



Fire and Ice Sermon Series

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

by Thomas Manton

THE EIGHTH VERSE.

He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

WE now come to the third defence to take off the scandal of Christ's meanness and sufferings; and that is taken from the glorious issue and end of these sufferings. It was an ignominious death, but there followed a glorious resurrection: he was not detained and holden of death, he got clear of it, and then lived for ever. The text saith, 'He was taken from prison, and from judgment,' &c.

There is scarce a verse in the scripture that hath been so variously expounded as this hath been, not only by others, but by the same men. Scarce a man hath agreed with himself positively to determine of the sense of it, the phrases looking so many several ways. However, difficulty provoketh endeavours. According as I apprehend them, you may divide them into two parts:—

1. The scandal itself, laid down in the most aggravating terms—prison,' 'judgment,' 'cutting off from the land of the living,' and a 'stroke upon him for transgression;' as if the prophet had said, Grant all that you will charge upon him, prison, judgment, strokes, cutting off,—express it the worst way you can, all this will not impeach the glory of his excellency.

2. We have the defence in other terms: 'He was taken' from those things, and 'who shall declare his generation?' 'If you think it is not enough to say that he died for others, and that he was stricken for the transgression of my people, yet he did not as every man that dieth for others; he perished not in this expression of

his love, as others do he was taken from prison, and from judgment, and now liveth gloriously. There are two things in the defence:—

[1.] His resurrections ‘He was taken from prison and from judgment;’ he got out from under it.

[2] His life and duration in that state: ‘Who shall declare his generation?’ These are the parts, which will be the better made out to you by going over the phrases, as they lie in the order of the words, clearing this scripture from a wrong sense.

1. *He was taken from prison and from judgment.* These words have been variously translated and variously expounded. Some read ‘by prison and judgment he was taken away;’ but that doth not suit with the scope: others, ‘after distress and judgment he was taken into glory,’ that differeth not from the proper sense: others, ‘without prison and judgment he was taken away in a violent, wrongful, extra-judicial manner;’ but the Hebrew words do not so easily signify that. Now the main thing is to reconcile scripture and scripture, though it is impossible to reconcile interpreters. Therefore to dance after their pipe would perplex a man with much uncertainty, seeing they knew not which sense to take themselves. The Seventy translate it otherwise than it is read here, and the words are quoted in Acts 8:32, *en th tateinwsei* &c., ‘In his humiliation his judgment was taken away;’ for that place hath the sense, though not the same words; for in or after his humiliation his judgment was taken away, when he was taken from it: in the middle of death he was a conqueror. Others now follow our reading, and give the sense thus: ‘He was taken from prison and judgment to the cross;’ as soon as bound and condemned, presently crucified. But that mistaketh the sense, and the following words show it is wrong, for they declare the glory of his resurrection, as these do his resurrection.

Thus for the different opinions. The true sense briefly is, that Christ was taken and assumed into glory from the prison of the grave. Prison is taken metaphorically for any distress, or it may be taken properly for the prison of the grave, and that judgment and condemnation that was passed upon him by God and men: by God, as our surety, condemning him in our stead; by men, in an unjust and violent way. Thus, after much traversing the variety of senses, I find this to be best and most approved.

2. It followeth, *Who shall declare his generation?* The Seventy, and Luke out of them, have it, *thn genean autou tiV dihghsetai*; ‘Who shall declare his generation?’ Some apply this to his eternal generation, as the fathers generally do,—as if the scandal of his misery were excused by that: others to his incarnation,—who can declare it how he was begotten of the Virgin? But these

are wide of the scope, and the word will not bear it. Others refer it to the wickedness of that age, Who can tell it? Oh, the wickedness of such a generation, who would put to death such an innocent person as the Messiah (Who can declare the wickedness of the people of this generation? But that is but arresting the place, and a harsh sense. Others more properly interpret it thus: Who shall declare his generation? that is, the numerousness of those converts that shall be gained to him, the race or issue that shall come of the gospel? But this is the matter of another verse, and such a thing is never expressed by *dor* or *genia* properly, but by other words. The sense is, then, who shall declare his generation? that is, his age or duration: *dor* is often for that, and *genia* too: Acts 13:36, 'David, after he had served (*genia*) his age, or his generation, he fell asleep' The like in other places. So that the

meaning is, though he were a short time under distress and judgment, some two or three days; yet, when he was taken from it, who shall declare his generation? who shall be able to count the number of his age, or the date of that time? You may easily count the number of a man's age and the date of his generation: Ps. 90:10, 'The days of our years are threescore years and ten.' But who can tell those many thousands of thousands of years, those endless ages that for ever Christ shall live? You can tell David's or Jacob's generation, but can you tell his? Theirs is soon reckoned, but who can find out a sum that can reach eternity? Thus for this phrase.

3. It followeth, *For he was cut off of the land of the living*: for, or though he were cut off; that is, though he were by a violent death cut off, yet he shall be taken thence and translated into glory, where he shall have a long and lasting age. Or you may take the particle causally, as we render it, *for*: here is a double reason, he was but cut off as a slip, and it was not for his own sins; and therefore there is reason why he should not miscarry under it: this will appear in the exposition. 'He was cut off' is a metaphor taken from plants or trees, that do not fall down of their own accord, but are slipped and plucked off. The same metaphor is used, Dan. 9:25, 'The Messiah is cut off, but not for himself.' To which metaphor Christ himself seemeth to allude, Luke 23:31, 'For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in a dry?' The meaning is, if Christ himself be taken off, who was cut off as a green tree, and not planted again,—was taken from the land of the living; that is, from living and conversing here upon earth: and it is so called, both by way of opposition to the land of the dead, or the grave; and by a condescension of the Spirit of God to our weakness, because we count that none live but those that are before us. This phrase is often used: Ps. 27:13, 'I had fainted unless I had believed to see the

goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.' So Isa. 38:11, 'I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living.'

4. *And for the transgression of my people was he stricken; or by the transgression*, by the wickedness of Israel. He bringeth in God speaking it, as taking notice of their sin: Acts 2:23, 'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel of God, have ye taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.' You may take both; it is like this may be the scripture Paul meaneth when he saith, 1 Cor. 15:3, 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;' either sense is good. The sum of all is this, that though Jesus Christ was so cruelly and despitefully handled for our sins, yet at length he was taken from all this suffering, and reigneth for ever with God in glory.

Many points may be raised from these words; but having promised only to hint at the main things in these following verses, I shall take notice but of these few.

Doct. 1. That by the divine appointment there was a formal process against Christ. He was made guilty, he was cast into prison, he was condemned. Sin was translated upon him in the former verses. Here God had him to prison, and let all his distresses come upon him; and so the grave especially he was condemned to; there was judgment passed upon him. And therefore, the next time you see your surety without sin; here you see him as under your sin in misery and distress: Heb. 9:28, 'Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation.'

What comfort is there for believers in this, to support and strengthen their faith?

1. In that whatsoever should be done to them, is done to Christ in their stead. It is comfort that Christ hath made full satisfaction, that he' hath been in prison and under judgment for our sakes. God will not exact twice, of Christ and you too.

2. It yieldeth them instruction as well as comfort, not to think it much if they be imprisoned, and be under judgment for Christ's sake. Christ hath been so for theirs, and you may be glad you are conformed to your head: Luke 21:12, Christ told the apostles, 'They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.' So it may be with you; but remember he was taken from prison and from judgment.

3. Christ had a long reign for a short death. Christ's glory was in the midst of his sufferings, in his humiliation, that is, when most humbled. Christ

did not recover glory till in the prison of the grave. We can easily count the time of his suffering, but his generation who can declare? 2 Cor. 4:17, 'This light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' An hyperbole, which is an expression greater than the truth, will not declare the glory. Hyperboles of hyperboles are not high enough; who can declare his generation?

4. Those that are cut off from the land of the living may live again to glory. So the church, when buried as it were under its ruins, there will be a resurrection; and therefore the glory of the churches is called 'the first resurrection,' Rev. 20. Death is but a transplanting to glory to the godly; they are but a slip taken off from an earthly root, that God may set them in the field of glory. Alas t this life is nothing to the age and generation that we shall have with Christ in heaven; a man may die, and yet be saved from death.

5. All Christ's sufferings were from men or by men. If there be anything shameful in the cross, blame the Jews for it, and yourselves for it. Many blame the Jews, and are ready to fly in their faces; but do you blame yourselves? It is hard to know which is meant by 'the transgression of my people,' or 'for,' or 'of my people.' God would have us reflect upon both. Christ, that died for the sins of men, was taken away by the sins of men, that so he might at the same time discover his personal innocency and assumed guilt.

6. Oppressed innocency will get clear again: 'Who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people.' It was not a just debt in regard of men, and therefore not a lasting death; and it was not for any fault of his own. It plainly hinteth the unexpected restitution of glory to the people of God in their greatest humiliation; their judgment is taken away: God can never come with help too late, but men can. In his humiliation, in his judgment, Christ showeth the meaning of that riddle, 'Though he kill me, yet I will trust in him.' There may be victory in death; the matter is never past help with God: Jonas in the whale's belly was recovered. We can never sink below hope and prayer. Our interest thrives best many times when the case is dead and desperate as to all appearance.

These things having been observed, I now come to the main things intended in the text, and that is the glory of the resurrection, and the duration and continuance of that glory.

The points are two:—

1. That the Lord Jesus was taken from prison and from judgment, i.e., he rose again out of the pit of distress, to which he was condemned for our sakes.

2. That Christ being risen, liveth a numberless date of years, even for ever with God in glory.

These two points, then, the resurrection of Christ, and the life of Christ: the first is from that clause, 'He was taken from prison and from judgment;' the other from that, 'Who can declare his generation?'

I begin with the first point, that the Lord Jesus was taken from prison and from judgment, and rose out of the pit of distress, to which he was condemned for our sakes. He was taken from prison and from judgment; he did rise as Mediator, and could not choose but rise; he was not suffered to miscarry in it. The scriptures testify abundantly that he rose again: 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 'That he died for our sins, and rose again the third day, according to the scriptures.' And in other places, that he ought to rise again: Luke 24:46, 'And thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.' This Christ proveth out of the scriptures.

Therefore I shall show you—(1.) Why he rose, by reasons reflecting upon the efficient cause; (2.) Why he ought to rise, reflecting upon the final causes and ends of God in Christ in it for our good.

First, I shall show you why he rose, giving you the reasons for it; as—1. His own prayer. Christ's prayers were all granted, but especially those that were put forth with such vehemency and strong pouring out of his soul to his Father. He prayed for it with a great deal of holy fear, that he might not miscarry in the work. Therefore he was taken from prison and from judgment. The apostle saith, Heb. 5:7,

He was heard in that he feared; he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death.' He did not so much pray that he might not die, as that he might be saved from death; that having taken so much guilt upon him, he might not sink under it.

2. God's power was put forth upon his prayer to support him. He had a Father to look after him, whose tenderness would not let him leave Christ in the grave, nor suffer his Holy One to see corruption. And therefore the resurrection of Christ is applied to God the Father; as here in the text, 'He was taken from prison and from judgment.' And Acts 2:24, 'Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible he should be holden of it.' He helped the grave to disburden herself, easing it of its pangs and throes Rom. 8:11, 'But if the Spirit of him that raised tip Jesus from the dead dwell in you,' &c. The apostle speaketh of a mighty power of God, that is, of God the Father, which wrought in Christ when he raised him from the

dead, Eph. 1:20. God the Father put forth his power to take off the pains of death and the chains of the grave.

3. There was the power of his own Godhead; he had in himself a divine virtue to quicken his body. I distinguish this from the former, because God did not only raise Christ, but he raised himself, so as his resurrection might be a discovery of his Godhead. And therefore you shall find in scripture, that he is not only said to be raised by the power of God, but by himself, by his own person: Acts 2:24, 'He loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible he should be holden of it.' The grave was to give up this hot morsel, as a man that hath swallowed down a hot bit was not able to hold it. The scriptures do not only ascribe the resurrection to God the Father, but. to the Godhead of the Son too: John 10:17, 'I lay down my life, that I may take it again.' The words speak of Christ's taking up his life by his own power. He so laid down his life, that he might reassume it again by his own power. It is said, 2 Cor. 13:4, that 'though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God; for we are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.' And it is very like that expression of St Peter, 1 Peter 3:18, 'Put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.' The apostle's scope in that place of the Corinthians is to prove that Christ and Christians are both alike in some respects: there is visible weakness, and inward power; he died through visible weakness. That which you could see in him was man's form, and so he was crucified; that which was not seen was his divinity, through the power of which he liveth. His resurrection was a glorious instance and manifestation of his own Godhead.

Secondly, For what end Christ was raised. And here, that I may show believers the fountain of their comfort, why it ought to be that Christ should be raised from the dead, since all the comfort of the soul dependeth upon his getting above the grave, and shaking the powers of death, I will here a little refresh your spirits with the water of this well-spring of salvation; I will draw it up and pour it forth in three considerations. In regard of a moral necessity which I call conveniency, the good that we attain by Christ's getting the upper hand of the grave, and the confirmation of our souls in all the benefits of his purchase; for without his resurrection they had been nothing to us.

1. Generally the resurrection is made to be the chiefest ground of comfort to Christians in the scripture; and therefore you shall find in scripture that this is made the great article: Rom. 10:9, 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' Mark, that is put as the main thing of Christianity, that God hath raised him from the dead: 2 Tim. 2:8, 'Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel.'

Above all truths we must clearly preach that, and press that as if it were the life of all religion. Remember Christ is raised from the dead; and therefore it was a usual salutation among the Christians, THE LORD IS RISEN. The apostle maketh the triumph of faith chiefly to arise from this, Christ's resurrection: Rom. 8:34, 'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again.' If Christ had not risen, there would be but poor comfort to believers: 1 Cor. 15:14, 'If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.' All would be to no purpose without this great seal and confirmation. It is a point of so great importance, that it is generally made the corner-stone in religion, the main hinge upon which gospel comfort hangs.

2. More particularly to show you the benefits of it.

[1.] All your spiritual enemies are subdued: Eph. 4:8, 'When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive;' that is, those things that usually captivate the spirits of Christians, they were forced to set off the triumph of Christ's ascension; he seized upon the spoils at his resurrection, and rode in triumph at his ascension to glory. Death is unstinged; death shall be served as Haman, when it thinketh to hurt believers, and shall honour them as he did Mordecai. You may die, but you are saved from death: 1 Cor. 15:55, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' It followeth, 'Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ' You can no more be held of the grave than Christ could be holden thereby. Hell is unarmed and subdued, and the powers of darkness triumphed over. Though the devil mustereth temptations against you, you can see all conquered by faith in Christ's resurrection 'Your life is hid with Christ.' Then for sin, that is subdued: Christ gave it its death-wound upon the cross, and at his resurrection got above it. Then for the world, remember what Christ says, John 16:33, 'Fear not, little flock,' 'I have overcome the world;' that is, so conquered and triumphed over the world that it shall not hurt them. As for the devil, he trode him underfoot, and so shall Christians shortly: Rom. 16:20, 'The God of peace shall tread Satan under our feet shortly.'

[2.] All spiritual blessings are procured for us. The blessedness of a Christian lieth in these three things: in pardon, grace, and glory; in justification, sanctification, and glorification. And all these are confirmed by Christ's being risen, and taken from prison and from judgment.

(1.) For pardon or justification. If any one sin had remained unsatisfied for, Christ could not have risen; every sin must be expiated with death: Rom. 6:23, 'The wages of [every] sin is death;' and Christ would fulfil every tittle of the law, Mat. 5:18. But seeing he is got free, you may be sure he hath paid

the wages of every sin 1 Cor. 15:17, 'If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins.' While the surety is in prison, it is a sign the debt is not satisfied; but your surety is taken from prison and from judgment. Be of good comfort, all is paid: Rom. 4:25, 'Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.' God had him to prison for the debt of the creatures, and took him from prison and from judgment for their comfort, and that they might be persuaded of his satisfaction.

(2.) For the grace of sanctification; he rose that he might purchase the Spirit to raise us from the death of sin to the life of grace: Rom. 6:4, 'That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' By the same glory of the Father both is done, that is, by the same glorious power that raised Jesus from the dead: Phil. 3:10, the apostle speaketh of the power of Christ's resurrection, that is, the virtue that goeth out from it unto believers.

(3.) Glorification. Christ rose before us to open the way; and therefore he is called 'the first-fruits of them that slept,' 1 Cor. 15:20. Others rise as a single ear of corn, but Christ as the first-fruits. The first-fruits were consecrated in lieu of all the rest; so is Christ in your stead: Col. 1:18, Christ is called 'the first-born from the dead;' that is, the chiefest, and one that rose for us all,—the first that entered into heaven as a common person. There was a resurrection of some before the glorification of Christ's body, but he was the first-born that stood for all: Heb. 6:20, 'Whither the forerunner is for us entered.' Jesus Christ is our forerunner, his resurrection doth make way for us to rise after him; he is our harbinger that is gone before.

[3.] Consider what special thing there is in the resurrection of Christ above the other acts of the mediatorship, since the scripture layeth so much weight upon it. What is it that it contributes to the comfort of Christians above his death? It will be necessary to inquire after that, because the scripture speaketh so much of this circumstance, the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

I answer—First, By way of confirmation: it confirmeth the heart in the expectation of salvation by Christ. By this it appeareth that the whole contrivance of salvation was a true thing; you have God's seal for it. It therefore confirmeth the heart in two things:—(1.) The person of Christ; and (2.) The office of Christ, upon which all hangeth.

1. The person of Christ. There can be no greater proof of his divinity than the resurrection: 1 Peter 1:21, 'Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.' And, indeed, there our faith beginneth upon Christ's being God; as Peter saith,

'Your faith is built on God.' Well, then, here is God's seal to the heart, about the person of the Messiah.— Rom. 1:4, 'Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.' There the case was plainly and mightily decided that he was so, so as no man could contradict it: 'Truly this was the Son of God,' as the centurion cried. All were forced to say so by this instance. So Acts 13:33, he is said to be 'begotten of the Father.' He proveth it there to be at his resurrection, that *is*, *declarative*; then it was evidently shown that he was begotten of the Father. Well, then, though the mercies of pardon, grace, and glory were merited by other acts of the mediatorship, yet they are confirmed and sealed by this, because this establisheth the soul in the ground of it—in the truth of the person of Christ.

2. It sealeth to us the truth of his office, that this was he that was sealed to be Mediator. When the Jews taxed Christ for usurpation, he would confirm his office to them by no other sign but the resurrection: Mat. 12:39, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas;' that is, that which answereth to the type of Jonas; and what was that but his lying three days and three nights in the grave and rising again? As if Christ had said, If you will have a miracle and a seal from heaven, that is all that I will give you. So you shall see upon another occasion, in John 2, when the Jews saw him authoritatively purging the temple, and acting as an extraordinary person, ver. 18, 'What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?' What confirmation hast thou from heaven to be the Messiah, that thou takest upon thee to reform the temple? Ver. 19, 'Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up; meaning the temple of his body,' ver. 21. There was all the sign he would give them, viz., his resurrection; this was the most proper confirmation of his office.

Secondly, There is something by way of evidence,—it is a clearing and justifying of the merits of Christ. The benefits purchased by his death are evidenced to us in his resurrection; God must not only be satisfied, but it must be discovered to the world that God was fully satisfied, or else we should remain under doubts and perplexities still. Now the resurrection of Christ is the full discovery of that satisfaction that is made by his death. This is that that the fallen creature hath to show for it, that God was satisfied, even Christ's resurrection. You know, among men, when they pay debts, they look that the book be cancelled, and that they have an acquittance to show, if they should be challenged that the debt is not paid. Now, what have you to answer the challenge? What have you to show Satan when he impleadeth you before God? Why, by Christ's resurrection you

may even challenge the challenger: Rom. 8:34, 'Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again.' Why should God let him out of prison, if he had not paid the utmost farthing? He was taken from prison and from judgment. If Christ had been still 'in the prison of the grave, you must have looked for another surety that must make up his defects and satisfy where he could not 'If Christ be not risen, ye are yet in your sins;' ye have nothing to show for your discharge. How could ye have answered Satan then, if your surety had miscarried? Thus by way of evidence.

Thirdly, Something by way of pledge to us. By Christ's resurrection God giveth us a pawn and earnest, as it were, that we may expect the raising of our own bodies. You may plead it to God, and you may argue it for yourselves to God: Christ is raised, therefore raise me. And to yourselves, Therefore shall I be raised, because Christ was raised. Christ was acquitted from sins and received into glory: therefore, Lord, for his sake acquit me from my sins. Or shall I say, this is a pledge to us, that our persons shall be raised, justified, sanctified, glorified, because our head is raised? The apostle thinketh it is a good argument to prove the resurrection of our bodies by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 15; and 1 Thes. 4:14, 'For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.' The meaning is, that Christ's resurrection doth not only manifest a possibility, but a necessity of our rising with him. God hath in him given you an earnest of the resurrection, so as through Christ you may humbly challenge it at his hands—Lord, I believe thou wilt raise me to life everlasting. The wicked rise by the general power of God, but Christians rise with reference to Christ's resurrection; that was a pledge to them of theirs: and, therefore, it is observable, that presently upon the resurrection of Christ's body, there followed the resurrection of the bodies of some of the saints, that it might not only be a pledge, but that we might look upon it as a pledge to us: Mat. 27:52,53, 'And the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared to many.' There the virtue wrought immediately, that others of God's people might look for it, and the rest of Christ's mystical body expect their turn; not only the head, but some of the members rose too. Therefore, here is our comfort, because it is the great pledge and earnest that God hath given to the saints, namely, that, as it was done to Christ, so they may expect it shall be done to them.

Fourthly, Something you may expect by way of influence. Every well of salvation hath its proper stream, and every thing in a believer's heart hangs and depends upon some proportionable thing in Christ Jesus; our death to sin upon his death, our life upon his life, our holiness upon his holiness: John 17:19, 'For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they may be sanctified through the truth.' For whatever Christ had in himself as Mediator, he had it and did it for us. So that from these special things there is special causal influence on the hearts of believers. As from the resurrection of Christ our resurrection; from his death, the death of sin to the life of grace, or to the life of glory. There is causal influence from Christ's resurrection upon our hearts, which is the donation of the Spirit of God upon this act of Christ's resurrection, to raise us to grace and glory. And therefore we are said, 1 Peter 1:3, to be 'begotten to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.' Regeneration cometh from the virtue and influence of it, that passeth into our hearts for the conquering of sin, and begetting the new nature and the raising us to glory. But there is another benefit you are to expect by way of influence from the resurrection of Christ, even the gift of the Spirit, to conform you to your head. Christ by his resurrection being made a fountain of super-natural life, will send out vital influence. Wait for it, then; he will renew and heal you, and he will carry on the work to the perfection of glory. Head and members must be conformable, as far as the model of the creatures will permit. Therefore, as sure as Christ is risen, you shall be raised with him to holiness here, and to heaven hereafter. That you may wait for this influence—

1. Labour to get your union with Christ cleared to you. The passing out of virtue and influence from Christ depends upon that; the head doth not guide and act foreign members. Oh, say, then, if I were sure of my union with Christ, I should have this rich comfort. As the woman said, Mat. 9:21, 'If I might but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be made whole.' The least evidence of an interest and union with Christ would fill us with wonderful comfort.

2. Value it. Think it worthy of the best of your endeavours, and your greatest self-denial: Phil. 3:10, 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death.'

Now this appeareth to be from the resurrection of Christ, for these three reasons:—From its influence—

1. Because this is the most proportionable and suitable act in the creatures; and I take it for a spiritual principle that every act of grace hath a necessary dependence Upon that work of Christ that is most suitable to it. Observe it, Christians, faith is mightily helped when you know that special well-head to which you must repair for the refreshment of your spirit in every exigence. It is not enough to know in the general that Christ must do all for you, and that he is the fountain of all mercies; but you must know particularly what is the spring of your comfort on such and such a needful occasion. In times of knowledge God will have our thoughts more explicit; and if you observe it, you will find that general and indistinct considerations do not work so effectually to the stablishing of the spirit. God would have you to see the provision he hath made for every need. Christ died for sin that you might die to sin; and Christ rose to glory that you might rise to grace and glory. The dependence and looking up of the creature must be to the most suitable act and work of the Messiah. Whole Christ carrieth in himself the complete work of our salvation, and the several acts and conditions of Christ are proportioned to the several acts and conditions of salvation.

2. Because the same power that raised Christ raiseth us from death to life; and therefore clearly such influence is from the resurrection of Christ. This is evidenced in many places of scripture: Col. 2:12, 'You are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.' It is the same operation of God. The meaning of that place is, that the life of faith was created in our souls by the same almighty efficacy of God by which Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. For the apostle proveth three things there That whoever is in Christ is risen from death to life; and that this rising is by faith; and that this faith is wrought by the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. See another place, Eph. 1:19,20, 'And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.' It was the same power, because it was the same power that procured it for us. God raised him up, that he might be a fountain and root of all supernatural life to us, that the power might work in his as well as him. So Rom. 8:11, 'If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit which dwelleth in you. Mark, it is the same Spirit. The power of the Spirit is put forth to raise Christ, and the power of the Spirit is put forth to raise you. This is not done by the consideration of Christ's resurrection, but by the power of the Spirit accompanying it. It is the Spirit that doth effectually apply this raising and begetting power.

3. Because the Spirit worketh always with reference to this act and work of Christ. It raiseth you with respect to Christ's resurrection; and that is the meaning of these phrases which do abound in scripture, that couple the soul and Christ together in all his works, as crucified with him, raised with him. For the latter, take these places Eph. 2:5, 'Even when we were dead in sins hath he quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together.' So Col. 2:13, 'So you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him;' so Col. 3:1, 'If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things which are above.' Divers such kinds of expressions there are in the word, which make out the soul's sharing with Christ in the virtue of these works. The Spirit revealeth to them that they are not only to be raised with Christ, but that they are raised, and so make it a powerful argument to heavenliness, or any other part of the new creature. This is done already in the root and mystical notion, and therefore it should be done in the effectual application. I say, the Spirit revealeth to the soul the resurrection of Christ, and that he is our head, and the fountain of our life; and therefore we should live and be conformed to our head. And by such considerations the Spirit leaveth a great virtue and force upon the soul, which is called 'the power of the resurrection.' And thus I have a little opened this difficult matter to you. Take but one place more and I have done: Rom. 6:10,11, 'For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.' There are Christ's acts. , Now in the next verse you shall see how the Spirit maketh the soul to share in them: 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Dead by the death of Christ, but alive by the life of Christ. The Spirit cometh to the heart, and revealeth this to it. Lo, this is done for you in Christ, and so bringeth the soul by the same efficacy to a likeness to Christ.

Use 1. Is consolation. Here is comfort for those that have an interest in Christ. Believers, know the ground of your privileges. Christ is risen, and thereby declared mightily to be the Son of God. So shall you be declared mightily to be the sons of God at your resurrection: Ps. 37:5, 'Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.' Oh, what comfort is there for their spirits in that word, 'Christ is risen.' It was the comfortable message Christ sent to Peter, when he was ready to faint under the sadness of his own apprehensions, 'Go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is risen, and goeth before you into Galilee,' Mark 16:7—Go to Peter, and tell him by name. O poor Peter! he is weeping and ready to break his heart; go and comfort him, be sure to tell him I am risen. Christians, here is comfort for the saddest believer. Among the primitive Christians their usual salutation was, *THE LORD IS RISEN*; as if that were as much as wishing them all peace and grace.

But how shall we do to draw out these comforts?

Ans. Act faith, which bringeth in the virtues of Christ upon the soul.

But how must we act faith in this matter of the resurrection of Christ? It consists in reasoning and waiting. There is something you must collect *by way* of inference, and something you must expect by way of influence.

First, Set faith a-work, or arguing by way of inference. You must collect somewhat that you may extract the quintessence of it. As a surety, as a common person, and as a pattern of providence and church dispensations, in all these respects you may fetch comfort from Christ's resurrection. I shall a little clear these three considerations of Christ, though the two first be somewhat common among divines.

1. As a surety, and one that undertook for us; that is clear, because Christ is called 'the surety of a better testament,' Heb. 7:22. Now your surety is risen, then draw out the comfort thus Surely sin is satisfied, for the debt is paid. A man is never the richer for gold in the mine till it be digged out; no more is a man the better for comforts in the lump; dig them out by holy reasoning. Say then, Christ, that undertook all, he is got free again; surely then I am discharged, I have something to show to God. Go and urge it to the Lord—Why didst thou suffer Christ to rise again, if thou wilt charge poor creatures with their guilt? And urge it to Satan too—Dost thou condemn me, and tell me what I have done, and wherein so often I have sinned?—Why, Jesus Christ is risen. As Paul: Rom 8:34, 'Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again.' Surely the whole business is accomplished by Christ. Thus dwell upon such thoughts; only take heed you rest not in your own reasonings—look for the success of all from the Spirit. O Lord, didst thou not let thine only-begotten and well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, go free, after he had been in the prison and in the grave? Did not he undertake for us, and hast thou discharged him and not us? He is our surety, he hath paid our debt for us. Therefore reason with your souls as David reasoned with his soul: Ps. 42:11, 'Why 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.'

2. As a common person, Christ may be said to be all of us; for as Adam, in a sense, was all mankind, so Christ had all the elect in his own person, and so represents them: so that what he did we may, in some sense, be said to have done. Thus, a burgess in parliament, that represents all the town or corporation that sendeth him, his act is their act: it is grounded upon what the apostle saith, 1 Cor. 15:22, 'As in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive.' As Adam was a common person representing all mankind, so Christ all the elect.

Therefore the apostle saith, Rom. 6:11, 'Reckon ye also yourselves dead indeed unto sin, 'but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' You must do two things:—

[1.] Interest yourselves in the acts of your common person. Reason thus—If we are united to Christ, then we shall share in all his purchased benefits: 'I am crucified with Christ,' Gal. 2:20; and I am risen with Christ. You are instated by virtue of your union in all Christ's acts: Christ was raised, therefore I shall rise; Christ was taken to glory, therefore I shall be so. Urge it to God—O Lord, did I not rise out of the dust in Christ? Lord, didst thou not take me out of the devil's power when thou tookest Christ out of the grave?

[2.] You must reason from this privilege against present distress—Is it the evil of sin? Rom. 6:2, 'How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?' Am not I dead to sin in Christ, and alive to this grace in Christ? Then reason from your privileges; I am above this cross, for Christ is, and shall I sink under it? I am in this glory already, as united to Christ, who is there, and shall I despair of it? Is not my head there, and will the head be severed from the rest of the members in the mystical body?

3. As a pattern of Providence: for God meant to copy out all his dispensations to his people in the life of Christ. There is not a providence happeneth to the church or to believers but there is something therein conformable to the life of Christ. For look, as all dispensations typed out Christ, as the children of Israel's going out of Egypt did, for which see that of Hosea, 'I called my Son out of Egypt,' Hosea 11:1, which is cited, Mat. 2:15, 'Out of Egypt I called my Son;' and as Jonas, being three days and three nights in the whale's belly, did; so Christ is the type of all providences after him. There is no misery but some passage of Christ's life is parallel to it. Out of all these considerations you may fetch a great deal of comfort. Reason then against all the depths of misery into which you may be cast; I shall get free, for Christ got free; I see the success in the story of Christ's life. Is it the depth of inward misery? Ps. 18:5, 'The sorrows of hell compassed me about, and the snares of death compassed me.' So they did Christ, yet he got free of them, as the apostle saith, Heb. 12:2, '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, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.' Is it outward misery? None could have more distress upon him than Christ, yet he was taken from distress and judgment. Is it death? Christ died and rose again. Either God will preserve you from the evil, or he will order it so that it shall not hold you. Christ could not be holden of death when it seized upon him. Is it reproaches? It may be you are buried

in the scorn of the world, and crowded under disrespects and abasures—so was

‘ Christ before you.

We now come to the second considerable circumstance in the text, and that is the life of Christ: ‘Who shall declare his generation?’ As Christ saith, ‘I am the resurrection and the life,’ that is, the cause of both; for Christ did not only rise, and not only live, but he was the resurrection and the life. He rose as a resurrection, and he liveth as a life. And therefore all our spiritual rising and living is from his rising and living. But having spoken of his resurrection, it will be necessary to inquire into his life.

Doct. That Christ, being risen, liveth a numberless term of years, even for ever, with God in glory.

Who shall declare his generation t That is so long that it cannot be reckoned. Those that have the best skill in numbers cannot rise high enough to reach his age. By what sum will you express eternity? Thousands of thousand thousands can scarce be admitted to be a shadow of it: Heb. 7:3, ‘Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life;’ which is to prove, not that Christ as God should live for ever, but Christ as Mediator, as God-man, under which notion he is considered here.

1. Because at his resurrection he was cleared from sin, and so was no more liable to death. The apostle saith, Rom. 5:12, that ‘death entered by sin.’ It did so upon Christ as well as upon us when he took our guilt: 1 Peter 4:1, ‘He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin,’ being cleared at his resurrection. When he ceased from suffering he ceased from sin. Therefore the apostle saith, 1 Tim. 3:16, He was ‘justified in the Spirit,’ and manifested to the world in the flesh; that is, they saw him, but because of his miserable appearance, they could judge nothing but that he was a sinner; but when his Godhead came to be discovered at his resurrection, then he was justified in the Spirit. Therefore now he is no more liable to death. Christ was not justified, neither by God nor men, till that time. Now he is raised, he is exempt from it, as the apostle urgeth, Rom. 6:9, ‘Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.’ Death can lord it no more over Christ, as it seemed to do for a while; but now Christ hath destroyed death: Rev. 1:18: ‘I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death’ Death and hell thought to make sure of Christ, and to have him under lock and key, as it were; but he could not be holden by them. But now Christ hath the power of death and hell, so that none goeth there but whom he pleaseth. *Amen*; it is very

certain it is so. This is the first reason; having fully cleared the debt wherein he stood engaged to divine justice, he is no more liable to death.

2. That he might become a principle and fountain of life to us. Whatever Christ hath as Mediator, he hath it for us. He lived for us upon earth, and he dieth for ever for us in heaven: I Thes. 5:10, 'Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.' His life of glory is our life, as well as his life of grace; and therefore he is said to be 'the Resurrection and the Life:' 1 John 5:11,12, 'And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; 'that is, the testimony of God's bounty, eternal life, which is by virtue of his life. And so Christ is said to have life in himself: John 5:26, 'For as the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given to the Son to have life in himself;' that is, to have an original fountain of life. No creature in the scripture notion hath life in itself.

3. That he might perform all the other acts of the mediatorship, and so be doing something continually in heaven for the elect of God, that he may apply the merit of his sufferings, death, and resurrection. Past acts would not satisfy the spirit; they are more immediately for the comfort of those that have some evidence of their right in Christ. The soul saith, Here is much done, but what was this to me? This was done for those that have interest in Christ, as his sufferings, dying, and resurrection. Ay! but Christ liveth; there is something a-doing still—there is something a-negotiating in heaven for you. Therefore, he not only negotiated for you by the past acts of his life upon earth, his death, burial, and resurrection, but he yet liveth to be doing for you. His office required this Heb. 7:16, 'Who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.' The meaning is, the Levitical priests were by the law of carnal rites for a while, but Christ for ever. As a judicious divine observeth, present acts do most satisfy such doubtful spirits. Christ's life in heaven is for the effectual application of his merit, and other the great offices of the mediatorship.

But what doth Christ in heaven for us?

1. He intercedes for us: Heb. 7:25, 'Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.' That is the end of his life, to beseech the Father for such as come to him; he intercedeth for the application of his merit. Christ is a continual remembrancer in heaven, as it were, to God

the Father; he is praying that you may believe; he is our soul's solicitor, as it were, to appear and plead our cause in heaven for us: Heb. 9:24, he is said to 'appear in the presence of God for us,' as our agent in heaven. He proveth the matter, he prayeth for what thou prayest for, and liveth to appear before God for you in all your straits.

2. That he may seize upon his kingdom, and administer it to the destruction of his adversaries. Christ's life is their death: Ps. ex. 1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.' Christ must live, that they may fall and be under the feet of Christ. So the apostle saith, 1 Cor. 15:25, 'For he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.' At the time of his ascension Christ was solemnly inaugurated into the regal office, that so he might destroy his adversaries: Rev. 17:14, 'The Lamb shall overcome.' It is Christ shall fight against them. Isa. 58:8, 'Thy righteousness shall go before thee.' That which is comfort to God's people, is terror to the adversaries; if they could make sure work of him, their business were at an end; but Christ is alive to destroy their persons, and blast their designs. Some of the people of God may fall before them, and all visible supplies may be dead, as Sarah's womb; but 'the Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock, and let the God of my salvation be exalted.'

3. That he may dispense all necessary supplies to the needs of his servants: Eph. 4:10, 'When he ascended up on high, he gave gifts to men; 'that is, all necessary supplies for his servants. As a fountain of living waters continually feedeth the stream, so you have a living Christ who will continually supply the streams of grace; he knoweth your needs, and can supply them. And therefore the apostle maketh the main business of salvation to hang upon the life of Christ Rom. 5:10, 'For if when we were enemies we were reconciled by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life;' that is, can we want anything necessary to salvation, that have a living Christ to go to? You may be sure, if by his death he could bring you into such a glorious estate, now he is alive he will not be wanting to you.

Use 1. Is information. Learn hence divers truths:—

1. What is the fountain of spiritual life, to wit, the life of Christ; and, therefore, it is called the life of God, and the life of Christ, in many places of scripture: 'Alienated from the life of God,' Eph. 4:18; It is God and Christ that liveth, and liveth in us, Eph. 3:17; and Col. 3:3, 'Your life is hid with Christ in God,' and 'Christ that liveth in me,' Gal. 2:20. Again, 'When

Christ, who is our life, shall appear,' Col. 3:4. As things are hid in their causes, flowers in their root, till their appearance at spring, so the glory of spiritual life is hid in its cause and fountain.

2. That true believers cannot wholly fall away. Christ liveth for ever, and, therefore, they shall live for ever; the life of Christ cannot wholly be abolished in them. When you can dig up the spring and fountain, then grace may wither, and you may be lost in a seducement and a temptation, but now you are kept by the power of an endless life. The perpetuity of the saints, if it had no other ground but this, would remain unshaken; therefore, it is said, 'We are preserved in Jesus Christ,' Jude 1. Christ's life is their life, and Christ's life is such a numberless age, that none can count it.

3. That Christ is a fit object for worship and service. Every being is the more noble, the more life it hath in it; the life of things is the commendation of them: Eccles. 9:4, 'A living dog is better than a dead lion;' better, that is, more noble. Now, since Christ hath the noblest and the highest being, he liveth for ever. The scriptures often call upon us to trust in the living God: Ps. 13:2, 'My soul thirsteth for the living God.' Who would go to the dead cistern, and leave the living fountain? Alas! what is a man the better for a dead idol? All the satisfaction of the spirit lieth in the life of him whom we worship. Now Christ is not only living, but living for ever. Your hopes in him will not run waste. A prince, whose breath is in his nostrils, may uphold his favourites during his life, but upon his death they may be brought from the crown of their excellency to the dust of scorn and ignominy; but Jesus Christ never dieth. As Bathsheba said to David, 1 Kings 1:21, 'When my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders.' All their care and cost is lost; but it cannot be so with Jesus Christ; he liveth to make you everlastingly happy.

Use 2. Is for the discovery of hypocrites, that pretend to Christ, but live as if Christ were in the grave still, as if he were a dead Christ, as if there were no life nor virtue in him.

But how shall we know what is the life of Christ? I answer—By three things: there will be freeness, and there will be power, and there will be likeness to Christ.

1. There will be freeness towards God. The heart is sweetly drawn out to comply with the mind of Christ. Christ doth not live in you, if there be not a willingness in you to be like him. The Spirit of Christ supplieth the place of a law in such a soul: Rom. 8:2, 'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.' Outward letters and

the rule could not make him free, and disentangle him from his corruptions, but the Spirit of the Lord Jesus evangelising the law of God, did. The law is made gospel by the Spirit in the life of Christ; it giveth the heart a sweet liberty and freedom towards God. The tears of those that pray are sweeter than the joys of the theatre.

2. There will be power, there will be something besides cold forms and slight pretences: 2 Tim. 3:5, 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power.' That which the apostle calleth the power and force of godliness is a real impression and operation upon the heart; there will be somewhat besides empty profession and barren speculation; there will be somewhat that you may call power and 'mighty working,' as the apostle calleth it everywhere. Now, when there is no working upon the spirit answerable to knowledge or pretences, what a dead Christ do such make him!

3. There will be likeness to Christ. Christ as surely liveth in believers now, as he once lived upon the earth in his own person. And you know three things were eminent in the person of Christ when on earth:—Obedience to his Father: he often professeth that he came to do the will of his Father: John 4:34, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' But we drink in iniquity like water; our meat and drink is to sin against the Father. That is the meaning of that phrase before mentioned, Job 15:16. Then for his humility: 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart,' Mat. 11:29. He could have given the world another pattern: Learn of me, for I made the world; I can do wonders. But Christ would teach this lesson, Not as I am mighty, but meek: Phil. 2:5, 'Let this mind be in you which was also in Jesus Christ.' What was that? A humble mind, as you may see in the context. And then usefulness: that was eminent in him; he went about doing good. Laziness and selfishness were abhorred by him. If Christ would make Christians more useful, he would still act according to his old copy, and live over his life in their hearts again. Search then; is the living God a dead thing to you?

Use 3. For reproof to the people of God, that do not draw out this life of Christ. Believers, Christ should not only live in heaven, but he should live in you also: 'Not I, but Christ that liveth in me,' Gal. 2:20. Christians are to blame especially in their conflicts with sin, and the difficulties of duty, and the hardships of the world, and they faint under miseries, as if there were not a living Christ, whence they might fetch comfort. A Christian should say, The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock. You should make his power useful in your worst condition; your lives should be nothing else but a discovery of the life of Christ in yourselves: 2 Cor. 4:10, the apostle saith that he suffered terrible things with a courageous heart,' That the life also of Jesus might be manifested in

our body.' Noble actings of grace hold forth the life of Christ, as effects discover the cause. And by your conversations it should appear there is one liveth in heaven.

Use 4. Is consolation in all conditions. Is it sin that is grievous to you? doth it leave a wound upon the soul? There is one that liveth in heaven; that prays for the binding up of your souls, and for the healing of the wounded spirit; he is negotiating the matter with God for you. Is it death? Christ liveth, though you die; and though you were dead, yet shall you live: Hosea 6:2, 'After two, days he will revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.' Are friends dead? Remember your Friend in heaven liveth for ever. Are your hopes dead as Sarah's womb and Abraham's body? Yet Christ is alive still, Succours may miscarry, supports may fail, violence may cut off your comforts; but no hand of iniquity can reach Jesus Christ. He liveth for ever with God in glory.

Use 5. Is exhortation to believers:—

1. To wait for the like privileges. Oh, who shall count your generation when you shall come to share with Christ? You know the longings of Christ's heart towards you, and that you shall behold his glory: John 17:24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me may be where I am, that they may behold my glory.' You are to enjoy the same endless life of bliss and glory. Oh, groan, and wait for the consolation of the saints in heaven. For the present you have rich privileges, but alas! this is nothing: 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,' 1 John 3:2.

2. Possess your souls of this life of Christ, and by faith see yourselves in him: Rom. 6:10, 'Reckon ye also yourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.' Dead first in his death, then raised in his resurrection, and at last glorified in his glory. All these acts of the Mediator must pass out into your souls; first I was dead to the law, dead to sin, dead to the curse; but then, shall live and die no more.

3. Strive to be conformed to your head. He is to die no more; do not you die any more in sin. There is in every action of Christ influence and matter of imitation: influence, of which you must possess yourselves; but matter of imitation is that to which you must be conformed. Oh, strive to keep in the same condition with your dear Lord and Saviour. If death hath no more dominion over him, 'let not sin reign in your mortal bodies,' Rom. 6:12. From the same enforcement the apostle urgeth it; and indeed for a motive you can have no better than what the subject offereth. Christ would not only suffer for you for a

time, but lives for your sake for ever. Christ spendeth all his time to do you good.

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