ravished in his spirit, he roamed towards heaven with a cheerful look, and soft sweet voice, but what he said was not understood; at last raising himself on his bed, as Jacob did upon his staff, he ended his blessed life with these blessed words: O thou fiery chariot, that camest down to fetch up Elijah, carry me to my happy hold; and all you blessed angels, that attend the soul of Lazarus, to bring it to heaven, bear me, O bear me into the bosom of my best

beloved, Amen. Amen. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly; and so he fell asleep. *Leigh.*

Mrs. Drake, a woman of great temptations, and desertions, at last growing sickly, and free from her desertions, she became incessant in her discourses of heaven and of the things of God. The Lord's day before her death, she called all her children together, and with many admonitions and zealous instructions, and heavenly discourses, she spent much time that day with them; the Tuesday following, Mr. Dod came, and spent some time in heavenly discourses, and then went to prayer; and suddenly as prayer was done, she brake forth in a wonderful manner in these expressions: Oh, ho, ho, what is this? what is this? what is this? I am undone, undone, undone, I cannot endure it: O, O, O, let me be gone, let me be gone, I must be gone, I cannot tarry; Oh what shall I do? Lo, lo, the angels are come, they wait, and stay for me: O dear mother, why hold you me? I must be gone; O he is come, he is come, he is come; now you have it, you have it, you have it, (meaning that now they had the issue and fruits of all their prayers) why hold you me? let me be gone, my work is done: O call, call, call! where is my crown, fetch me my crown, bring me my white robes, quickly, quickly, quickly; why run ye out? the angels stay: O it overcomes, overcomes, overcomes me: what shall I do? what shall I do? what shall I do? with innumerable such swift expressions as could not be remembered; and withal she heaved up still all the time with fixed eyes towards the house-top, as though she had seen some vision, and would have flown away from them all. *Idem.*

Robert Milner, on his death-bed, was so filled with joy for many days together, that he could not hold, but proclaimed the sweetness and goodness

of God from day to day, he professed his joys were unutterable; he carried, as if he had been in heaven afore-hand, only once talking with some christians about him, he cried out, Oh I have lost it! But presently he added, Oh I have it again, it is come, it is come! At last, drawing near his end, he sent for the relator as formerly, and desired his prayers; and whilst he was in duty, commending his soul unto God, he suddenly rouzed and stirred up his body, crying and saying aloud with much vehemency, The Lord, the Lord, merciful and gracious, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgressions, and sins: And in the very act and heat of his proclaiming the name and goodness, and sweetness, and mercy of God, he bowed the head, and gave up the ghost.

Lord Henry Otto, being sentenced to death for religion, he told the minister waiting on him, I was troubled, but now I feel a wonderful refreshing in my heart; adding, with his hands lifted up to heaven, I give thee thanks, O merciful father, who hast been pleased to fill me with so much comfort; O now I fear death no longer, I will die with joy. As he was going to the scaffold, he said to the minister, I am sure that Christ Jesus will meet my soul with his angels, that he may bring it to an everlasting marriage, where I shall drink of a new cup, a cup of joy for ever. Upon the scaffold, lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said: Behold I see the heavens open, pointing with his hand to the place, where others also observed a certain brightness which dazzled their eyes.—And so he received the stroke of the sword. *Clark's Mart. in Bohemia.*—In like manner, Bandicon being on the scaffold with his father, fixing his eyes upon heaven, said to his Father, Behold I see the heavens open and millions of angels ready to receive us: Father let us rejoice and be glad, for the joys of

heaven are opened to us. *Idem in his persecution of the church in the Low Countries.*

3. They stand ready to receive us into their embraces, and convey us through the air into heaven.

Romula being trained up by Redempta, fell into a palsy, that she was fain to keep her bed; but the sickness of her body being sanctified, and tending to her soul's health, on a certain night she hastily called for Redempta, saying, Come mother, come mother, who straightways, with her other disciple, rose up; and as they were about midnight by her bed-side, suddenly there came a light from heaven which filled all the room, and then they heard a noise, as it were, of many that came in; the door being shaken, and thrust open, as though there had been a great press of people; straight after that light followed a wonderful pleasant smell, which did greatly comfort their trembling hearts. Romula perceiving that they could not endure that abundance of light, with sweet words comforted Redempta, that stood trembling by her bed-side, saying, Be not afraid mother, for I shall not die at this time. And when she had often repeated those words, by little and little the light vanished away, but yet the sweet smell remained still: Upon the fourth night after she called again for Redempta, who coming in with her other disciple, as formerly, suddenly they heard two choirs, singing before the door without, the one as the voices of men, that began the psalms, and the other of women that answered; and while those heavenly funerals were in celebrating before the door, the holy soul departed this life, and was carried in that manner up into heaven; and the higher these two choirs did ascend, the less did they hear that celestial music, until at length they heard no more: And then

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also that sweet and odoriferous smell vanished away.  
*Greg. Dialog. l. 4.*

Fructuosus, bishop of Tarracona in Spain, with his two deacons, Augurius and Eulogius, suffered martyrdom; the cause of their punishment, was for professing of Christ's name, their judge and condemner was Emilianus, their death was by fire, into which they were all cast, with their arms bound behind them; but their bands and manacles being loosed by the fire, they lifted up their hands to heaven, praising the living God, to the great admiration of them that stood by; praying also, that the element which seemed to fly from them, might work his full force upon them, and speedily dispatch them, which was after their request obtained. In the mean space, as they were in the fire, there was a certain soldier in the house of Emilianus, who did see the heavens above to open, and these aforesaid martyrs to enter into the same; which soldier likewise shewed the sight the same time unto the daughter of Emilianus the president, who beholding the same sight with the soldier, was a present witness of the blessedness of them whom her cruel father had condemned. *Fox Acts and Monuments. 2 Vol.*

Philip de Mornay, L. of Plessis Marly, lying on his death bed, in the midst of his prayers was heard to say, I fly, I fly to heaven; the angels of heaven are carrying me into the bosom of my Saviour. *Clark's Life of Philip de Mornay.*

Mrs. Stubbs on her death bed, speaking to them that were by, she said; 'Oh would to God you saw  
 ' but what I see; for behold I see infinite millions  
 ' of most glorious angels stand about me with fiery  
 ' chariots ready to defend me: These holy angels,  
 ' these ministering spirits, are appointed of God to

‘ carry my soul into the kingdom of heaven, where  
 ‘ I shall behold the Lord face to face, and shall see  
 ‘ him, not with other, but with these same eyes.  
*Life and Death of Mrs. Kath. Stubs.*

4. They welcome us into heaven, and present us before Christ in his throne.

Helmont in his *Vision of the Soul*, tells, that in the year 1619, after a long weariness of contemplation, that he might acquire some gradual knowledge of his own mind, fallen by chance into a calm sleep, and rapt beyond the limits of reason, he seemed to be in a hall sufficiently obscure; on his left hand was a table, and on it a fair large viol, wherein was a small quantity of liquor, and a voice from that liquor spake unto him, Wilt thou honour and riches? At this unwonted voice he became surprised with extreme amazement; and by and by, on his right hand, appeared a chink in the wall, through which a light invaded his eyes with unwonted splendor, which made him wholly forgetful of the liquor, voice, and former counsel. Presently he awakened, but his ancient intense desire of knowing the nature of his soul, in which he had panted incessantly for thirteen years together, constantly remained with him. At length amidst the anxious afflictions of various fortunes, when yet he hoped a sabbath of tranquility, he had in a vision a sight of his soul: It was a transcendent light, in the figure of a man, whose whole was homogeneous, actively discerning a substance spiritual, crystalline, and lucent by its own native splendor. And then it was revealed to him, that this light was the same which he had a glimpse of before: If the demand be, what becomes of this light after its separation from the body? Dr. Charleton, who translated that book of Helmont, gave it in this poesy; *Lumen de Lumine*; *Light of*

*light, and Light to light.* The angels of light take these luminous substances, or substantial lights, and present them before that uncreated Light, the Lord of glory : What the estate of this life is, and what it will be, is sung by Mr. Maor, in his pre-existency of the soul :

Like to a light, fast lock'd in lantern dark,  
Whereby by night our weary steps we guide  
In slabby streets, and dirty channels mark,  
Sowe weaker rays through the black top to glide,  
And flusher streams perhaps from horny side :  
But when we've past the peril of the way,  
Arriv'd at home, and laid that case aside,  
The naked light how clearly doth it ray,  
And spread its joyful beams as bright as summer's  
day ;

Even so the soul in this contracted state,  
Confin'd to these strait instruments of sense,  
More dull and narrowly doth operate ;  
At this hole hears, the sight may ray from thence,  
Here tastes, there smells ; but when she's gone  
from thence.

Like naked lamps she is one shining sphere,  
And round about has perfect cognizance :  
What e'er in her horizon doth appear,  
She is one orb of sense, all eye, all airy ear.

So nothing now in death is to be dread,  
Of him that wakes to truth and righteousness,  
The corpse lie here, the soul aloft is fled,  
Unto the fount of perfect happiness ;  
As earth returns to earth, this light no less  
Returns to him that gave it, where it is  
Presented by the angels with excess

Of strange melodious music, joy, and bliss,  
 O then how doth that Great Light this light greet  
 and kiss !

5. They joy in sweet harmony of praises that  
 never shall have end.

A certain man, called Servulus, drawing near his end, called for all such strangers as lodged in his house, desiring them to sing hymns with him : and as he was singing, all on a sudden he cried out aloud, saying, Do you not hear the great and wonderful music which is in heaven ? and even in that instant his soul departed this mortal life. All that were present felt a most pleasant and fragrant smell, whereby they argued the verity of his saying ; and that he and angels were then in consort singing hallelujahs together in heaven. *Gregor. Dialog. l. 4.*

Another called Guthlake, drawing near his end, told Berteline his scholar. The time is come, my dear son, wherein I must pass to Christ : and lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, he yielded up his soul ; when at the very instant Berteline saw, as it were a fiery tower reaching from heaven down to the earth, the brightness whereof was so wonderful, that the pale sun might envy so great a lustre, whilst the angels themselves were heard to sing melodious tunes of joy. *Felix.*

## S E C T. IV.

*Of the Duties that concern us in this respect.*

2. **F**or the several duties that concern us in this respect.—

1. Weigh not the pains, or pangs of death, as if they were intolerable; but rather pitch we the anchor of our hope on the firm ground of the word of God, who hath promise *in our weakness to perfect his strength—and not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear,—and to give his angels a charge to bear us up in their hands.* If the Lord lay one hand upon us, he puts another hand under us; yea, he chargeth his angels to bear us up in their hands, and to allay our pains; it proves so to many, that the very thoughts of death more pains than the pangs of death; howsoever it may comfort us that the angels stand by us, who either will help us in, or help us through those pangs of death, that we be not swallowed up by them.

2. Take we no care of our bodies after death, save only to commit them to the earth. Methinks the angels might take off that carking care which many have; what if thy body be used as the Irish papists used the bodies of dead protestants, who cast some into ditches, and left others to be devoured of ravenous beasts; yea, and digged up

others that had been formerly buried, and then left them as dung on the face of the earth; yet the angels see and take care that every part, and piece, and member of thy body shall be preserved and kept safe unto that day of our Lord; the earth in her womb, or the sea in her gulphs, or beasts in their bellies, or whatever is the grave of the bodies of saints, they are but as God's close chests, to keep in them a part of the Lord's own treasure; and when these chests shall be opened (as they shall be in that great day of the resurrection of saints) then shall those bodies be brought out again by the holy angels; and then shall they be as good, nay, better than ever they were before; *For our vile body shall be made like the glorious body of our Lord and Saviour, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

3. The nearer we draw to our end, let us draw nearer to God and his holy angels. This is done by having a special care of our souls, and by doing those duties that we owe both to God and his angels. I list not to enter into controversies; I deny that any worship is to be given them, or that we ought to pray to them; yet (as the contemplative bishop said) this devotion we do gladly profess to owe to good angels, that though we do not pray unto them, yet we do pray to God for the favour of their assistance and protection, and we do praise God for the protection and ministration that we have from them. And yet further, we come short of our duties to these blessed spirits, if we entertain not in our hearts an high and venerable conceit of their wonderful majesty, glory, and greatness, and an awful acknowledgement, and reverential awe of their glorious presence; an holy joy, and confident assurance of their vigilant care; and lastly, a fear to do ought that might cause them to turn away their faces in dislike from us. All these dis-

positions are copulative; for certainly, if we have conceived so high an opinion of their excellency as we ought, we cannot but be bold upon their mutual interest, and be afraid to displease them by our heinous and abominable sins. The man that is going out of the world, and within a step or two of death, should, methinks, be very fearful of neglecting the angels, or of grieving the angels: Why alas, if they watch not over him now, if now they inspire not the soul with blessed motions, and pious thoughts; if now they fail of their office, when there is more need of it than ever was, or ever will be; oh what will a poor soul do? Come, think me of this e'er it be too late; yea, the nearer we draw to our end, the more tender let us be of our care and to respect these blessed spirits; and who can tell, but as in the very agony Christ was comforted by an angel, so these ministering spirits may at such a time minister comfort and consolation to our souls? We have seen an heaven of joy entering into some, before they entered into the joy of heaven.

4. Make to ourselves friends of the angels, that when we die, they may receive us into everlasting habitations. Thus Christ advised us in respect of riches, make use of them by your beneficence to the poor, that they may pray for you, and make your advantage of being rewarded by God: this is the meaning of, *make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness*. And if worldly riches, that either in getting, using, or keeping, do administer matter of sin, (and therefore are called unrighteous mammon) may be so improved, how much more may we improve the angels, and gain by the angels, if we make them our friends? But how should we make them our friends? I answer: 1. Let us resemble them in their purity, piety, innocency. Suitableness of spirit and life, will breed friendship: if we are but pure in our measure as

they are pure, they will delight to befriend us here, and to lay a foundation for a far more familiar acquaintance in heaven hereafter. 2. Let us apply ourselves to them, as desirous and willing of their friendship: let us converse with them as friends, assenting to what they say, and making up holy conclusions with them, and replies, which they will find ways to understand. O the blessed motions that they make continually to our souls! Is it not their joy to gain us, and to win upon us? and to that purpose are they not suggesting this and that good thought to save our souls? O then let us answer them in their motions, and receive whatever they administer!

5. Though we go through the valley of the shadow of death, let us fear no evil, for the angels will be with us. It is natural for us to fear death; and indeed, as it is the destruction of the creature, and parts body and soul; as it leads the body through a dark, dirty way, the grave; and as it leads the soul through the devil's territories, the air, it is no wonder if nature startle, and be afraid of it. But the christian hath many considerations to alley his fear, and to cheer up his spirit: As 1, Death is but the separation of the soul and body; it is not the annihilation of soul and body, but a fait shaking hands between two parting friends: it is as if the wife should take leave of her husband to go see her father; to whom the husband says, that he will follow after her, and be with her in the morning: Farewel my dear, says the soul, I must go to my father; And farewell my dear, says the body, I will come after thee, and be with thee in the morning of the resurrection. Is it true, they cannot part without many a tear, and kiss; but what needs fear? the morning comes as well as the night. 2. The body's passage through the grave, though dark and dismal, yet it is safe and secure, and fit for

rest and sleep : *He shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds* : When a righteous man dies, or his body is buried, he is but gone to bed ; and therefore we call those places where the dead are laid up and buried, dormitories, or sleeping places ; they sleep for a time ; but they shall awake, and rise up again at the last day. 3. The soul's passage through the air, though full of devils, yet it is accompanied with a safe convoy : there is a white regiment of glorious angels that will bring the souls of saints through all perils to *mount sion, to the city of the living God, to 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.* Now can the wife fear an enemy, when the husband hath sent a puissant army to convey her safely to himself ? How then should we fear the way, or fear death, or devils, when the angels (who are stronger than all enemies) have a charge to conduct us to the bridegroom of our souls ? and they will not, cannot fail of what they have in charge : they are the army of heaven, the saints own guard, the officers and soldiers of the Lord of hosts ; and therefore they will be sure to perform their trust, we need not fear it.

6. Let us prepare and make ready for that glorious welcome which the angels will give us into glory : would you know how to prepare ? 1. Procure their joy by your conversion : *There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.* The conversion of a sinner is the gratulation of angels ; and if they joy at your repentance, how much more will they joy to see you in heaven with them ? 2. Procure their love by the strictness and holiness of your lives ; live like angels ;

bring soul and body as near as may be, into a spiritual frame; this is the way of friends to procure welcomes here on earth, if they will but maintain a familiarity, and sympathy, and nearness, and likeness to one another in mind and manners: O thus do you, and then you may expect angels welcome into that city of glory.

7. Wait upon God with encouragement, that one day the angels will present us to Christ in his throne without spot and blameless. It is now our complaints, Oh the sin whereof we are guilty! and oh wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us from this body of death! but the day is coming when we shall be freed from these complaints. As Christ's ministers have a charge, and when they have done their work they will present to us Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 11. 2. and as Christ himself hath a charge, and when he hath done his work, he will present us to himself, Judg. 24. and to his Father, Colos. 1. 22. so the holy angels have a charge also, and when they have done their work, they will present us to Jesus Christ; how? even as ministers do, *that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ; or as Christ himself doth, that he might present to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish:* So will the angels do, *even present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.* Let us press on to perfection even upon these hopes, that howsoever it is with us now, surely we shall be faultless, we shall be equal unto the angels, equal in grace, and equal in glory; for to that end will they present us to Christ in his throne, and accordingly will Christ pronounce his sentence, *Enter you into the joy of your Lord.*

8. Praise we God for his mercy of angel-ministration from first to last. This we must do in heaven, only begin we this tune and ditty while we are upon earth; and if we cannot do it as we would, let us call in angels to join with us in blessing, praising and admiring God: This was David's wont, *Praise ye the Lord, praise ye the Lord from the heavens, praise ye him in the heights; praise ye him all his angels; praise ye him all his hosts.* The angels desire no better employment than such as this; they love to sing the tune of the gospel most; and therefore stir we up them, and stir we up ourselves with them to be much in praises of our God. Surely he deserves a thousand thousand hallelujahs, and that we should bless him upon a thousand stringed instrument: Here is fewel enough, the Lord kindle a great fire in every one of our hearts, to inflame them with the love of such a God as this is. It was the last speech of dying Chrysostom, Glory be to God from all creatures: And if I should die this hour, I could wish my soul in no better temper: "Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name, Bless the Lord, ye his angels that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure. Bless the Lord all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord O my soul.

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## C H A P. V.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the Ministration of Angels at our Resurrection.*

**T**he last period wherein the angels minister to saints, it is from the resurrection to the glorification of their souls and bodies in heaven. In this last as in all the former, I shall observe, 1. Their ministration. 2. Our duties.

1. For their ministration, we may consult these texts.—

*And he shall send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

*The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God.*

*The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of the kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.—So shall it be at the end of the world, the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just.*

*Also I say unto you, whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before*

*the angels of God.—And I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*

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S E C T. II.

*Of the Kind of Angel-ministration at that Time.*

**F**or the kinds of their ministration at this time.—

1. The angels will summon all the saints to appear before Jesus Christ, in his judgment seat. This is done by the sound of a trumpet, “And he shall send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet.—The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.” What this trumpet is, I have discust elsewhere; and I take it to be metaphorical, viz. a sound formed in the air like the sound of a trumpet; and for the archangel, it is not so limited to one, but that all the archangels, and all the angels of God are thereby understood. O the day, when all the angels shall be sent of Christ to bid all the world to appear before him! This is that voice on which Jerome so often meditated, Whether I eat, or drink, or whatsoever I do, methinks I always hear that voice of the trumpet sounding in mine ears, “Arise ye dead, and come to judgment.” This is that voice of which Chrysostom said, O the terrible trumpet, that all elements shall obey! it shall shake the world, rend the rocks, break the mountains, dissolve the bonds of death, burst down the gates of hell, and unite all spirits to their own bodies. This voice

shall take from death all her spoils, and cause her to restore again all that she hath taken away from the world. In this ministration the saints may rejoice; be it never so terrible to the wicked, it is nothing to them but an awakening out of sleep; as if the angels should shout and say, Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the time of the singing of birds is come; arise, arise ye saints, and come away.

2. The angels will gather all the saints together to the judgment seat of Christ. In this are involved these particulars.

1. That the angels will collect the dust of all the bodies of the saints. This all the schoolmen hold. The collection of the dusts of the blessed is by the ministry of the blessed angels. They can move, and remove bodies as they please. As crass and inferior bodies are in order governed by those that are superior, and more subtile; so are all bodies ruled and disposed of by spirits endowed with life. Augustine goeth further, and says, that irrational spirits are governed by rational, and rational creatures that transgress, are governed by rational creatures that are just. Gregory joins with him saying, invisible creatures do give motion and sense to carnal bodies which are visible: and so nothing is disposed of in this visible world, but by another creature which is invisible. Hence Aquinas concludes, that in all things which are corporally done of God, he is pleased to use the ministry of angels, and that therefore the gathering of the dust and the reparation of the bodies of all the saints is only by the ministry of the angels at the resurrection day. Come christians! keep faith and a good conscience; though men prevail over your bodies to kill them, and so scatter the ashes of them all the world over, let

never any uncomfortable damp of slavish fear vex your blessed hearts, be not you afraid of evil tidings, or of destruction when it cometh; for the angels have a care of every piece, and part, and particularly of your bodies; not one hair of your heads, not one atome of the substance of those bodies you bear about you shall be left in the grave, or in any part of the world, but it shall be gathered by angels and brought together into one heap or lump.

2. That the angels will form and fashion, and organize those dusts so brought together, into perfect, complete and solid bodies; this also is affirmed by Schoolmen: *whatsoever appertains to the transmutation of bodies as to the condensation of some parts, God is pleased therein to use the ministry of angels.* Indeed the animation or enlivening of the body by the infusion of the soul, is, (as they say) immediately God, without any operation of angels; for as the soul was immediately created of God, so must the soul be again united to the body by the immediate hand of God himself, yet the collection, preparation, and reparation of our bodies are done by angels. O the power of angels! This eye shall be put to this head, and this hand to this arm, and this arm to this body, and so every part to part, and member to member by the ministration of angels: What need we care if all these be eaten of worms, or serpents, or other creatures, yea of canibals, or savage men? Certainly they must all be restored again; I shall not want this eye, this hand, this finger, this joint, this nail on my fingers end at the resurrection day. The hand of the Lord was upon me, (saith Ezekiel) and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley, which was full of bones, and he caused me to pass by them round about, and behold there were very many in the open valley, and lo they were very dry. And he said unto me,

son of man, can these bones live? And I answered O Lord God thou knowest.--Then the Lord bad him prophecy, and as he prophesied there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone, and then the sinews of the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them, and then the Lord bad him prophecy unto the wind, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live. Why thus will it be at the resurrection-day; the angels ministry will be like the prophets prophecy; they will give a shout, and collect the bones, and then put them together, bone to his bone, and then cover them with sinews and flesh, and skin; only the breath or soul must be infused immediately by God himself, and then shall the saints live, and stand upon their feet, as an exceeding great army.

3. That the angels will bring the saints thus raised, organized, and quickened to Christ's judgment seat. The apostle speaks home to this, The dead in Christ shall rise, first, and then we which are alive, and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. A willing welcomforce is here upon the saints to transfer them, or carry them into the air, where Christ is in his throne: Now how shall this be done? Why they shall be caught up saith the apostle: By whom? Some think by the clouds as if the clouds should first descend; and then enwrap the saints, and so serve as chariots to carry them up to Christ in the air; but I would rather think by angels as if the apostle should say, all the saints at the last day, both those raised, and those changed, shall be caught up by the holy angels into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: And is not this agreeable to the words of Christ, that angels shall gather together his elect? Whither together? But to the

clouds, or to that place in the air where they shall meet the Lord. O the blessed ministry of endeared angels! They that before carried up Lazarus's soul into Abraham's bosom, must now carry up Lazarus's soul and body, yea all the souls and bodies of all the saints into the air, where shall be the blessedest meeting that ever was; there shall Christ meet with his saints, and never part again; indeed here sometimes we meet, and anon we part; now he comes and gives us the kisses of his mouth, but ere while he is gone, and we cry after him, O where is he whom my soul loveth, I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him that I am sick of love; but when the angels shall bring us together at this day, we shall never part more; for we shall meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be for ever with the Lord.

4. The angels will separate the good and the bad the sheep and goats. They shall gather out of the kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity——They shall sever the wicked from amongst the just. This separation is sometimes given to Christ, he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and he shall set his sheep on the right hand, but the goats on the left. Christ shall do it originally, but the angels ministerially, derivatively, and by way of execution; Christ commands it, and the angels accomplish it. O the joy, and O the horror of this particular; I, horror to the wicked, but O what joy will it be to the saints to meet together, and to see all the wicked in the world thrust out of their society, they were before thorns in their sides, and pricks in their eyes: many a tear did they cost the saints to see their wickedness, Rivers of tears ran down mine eyes, because they keep not thy laws; many a heart-grieving, heart-vexing thought hath pierced the saints to know their sinfulness; just Lot

was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. Ah poor man, it was an hell to him, to dwell with Sodomites, for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds. Well, but now they shall never grieve them, trouble them, vex them any more; the angels will not only deliver just Lot out of his ill neighbourhood for a time, but they will free all the righteous from all the unrighteous in the world for ever and ever: Not one Sodomite, nor one impenitent sinner shall stand with Christ's sheep on his blessed right hand; never more shall the saints cry out, and say, Woe is us, that we are constrained to dwell with Mesech, and to have our habitations amongst the tents of Kedar; But rather shall they go on with the Psalmist, and say as in the next verse, *Our souls have long dwelt with them that hate peace, and holiness, but now we shall never dwell with them any more.* This will be the angels work at the last day, they will gather out of the kingdom all things that offend, all scandalous wretches, and vile persons, all froward hearts, and privy slanderers; all that have high looks, and proud hearts, all that David said, he would throw out of his house, and from the city of the Lord, will they also throw out of the kingdom of God, and of Jesus Christ, that they molest not Christ's sheep any longer.

4. The angels will be spectators, admirers, witnesses, approvers of the mystery of godliness in the sentence of Christ on his saints. This piece or part of Christ's mediation in absolving saints, is amongst the rest of those great mysteries of godliness seen of angels. Seen? How seen? It is not a bare light, but such a sight as astonisheth the understanding, and takes up the heart of blessed angels, *which things the angels desire to look into;* their whole spirits are taken up with it, they cannot look off it,

but stand, and view, and admire, and leap for joy to see the passages; they are rapt up above themselves, to hear the blessed sentence coming out of Christ's mouth, *Come ye blessed of my Father*; nor is that all, but as they see, so they witness, and approve the acts and passages of Christ in rewarding saints, *I will confess them* (saith Christ) *before the angels of God*; that is, at the last day I will take them for mine, I will confess them to belong to me, I will pronounce on them the sentence of absolution, I will do to them as if a king should come in company, and choose out one, and salute him familiarly, and call him by his name, and take him by the hand, and confess him before all to be his friend; so will I confess the saints to be *my friends, my jewels, my peculiar treasure, my temple, and tabernacle, where I place my name, the dearly beloved of my soul, children of the kingdom, yea the kingdom of heaven itself*; or if more honour can be given them, I will confess them to be *my garden, my vineyard, my spouse, my second self, one with me, as I and my Father are one*: And be ye witnesses of this my sentence, O ye angels! I would have you to take notice of it, to see it, behold it, hear it, admire at it, and to witness with what equity and proportion I deal with saints, they confessed me before men, I confess them before angels; they are not ashamed of me, nor of my name before kings and princes, and therefore now I am not ashamed of them, nor of their name; so far am I from blotting their name out of the book of life, that now I *confess their name before my Father, and before his angels!* Witness it O ye angels, yea and approve of it, consent to my sentence, acknowledge my goodness, justice, mercy in saving these souls, by saying Amen, and bidding them welcome into heaven, and then you have done with your ministration.

At this last passage the angels receive that augmentation of joy, of which some divines have written. Hall and Andrews, stars of great magnitude in this orb of the English church, have both supposed, that angels themselves shall receive an augmentation of happiness at the day of the last judgment, when they shall be freed from all their charge, and employments. As rest is the end of all motion, so the perfection of blessedness consists in rest, and therefore the angels being now discharged of that charge which they took at the beginning, they have no more to do, but in one choir to join with the saints, and everlastingly to sing hallelujah, and again hallelujah, and amen hallelujah.



### S E C T. III.

*Of the Duties that concern us in this Respect.*

I. **F**or the duties that concern us in this respect—

1. Meditate as if you heard the angels sounding their trumpets, and saying, Come out of your graves, and appear before Jesus Christ your judge. Surely these ministering spirits, these especial messengers, these new covenant-officers that now wait on us, and as tender nurses will ere long lay us asleep in the bed of the grave, will in the morning of the resurrection awake us out of sleep, and say to us as the angels to John, Come up hither. And is not this worthy our morning thoughts, or even-

ing thoughts, or midnight thoughts ; When we are awake in the night, and compassed with darkness, and all is quiet, and still, suppose then we heard the sound of angels shouting in the air ; Now souls come to your sentence, either of eternal weal, or eternal woe : Methinks this meditation should work and make every one of us say, Lord, if it were thus, what would become of my soul ? In what case were I ? In what condition were I, if the angel now sounded ? Was my repentance such when I went to bed, as that now I dare look the Judge in the face ? was my faith so active, or is it now so strong, that I can with confidence go to Christ, and say, speak Lord, speak out the doom, that thou intendest to pass upon my soul, for I trust in thee ; if so, it is well ; the Lord keeps us continually in such a prepared frame ; but if it be otherwise, O let us think of it, and prepare for it ; let us not put off repentance from day to day, but, let the instant or present moment be the time of turning from all sin to God, and let us become now, even now, as we would wish to be then, *When the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.* It were a blessed meditation that would work us into such a frame ; now the Lord came in, and both set us at it, and appear to us in it.

2. Cheer up ye saints, *Arise, shine, for your light is coming and the glory of the Lord will rise upon you ; who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves of their windows ?* No sooner are the summons given, but all the saints shall be gathered together from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to another. O what a sight will it be to see the Eastern saints, and Western saints, and Northern saints, and Southern saints, flying on the wings of angels, to Christ on his throne ! Why here is matter of joy : if our evidences are but clear, if we

are but assured that he that is our Judge, hath shed his blood for us, and given himself for us, I wonder that we are not more spiritually cheerful. Come, though the world scatter us, persecute us, drives us to hills and holes, yet we shall meet together at the great marriage-supper of the Lamb, and there will be joy indeed; the very forethoughts of this should methinks fill our hearts with joys unspeakable, and full of glory; "Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.—Write, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb, these are the true sayings of God." Blessed sayings! in which, if we open the eye of faith, we may see matter of truest joy, and spiritual rapture: we are all invited if we are but saints, to the marriage supper of the Lamb, "Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God:" If you say, how should we come, that must die, and lie buried in graves, till we rot, and return to our first principals? I answer, these remoras will not, cannot hinder; for our very dusts shall be carefully gathered by the hands of angels; and when they are gathered and brought together, they shall be put into form and fashion, far better, and perfecter than now they are, by the ministration of angels; and when they are formed, and fashioned, and revived, and spiritualized, we shall be caught up by the angels into the cloud to meet the Lord in the air, thus far will the angels minister to us, and therefore, what should hinder but that we must all meet him, and feast with him? And if so, how merry should we be in the mean time, who are admitted, and invited to this gracious and glorious feast? Away, away, all horrors of guiltiness, false fears, slavish terrors, damps, and droopings! Christians! we must part, and for a time lie and sleep in solitude and rottenness, but we shall meet again; there will be such a congregation of saints

at the last day, as never was since the world's creation, and as we hope to be a part of that general assembly, and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, let us now rejoice in the Lord, and again rejoice.

3. Comply with the angels in separating yourselves from the society of the wicked. I know the command, "Let both grow together until the harvest;" the angels do not, nor must they separate the wheat and tares before the last day, but then will God say to his reapers, "Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." Come then, and do you know on your part that which the angels will do on their part at the last day. You will say, what would I have you separatists? I answer, not in opinions, or heterodox doctrines, but in conversation; my meaning is, I would not have you to run with the world into the same excess of riot; "If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or railer, or a drunkard, or extortioner, I would have you with such an one not to keep company, no, not to eat. And yet that I be not mistaken, some kind of society, or familiarity, I allow withal: there is a society, more common and cold, and general, as in trading, bargaining, buying, selling, &c. And this christians must needs exercise with the men of this world, except they will go out of the world: but there is a society more special, dear, and intimate, and in this respect "I have written to you (saith the apostle) not to keep company with fornicators," (*i. e.*) not to have any ordinary, voluntarily, friendly, dear, and intimate society with them. Alas! who in his right wits would run upon a man, whom he sees hath the plague-sore running upon him? And what christian in his right mind spiritually, having any fear of God in his heart, life in his soul, or tenderness in his conscience, would delightfully thrust

himself into the company of wicked men? It was writ of Jesus Christ, that he was "Holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." And such a separatist was David, "I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers; I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the wicked." And indeed to think of the angels work at the last day, it were enough to make us comply, and to prepare for such a work all the days of our life. Oh what should we do with them in our hearts, and dearest thoughts, who shall have no better companions hereafter than devils and the damned!

4. Confess Christ before men, that he may confess you the last day before the angels of God; you may think you are in prosperity, and flourish, you fear not martyrdom, there is not the least occasion of the confession of Christ, his truth, and gospel unto death, or danger, as the word imports: and therefore this last advice is not seasonable. But I answer. 1. We see the boldness of our common adversaries: error on all hands grows insolent, and proud, and daring; so that now God calls to us from heaven 'Who is on my side? who?' 2. We 'know not how soon occasion may be both for confession and martyrdom;' 'One observes, that 'usually before any great persecution befel the 'church, the holy men of those times observed, 'that there was some great decay of zeal, and of 'the power of godliness, or some mutual contentions and quarrels amongst the people of God: or 'some such sin or other that provoked God against 'them; and then as the shepherd sets his dog upon 'the sheep, when they go astray, to bring them 'in; so God lets loose wicked persecutors upon his 'own children, to bring them in unto himself. And 'he applies this to ourselves. It is true (saith he) 'through God's mercy, we yet enjoy the gospel of 'peace, and the peace of the gospel, but how short

' a time it may continue no man knows——This  
 ' we know, that schisms, heresies, and blasphemies  
 ' never abounded more in the church of England  
 ' than at this day, that the spirit of division never  
 ' raged more, that profaneness never more outfaced  
 ' the glorious sunshine of the gospel, than at this  
 ' day, and surely these are the forerunners of judg-  
 ' ment.' O then let us learn this lesson, as we  
 would have comfort at the last day ! Come what  
 will come, let us confess him before men ; let no  
 creature make us to deny the Lord Jesus Christ ; if  
 his truth call for it, let us stand it out against all his  
 enemies, yea even against the gates of hell, and de-  
 vil and all. And then we may comfortably hope,  
 that when Christ shall come in the clouds with his  
 mighty angels, he will confess us, and pronounce a  
 blessed sentence upon us, before God, angels and  
 men. *Amen, even so be it. Amen, and Amen.*



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