



Fire and Ice Sermon Series

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

by Thomas Manton

THE TENTH VERSE.

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

THE prophet is still dealing with the Jews' scandals. Unbelief will easily take up any pretence to justify itself. And therefore when there was so much ground for their prejudice against Christ, as such meanness and so many sufferings, these vain pleas could not easily be removed out of their minds; and that is the reason why he speaketh to it again in this verse, that he might further discover their folly, because they would suffer their thoughts to stay in the outward appearance of things, not considering how God bringeth about many times his greatest designs in a riddle and mystery, and wraps up the good and salvation of his people under a veil of contradictions. God the Father is the wronged party, and he that hath to do with pardon Rom. 3:26, He is 'the justifier of them that believe in Jesus.' The prophet telleth them in this verse that Christ should live by dying, gain by his bruises and sufferings; that which was likely to disaffect the world against him, should draw them into his obedience. Where the work of the Lord seemed to miscarry, there it should prosper in his hands. The great expectation was that the Lord should bruise the head of the serpent; yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Christ. Look to the design of God, and you shall see sufferings are not matter of scandal, but admiration. It is no good rule to measure the intents of God by the looks and face of things. Whilst you look only to the outward meanness and sufferings of Christ, you overlook the design of God in him. 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief,' &c. The words contain divers arguments and defences against the scandals taken up against Christ by the Jews.

1. The will of God: *it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief*; that is the cause of his sufferings.

2. The nature of his suffering: *when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin*.

3. The fruits of his suffering, and they are three:—

[1.] The propagation of his spiritual seed: *he shall see his seed*.

[2.] The prolongation of his life: *he shall prolong his days*.

[3.] The promulgation of the will of God in his hands: *the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands*. This will be clear to you by going over the phrases.

Tremellius has it, *Delectatus est Dominus*, the Lord delighted to bruise him. The Seventy, to mend the harshness of the phrase, render it, 'It pleased the Lord to cleanse him:' but that is a mistake of the word, which among the Chaldees signifieth to cleanse; and there is no reason why we should fear to say that the Lord designed to subject his Son to bruises and to grief, since the great comfort of Christians dependeth upon it. That these things did not happen by chance, or against the will of God, as something that he did not care for, or would abhor. The Lord's pleasure was fulfilled in all these sufferings, though these wicked men that brought them upon Christ had other intentions. And that decision of Lombard and other school-men is very derogatory to the truth of the gospel and the comfort of believers, when they say, God would only discover the virtues of Christ, and the fruits of his sufferings, and the malice of the Jews; as if the sufferings of Christ were beside God's intention and design. But the acts of their malice are ascribed to the ordination of God: 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him and to put him to grief.' And suitable to this, it is very observable in the New Testament, that those words which imply their malice do also imply God's appointment. Pilate delivered him, Judas delivered him, and God delivered him Mat. 27:2, ***papedwken***, 'And delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.' And then it is said of Pilate, in the 26th verse, that he 'loosed' or 'released Barabbas,' ***paradwken***, and delivered Christ to be crucified. And Judas delivered him: Mat. 26:15, 'I will deliver him to you.' And Christ, speaking of Judas, says, John 19:11, 'Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.' And the same word is used of God's disposal of Christ, Rom. 8:32, 'He spared not his own Son but delivered him up for us all.' And again, of the Jews, Acts 3:13, ***paredokate***, 'Whom ye delivered up.' The priests for envy, Judas for gain, the people in blind zeal, and Pilate to keep up his esteem among the Jews, but God to make out his own ends for the salvation of his

people. And always delivered or betrayed is expressed by the same word, which is the rather to be noted, because the scriptures, not in one place only, but in many, use the same action and expression. And therefore, without any stain or blot upon divine justice, we may say, 'The Lord delighted to bruise him and to put him to grief;' for he had a great hand in all that was done to Christ. It followeth:—

'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin;' or, as it is more properly in the margin, 'When his soul shall make an offering for sin: 'this clause being to be referred to God the Son; for the Lord Christ was not unwillingly subjected to bruises and griefs, but voluntarily submitted himself to the pleasure of his Father's will, and gave himself to die for us: Gal. 2:20, 'He made his soul (*ascham*) sin,' as it is in the Hebrew, it being a usual property of scripture-phrase to call the sin-offering sin. Thus it is said, 2 Cor. 5:21, 'For he hath made him to be sin for us; 'that is, a sin-offering. And thus you may understand that of the apostle, Rom. 8:3, 'God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.' By a sin-offering, which was Christ, be abolished and took away sin. I should pass over this phrase, but that I cannot choose but note to you the conditionality of this expression, 'When he shall make his soul an offering for sin.' *Erab* some read it—if thou wilt do thus and thus. It implieth the covenant between God and Christ. There is not only a covenant between God and believers, but between God and Christ; as I shall show more fully hereafter, when I observe the abundant usefulness of that consideration. But it followeth in the text:—

He shall see his seed. This is the third reason why the death of Christ should not be accounted infamous and ignominious to him. The meaning is, he shall beget to himself a great many children by the immortal seed of the word and the power of his Spirit, which are called his seed; and it is said he shall see them, he shall live to see how the word is propagated throughout all ages. I conceive in this expression the prophet alludeth to the desire of the Hebrew fathers, who were for living so long as they might see a numerous issue come from their loins. And therefore it is spoken of as a very desirable blessing Ps. 128:6, 'Thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.' Or, if you will, this expression may refer to Isaac, who, though God commanded to be offered, yet he promised that 'his seed should be multiplied as the stars of heaven and the sand on the sea-shore;' and all this upon his death. That which seemed to cut off other men's hopes should increase Christ's. As he saith himself, John 12:24, 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.' So Christ by his death, like the root in the ground, perisheth, that he may bring forth fruit. But it is added:—

He shall prolong his days; that is, he shall live for ever. Some refer it to his seed,—he shall prolong the days of his seed: so the Seventy. But probably it is to be referred to Christ, though the comfort also belongeth to the faithful; their days shall be prolonged in the life of Christ, and they shall be eternal in his eternity.

The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands; that is, the will of the Lord. The will of the Lord for your redemption, justification, sanctification, the conversion of the world, the collection of a church, whatever you may call the will of God. Any design of his shall prosper in the hand of Christ; anything in the grand design of reconciliation; that is, by his strength, or by his ministry and dispensation: both these are called a hand in scripture; as it is said, Num. 36:13, God published the law by the hand of Moses; ‘These are the commandments and judgments which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses unto the children of Israel.’ So ‘prosper in his hand;’ that is, by his ministry and dispensation.

Thus I have gone through the phrases. I have been the larger, because I shall a little stay upon this text. I do not find a verse in the scriptures that doth yield more consolation and comfort to Christians than this doth. Here is the Father’s ordination the Son’s voluntary susception, God’s covenant with Christ; Christ is a sacrifice for sin. Here is the promulgation of the gospel, the life of Christ, and the pleasure of the Lord. Oh, what a heap of sweetness is here, if we had the skill to draw out the comfort of it!

I begin with the first: ‘Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief.’ The point is, that all the sufferings of Jesus Christ were laid on him by the ordination and appointment of God the Father.

It was the Lord bruised him, and put him to grief; that is, it was by the Lord’s appointment and decree. This appears by scripture, which asserts—

1. The choice of Christ’s person, and the designation and deputation of him to the office of Mediator. As Isa. 42:1, ‘Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him.’ God would show election in Christ first: the cause of his appearing in our salvation was God’s choice: John 6:27, ‘Him hath God the Father sealed;’ that is, expressly appointed, marked out for such a design. So it is set forth, Rom. 3:25, ‘Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation for our sins: So 1 Peter 1:20, ‘Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.’ The plot of the gospel was long since drawn in heaven, and lay hid in God’s breast, till he was pleased to copy out his eternal thoughts, and give the world a draught of them.

2. The bestowing the person of Christ upon us, so that he was made ours, as it were; which is expressed in scripture by God's sending his Son: John 3:16, 'God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son.' He disposed of his person, to be handled so as might make most for your good. And, therefore, in other places he is said to send his Son: 1 John 4:10, 'He sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' God dispatched him on that great errand. And in this sense is the apostle's phrase, Rom. 8:32, He 'spared not his own Son.' He would not dismiss him from serving his design, though it rendered him liable to wrath and sufferings. *Gave, sent, would not spare*; all these words imply the execution of the decree according to the design of God.

3. The determining of all the sufferings of Christ; not a sorrow, but God had it in his thoughts before all worlds. Every bruise and stroke was a further discovery of his eternal counsel: Acts 2:23, 'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.' Mark it, ***wrismenh boul h kai prognwsei***. There was an express counsel for that, even the greatest mischief their wickedness could execute upon Christ; they had other thoughts than to conform to God's will, yet they did but discover it, and draw it out to the world: Luke 22:22, 'The Son of man goeth as it was determined.' Which checketh our laziness, that we do no more consider the several actions of Christ, they being all appointed and ordered in much counsel by the Father Acts 4:27,28, 'Of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.' What Herod and the Jews, and Pontius Pilate and the Gentiles did, was all that God would have to be done. Every particular was conceived and devised in the decree of God, and so necessary to be fulfilled; 'For who hath resisted his will?' Rom. 9:19. God will cause the decree to bring forth, and the world shall see what is conceived in the womb of his counsels.

4. There are some expressions which seem to imply as if there were more than a bare knowledge and permission in this great affair, as if there were some kind of action in Christ's sufferings. As here, 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to grief;' Zech. 13:7, 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.' God is said to awake and stir up the sword against Christ, which implieth more than a bare suffering, some kind of efficiency and concurrent act of God to the bruising and grief of Christ. For that place is meant of Christ, my shepherd and my fellow; there is no shepherd that is God's fellow but Christ. Besides, Christ applieth it to himself: Mat. 26:31,

‘For it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.’ It will be worthy the inquiring, then, what acts of God, what efficiency there was from him towards the sufferings of Christ?

1. Thus far God concurred, by a withdrawing of his presence and the sight of his favour; so God might be said to put him to grief indeed, for so Christ complaineth, Mat. 27:46, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ That was the greatest torment that could be upon Christ’s spirit. His humanity would not have been sensible of all the other sorrows, if there were not a suspension of that joy and comfort which otherwise he might have taken in the union of the Godhead. I say, in this sense God may be said to put him to grief, by the withdrawing of his love and presence of grace from his apprehension.

2. By sustaining the wicked instruments in their natures, beings, and actings, whilst they were drawing out their spite and violence against Christ: Acts 17:28, ‘In him we live, and move, and have our beings.’ It is by his concurrence the action is brought forth. God could have blasted the hand of violence, blown them all into nothing, even in the heat of their fury against his Son; but the Lord upheld them in their beings and actings. As Christ said to Pilate, John 19:11, ‘Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.’ If there were not some leave and concession from heaven, they could do nothing. God can suspend the actions of the creature at his pleasure, as he did the fire from burning when the three children were in it. And therefore so far God concurred to the supporting of the creature in acts of violence and sin against Christ men have not a power of themselves, separate from a providential assistance, to operate or exercise any power in them. Though God doth not take away their power, yet if he doth not co-operate with their power, nothing will be done; as the beasts stood still when the wheels stood still, Ezek. 1:21. When God stands still, all second causes are silent, and move not at that time. And though he does not dissolve their beings, he can suspend their motion, if he will not work with them. There is his concurrence to the action, though not to the pravity and wickedness of it. I conceive that is dangerous and unsafe to say.

3. By serving his love and glory by their wickedness, that bruised and afflicted Christ. God would not have permitted it if he did not know how to make good use of it, and how he might reduce it by his goodness and wisdom to his glory. So far he would uphold them in their actings as to serve his purposes of salvation, and to cause his pleasure to prosper. It pleased the Lord to bruise Christ, that he might bruise the serpent. His

aim was at his head, though Christ's heel was bruised in the enterprise: Gen. 3:15, 'It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' God doth make sin itself to turn to his own glory. As Gregory said of Adam's fall, it was *luctu foelix culpa* (the fruitful sin), because it made way for such a Redeemer as Christ, because it made way for his redemption; as the apostle said, Rom. 3:5, 'Our unrighteousness commendeth the righteousness of God.' And such efficiency there was about evil, though not of evil, that God might bring good out of it, and dispose of it for the advantage of his own counsels and intents. And so he may be said to awake the sword against the shepherd that was his fellow, as justly pursuing the effect of his own decrees.

The reasons of this point are:—

1. Because all things fall under his decrees and the care of his providence, and therefore certainly this matter of Christ does. See that place, Eph. 1:11, he 'worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;' the meaning is, there is nothing done in the world but God may be said to work it; he doth it by counsel and by the counsel of his own will, in a wise order and freely, as God pleaseth and as he seeth best. God's will and counsel is the ground of all things. Mark the generality of the expression, all things; nothing so low and frivolous but God's will taketh cognisance of it; nothing so wicked but God will order and dispose it for good: Mat. 10:29, 'Not a sparrow shall fall upon the ground without your Father; and every hair of your head is numbered.' Nothing so sinful as Judas's act and Pilate's, yet it was determined; God's hand and counsel intended it. Whatever is done is done in reference to some foregoing decree.

2. Because this was the special design and contrivance of heaven to bring forth Christ into the world; all other dispensations looked this way. Adam's fall, God's providence through so many ages, did but tend to help on this great birth, and therefore this design of Christ is called by the apostle, Eph. 3:10, 'The manifold wisdom of God.' All that variety and intermixture of providences was but in pursuance of his design: 1 Tim. 3:16, 'Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh.' This was the great contrivance, the masterpiece of heaven, that discovered most of God to the creatures. It was much when God made man after his own image and likeness, the wonder of nature; yet it was more when God made himself after our image. That is a wonder indeed. The apostle would have it carried above all exception by all Christians. Therefore, it was especially in heaven designed by God.

Object. How is the creature to blame, then, for smiting and bruising of Christ? Or if to blame, how is God clear? It was by his ordination and appointment.

Ans. 1. For the creatures' blame; they are faulty:—

[1.] Because God's secret thoughts and intents are not their rule. Hidden things belong to God; and it is he that worketh according to the counsel of his own will. You must look to the counsel of his word. Though God got a great deal of glory, yet that was no thanks to them that crucified Christ; for because they crucified him, the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost, to their ruin and desolation, 1 Thes. 2:16.

[2] They had other ends, though God turned it for good: Acts 2, 'With wicked hands ye have taken, and crucified, and slain;' Isa. 10:7, 'Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few.' Judas's end was gain, Pilate's to please the people, the high priests' to wreak their malice; but God had other ends in it, the salvation of fallen man.

[3.] God's decrees did not compel them to evil; it implieth things will be, though it doth not effect them—there is no necessity of constraint and compulsion, though there be of infallibility. God taketh not liberty from the creatures, nor contingency from the second causes; they act their own way, though God turneth it to his own ends; they were carried to it by their wickedness. This is the plain decision of the matter.

2. For the justifying of God when he judgeth. His justice cannot be impeached, because he infuseth no evil, enforceth to no evil, only ordaineth what shall be; his goodness cannot be impeached for suffering things which he can turn to such advantage for his own glory and the creature's good. And, therefore, as the sun shineth upon a dung-hill without having his beams polluted by it, so God's ordination taketh in the sin of the creatures without any blemish to itself. God's decrees are immanent in himself, working nothing that is evil in the creatures. Other things might be said, but I would not perplex the matter.

APPLICATION.

Use 1. It serveth to give check to curiosity. Men are bold in their inquiries, and cavil at such dispensations. Though you cannot see the reason of them, yet rest in God's appointment: 'It pleased the Father to bruise him.' You

shall find in scripture this is made to be the last result of all difficulty, the pleasure and will of God: Col. 1:19, 'It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.' If you would know the reason why the second person should be chosen, and enriched with the fulness of the Godhead, it pleased the Father. So for God's liberty in dispensing mercies to babes, passing by wise men: Mat. 11:26, 'Even so, Father, because it pleaseth thee.'

Use 2. Is consolation to believers. Here is ample encouragement for your faith: every grain in the life of Christ should be weighed. Now this is a material consideration, that he was ordained by God the Father.

1. That the offended party beginneth first to think of a remedy: 1 John 4:19, 'He loved us first.' Certainly it is a great relief and support to our thoughts; God thinketh of a pardon before we could think of the sin. It pleased the Father to take the sufferings of Christ into his eternal thoughts. Oh, then, when you have offended the Father, think you have a Christ to present to him, one that he thought of before all worlds.

2. Here is encouragement. Christ is a sacrifice of the Father's ordaining. He was pleased to bruise him. Therefore, rejoice and triumph in believing. You have found him who is acceptable to God the Father. This is the great inquiry of men, how to appease God. When they are filled with fears, and a sense of divine wrath, what would they give to redeem their souls from guilt? You shall see the offers of the creature are very large: Micah 6:6,7, 'Where with shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings and calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, and the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' Thus, you see, they bid high. Oh, this will be your disposition when you are scorched with God's wrath. Anything for a pardon, for a testimony of his love. How shall you please him? Though he will not accept of thy first-born, yet he will of his own Son, whom himself hath given thee. It is not the creature's shift, but the Lord's appointment. You may be sure here is somewhat will please the Father; you have it from heaven: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' But God will have all believers know it. Oh, say with joy then, Job 33:20, 'I have found a ransom.' God will say so too; it was his ordination for reconciliation.

3. Here is comfort against sins of deliberation. It may be you have catered for your lusts, and devised wickedness upon your beds. It is sad when so much of your hearts hath gone out to the ways of sin. Sins of counsel and premeditation do most sadly wound the Spirit; but here, is your balm and comfort. Christ was the

result of God's eternal thoughts. The Lord was devising the remedy as well as we the sin.

Use 3. Is information. It informeth us of divers things.

1. The greatness of God's love: John 3:16, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son.' Christ himself speaketh of it with admiration. *So loved!* as if there were not an expression great enough to show how much: 1 John 4:10, 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.' If you speak of love, this is love indeed. When Abraham offered Isaac, and would part with his son, how doth the Lord make him promises upon it? Oh, then, consider what it was for God, of all persons, to choose the second person in the Godhead, his Son, and to give him up for you—to determine so great sufferings against him, to awaken the sword against the shepherd his fellow—and all for your sakes. Consider of it in your thoughts, and let these thoughts of God be sweet and endearing to you. He was not bound to it; you could oblige him by no merits, by no satisfaction you could make him,—only it pleased him. Oh, study this his love, the dying love of our dear Redeemer.

2. The ancientness of God's love in Christ. The oldness of love is the commendation of it; therefore God saith, Isa. 54:8, 'With an everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.' His pleasure in Christ was conceived before all worlds. Christ manifested in time was the effect of an eternal love. You shall see the scriptures voucheth the ancientness of the promise often: Titus 1:2, 'In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.' A promise that went before all time.

3. It teacheth us to bless God the Father for giving and appointing of Jesus Christ. It is good to look what endearment every person hath upon our spirits, that so we may keep them up in our thoughts as a proportioned object for our worship and respects. Here is the great endearment:—The election of the Father caused the donation of the Son: Eph. 1:3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.' Bless him not only as your creator and preserver, but as the God and Father of Christ.

4. It teacheth us not to look upon the face of things, but upon God's counsel and intents in them. The foulest acts that ever were in God's design may serve most holy purposes. Providence is like a double-faced picture—a monster and a woman: Gen. 45:5, 'God sent me before you to preserve life.' So in all that befallerth you, or what others do to you out of ill ends, God may work good out of it.

I come now to the second argument—why Christ's death should not be looked upon as infamous and ignominious to him; and that is taken from the manner of his sufferings: 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin;' or 'When his soul shall make an offering for sin.' I shall take notice—

1. Of the form or manner of it.

2. The matter, or what is contained in it.

1. For the form or manner of it. It seemeth to be conditional and federal, that when Christ would do thus and thus, God would perform his part to him, and he should enjoy such and such privileges. The point is—

Doct. That the business of man's salvation was transacted by way of covenant between God and Christ.

Here is the form of it, that in case Christ would make his soul an offering for sin, he should see his seed, and prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hands. That this point may be fully made out to you, I shall use this method:—

1. Show how it may appear that there was such a covenant and formality of agreement between God and Christ.

2. What this covenant is, and the several, ways whereby it doth appear in scripture.

1. I shall show how it may appear there was such a covenant.

[1.] By such titles given to Christ as do infer it, because he is the effect or result of it; as Mal. 3:1, 'I will send the angel (or messenger) of the covenant, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.' This *him* whom by covenant I have designed to such an office, him whom by virtue of the compact and agreement I have made with him, I shall send to you. So you shall see he is called a covenant: Isa. 13:6, 'And give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;' Isa. 49:8, 'And give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth.' Because of the eternal agreement between God and Christ, he is said to be a covenant; that is, the foundation of a covenant between God and believers. His being given for a covenant, is to be a means to redeem and reconcile them.

[2.] By the words that passed between God and Christ, that are recorded in scripture. It is very observable that the scripture, for the relieving of our thoughts and apprehensions, does make all the passages and debates between

God and Christ to pass by words: so in this business: Ps. 110, 'Thou art my Son, sit thou at my right hand;' Ps. 2:8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' But to this affair in hand, you shall see how God breaketh the matter to him: Ps. 89:19, 'Thou spakest in vision to the Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty, and have exalted one chosen out of the people.' Thou speakest in a mystical way to thy Christ; God revealeth himself to his Holy One, and said thus, Lo, the creatures are weak and miserable, never able to recover themselves into my favour, but thou art mighty; therefore I shall lay this charge upon you, to help them. And thereupon you shall see Christ's answer: Ps. 40:7,8, 'Lo, I come; in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.' Christ accepted of it, and agreed to the terms, and was willing to do, and conform to the pleasure of God the Father for poor sinners. So in this place, if he will do thus and thus, then he shall see his seed, and prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands.

[3.] It appeareth by the carriage of Christ. The scripture sheweth everywhere that it was according to the covenant God made with him: he undertook to do all things according to the will of the Father John 4:34, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work;' and therefore he would punctually keep to the laws of the covenant. And accordingly he is said to look up to God the Father for the accomplishment of his promise to him: John 10:18, 'This commandment I received of my Father, that I should lay down my life:' I have agreed to it. John 12:49, 'For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father that sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak:' according to the instructions he received from God, and the tenor of his commission; he would not vary from it a tittle. And he goeth to the Father, and urgeth it to him: John 17:4, 'I have glorified thee upon earth, and have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. He did all that he was bound to do. So in many other places.

2. What this covenant is. I shall here show you the whole draught of this transaction. To a covenant there belong four things—two on the part of the proposer, and two on the part of the undertaker; and so in this covenant you will find the scriptures fully discovering these four things—two on God's part, and two on Christ's. On God's part, there is the work proposed and the encouragements promised. And then, on Christ's part, the work is undertaken, and the terms and promises expected to be fulfilled.

[1.] To begin with that which is God the Father's part, who being the first in order of persons, is the first covenanter. In the motioning of a thing, something is required and something promised.

(1.) See what is required then, and what charge is given to Christ. Help is laid upon the shoulders of Christ. It may be referred to two heads:—

(1st.) He was to do something by way of merit and impetration, that so he might satisfy the creatures' engagement, and merit the favour of God for them, which they had forfeited; and there were divers steps in this. He was to divest himself of his glory, to strip himself of all appearances of the Godhead. And therefore he is said to be employed as an instrument and servant in the execution of God's decrees. Hence it is said, Isa. 53:2, 'He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground, having no form nor comeliness.' Before him; that is, before God the Father ver. 11, 'By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.' Isa. 13:1, 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold.' To this end he was to take a body: Heb. 10:5, 'A body hast thou prepared me.' And to take flesh of a woman; and therefore it is said, Gal. 4:4, 'God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.' He was to take an office of service and obedience, and then to work all our works for us. It is said he was made under the law, subjected to the first covenant of works. He was to be holy, and harmless, and undefiled, to be exercised with divers sufferings, reproaches, and injuries; therefore called 'a man of sorrows,' Isa. 53:3. And it became God in this regard to make the captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings. Then at length to humble himself to the very death, and in great consternation and agonies to lay down his life, and to pour out his soul as an offering for sin: and all by the command of the Father; that is, by the charge laid upon him by God. And thus far the merit. He left his glory, taking our nature, our works, our debts upon himself, and subjected himself to the wrath of God the Father, that he might make an atonement for the sins of the world, sufficient for all mankind.

(2dly.) God gave him something touching the application of his merit. God gave in the names of divers persons, and bade him have a care over them. Therefore it is said, John 10:3, 'He calleth his own sheep by name.' He hath such a special care over them, as if every distinct name were given unto him, and there were a charge committed to him to have a care of that soul. And the elect of the Father are said to be given to Christ: John 17:6, 'Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.' Now what was he to do to them, i.e., to those of the world whom God had chosen as his? He was to enlighten them; he was to bring them into covenant with himself by enlightening them. God saith of Christ, Isa. 13:6, 'I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light

to the Gentiles;' that is, to shine in upon them in the darkness of their natural estate, to bring them home to himself: John 6:37, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and them that come to me I will in no wise cast out.' And the reason is given in the next verse; it is 'the will of my Father.' And then he was to comfort them by the glad tidings of salvation Isa. 61:1, 'The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim comfort to all that mourn, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening the prison to them that are bound.' And after this to bear with their weakness and waywardness; for that is a part of his charge: Isa. 42:3, 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.' Lovingly to bear with the ignorance and weaknesses of his children, and supply all their defects by his Spirit and strength: Isa. 40:11, 'He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.' He shall have a special and certain care of his tender flock. Besides, where they want strength, he shall lend his own strength, and so sweetly lead and guide them by his counsel, till he has brought them to his glory, that is in his commission and charge: John 6:40, 'And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.' This is the Father's charge, who doth as it were say thus to his Son, If you will engage yourself to me, here is the work you are to do; you must leave your glory and become my servant; I have fitted a body for you, and you shall fulfil the law, and live in meanness and misery, and then yield up yourself to an accursed death, that so you may merit my favour for these persons whose names I give you: and then you shall oblige yourself to enlighten and quicken them by your Spirit, that their bondage may be removed and then you shall cherish them, and comfort them, and support them, especially the weak ones among them, until you have perfected them, and brought them to glory. This is the sum, and this was the will of the Father, and the charge given to Christ: so that whatsoever Christ acted as Mediator, he acteth as God's servant.

2. Now, the work being proposed, God promiseth what he should expect by way of encouragement and reward for it; and that is this,—that in case Christ will undertake all this, he shall not want help, he shall have the Spirit; Isa. 61:1, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;' and that he should have the Spirit without measure, not by drops, as the creatures have. And that he should have all countenance; God would not forget his relation in the meanness of his disguise: 'I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son,' Heb. 1:5. And because empty relations are nothing worth, God would not only be a Father in

title, but dispense all fatherly care and respects to him, so that though he meet with opposition and discouragements, he should be borne up against the brunt of them: Isa. 13:4, 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law.' He shall still have the best. His judgments and law shall be set up; and sorry, impotent men shall but express their malice; they shall not wreak and satisfy it, for the Lord will be with him: Isa. 13:4, 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged;' the meaning is, he will mightily come in for his assistance. And then, after all this, he shall be full of success and triumph: 'He shall see his seed,' and God's pleasure shall thrive in his hands. He shall have anything, a kingdom that knoweth no end and no limits: Ps. 2:8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession.' He shall have power over his adversaries to use them at pleasure, to dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel is shattered into pieces by an iron mace. Alas! what is an earthen vessel to an iron mace? And then the bowing and stooping of all creatures before him: Phil. 2:9,10, 'Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.' God hath promised not only to break the stoutest back, but to bow the stiffest knee; and wherefore? because he undertook this work by covenant. And then, after all this, an entrance into glory: Luke 24:26, 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into glory? 'So was he thus engaged to do by covenant. And besides, Christ was encouraged by promises not only to his person, but for his people. As a sufficiency of grace: Col. 1:19, 'It pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell.' And also a power to justify them: 'By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.' To sanctify, enlighten, and glorify them: 'All things are delivered me of my Father,' Mat. 11:27. So that you see what God would do for Christ, in case he should take that burden and charge upon him. Thus you see the matter proposed by God the Father.

Secondly, Now you shall see that this is accepted by God the Son; the work is undertaken with reference to those terms. 1. The work is undertaken. God the Son, being equal to the Father, could not have been commanded and overruled to any service without a voluntary susception and concurrence of his own; and therefore, upon this discovery of the will of God, Christ sweetly concurred and consented to it: Ps. 40:7,8, 'Lo, I come; in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God.' And he; professeth in another place, John 4:34, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' It was a gladsome thing to him, as the hours of repast are to an ordinary man. As for the impetration, God would have him lay aside his glory. And it is said, Phil. 2:7, 'And made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men,' incarnate; 'He was found in fashion of a

man.’ It was his Father’s will that he should endure reproaches and injuries: Isa. 50:5,6, ‘The Lord hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away my back: I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.’ Christ offered himself to all these indignities, being bound to it. He would not be rebellious against his Father’s motion. Then to do our works; therefore he is said to be obedient. And then to pay our debts; and therefore he is said to be obedient to the death of the cross, Phil. 2:7. Then for the application of the merit; he inviteth the weary, Mat. 11:28. He enlighteneth the blind, dispossesseth Satan, sets the captive free, Mark 5:18. Pitieth the faint: Luke 15:5, ‘And when he had found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing.’ He bringeth home the weary upon his own shoulders, and at length bringeth them to glory: John 6:40, ‘And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him at the last day.’

2. Christ looketh for the donation, and the accomplishment of God’s terms upon it. As for help and assistance: Isa. 50:9, ‘Behold, the Lord will help me.’ So Isa. 49:5, ‘And my God shall be my strength.’ It is spoken of Christ in many places. And Isa. 49:7, ‘Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nations abhor, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, and princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.’ He comforts himself with the promises of success and glory, that though the nations should despise it, yet kings should see it, and rulers worship him. The apostle, quoting a prophecy of Christ, saith in his person, Heb. 2:13, ‘I will put my trust in him;’ that is, for his seed; ‘Behold I and the children which God hath given me.’ So for his people: the Spirit is called the promise of the Father, Luke 24:49, ‘And, behold, I send the promise of the Father unto you,’ that is, the Spirit which my Father hath promised, he will give you. And he pleadeth for his own glory upon this ground, because he had submitted to God’s terms: John 17:5, ‘And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was.’ So for his people, ver. 24, ‘Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, and that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.’ Thou didst promise this glory to me, and to them in me, in the everlasting covenant. And thus I have given you a taste of this matter.

The reasons are these:—

First, That God might found another covenant upon it; therefore God would make a covenant with his Son before he would make a covenant with his creatures;

for indeed Christ's covenant is the foundation of another covenant. Unless he had been bound to Christ by this, the other would not have been sure, if God had not obliged Christ to the oversight of it. That this reasoning may be looked upon as the more cogent, do but eye the several differences between both these covenants.

1. This was made with Christ; he is the only federate or person in covenant with God: but now, in the other, Christ is indeed a main federate, the prime federate or chiefest person in covenant, but not the only federate. That he is the prime federate is clear: Gal. 3:16, 'To Abraham and his seed were the promises; but he saith not seeds, as of many, but to thy seed, as to one, which is Christ;' that is, Christ mystical; the whole church, head and members, are called Christ in scripture: 1 Cor. 12:12, 'For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.' It is true, the promises are mainly pitched upon his person, but from him descend to the rest: for the covenant is not made with Christ only, as appeareth, Heb. 8:8, 'I will make a covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah.' It is made with all believers. This is made to Christ mystically, whereas the other we speak of now is made to Christ personally.

2. This made with Christ is a covenant of works in the very formality of it, and obliged him to subject himself to a covenant of works, to fulfil perfect obedience for the creatures, and to satisfy for the debts of the creatures, and to buy out their peace by the price of his own blood; but now the covenant made with believers is a covenant of grace. God dealt with Christ in justice, that he might deal with us in mercy: Rom. 3:24, 'Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.' God dealeth with us freely, though he satisfied his justice upon Jesus Christ. The yoke of the old covenant is not upon the neck of believers, because the stroke of it is upon the back of Christ.

3. This covenant made with Christ is eternal, before all worlds; the other, the covenant of grace, is made with us in time, and we enter into it in time. I confess in itself it is very old, ever since the first promise dropped from God's mouth: Gen. 3:15, 'The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' Though since that it hath been renewed, and we come to have share in it at conversion, yet I say it is very old, ever since the fall; however it is not so old as the covenant with Christ, that was before all time: Titus 1:2, 'In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began,' that is, to Jesus Christ. Before any succession of time Christ received promises for you, and undertook to bestow eternal life upon believers: 2 Tim. 1:9, it is said, 'According to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began;' that is, it was given to Christ for us. And this it may be is the meaning of that, Heb. 13:20, that 'Jesus Christ is the

great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant;' the blood appointed to be shed to be the everlasting covenant between God and him.

Second reason, That Christ might be inaugurated into his office with the more solemnity, and greater endearment to the creatures. That which is done by a covenant is done more solemnly and surely; you have not only a decree and purpose, and promise and types, but the discovery of a covenant: Ps. 110:4, 'The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.' There you have God's oath for Christ's priesthood, which noteth an irreversible sentence. Though the creatures play fast and loose with him, yet God thinketh himself never enough bound to them. And, therefore, he would tie himself in such ways as are most solemn and obliging amongst men, as by oaths and covenants. He would fain stablish the hearts of sinners, and make things certain to them; and, therefore, he giveth this account of his eternal transactions for your good, they were ordered by way of covenant.

Third reason, This is a way that yieldeth much comfort and satisfaction to the people of God. This is the most comfortable representation of Jesus Christ that can be made to you, and that for two reasons:—

1. You have a double engagement upon God; he is engaged to Christ, and he is engaged to you. Oh, that is it that makes all sure to our souls, that God was engaged to Christ first. If God had only dealt with particular persons, the business had been in danger of miscarrying. In the covenant of works the burden lay upon every one's person; if thou do this, thou shalt live: Gal. 3:10, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.' But now there is a covenant made with Christ: indeed God hath taken every one's person into covenant, but God hath given Christ the oversight of it; he hath founded a covenant upon a covenant. The covenant was made to him before it was made to you. Nay, in the covenant made with you, it is made with one seed, which is Christ: there to Christ mystical, here to Christ personal; still Christ is taken in with you, and therefore the business is more sure and satisfying: 2 Cor. 5:19, 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.' There is great comfort that he would transact the matter with Christ before he would meddle and deal with the world.

2. You have double promises; the very promises that are made to Christ's person, they are your promises as well as Christ's, so far as they are compatible with your state and condition. Your Mediator will be nothing but what you shall have the benefit of; nay, it is very observable that we have glory not only by virtue of the promises made to ourselves, but by virtue of the promises made to Christ; that we should have glory, as Christ prays, John 17:23,24, 'And the

glory which thou gavest me I have given them. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me from the foundation of the world.' God promised to be his God and Father, and therefore you may be as confident he will be yours as if the promise had been directed to your persons. For Christ reasons thus, John 20:17, 'Go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' he hath engaged himself to be mine, therefore yours; you are what I am. So that besides the promises directed to sinners, you have Christ's, personal promises so far as they concern your state. So you shall see God promised to acquit Christ from all the sins he should take upon him, and to free him from the reproaches that should be cast upon his person, because of his miserable appearance in the world: Isa. 50:7,8, 'For the Lord God will help me; therefore I shall not be confounded. He is near that justifieth me; who shall contend with me?' If all the world count me a sinner, God will justify me. As the apostle applieth it to believers, Rom. 8:33, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth.' God dealt with Christ as the first believer: if Christ had the Spirit put upon him, you shall have the Spirit by virtue of the first promise: Isa. 13:1, 'I have put my Spirit upon him; and he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.' Isa. 44:3, 'I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.'

Use 1. Is exhortation by way of inference to two duties:—

1. If there be such a covenant, meditate upon it. Oh, it is the most comfortable subject that you can spend your thoughts upon! Consider the form of it, that the divine decrees were laid in the way of a covenant, and that God and Christ should article one with another. You may fetch a great deal of comfort and support for your faith out of this.

[1.] It occasioned God and Christ to become both believers, and to trust one another; and Christ is a believer to this day: Heb. 10:13, 'From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.' God promised Christ, and Christ promised God, and they took each other's word for the salvation of all the world. Oh, what an encouragement is it to believe when you have such high patterns! If you will not believe God upon his oath, believe him upon his engagement to Christ. It is an honour to be a believer, because God and Christ were both believers: as great personages among men are an honour to the society and fellowship into which they come. You may fetch a reason hence; they trusted one another, and shall not I trust them both? Now you have a willing God and an able Saviour, and they both in covenant with you. Christ would not let go the assurance that he had of God's love by this covenant in his agonies: Mat. 27:46, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'

Though there were a suspension of the discovery of love, yet he could say *my God, my God*. Oh, why should not we believe now, and silence all doubts? Who would not believe God with his surety?

[2.] Consider the manifold engagements that are upon God. God is bound to Christ, and God is bound to you; the heart should not be loose in believing when God is thus bound. You have his purpose, his promise, his oath, both covenants. Is it not a high affront put upon God to distrust him now? God was angry with Sarah for laughing, when she had but a bare promise, Gen. 18:13. Certainly, then, he has just cause to be angry with you for unbelieving, when he hath so deeply engaged himself to you. Num. 23:19, it is said, ‘Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and Shall he not make it good? ‘So I may say much more, Hath he not sworn, hath he not covenanted, and will he not make good his engagement to Christ?

[3.] Here is comfort against the sense of our unworthiness: you are vile wretches, you can expect nothing; but consider, Christ is not unworthy: God made the promises to him; he hath the oversight of the covenant of grace: God hath a bond, a covenant with him; and though you have given him occasion to break with you, yet he will not break with his own Son. Jesus Christ did not fail in his undertaking with God, but fulfilled the will of his heavenly Father, even to a tittle. Therefore God will make good his word to Jesus Christ for you, though humble and vile in yourselves. No matter though you be base in your own eyes; consider the truth of God plighted to his Son, who was not unfaithful.

[4.] Against fears of apostasy. Oh, you shall not keep faithful with God! Why, consider God doth not deal first with you as with particular persons, but with Jesus Christ. The covenant is not committed to the indeterminate freedom of your wills, and the wanderings of your hearts, but to the care of Jesus Christ; and there is no breach likely to be on Christ’s part. It is a dishonour to God to think we are out of favour upon every offence. In the state of innocency we had perfect peace, but it was such an estate as was capable of enmity, because the covenant was made with ourselves; but now it is made with Christ, that is a firm foundation. If we were still left to our own free will, it were not certain that any should be saved.

2. The matter of the covenant; this yields ground of comfort also. Do but consider what Christ was bound to, or what God promised Christ.’ Do you struggle with unbelief, and you cannot tell how to settle

upon any comfort? If you belong to Christ, God hath given him a charge to look after your souls, you shall not perish; Christ is bound to apply the virtue of his sufferings, as well as to merit by them. Are you feeble? God hath provided a place for you in Christ's bosom. Christ's shoulders are for lambs that cannot go of their own feet. Do you want knowledge? It is one of the things given Christ in charge: He shall be 'a light to the Gentiles.' Do you want freedom and liberty towards God? Christ is to preach freedom to the captives. Still study the covenant between God and Christ, and you shall see the Lord Jesus received a charge to supply your wants. Is a nation stubborn and averse from Christ? Is it not said, 'He shall set judgment in the earth, that the isles shall wait for his law'? Is there opposition against Christ, his glory, and servants? Is it not said, 'He shall not fail, nor be broken in judgment'? Alas! these adversaries can do nothing; like angry bees, they may sting, but they leave their life behind them. God will still uphold the hand and head of Christ. This is the first part to meditate on.

2. If there were a covenant made with Christ, oh, then, get an interest in him, and be united to him, that so you may come within the compass of his care and commission. Everything belongeth to you according to your interest in Christ: 2 Cor. 1:20, 'The promises are in him yea, and in him amen.' Still a man's hope is in the covenant of grace: and you shall see Christ hath all to do in the covenant of grace.

[1.] In this covenant between God and Christ he is only federate; he hath taken the whole business upon himself, to discharge you out of the covenant of works, to destroy the powers of hell, to bring you into favour with God. We cannot do it with our prayers and tears: Hosea 13:14, 'I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction.' Christ undertook this when God the Father and Christ entered into a formal, solemn compact, for so the apostle explaineth it, 1 Cor. 15:55.

[2.] In the covenant of grace made with believers, Christ is every way concerned in it: he taketh several relations upon himself, which seem otherwise to be contradistinct.

(1.) He is called the testator or author of the covenant: Heb. 9:16, 'For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.' It was built upon his purchase, confirmed by his death. He undertook to make up all controversies that might fall out between God and us; and so the whole is ascribed to him; therefore he is said to be

‘the author and finisher of our faith,’ Heb. 12:2. Our faith is built upon that covenant, and peace with Christ is surely ordained for us. We are said to be his people: Mat. 1:21, ‘And he shall save his people from their sins.’ And therefore there are many promises in scripture that pass in the name of Christ. Somewhat he will do to us, which shows him to be joint-author together with God in the covenant; he, being heir with his father, is heir to the promises. So that you see there is no likelihood of right to the covenant but by union with Jesus Christ. It is his covenant as well as the Father’s.

(2.) He is called the Mediator of the covenant: Heb. 12:24, ‘And to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant.’ He is the middle person that goeth betwixt God and us, to make up all breaches that may be on our default; he mediates with the Father when he is provoked by our sin, and mediates with us by his Spirit, to bring us upon our knees before God. The old covenant needed no mediator, for God and man were not fallen out; but now they are so, and therefore Christ is the fittest person to mediate; for partaking of the nature of both parties, he is the fittest person to come between them.

(3.) He is called the surety of the covenant: Heb. 7:22, ‘By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.’ One that is to see it performed on both sides, so as God will challenge Christ for our part, and you may challenge God for Christ’s part. He is to see all wrought in us which God hath required; to see that the Spirit writes the law in our hearts, and inclines us to obedience; and then to see that we yield up that obedience, and that God be satisfied. He is to do all our works for us, and all our works in us; so that God calleth upon Christ, and we call upon Christ. All is done in him, and therefore God calleth him his witness, Isa. 54:4, ‘Ye are my witnesses, and my servant whom I have chosen,’ Isa. 43:10. He is my chief witness, that I am faithful, and true, and able. Christ will undertake for him, and he will undertake for you, for you need a surety most.

(4.) In the covenant of grace Christ is the prime federate; the promises are mainly pitched upon him, and he receiveth them for all his brethren. He is mainly intended: Gen. 3:15, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.’ Mark, the covenant is made to all in general, but so as it reflects upon Christ especially. There is an enmity between all the holy seed and the serpent’s, all the spawn of Satan, though chiefly Christ be concerned in it, as if the whole seed were Christ’s. And in the covenant renewed with Abraham, the promises are mainly pitched upon Christ, or else the expressions would not agree; for he it is that stands as the prime federate, to receive the promises for all his brethren: Gen. 12:3, ‘In thee shall all the families of the earth be

blessed.' The covenant of works was made with Adam and all mankind, and Adam received it for all his race: so does Christ. Well, then, you see the necessity and benefit of union with Christ, that you may be entitled to his care as he is the only federate, that you may receive his bequests and legacies as testator and ordainer of the covenant, that he may mediate for you, and go to God for you; and as he is Mediator, he may undertake for you; and as a surety he may bestow blessings upon you, as your head, as the chiefest of the body that is called Christ.

3. To love God. You have the greatest experience of the love of the Godhead that possibly you could have, that there should be a covenant between the persons of the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that they would mutually engage one another for your good. It is the highest endearment you could have from them, that God should ordain you his Son to carry on the work of your salvation; therefore engage and give up yourselves to God again: seeing the Lord should devise such a way, and Christ effect it, give up yourselves by covenant to God.

But I come now to the matter, or to handle the words absolutely, and not considered under that conditional and federate form: 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,' or, as it is in the Hebrew, When he shall make his soul sin' (*ascham*), the sin or the trespass-offering. His soul, that is, himself: 'What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' Mat. 16:26; that is, himself, body and soul. So his soul, that is himself, shall he make an offering for sin. His whole man was offered up. He could not sacrifice his divinity. The apostle Peter saith, 'He suffered in the flesh.'

Doct. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ was the only true satisfactory and expiatory sacrifice for sin.

1. Because it was of God's own ordaining. God will be pleased with nothing but what he appoints. Foolish man would fain give laws to heaven, and think to please God with what liketh himself best either in worship or in sacrifices; as if God would be enticed by their own lure. Christ is the only *ascham*: God requireth not ten thousand rivers of oil; and all things else are nothing to God's will. Christ was of his own appointment, and therefore expiatory: Rom. 3:25, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation;' 1 John 4:10, 'God hath sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.' It is not expiatory, if God, the party offended, did not accept of Christ Eph. 5:2, 'He gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour;' that is, for an acceptable sacrifice all other sacrifices were an abomination to this.

2. Other sacrifices were but types of this, they could not make the comers to them perfect, as the apostle proveth, Heb. 9:9. There was expiation, but not

real, except Christ was eyed in them. They could not make him that did the service perfect, as appertaining to the conscience: that is, they could not satisfy the conscience. The sin was not forgiven through their worthiness, they could not have any solid ground that justice was satisfied; this is a thing that naturally troubleth a man, how to satisfy justice, and to appease the revengeful deity. Naturally there is such a sense in guilty man, and that was the reason why they would have somewhat above sacrifices, because still there was something that stuck with them, that this was not enough. And therefore they in Micah added their first-born, Micah 6; 2 Chron. 33:6, 'And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom. There was somewhat that caused parents to be so unnatural besides the example of the heathens. And truly it was because their consciences were not perfect. They had not the good answer that Peter speaketh of, they could not be persuaded God was appeased by the killing of a beast.

3. No other thing could be satisfactory and expiatory besides the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The prophet Isaiah bringeth in God as saying, 'He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor, therefore his arm brought salvation. Man could have had no other person to interpose for him. Therefore Christ, who is the arm of the Lord, he brought salvation to him. All the angels in heaven were not able to lay down a valuable consideration; there was no intercessor, no intervener, none that could come between man and wrath. No creature can stand before infinite wrath to countermand it; man was not able, nor all his tears available. The law taketh no notice of sorrow for sin. It is true, the creature was easily inclined to think of merit in that which is dolorous and costly; but it is but a vain thought, the law is satisfied only through full and complete obedience. Your prayers would not do. Christ doth not barely pray to God, but offer himself also. His entreaties alone would not have been sufficient: Heb. 9:22, 'Without shedding of blood there is no remission.

4. Christ sacrificing of himself complied with God's design, which is double:—

[I.] To discover the glory of the Trinity, his love to the souls of men, and the Spirit's efficacy. These things would not have been drawn out for the creatures' benefit, had it not been for this design. The Father is glorified in being the contriver, the Son in being the Mediator, the Spirit as the applier and settler of comfort in the hearts of Christians. This was a high honour to Christ, next to that personal glory that he had with the Father before all worlds. When Christ was about to die, he saith, John 13:31, 'Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.' The Son especially; and not him alone, but the whole Godhead; the Spirit is glorified in your sense and experience of him.

[2.] To magnify his justice and displeasure against sin: Rom. 3:25, ‘God set out Christ to declare his righteousness in the remission of sin.’ God would have us be reconciled, not only by way of entreaties; but satisfaction. You can as well stand before the seat of judgment as the throne of grace, if God forgives sinners. God’s justice is more glorified in punishing sin in Christ, than if all the world had been lost for sin. This appears by the impartialness of it, that God should not spare his own Son; but the merit of it is full, here is room for acceptation through the worth of his person that did all. If men had been damned, God would be glorifying his justice, but never be said to be glorified. It is more to the creditor to have his debt paid at once, than always a-paying. Ten thousand pounds is a long time a-paying by a poor man in shillings, but a rich man layeth it down in a little time, and pays all.

Use 1. Then disclaim other satisfactions, your tears, your duties, your repentance; do not think to please God with these. Alas! you will never know when the work is done fully. Men make their way to God *easy* through these. Naturally we trust in our works and duties; these are rather fruits than causes. Look higher than your prayers and tears, to Jesus Christ.

I now come to the third reason why the death and sufferings of Christ are not ignominious to him; and it is drawn from the fruits of his sufferings, which are three:—The first is a propagation of his spiritual seed: ‘He shall see his seed.’ *By seed*, usually the scripture meaneth posterity; he shall see his holy posterity; that is, those that are begotten to Christ by the word. Observe here two things:—

1. That believers are the seed of Christ.
2. That Christ shall live to see his seed.

Doct. That believers are Christ’s Seed.

By purchase and covenant he hath obtained it of the Father, that you should be his generation and his posterity. The whole world in some sense is God’s offspring, Acts 17:28. The apostle quoteth it out of a poet—*gggtou gar kai genoVesmen*; but the special seed, the spiritual seed, that is appointed to God the Son. Eph. 3:15, it is said of the Lord Jesus, ‘Of whom the whole family of heaven and earth is named.’ Saints militant and triumphant are named from him. As the parents give the name to their posterity—as Jacob to Joseph’s sons, and Zacharias to John the Baptist—so Christ to believers. It is just here as it was with Abraham: Gen. 21:12, ‘In Isaac shall thy seed be called.’ Abraham had another son, but that should not be counted his race; not in Ishmael, but in Isaac. So here; every son of Adam is the son of God, Luke

3:38, but in Christ shall thy seed be called. Men cannot be God's sons, but by being Christ's Seed. You have no spiritual right to God's fatherhood out of him.

Object. But you will say, How are believers Christ's seed, since it is said everywhere that we are born of God, and especially it is said, 1 John 3:1, 'Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God'? And in other places it seemeth we are the Spirit's seed: John 3:5, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' And we are said to be 'born of the Spirit:' 1 Cor. 4:15, 'Yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the gospel.' My answer shall be in these reasons:—

1. By reason of the gift of the Father, who made over all dispensations and all relations to the Son: John 5:22, 'He hath committed all judgment to the Son.' So 'All things are delivered to me of my Father,' Mat. 11:25. So that quickening, life, and all cometh from the Son; and God the Father worketh nothing in us but in reference to the Lord Christ; and he hath given over all his interest and relations to Christ: John 17:6, 'Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.' They were God's sons, but he made them over to Christ, so that all the relation that we have to God the Father is through the Son; he is our Father, as he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and we come to have interest in the love of the Father by the love of the Son: for it is said, John 1:12, 'As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.' It is Christ gave us that power and prerogative. So Gal. 4:5, 'That we that were under the law might receive the adoption of sons.' So that you see, through the gift of the Father, we are Christ's seed. He worketh nothing in us, and doth own us no further than we belong to the Son: for, as he is Christ's Father, so he is our Father; and as his seed, we are God's sons born to him.

2. Because the Lord Christ did so much to purchase them and gain us for his seed.

[1.] He died for them. Christ, like Rachel, dieth, that he may bring forth. *Perit dum parit*—he perisheth that he may bring forth. You *are Benonis*, the children of his sorrows: John 12:24, 'Except a corn of, wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit,' not else. Isaac had not a promise of increase and a numerous issue till he was ready to be offered. When in this chapter the prophet had spoken of the sufferings of Christ, he comes to say, Isa. 54:1, 'Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the

married wife, saith the Lord.' Christ liveth to make you fruitful: Heb. 2:10, 'To bring many sons to glory, the captain of their salvation was made perfect through sufferings.' God would not have his birth exempt from the fate and lot of all bearings; even Christ did bring forth in sorrows.

[2.] Because he sendeth forth power and efficacy to beget them.

(1.) He provideth the word, and blesseth it with power and efficacy; as you may see, 1 Peter 1:23, 'Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever;' and in the 25th verse you see what word, to wit, 'The word which by the gospel is preached unto you,' the word preached in Christ's name, this word begets us. Therefore ministers are said to be instruments in the hand of Christ, as he is pleased to bless their endeavours. It is said in Ps. 110:3, 'From the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth.' The meaning is, that believers should be born to Christ like dewdrops in the morning of the first dawning of heavenly light: 1 Cor. 4:15, 'For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.' Others were but schoolmasters; he was their father in Christ. God provideth nurses and subordinate parents, to whom he conveyeth his own honour. It is by Christ's blessing upon their care and ministry.

(2.) By his Spirit. It is Christ's Spirit that bringeth you to be new creatures. He worketh so as he may glorify Christ. The efficiency of the Spirit is the seed of Christ. Therefore it is said of one that is born of God, 1 John 3:9, that 'his seed remaineth in him.' The power of the Spirit is a seed by which we are made new creatures, Titus 3:6, 'The renewing of the Holy Ghost is shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour.' The true virtue is from the Spirit shed on us through Christ Jesus. All that are new creatures are begotten by his word, actuated and quickened by his Spirit, and therefore they are called his seed.

3. The next reason is, because all that is done to believers is to form the image of Christ upon them: Gal. 4:19, 'My little children, of whom I travail in birth again till Christ be formed in you.' The work of conversion is but the stamping and drawing out the lineaments of Christ upon the soul. So it is said, Rom. 8:29, *summorj ouV thV eikonoV*, 'Whom he did foreknow, he also predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son.' God intended us to be his seed, because the new creature is most like him. The acts of Christianity are expressed by our being 'planted into the likeness of his death and resurrection,' Rom. 6:5. The acts that pass forth into the soul for the subduing of sin, for quickening of grace; it is a planting and forming Christ's image and likeness: and the whole carriage that passeth from us, it is through the Spirit, it is but a

discovery of Christ's life. Therefore, the seed, likeness, form, and features are an argument of parentage: children are but the parents multiplied, and new set forth to the world.

To apply it.

Use 1. Is a word to the careless world. Look to it whose seed you are.

There are divers seeds in the world.

1. There are some that are only the offspring of God in a large sense, have no other claim but by the first Adam. Ignorant men look upon themselves under no other notion than that of God's creatures. Oh! consider your happiness lieth in your relation unto God through Christ. You shall see the main encouragement to prayer, or any address to him, is when you can come and call him Father. God is sweet to you when you can call upon him as sons and daughters. But, alas! what a sad thing is it when men have no other title to God but their creation! Isa. 27:11, 'He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour.' Ignorant people say, God that made them shall save them. No; such an interest and claim to God will not avail you; he that made them will not save them; God will reckon his seed in Isaac, that is, in Christ. There is no privilege in claiming by Ishmael.

2. There are some that are yet worse, by the virulence and bitterness, and rage of heart against the ways of God; they are possessed with an opposite seed—the seed of the serpent: Gen. 3:15, 'I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed.' There is a seed that is full of envy and enmity against the people and ways of God: Mat. 3:7, 'O generation of vipers! the very spawn and seed of vipers.'

3. There is the holy seed, against whom all the powers of darkness are armed: Rev. 12:17, 'And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to war with the remnant of her seed, which kept the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.' The generation of men that worshipped God in Jesus Christ, those are they that are hated by the world, and yet they are the pillars of the earth, Isa. 6:13. Therefore, look to yourselves whose seed you are. If the Spirit of Christ hath not been shed out upon you, to new form you through the word; if you are not formed more and more into the image of the Lord Jesus, you are none of his seed. Consider who is your root; your fall lieth in this. God doth not deal with single men, but with the common root and author of the whole seed. Adam was a miscarrying root, but Christ is not.

Use 2. Here is a word to the seed of Jesus Christ, to believers. You may say indeed, Ps. 100:4, 'It is he that made us, and not we ourselves; we are

his people, and the sheep of his pasture.’ You are of the Lord’s making, and therefore of the Lord’s keeping. The seed of Jesus Christ are preserved in him. The whole work of Christ is the workmanship of God in Christ Jesus, Eph. 2:10. Therefore, look up to him. Children’s dependence is upon the parents, and yours is upon the supplies of Christ, for your heavenly Father knoweth what he hath made. Here is—

1. Direction to you to whom to look for increase of grace. It is the rule of nature, all things are nourished by those things by which they are begotten. God maketh the next causes to be the conveyances of support to his creatures. God begetteth you by his Spirit, actuating and quickening the word, and so he keepeth you: 1 Peter 2:2, ‘As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.’

2. Exhortation to press you to conform to Jesus Christ. You are his seed, and therefore it is an engagement to likeness: children are to bear and show forth the image and likeness of their parents. Christ makes imitation an argument of parentage: John 8:37, ‘I know, that ye are Abraham’s seed, but ye seek to kill me.’ A degenerate offspring are a shame to their ancestors. They were children of God, that came of an ancient royal family, but yet were unworthy of their extraction, 1 Chron. 4:22, ‘Who had dominion in Moab and Jashubilehem: and these are ancient things.’ Base powers came of them that preferred sordid drudgery work to the king of Babylon before working in the temple. What doth it avail to speak of the ancient honour of our family when we are degenerated from it? Oh, take heed you be not a stain to Jesus Christ. You came of a noble seed, the whole family of God is named of him. Ishmael came of Abraham; but ‘cast out the bondwoman and her son.’ God will have no bond-slaves to inherit this honour. To be enslaved to sin, and to pretend sonship by Christ, will provoke to a casting out. Children, unless degenerate, will hold out the honour of their parents, and walk in the high steps of their ancestors; and so must you show from whose loins and life you came by a worthy walking before God.

Use 3. Here is a word of consolation. A great deal of comfort it is to be of the seed of Christ; as—

1. Consider what an honour is done you. By this you have a title and claim to the whole Godhead: ‘He gave you power to become the sons of God.’ You belong to his care, being the seed of Christ. As some living fathers among the emperors did make their children co-partners with them in their dignity, so are you sharers with Christ in all his privileges: Rom. 8:17, ‘And if children, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.’ Our Saviour saith, John 20:17, ‘I ascend, to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.’ As if

you were in the same rank with Christ. And therefore it is said, Heb. 2:11, 'He is not ashamed to call them brethren.' Christ doth not think it a disgrace to him that they should be invested in his honours and privileges.

2. This relation engageth affection.

[1.] It engageth Christ's delight to Christians. As parents' joy is in their seed, so is Christ's in your thriving and welfare. God hath made love naturally descending and running down to them that come from us. Christ is brought in as a type of Isaiah, Heb. 2:13, rejoicing over his children: 'Behold I and the children which thou hast given me.' Believers are a pleasure and glory to him. To look upon the numerousness of the saints is a pleasant sight to Christ; as to a father to see the increase of his loins: Isa. 62:4, 'For the Lord delighteth in thee.' Christ rejoiceth over his seed. It is promised as a privilege that he should see his seed, implying it should be a delight to Christ. And what a comfort is this, that we should be Christ's joy! Therefore Paul saith, Phil. 1:8, 'God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ;' that is, as the bowels of Jesus Christ did yearn after you, with such like bowels do I yearn for you.

[2] It engageth Christ's care of you. He shall see his seed; and you are his seed, and therefore he will look after you. He watcheth these great births, that they may not miscarry; and is as it were bound that we may lack nothing. All his care is about his seed: Cant. 2:17, Christ walketh in the gardens to look after the green figs and tender grapes, that he may apply himself to them. The apostle saith, he is 'worse than an infidel that provideth not for his own;' not only beneath grace, but beneath nature. And certainly Christ will have a more tender regard to his own seed. The greatest expression of love that Christ would have spoken to Peter was to feed his lambs, John 21:15. We may look to him for provisions: Isa. 49:15, 'Can a woman forget her sucking child? She may, but I will not forget thee.' Men, by debauching their spirits, may wear out the impressions of natural affections, but Christ cannot forget his own seed: 'The foundation of the Lord standeth sure.'

I come now to the second point.

Doct. That Christ shall see his seed, or an increase of the faithful through his word and Spirit. It noteth two things:—First, The life of Christ. Many leave seed that do not see it, being snatched from their children and comforts as soon as they grow into any hopes: but Christ's seeing his seed implieth he should live to see it propagated throughout all successions of time.

First observation, That the seed of Christ have a living parent 'He shall see his seed.' God's children can never be orphans. We say by many that their parents died too soon for them, because they were but young, and exposed to the hazards and uncertainties of the world. But believers cannot be left as orphans: John 14:18, 'I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you again.'

Well, then, to apply it: Lay up this comfort, though Christ be ascended and gone out of your sight, yet he seeth his seed, he liveth to take care for you. You have not his corporeal presence, but you have the presence of his Spirit to direct you: John 16:7, 'It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you.' Christ cannot die too soon; his absence in the flesh is abundantly recompensed and made up in the Spirit. That more generally and more particularly is the comfort that you have by the life of Christ as you are his seed: and therefore I shall not handle it at large.

1. You may be sure you are still an object working upon his affections. The sight of things worketh more vehemently upon us than the conceit of them. Imagination hath a great force upon the spirit, but not so great as the senses, as tasting, seeing, and the like. As you shall see in impure love: Gen. 39:7, she 'cast her eyes upon Joseph, and said, tie with me;' Mat. 5:28, Lusting cometh by looking. So in pure affection love is enkindled by the presence of the object. You may discern the workings of nature in these instances. As you shall see in another case; when God would stir up or provoke the rage of his justice, it is said, 'And God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt' It is spoken after the manner of man. It is true of the man Christ Jesus, who, looking upon us, and seeing our state and case, is the more touched with the feeling of our infirmities, Heb. 4:15. It is said in Mat. 14:14, Christ saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion towards them. Christ's eye presented objects to his pity; therefore the prophet speaketh to Christ: Isa. 63:15, 'Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and thy glory.' Christ shall see his seed; not only know their state by imagination, but live to look into their particular wants: 'Though Abraham be ignorant of us,' yet Christ liveth to see the several states of his seed.

2. You may be sure that he is able to give you a constant and sufficient supply. Parents, that only leave a portion, cannot provide against all hazards. Christ doth not only leave you a portion, and so let you shift for yourselves, but you are still under his eye and care Rev. 2:2, 'I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience.' That was the ground of Christ's pity to her: he ever seeth his seed. It was the prodigal's comfort, that though he had spent all, yet still his father was living: Luke 15:17, 'There is bread enough in my father's house.' God doth not give us a stock of grace, and leave us to ourselves; we are still in the

family, and under the Father's eye and care. You have a parent that liveth for ever, that dispenseth his grace to you, and teacheth you how you may manage it without impair and loss. A father, whilst living, will not put the whole out of his own hands; it is best that our stock is still in Christ's keeping.

Secondly, *He shall see his seed*, noteth the increase that is implied in the phrase *seed* put indefinitely: it is put for a multitude, such a seed as is worth looking after. Observe then—Second observation, That Jesus Christ hath a plenteous seed and numerous offspring. In the exposition I showed you it is plural, 'He shall see his *seeds*.' It is parallel with that, 'He shall see his children's children.' A seed propagated through many successions of ages. This appeareth by the promises made to the types of Christ; as—

1. To several of the patriarchs, &c., viz., Isaac, Ham, Jacob, David, whose posterity was a shadow of it: Jer. 32:22, 'As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.' Great shall be the number of those that are grafted into Christ, and made kings and priests to him. So to Abraham Gen. 28:14, 'And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' It is meant principally of the holy and spiritual seed: Gen. 32:12, 'I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.' Balaam says, Num. 23:10, 'Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel?' It is meant of Jacob's sons that are propagated; and it is meant of Israel's sons among the Gentiles principally, though not with exclusion of the other Hosea 1:10, 'Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall be said to them, Ye are the sons of the living God;' which is applied by the apostle to the church among the Gentiles.

2. To the church: Isa. 54:1,2, 'Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and, let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.' It is said, the land should grow too little: Isa. 49:19, 'The land shall be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants;' Isa. 40:8, 'Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to the windows?' Doves fly in flocks, so that they even darken the air.

3. To Christ; as here, that he should see his seed: Ps. 2:8, 'Ask of me, and I will give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the

earth for thy possession;’ Rev. 7:9, ‘After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb.’

Use 1. Be not discouraged at the church’s, paucity and fewness. Men say they are popular, and go against the whole world: Gen. 19:9, ‘This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge.’ Elijah was zealous alone. Do not be discouraged. A grain of mustard-seed will grow into a tree, Mat. 13. A little flock may increase, so that you must stretch forth the curtains, and strengthen the stakes. The little stone hewed out of the mountain filled the whole earth, Dan. 2:35; and Job 8:7, ‘Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.’

2. Wait and pray for the increase of it, for the coming in of the fulness of the Gentiles, Rom. 11:25. Pray that the waters of the sanctuary may go out to the former and latter sea, Zech. 14:8.

We are now come to the second fruit of the sufferings of Christ ‘He shall prolong his days;’ that is, though he die, the term of his life shall never be the shorter for it; he shall live forever. Some apply this to the seed of Christ before mentioned; as if the sense were, He shall prolong the days of his seed. And the Seventy favour this sense in their translation, for they render this clause with the former, ‘He shall see his seed to be long-lived.’ I confess the result is the same; for if Christ be long-lived, we shall be long-lived; our life and glory hang upon his life and glory. But I conceive this phrase more expressly and properly doth concern Christ himself. The point is then—

Doct. That the days of the Lord Jesus Christ were not shortened by his dying, but rather prolonged and lengthened out to eternity.

I cannot give you the full discussion, having spoken much concerning it upon that place which I shall now quote as the proof of it Isa. 53:8, ‘Who shall declare his generation?’ that is, who can count the number of his age and duration? The reason is—

Because, after suffering, Christ was to return to the glory of his God-head: Luke 24:26, ‘Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?’ He was to put off meanness and death; these things could have no more dominion over him. He returned to all the other glories, and therefore to the glory of his immortality. And hence the apostle saith of our Lord Christ, 1 Tim. 6:16, ‘Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light;’ that is, in opposition to the creatures. He only hath it to dispose of it, and in himself; for otherwise we are immortal in our souls; but it is only by his benefit and promise, and as we live in

his life. Well, then, you see the reason is, because Christ is in possession of glory and immortality.

Use 1. It maketh for the comfort of believers: your Saviour liveth for ever. As the second person in the Trinity, he is immutably glorious; and as the Mediator, he hath eternity made over by grant and covenant to him. It is for your comfort divers ways; besides what I have spoken to before, take these:—

1. If Christ be eternal, then his love is eternal, his care and his mercy are eternal, his kingdom is eternal: Isa. 9:6,7, ‘Of the increase of his government and peace there is no end.’ Everything in Christ is prolonged to you. As you find Christ to you now, so he will be to you for ever. It is true, there may be some withdrawings of love and grace as to our apprehensions. And so Job saith, Job 30:21, ‘Thou art become cruel to me.’ Saints may think they have lost God and lost grace, when it is only through the weakness of their own apprehensions; there may be a different appearance of Christ to the creature, but his heart is the same to them still; like children, that think the sun doth not give light but when they see it breaking out in glory. There is light for you in Christ, though you cannot see it through the darkness that is upon your spirits.

2. Here is relief against all our enemies. Is it the shortness of life? Ps. 102:11,12, ‘My days are like a shadow that declineth, and I am withered like grass; but thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever.’ It may be you are assaulted with weaknesses, you carry about you a sickly, crazy body that is ready at every turn to drop into the grave. This is a trouble to you: God having placed in the creature naturally a desire of immortality, the vanity and perishableness of their being is a trouble to them. But consider, Christ is long-lived, and therefore your glory shall not be left in the dust, nor God’s holy ones left to corruption and rottenness. Christ’s life was not shortened by his death, but prolonged; so shall yours be that have an interest in him. Oh, see that your lives are made long in the prolongation of Christ’s life; for as the body liveth in the life of the soul, so shall we live in the life of Christ. See how the church draweth out this comfort everywhere: Hab. 1:12, ‘Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One? We shall not die.’ We cannot perish if we have an interest in one that is everlasting: Ps. 102:27,28, ‘Thy years shall have no end; therefore the children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.’ It is taken for a good consequence, that if God continueth, the saints shall continue: ‘Thy! years have no end, *therefore* their seed shall be established.’ What a privilege is this, that creatures that are in their own nature but of a day’s standing, as it were, should have their lives prolonged to the continuance of their Maker!

3. This will support and settle the heart in doubtful times, in days of misery and violence. Your hearts are ready to be overcome, to see the thriving of wicked men; and you know not how dangers may grow upon you. Consider, the days of the Lord Christ are prolonged; let them flourish never so long, he will outlive them. A man would comfort himself in this, if he knew that the interest of religion would thrive to a long continuance. Why, you may be sure Christ will take care of his church: Ps. 9:6,7, 'O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end; but the Lord shall endure for ever.' Their enemies are such as must die, but Christ will never die; his days are prolonged, but their days are shortened: Ps. 55:23, 'Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days.' You may see an end of Christ's enemies, but never of the life of Christ. Alas! who would fear them? You may be sure when they perish, Christ will remain Ps. 92:8,9, 'But thou, Lord, are most high for evermore. Thine enemies shall perish, all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.' Still you have an eternal God, and an everlasting Christ, that will live beyond your enemies.

4. It is comfort in the loss of outward enjoyments. Alas! their nature is vanishing, even the most glorious of all the creatures. The heavens shall be like a scorched scroll: Ps. 102:26, 'They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old as doth a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed.' But you have an interest in a more lasting comfort, in a Christ whose days are prolonged, though all things else perish before you.

Use 2. Is advice to the world, first, to get an interest in Christ; his friendship will last. Make a friend of him, that you may be sure will abide by you to the last. This is Christ's argument for improvement of wealth: 'They will receive you into everlasting habitations,' Luke 16:9, to wit, those whose bowels you have refreshed. Make friends of the saints, but especially 'of Christ, that when other things fail, you may have an eternal God to stand by you. Christ is a friend that can never fail. Barzillai commended his son to David, 2 Sam. 19:37; but David must yield to the fate of all men, and was forced to leave him to Solomon, 1 Kings 2:7. Oh, commend your souls to Christ, and he will not leave them to another. His days are prolonged, and he doth not yield to the fate of the creatures. Well then, choose him. Those are not friends that beguile you in your hopes (and then are not able to stand by you), as the creatures do. Christ is a friend that is able to stand by you in the worst of times; he will confess you before his Father in heaven.

2. He will give you long life, which is the great desire of the creatures: Ps. 34:12, 'What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?' What man is there that doth not desire to live long? that is the meaning of it: Prov. 3:16, 'Length of days is in her right hand, and in

her left riches and honour,' Length of days is the right-hand blessing of wisdom; it is the blessing of Jesus Christ. Therefore it is said, Eternal life is in the Son: and he that hath the Son hath life; his days are prolonged, and he will prolong and lengthen out yours to eternity.

Having showed the things most proper to this phrase, I come now to the latter clause, that 'the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands.' The point is, that all the will and pleasure of God shall prosper and be effectual in the hands of Jesus Christ.

Reasons—

1. Because he is the choice instrument of God, the special servant of his decrees, therefore everywhere called his servant: Isa. 42:1, 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold.' He is God's servant as Mediator, therefore God will uphold him, and bear him out in his work Isa. 53:11, 'By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.' Certainly God's will and work will thrive in the hands of Christ. When God raiseth up any special instrument among the creatures to accomplish his pleasure, they are successful. Nebuchadnezzar, that was but a remoter servant of God's decrees, and one taken in by the by to do God's will, he was prosperous: Jer. 25:9, 'Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and will make them an astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual desolation.' So the Medes and Persians, when called to the service of God's decrees, they were successful: Isa. 13:3, 'I have commanded my sanctified ones; I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness.' They are set apart for that work. The lowest servants of the decrees cannot miscarry, much less, then, can Christ, the choicest instrument of God's decrees.

2. Because the Lord Christ is so qualified that the will of God must needs prosper with him.

[1] He is willing and ready to comply with the will of God the Father. It is motive sufficient to Christ that it is the Father's pleasure: John 4:34, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' It is Christ's pleasure, as much as God's, to work out the good of the creatures. Work is best done by a willing servant; now Christ is willing. As God gave Christ, so Christ gave himself to die for man. The Father's delight is to you, and so is the Son's; and therefore the business is not like to miscarry, Prov. 8:31. Christ is brought in speaking as the Wisdom of the Father, 'rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights are with the sons of men.' Christ's

delights were with men; it was a pleasure to him to do them good. The pleasure of the Lord will prosper in any hand, but especially in the hands of Christ, for it is his own pleasure.

[2] He is able and mighty, so as he must needs effectuate the will of God: Ps. 89:19, 'I have laid help upon one that is mighty.' It is an able Christ that the work is committed to, that can break through discouragements, overcome difficulties, remove lets. Alas! there is no mountain that is anything before this Zerubbabel: Col. 1:19, 'It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.' He wanteth nothing for the accomplishment of this work, there is a fulness and supply of all things: Col. 2:3, 'In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge: There is an unexhausted treasury of grace and knowledge to be found in Christ; it was hid, the world does not easily see it, but there is a rich magazine of grace, and sufficiency to effect all the will of God; but our weakness measureth things by appearance, and till God bringeth us within the veil we cannot see it.

But you will say, What is this pleasure of the Lord?

I answer—It is the whole decree of God about the good of the creatures; more especially, that I may open your hearts to the view of some cases, these comforts work best when they are drawn forth into particulars.

1. There are some more general, that concern the universality and body of men; and so the pleasure of the Lord is that Christ should gather churches out of the world, out of all kindreds and nations in the world; and then give them his laws; and this Christ will do, notwithstanding the rage of tyrants, and the malice of evil men 'The isles shall wait for his law.' And it is said, Isa. 9:7, 'The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.' The Lord hath sworn he will maintain him against all the attempts of the world; that the gospel shall get ground and prosper. Now, see if Christ's hand miscarried in these general works: Acts 2:4, three thousand were converted by one sermon; one apostle preached the gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and that was some thousands of miles, Rom. 15:19. These general works prospered by the good pleasure of the Lord.

2. Some more special, as the reconciliation of sinners to God. This will thrive in Christ's hands, for it is God's pleasure: Luke 4:18, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, and sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives; 'Col. 1:20, 'It pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself.' The conversion of a sinner is the will of God: James 1:18, 'Of his own

will beget us, by the word of truth.’ Do not doubt, then; there may be discouragements, but the will of God is for your regeneration. So the sanctification of the creatures: 1 Thes. 4:3, ‘This is the will of God, even your sanctification.’ This is one of the wills that shall prosper in the hands of Christ, your preservation and keeping in a state of grace: John 6:34, ‘And this is the Father’s will who hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing.’ You may have many assaults, but it is God’s will you should be kept. Nay, it is his will to glorify you: Luke 12:32, ‘It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.’

Use. What an abundance of encouragement to faith is there from every word that is here used!

1. That all the work of Christ for your good is called *chephets*, the Lord’s pleasure. We may come to men for things with greater confidence when we know it is their pleasure to give them to us. It was an encouragement to Joab to set the woman of Tekoah at work to bring home Absalom, because the thing was pleasing to the king 2 Sam. 14:1, ‘When he perceived the king’s heart was towards Absalom.’ So when we perceive God’s heart towards a thing, we may the better urge him to it. Among men we easily speed in an errand that is pleasing to him to whom we go: Ps. 35:27, ‘The Lord hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants: All that can make for good to you, it is the Lord’s pleasure; your welfare is his delight; nay, to those that are without, for them to come in to be recovered and accepted to mercy, it is the Lord’s pleasure. So it is in prayer, when you come with such requests to the throne of grace; you speak to God’s bowels when you ask for such things as are acceptable to him as they can be to yourselves. We have two hints of God’s *pleasure*—*chaphets*, it *pleased* the Lord to bruise him; and *chephets*, his *pleasure* in Christ’s bruises was our good.

2. *It shall prosper.* It goeth in the way of a promise; it is part of God’s covenant with Christ to relieve your souls from doubts and fears; you may go and urge it to him—Lord, was it not thy covenant that thy pleasure should prosper in the hands of Christ? This is thy pleasure. Christ urgeth this covenant, and therefore you may urge it: John 17:4, 5, ‘I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was.’ Tell him Christ observed his ordinances to a tittle; you may plead promises though not performances; you may plead Christ’s merit, though not your own. But to the word, *shall prosper*. This signifieth to break through, or pierce through. Alas! all difficulties are nothing. They are but as a fly upon the wheel, that cannot hinder the motion. Rage and opposition will not hinder the collection and gathering the church of Christ. The devil, sin, and all the powers of darkness, shall not hinder

the reconciling of a soul to Christ. The will of the Lord shall break through. Death nor the grave shall not hinder the glory of Christ. Mountains are nothing to Christ. God's pleasure is not retarded by difficulty; it breaketh through all.

3. *In his hand.* Our hands would fail us, nay, be withered and decay. What is the reason discomfort seizeth upon men? They would have the will of God prosper in their own hands, like the monk that hopes to subdue corruption by his own vows, *nihil videt prosperum* (nothing he sees will prosper): Gal. 2:20, 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' It is not in our hands, but in the hand of Christ. Oh that our souls would look up to him in the sense of our own weakness! Christ's hand is a strong hand: John 10:28, 'No man shall pluck his sheep out of his hand.' The sheep are safe when in the hand of Christ, especially when upheld by God: Isa. 13:6, 'I will hold thine hand, and keep thee.' It is not Christ as than only, but as upheld by the power of the Godhead. As a man, he himself is subject to agonies and consternations: Ps. 89:21, 'With whom my hand shall be established, and mine arm shall strengthen him.'

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