



Fire and Ice Sermon Series

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A Practical Exposition Upon The Fifty-Third Chapter Of Isaiah.

by Thomas Manton

THE FOURTH VERSE.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

THE prophet having given you the meanness of Christ's birth, and the manner of his appearing in the world, beginneth now to draw towards his death and passion, and in this verse entereth upon it, and doth not barely describe Christ's agonies and fears, but sheweth the cause of it, confuting the folly of the Jews, who rejected Christ because he came under this disguise of meanness and sufferings, by showing it was fiat their sakes: 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.'

This text is the rather to be prized, because as it is a clear conviction against the Jews, so it is a ground of all consolation to Christians. It is a clear demonstration against the Jews; they could never elude it, insomuch that when Luther urged this place to them, they had but this poor shift, that certainly the people of the Jews did not deserve these plagues and therefore the Messiah needed not to take them away; or if they did deserve them, it was because they did not persecute Christ enough, the pretended Messiah. Thus it is usual with people to have an ill apprehension of their miseries. But other Jews left all upon the reading of this chapter; and being asked why? they answered, God was stricken and smitten, they could never put by that, they said. And it is the ground of all consolation to Christians. Luther said all St Paul's epistles were so, and those floods of consolation flowed out of this fountain: 'He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.'

Therefore, let us a little look upon it. The parts are two

1. Christ's love.

2. Man's unthankfulness.

1. Christ's love, which is set forth in that clause, 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.' And there consider—

[1.] The certainty of what is averred of Christ: *surely*.

[2.] The acts of Christ's obedience, set forth in two words: *he hath borne*, he hath *carried*.

[3.] The objects: they are *griefs*, *sorrows*.

2. Man's unthankfulness, in censuring Christ and despising him; and there consider—

[1.] The persons: *we*.

[2.] The guilt: *esteeming Christ stricken and smitten of God*. These are the parts; and that I may open them, I shall go over them in a short comment and explication, and then clear a doubt about the quoting of these words by St Matthew. I shall first go over the words.

Surely. To note—(1.) The reality of the thing in regard of Christ's suffering, it was verily and really done. (2.) To note the truth of the proposition; this is a true proposition. Christ hath borne our griefs; he bore them, and it is true that he bore them really. And then for the acts, he *bore* and *carried*. They note a susception or taking up of things to put them upon our backs. And then the objects, *our griefs*, *our sorrows*. The first word signifieth sicknesses, the last wounds. The one importeth the sin, the other the punishment of sin. The Septuagint translates it, *ovoutoVtaVamartiaVhmn j erei kai peri hmn odunatai*—he beareth our sins, and is pained for our sakes. Then the specification of the object, *our sins*, *our griefs*. It implieth, first, that it is for our sakes he endured these sicknesses and sorrows for us. Secondly, He not only bore pains for our sakes, but the pains that we should have endured, or at least equivalent to what we should have borne and carried, if we had suffered for sin. And it implieth not only the cause of suffering, but the quality of suffering. So much for the first part.

2. For man's unthankfulness, yea, evil requital of Christ's love. For here is first something implied, an unworthy refusal of him for our saviour: *yet we*. Secondly, The ground of this refusal, expressed upon a false supposition or surmise, that all these calamities came upon him by the just judgment of God: *we esteemed him stricken and smitten of God*. Some read *quasi leprosum*—stricken with a leprosy. Leprosy was esteemed among the Jews as the greatest expression of God's anger. They looked upon him as in the state of leprosy, as if he had the expressions of God's anger upon him. And then as for *smitten of God and afflicted*.

Expressions are heaped up one upon another, to show the height of Christ's sufferings, and their malice. He suffered much, and they looked upon him as having all the expressions of God's anger: 'Stricken, smitten, afflicted.'

But you will say, Was not this true? was he not stricken and afflicted by God?

I answer—True, but not in their sense; they did not look upon themselves stricken and smitten by God in him. For the matter of the censure, it was right, but for the form and manner of application to Christ, it is wrong.

But now to answer one objection to the whole, and I have done with the explication.

If this be the meaning of the words, how cometh it then to be quoted by Matthew in another sense? Mat. 8:17, 'That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.' Where it is applied to the healing of corporal and bodily diseases.

This is a doubt fit to be solved, and I shall answer it.

1. Some think, and, for aught I see, Junius is in the number, that this place is to be meant of bodily diseases, as if it were an argument only brought to prove that Christ was the Messiah by the power he exerted in curing those diseases; and that this bearing and carrying intimated no more than the bare taking them away. But if it be properly to be understood of diseases, how will the last clause agree? for it is nonsense to think he was stricken and smitten of God because he took away diseases.

2. Others therefore think that the proper and literal sense is concerning the bearing and taking away of sins and punishments, though in an accommodative sense it has respect to diseases bodily. But how is it said then, 'that it might be fulfilled,' which is a note of difference when a text is quoted for the thing contained in it, or the words alluded to in it? Therefore—3. What is to be done then? I answer—We must distinguish of the sense of a place. There is the proper and full sense, and the less principal, secondary, and subordinate sense. So it may be applied to diseases, which was some kind of representation of his great love in taking away our sins, and is virtually so in this place, because sicknesses are the effects of sin at least. And this action of Christ's taking away diseases, was a type of his taking away sin. Now, Matthew applieth that to the sign, which did more fully agree to the thing itself and the truth signified. And observe this, for the clearing of this and other scriptures: as the patriarchs in their actions, and in what they did, were types of Christ, so Christ's own actions

were in a manner types of what he himself would more principally do, as casting out of devils, dispossessing of Satan, healing the sick; and so the prophecy was fulfilled in the type: and it was a taste of Christ's love when he cured the sick and healed every disease. And so upon the cross, when he bare our sins, and suffered for them; as it is quoted by Peter, who expressly followeth the Septuagint's translation of this place, saying, 1 Peter 2:24, 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.' Now the words being explained, I shall give you several brief notes upon them; for if I should speak largely, I shall prevent myself in the chapter. (1.) From that deep assertion with which this truth is proposed, *surely*, look upon it, it is a sure thing: this is a true proposition, that Christ did bear our sins and carry our griefs; it noteth the truth of the thing, and the unquestionableness of it this *surely* chiefly relateth to that our sins; though it is to the whole sentence, yet to that emphatically. The note then is this:—

Doct. 1. That it is a most unquestionable truth that Jesus Christ suffered for our sins. As the centurion said, Mat. 27:54, 'Truly this was a just man, and the Son of God.' They had some tremulous consent before, but then he puts it out of question: truly it was so, he was some great man. But to prove it, take that place: 1 Tim. 1:15, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' It is a sure thing, an unquestionable truth. So the gospel of salvation is a word of truth, Eph. 1:13. In regard of its effects, it is called there the gospel of salvation; in regard of its property, the word of truth.

I shall prove it to you a little by parts.

1. It is an unquestionable truth against the Jews that he did not die for his own sins, for to those the prophet chiefly speaketh: and I should not be faithful to the text if I did not hint it. John 8:46, Christ maketh this challenge, 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?' not, Who can lay anything to my charge? For they were ready to lay anything to his charge, and to object against him as a traitor, deceiver, glutton, demoniac, what not; but they could not make it good, nor convince him of it. Nay, it is worth the observation, that God would not suffer him to be condemned till Pilate had solemnly acquitted him thrice by his own mouth. See it in one chapter, Luke 23:4, 'He saith to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man;' and again, ver. 14, 'Pilate said to the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people altogether, I have examined him before you, and have found no fault in him touching those things whereof ye accuse him;' and in ver. 22, 'And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him.' And there was nothing but popular tumult, and a confused noise of voices. 'Crucify him, crucify

him,' but no cause specified. Just as Tertullian saith of the old Christians, *Suo jure non inimicum vulgus invadit lapidibus et incendiis*—when they were dismissed from the judges, the common people would tear them in pieces, but they could assign no cause. Therefore, 'surely he hath borne our griefs.' As in the place before quoted, the centurion and they that were with him, when they saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, were forced to testify his innocence, Surely this was some hero, some man highly favoured by the gods.

2. It is an unquestionable truth that he died for our sins, in that—

[1.] It is the sum of all truth: 2 Cor. 1:20, 'For all the promises of God are in him yea, and in him Amen.' It is called 'a more sure word of prophecy,' 2 Peter 1:19. That part of the prophets that concerned Christ was more sure than all revelations and voices.

[2.] This truth is confirmed by God's oath, Heb. 6:14-19, when God made a promise to Abraham, 'because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying, Surely in blessing I will bless thee;' which, as the apostle reasoneth there, belongeth to us, through Christ. So that we have two immutable things—God's promise, and God's oath. Surely that is God's oath; if not, let me not be God.

[3] This a truth confirmed by Christ's own testimony, by the apostles and witnesses chosen to this purpose, whom the world was not able to withstand. And by a multitude of miracles wrought by them, and extraordinary gifts bestowed on them. Therefore it should be entertained as a sure truth, as a sure word of promise.

Use. It serveth to show us how this proposition is to be entertained by us, as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation and belief. Such truths are so commended to us to show how they should be received. It is to check our unbelief that these asseverations and commendations are annexed to great truths. A physician commendeth some medicines, not that they need it, but that the patient may the better take them. So we say it is true, not as if there were a doubt of it, but that the act of your faith may be the more revived and exercised upon these truths. Now then close with this truth both in the general and particularly.

1. In the general, look upon it as a faithful saying, that Christ the Son of God came into the world. There is a great deal of difference in men's assent to the gospel in the general. Every one doth not believe it to be a word of truth. First, In some there is but a conjectural apprehension; it may be true, or it may not, for they never made a strict inquiry into it, only received it by tradition. As the men of Samaria. Christ telleth them, 'Ye worship ye know not what,'

John 4:22. So they take up the gospel at haphazard, not knowing the worth of it, never feeling the power of it, nor experiencing the comfort of it. Secondly, In others there is but opinion, in which the mind is strongly swayed to think it true, but they cannot tell how it may prove. There are fears and doubts of the falsehood, as well as of the truth of it. They cannot contradict it, and yet cannot settle in it, for the establishing of their souls. There may be seine ungrounded overly persuasions, which may work in them that which the apostle calleth an enlightening. and a tasting of the powers of the world to come, Heb. 6:5. As some were drawn into baptism in the primitive church out of a probable conceit of the truth of the gospel, there may be some flashy momentary lightnings, but in few there are real and thorough persuasions of the truth of this proposition.

2. In particular, we should get the riches of assurance of understanding that we may fetch comfort out of it for ourselves. We should all say, For *our sins* Christ died; and if that word be too common, *my sins*. Take heed of making God a liar: 1 John 5:10, 'He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.' Here is the oath of the Spirit of God, 'Surely he hath borne our griefs.' There should be the like confidence in our hearts as there is truth in the proposition. Do not doubt of the sure word of promise. Many are loth to determine upon comfort; they are afraid of presumption; they are afraid to look upon the promises on the bright side: why then, look upon them in the humbling way. Claim by the apostle's tenure, 'He came to save sinners, of whom I am chief,' 1 Tim. 1:15. He came to die for sinners; why not than for me? I am sure I am as much a sinner as any other man, and more too. The faithful saying is, that Christ came to die for sinners surely I am sinner enough for Christ to save,—that you can say by experience. Why, if the word be true, it is as true Christ came to take away our sins.

But how shall I look upon this as a faithful saying, that Christ came to die for my sins? Is not that to believe a lie, suppose I be a reprobate?

Ans. [1.] The word of God excludeth none but those that exclude themselves. We are to go to God's revealed will; that we are bound to believe, though in his secret will it should not be truth. As Abraham was bound to believe, after God's command, that Isaac should die under his hand, though God had otherwise purposed; for you know it is said, 1 Tim. 2:4, 'Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.' God sheweth them that the promulgation of the gospel is general.

[2] Though every wicked man is not bound to believe that his sins are pardoned, yet he is bound to come to Christ that he may obtain forgiveness.

Therefore I close this proposition with a great deal of joy, that surely Christ came to pardon our sins, and to carry our griefs. So much to this use and point.

2. From the first act of Christ's love, with the object of it: 'He hath borne our griefs;' that is, took our sins upon him: the point is:—

Doct. 2. That Jesus Christ bore the guilt of our sins.

All our griefs were really transacted and cast upon him. The scriptures delight much in the expression of Christ's bearing our sins, and it implieth two things:—

1. A sublation, a taking of them away from us.

2. A susception of them upon himself. Look, as the sacrifice is said to bear the iniquities of the people, and the two goats—the slain goat and the scape-goat—typed out Christ's death and resurrection Lev. 16:22, 'And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited;' so Christ is said to 'bear our sins in his own body upon the tree,' 1 Peter 2:24—the guilt and the punishment of them. So Heb. 9:28, it is said, 'Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;' and John 1:29, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the *world*,'—*airei*: the word signifieth both to *bear* and to *take away*. Now, this bearing, in the language of the scripture, implieth a real susception of guilt; not only Christ's taking away of sin from us, but a taking of it into his own person; as Ezek. 18:20, 'The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son;' that is, his wickedness and his guilt shall not be transacted upon him. Now Christ bore our sins:—

[1.] That he might make a change with us: 2 Cor. 5:21, 'He was made sin for us that knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' He would take our sins, that we might have his righteousness. What a great exchange is were! As if a king should take a beggar's weeds and dunghill rags for his own royal robes. It was much for Joshua to have his filthy garments taken from him, more to have change of raiment; most of all that Christ should take such cast-off rags upon himself. We are righteousness in him, he is sin in us. In the great contrivance of the covenant, everything is done by way of exchange. The Son of God was made the Son of man, that the sons of men might become the sons of God. He took our misery that we might have his glory. He was born of a woman that we might be born of God. Christ was really sin for us, that we might be really righteous in him.

[2.] That he might destroy sin in us, by taking it into his own person: 1 Peter 2:24, 'He bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we

might be dead unto *sin*,’—*apogenomenoi*: the word signifieth that we might be unborn to sin: it cannot be fully rendered. We were before dead in sins: Christ would make us dead to sin, and, therefore, he took it into his own person. You know some foul diseases pass from us by the transmission of the infection to others. Christ was infected, as it were, by our corruptions, that we might be free. We, that were dead in sins, are now dead to sin, the vigour and strength of sin being extinguished by virtue derived from Christ’s bearing of them, whereby the soul is restored to health again.

The uses of this point are:—

1. To discover to us the love of Christ, whereby our faith hath somewhat to fix and dwell upon. The love of Christ is seen in that he would not only take away the guilt of sins, but take it into his own person. Here is the lowest condescension, and so the highest expression of love, that he was ‘made sin.’ This is that which is most abhorrent from the purity of the divine nature, to be sin; and yet he was so for our sakes; that was the lowest step and condescension that could be. Christ was made many things for us, but there is the highest wonder of his love, that he should be made sin for us. Usually that is the highest expression of love, when men do not only stoop beneath themselves, but do that which is contrary to their natures, to do us good. As when a stern man doth not only serve our necessities in his own way, but with great affability; and when a modest man is bold for our sakes. These things take with us, when men deny their very tempers and dispositions to serve us. This was the greatest self-denial in Christ, to become sin. Oh, work it upon your hearts, and display it before your faith! Here is cause of triumph: Col. 2:14, ‘Whatever was contrary to us, Christ took it away, nailing it to his cross.’ How nailed it? It was nailed when Christ was nailed: he bore it in his own person. Oh, how hath God provided for the triumph of our faith!

Doct. 3. I might further observe, that sin is our soul-sickness.

He took our griefs or sickness. The more gracious, the more healthy the soul is: 3 John 2, ‘I wish above all thing that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.’ Gaius had a healthy soul in a sickly body. As a disease blasteth the perfection and beauty of the body, so doth sin that of the soul,—it doth not thrive and prosper under it. There are some sins that bear a great analogy and resemblance with outward diseases, and affect the soul just as they do the body. But I will not speak to that now.

I proceed to a fourth point from the second act of Christ's love.

Doct. 4. That the Lord Jesus Christ took not only our sickness but our sorrows.

He did not only bear our griefs, but carried our sorrows; that is, took not only our guilt, but our punishment upon him; that is, the very wrath that we should have endured if we had suffered for sin, even the curse of the law and the wrath of God. He put himself in our stead; Christ would give us an experience of what he freed us from in his own person. That I may make this out to you, consider:—(1.) What; (2.) How; (3.) Why Christ suffered.

1. What Christ suffered. His sufferings were not only outward and visible, such as he endured in the garden, in the hall, and on the cross,—buffetings, scourgings, taunting insultations, being mocked, spit upon, crowned with thorns, pierced, crucified. Not only these, but inward sufferings, such as were:—

[1.] The assaults of spiritual wickednesses. The devil, seeing Christ under great agonies, thought he had a great advantage upon him, and therefore was very busy with him. Now God gave him leave, and Christ offered as it were the occasion, being stirred with passions; though, as a glass of clean water that is shaken, there was no filth to arise. God gave Satan leave, the chains of his providence being taken off from him, as in that place, Luke 22:53, 'This is your hour, and the power of darkness: ***h wra, kai h exousia tou skotou***.' Hell's licentious time,—it was, as it were, let loose to do what it would. The devil, who would tempt Christ in his fasting, would now much more in his dissolution and desertion: hell had a kind of license to tempt Christ, so far as it might stand with the innocence of his person.

[2] The desertion of God the Father, whereby all comfort was eclipsed and hidden from his soul; he was sequestered from all sense of comfort, though the union were not dissolved. Therefore, he crieth out, Mat. 27:46, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Though he lost his Father's love, it was not as if he had apprehensions that there was any change in God towards him; God was the same to Christ still, though not appearing in the same way: as the sun is the same, whether it shine through a red or green glass, and so casteth sometimes a comfortable and sometimes a bloody reflection.

[3.] He suffered inwardly the impressions of his Father's wrath, and that was a heavy burden indeed; and, therefore, he saith, Mat. 26:38, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.' It is said, Gal. 3:13, He was 'made a curse for us;' not only deprived of love, but made a curse. He suffered so much of the wrath of God, and underwent the curse of the law, so far forth as it might stand with ME office and person, that, if he had not been God, he would have remained under that curse to all eternity.

2. How he suffered. It was with a great deal of reluctancy and consternation expressed in his prayers, fears, grief; insomuch that he needed an angel to comfort him; and yet, notwithstanding, he was in so great an agony, that he sweat great drops of blood: the word is *Jronboi*, crumbs and clots of blood, Luke 22:44. That implieth a great deal of consternation of mind. Ordinarily, men, when they are in a great passion, emit sweat; but the impression of it was so strong upon Christ that he emitted blood,—nay, thick clots of blood, a sign that his soul laboured under the violence of strong passions. How poorly, then, do they provide for the honour of our Saviour that say he suffered no more than the cruelty and malice of men! The martyrs have suffered a great deal of more outward cruelty from men cheerfully, when they have been sawed, burned, melted, roasted, harrowed, boiled in lead or oil. They never felt much agonies and consternations, and, therefore, there was more in Christ's suffering than man's cruelty.

3. Let us consider why he suffered, and how that will clear the conclusion we have in hand.

[1.] He suffered to free us from the wrath which he endured, that was one end: 1 Thes. 1:10, 'Even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come.' Therefore, he underwent it in his own person; and the pains of hell did in a manner compass him round about. The ground of this reason lieth in this, that Christ was our surety and substitute, and, therefore, was to subject himself to that wrath which we had deserved by our sins, and should have endured in our persons, if he had not redeemed us from it. Our surety must carry our sorrows. He was to suffer not only for us, but in our name and stead; and the surety was to pay the same sum of money that the debtor oweth Heb. 7:22, Jesus was 'made a surety of a better testament.' The debt of punishment was to be exacted of him, as well as the debt of obedience. Jesus was made our surety, and he fully satisfied God's justice for that punishment that we owed to him by suffering it in his own person.

[2] He was to suffer to satisfy for our sins that he had taken upon him; for our sins were really put upon Christ, as was shown in the former point. And if

the sins and the punishment, which was the wrath of God, it followeth by a necessary consequence, that he who bore our griefs should also carry our sorrows. The ground of this reason is, because, as God meant to magnify his mercy at this time, so also his justice. He would not pardon sin without satisfaction for sin in us, or in our surety: Ps. 116:5, ‘Gracious is the Lord, and righteous.’ Now, if God had restored mankind without requiring our sins of Christ, he had only discovered his mercy. Nay, if an ordinary death had been accepted, as some dream of an acceptation, it had been all grace still. Now, it was God’s design to express his justice as well as his mercy; Rom. 3:25, ‘Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins.’ And the apostle repeateth it, ver. 26, ‘To declare, I say, his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus;’ that is, that he might be acknowledged just, even while of mercy he forgave sins. This is what the light of nature teacheth men, that justice must be satisfied before mercy could have a free passage. And, indeed, in the business of believing, the soul sticketh here: God is a just God, and this was what made the most seeing and knowing heathens to be at a loss how divine justice could be satisfied; and, therefore, to expiate guilt, they would give all that was near and dear, to them,—the fruit of their bodies for the sin of their souls. Whereas the gospel, you see, holdeth it forth in a sweet way,—Christ suffering the infinite wrath of his Father, even as much as would have sunk any soul to hell eternally, if it had been laid upon him. These arguments, I conceive, are sufficient. I will not traverse all the arguments and doubts that might be objected. Solid and fundamental truths are much weakened and lessened in the hearts of the hearers, when they are proposed in a controversial way; and therefore, lest I should prejudice this comfortable doctrine, while I go about to confirm it, I shall only touch upon two objections that concern the main state of the point.

Object. 1. If Christ made a full satisfaction by bearing our sorrows and his Father’s wrath, how then doth God love us freely?—how is mercy magnified?

I answer briefly—The freeness of God’s love or mercy doth not exclude the fulness of Christ’s merit. You shall see the apostle joineth both together, God’s mercy and Christ’s merit: Rom. 3:24, ‘Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.’ Freely, in respect of us; we could contribute nothing of desert, nor nothing of satisfaction toward it. There can be no price paid by ourselves, nor by any for us. We could not satisfy for ourselves, nor merit a satisfier. And therefore there is a great deal of freeness of mercy held forth in it, in that God freely gave Christ for us. The scriptures always speak of Christ as a gift: ‘For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-

begotten Son.’ There are divers respects that set out the freeness of the gift. First, In that he gave him of his own accord. We could not enlarge our thoughts to such a desire, Isa. 65:1. As God said in another like case, ‘I am found of them that sought me not.’ It is impossible that man or angel could take in such a contrivance in his thoughts to ask it of God. Secondly, Freely, because, as we cannot deserve it, so we cannot requite it. God giveth Christ to them that can give nothing for him. But this must be the work of another place.

Object. 2 is this, How did Christ suffer our punishment, since his sufferings were but temporary, and ours to be eternal? There are divers answers. I will give you that which is most satisfying.

1. I distinguish of our punishment; it may be considered two ways as to the substance, and as to the circumstances of it. For the substance, Christ suffered it fully, even infinite wrath, though not with such circumstances as could not stand with his person and office.

2. That those circumstances, the eternity and duration of our punishment, are not so much in regard of the punishment itself, as the persons that undergo it. It is because they cannot conquer and get above it. Now Christ was such an excellent person that he could not only undergo infinite wrath, but get above it. Christ could set himself free by his own power. The scriptures hint this answer in that expression, Acts 2:24, ‘Having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible he should be holden of it.’ Death and the curse were, as it were, in travail; for look, what pains and throes a travailing woman sustaineth till she be delivered of her burden; even such pangs did the grave and the curse feel till Christ were gotten free from them, for it was impossible he could be holden of it. Thus for that objection. Those curses that would have continued upon him for ever and ever, Christ conquered by the power of his Godhead, for he was to suffer triumphantly.

Use 1. Is exhortation, to press you to three duties:—1. To observe this great work of God, to put the punishment of our sins upon Christ.

[1.] Meditate upon it in your thoughts. Here is enough to take them up to all eternity. Deep sufferings seem to challenge from us a serious contemplation: Lam. 1:12, ‘Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger,’—which some have applied to Christ, though I think improperly. I quote it only to show you that a transient glance, a mere passing by, is not enough for deep sorrows; you must behold and see. The scripture speaks of looking upon him whom we have pierced, Zech. 12:10. And observe it seriously; it is not a slight turn of the

thoughts this way that will serve. What is the reason that men that know the evil of sin and the mercy of Christ do not more love Christ and hate sin? They have but a slight and superficial apprehension—it swimmeth upon the top of their thoughts, and is readily up: It is true we are all sinners, and God is merciful. These men, though they speak often of it, do least of all believe it. Therefore do not hastily run over these truths. The scriptures always, when they express the love of God, they seem to give occasion for some pause of the thoughts: ‘God so loved the world!’ ‘Behold what manner of love!’ and the like. The works of God’s providence require an accurate search: Ps. 111:2, ‘The works of the Lord are great, and to be sought out by all that take pleasure therein.’ Much more the great contrivance of the covenant. Take it into your thoughts, what it is to have a God suffering, and a God punishing.

[2.] Observe it with admiration. One said he had gotten this good by philosophy, that he had learned to admire at nothing. The more you know of the things of God, the more you will admire at everything, especially at this great mystery. There is an observation of curiosity, when men look into every turning of it by their reasons, and so lose themselves in a mist of errors. The Christian way is to look upon it with admiration, to admire the wisdom of God, that he should in such a sweet way magnify infinite wisdom and infinite justice at the same time. This very thing, the sufferings of Christ, the angels desire to pry into, 1 Peter 1:12; if you consult the context, you will find it so. He alludeth to the two angels that were set upon the mercy-seat, which was the covering of the ark, and typed out Christ. They would fain see the utmost of this mystery. They desire to look into it out of a thirst of knowledge, or a delight in meditation. So 1 Tim. 3:16, ‘Seen of angels;’ that is, this was the ravishing object that took up their thoughts.

2. To learn that which God teacheth us in such an instance. There are many profitable lessons. I will but name them:—First, There is the evil of sin. God would express his hatred against it by punishing it in Christ. Sin is such a thing, that when Christ did but take the guilt of it into his own person, he must suffer the infinite wrath of his Father. Secondly, Then the impartial severity of divine justice: God spared not his own Son. It is said, 2 Peter 2:4, that he ‘spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell.’ But lo, here is a greater instance: Rom. 8:32, ‘He spared not his own Son,’ when he bore our sins by imputation. No prerogative then can hinder. In vain do men pretend privileges against God’s wrath. There is nothing but Christ that hath borne wrath that we can oppose against wrath. There is nothing that stoppeth the long furrows but the casting God’s Son in the way. Think of this, that you may fear before him. God is a consuming fire, Heb. 12:29. He was so in Christ in a sense, and is

so to all out of Christ. Thirdly, The law's dignity and indispensableness. God would fulfil every tittle; not the least iota must pass away, but it must be fulfilled in Christ, both in regard of the duty it commandeth, and the curse it annexeth to the breach of it. Fourthly, The love of God in providing amply against all our scruples, that he would offer us mercy in such a way as he might declare his justice, and so satisfy all our doubts. There is a saying usual in some men's prayers, 'We appeal from thy justice to thy mercy.' This expression is not so warrantable. God's justice and God's mercy both look comfortably upon a sinner through Christ. It is mercy, and mercy purchased, when justice is satisfied. God is now faithful and just. That which before caused our greatest horror, causeth now our greatest triumph. God is a just God. What would men have given heretofore to appease justice? It could never enter into men's thoughts which way that should be done, till the gospel revealed it.

3. To render praise and thanksgiving to God. We enjoy a great deal of benefit by it, and great benefits require a great deal of duty. Here is a double motive to praise. The wrath of God is taken away from us, and Christ endured it for us. As to its being taken away from us, consider what it is to be freed from the wrath of God. What should we have endured if Christ had not made such a satisfaction! You cannot expect that I should give you a map of hell. I have observed that great truths never do well when they are painted by fancy. War and hell are rather pleasant in the description than horrible. It is like there may be a little shrinking in the soul; as a gentle fresh gale that is let out upon the face of the sea may a little furl the surface and upper part rather than stir the billows, it doth not work soundly. A mere relation is better than a passionate description. Oh, consider, then, what it is to be deprived of all sense of the favour of God, to be delivered over to torments ceaseless, endless, and remediless. One flash of God's wrath into our consciences, how doth it make us roar! And if a drop be so irksome, what is it to have an ocean of wrath poured upon us, and to be overwhelmed in soul and body! Oh, what a mercy is it that our Saviour hath delivered us from this everlasting vengeance of hell-fire! I had rather you

should enlarge your hearts to think of these things than expatiate upon them. To have all this taken away should make us abound in praise. And then, in the next place, consider how Christ took it upon himself. 'He hath carried our sorrows!' There are some rare instances and representations of those in story that have exposed themselves to violence and cruelty for others; as in Damon and Pythias, Pambo, &c. But none riseth so high as this, to wit, the leaving of infinite glory to suffer infinite wrath for us—that was a hard exchange. Oh, then, work it upon your thoughts, that you may live to that God that gave himself for you. The main argument that faith urgeth upon the soul is drawn from Christ's suffering for

us Gal. 2:20, 'The life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' I should have been given, but he gave himself in my stead.

Use 2. Is information to the children of God to show the happiness of those that have an interest in Christ's death. There is no wrath against them: Isa. 27:4, 'Fury is not in me.' There may be sometimes *fili sub ira* (children under wrath); they may have some apprehensions of God's wrath through their own sins, when they have offended God. They must get a new act of pardon assured to them and to their consciences. There may be displeasure, though not wrath. There may be afflictions, and that in pursuance of divine vengeance; though for the matter they may be the same as light upon wicked men, yet their habitude and use is changed unto God's children. They are of exceeding great use to them, to quicken them to duties, to humble them for sin, to keep lusts low, to prevent vanity and pride of heart, and to bring us nearer to God. So much for this verse.

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