



Fire and Ice Sermon Series

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

by Thomas Manton

THE TWELFTH VERSE.

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

IN this last verse, as in most of the former, you may observe a scandal, and a provision against it; for the prophet still continueth his method. As in the life of Christ, there was no passage or occurrence that did deject him to such a degree of abasement but that he showed forth some glimpse of his power and Godhead; as when they came to take him, he forced them to go backward and fall to the ground, John 18:6. So here, the prophet never giveth a single scandal, but addeth some glorious event and effect of it. Observe, then, two parts:—

First, Christ's conflict.

Secondly, Christ's conquest. The conflict is last in the order of the words, but first in order of nature and time.

There observe that the scandal of Christ's conflict is reduced to four heads:—

1. His death: *he poured out his soul unto death.*
2. The ignominy of it: *he was numbered with the transgressor.*
3. The cause of it, both of his death and ignominy: *he bore the sins of many.*
4. The prayer, meekness, and patience of Christ, together with his desire of the application of this remedy: *he made intercession for the transgressors.*

Secondly, For the conquest; there it is first hinted in the promise of the Father: *I will divide him a portion with the great.*

2. The possession and enjoyment of the Son, what the Father would give, and what the Son shall enjoy: *I will give him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.* Or, if you will have it more particularly, you may consider it thus:—

1. The ground of the conquest, implied in the causal particle, *therefore.*

2. The donor or author of it, God the Father: *I will divide.*

3. The reality of it, it was done; God the Son shall find this promise accomplished: *he shall divide the spoil with the strong.*

4. The nature of the conquest; it is expressed *by a portion with the great,* and by *dividing the spoil.*

5. From whom he shall take them: from *the great* and *the strong.*

6. Others add the persons whom he shall admit into co-partnership in the conquest and spoils, as implied in that word, *with the strong*; how justly, we shall see by and by. Though you may now guess at the sense of the words by this explication of them into their parts, yet I shall give you some better satisfaction about the phrases before I let them pass.

At this time, I shall insist upon the conquest, which, as I have observed, is last in nature and time, yet first in the order of the words. I shall pitch upon that now; and my first endeavour shall be to open it to you; for indeed, though most interpretations in their result and effect come to the same thing, yet I find they do not make it out one and the same way; so that the phrases need a vindication. Consider, then, that the intent of the prophet here is to set out the victory and triumph of the Messiah, which victory and triumph is here set out by terms proper to the triumphs of man. A general, when he hath scattered the enemies and driven them out of the field, securely seizeth upon the prey, and divideth it amongst his followers. The dividing of the spoils is a sign of conquest. Pharaoh, when he promised himself success, Exod. 15:9, you know what he saith there: ‘I will pursue, I *will* overtake, I will divide the spoil.’ That is the custom of conquerors. So one of Sisera’s mother’s ladies: ‘Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey?’ As soon as they had borne down the enemies, and had any leisure, they were for distributing the booty. So the prophet Isaiah, speaking of the glad tidings of the gospel, saith to those that hear them, Isa. 9:3, ‘They joy before God according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they

divide the spoil: So Christ is here set forth as a conqueror, taking his portion, and dividing the spoil.

I confess there is some difference in reading the words. Junius reads *it, Partem ei dabo, ut cum robustis partiatur praedam*— ‘that he may divide the spoil with the strong.’ Others, ‘I will give him the part of many, and he shall divide the spoil of the strong.’ Others, in many, and over the strong, as a great man, or as a strong man useth to do after battle. I shall not intricate the discourse with these things, but by going over word by word make all plain; though for my part I conceive the phrases are put here as common and in general, and only implying a triumph. ‘I will divide him a portion with the great, and divide the spoil with the strong;’ that you shall see him as a great conqueror, and like the kings and potentates, and the great and strong ones of the earth, having a part in dividing the spoil.

But it may be better to go over the text more particularly. ‘I will divide him a portion with the great.’ He is spoken of in the former verses, I will divide him a portion, or give him a part with the great, *barabim*, with many; so it may signify, and implieth the numerousness of those that Christ shall gain to himself among the nations; or the great, that is the powerful, whose power ruled the world. Not as if Christ and they should divide the world between them; that they should have a part and Christ should have a part: as some think, it implieth that Christ should have the elect, and Satan the rest. No, that is not the force of the word; but that Christ should come to parting; that is, to spoil Satan, for he is intended by ‘the great’ and ‘the strong,’ though it also noteth and implieth all his instruments, who usually have the dignities and pomp of the world. Therefore, it is said, Col. 2:14,15, that ‘he spoiled principalities and powers;’ Eph. 4:8, ‘He led captivity captive;’ and Luke 11:21, ‘He disarmeth the strong man, and divideth the spoils.’ I cannot conceal from you that some by this latter sentence, ‘divide the spoil with the strong,’ understand the godly, those that are called the violent, Mat. 11:12, that with a great deal of fervour of spirit follow him, love him, confess him, and cleave to him, and will not give over for any dangers, lets, and difficulties. But, for method’s sake, and reverence to those learned men that affect that sense, I shall take in that in the last place.

The points, then, are:—

1. From the causal particle, *therefore*. Observe—

That the ground of Christ’s triumph was his sufferings. Therefore—why? Because he laid down his soul an offering for sin, and hath borne our iniquities, as in the former verse; and it is again amplified in the latter end of this

verse. And it is worth our observation, that always the sufferings and exaltation of Christ, when spoken of together, are expressed causally; as Ps. 110:7, 'He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore he shall lift up the head;' that is, drink up the lake of curses that divide between God and the elect. Mark the particle *therefore*. So John 10:17, 'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life: Therefore prevail: mark the inference, because. Phil. 2:9, 10, 'He became obedient to death, even the death of the cross: *wherefore* God hath highly exalted him.' And John 12:32, it is there expressed conditionally and federally: 'If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me;' that is, if I be lifted up upon the cross, then I shall have power to work the hearts of men to my obedience. So that you see Christ's exaltation did not only imply his humiliation, as in some places it only doth; as Eph. 4:9, 'Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?' It not only necessarily implieth and presupposeth it, but was caused by it, and merited by it. So Rev. 5:9, 'Thou art worthy 'to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy' blood.' To open the seals; that is, to open dark promises, and to do what was necessary for the illuminating of the church. Christ's humiliation and exaltation was not only an antecedent and a consequent, as some divines expound these places, and I myself formerly have done among you, but as a cause and effect, as merit and reward. Calvin indeed judgeth it a curious question whether Christ merited his conquest and triumph; and his reasons were, because there is no express scripture for it. But what shall we say then to those causal particles? But this he saith is a great derogation to the love of Christ, to make him eye himself in his sufferings; since it is said, 'The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself;' he eyed our good in it, and not his own.

I answer, it maketh much for our comfort, that Christ had his conquests, and the privileges of his mediatorship in a way of justice and merit; that though all things are dispensed to us freely, yet to Christ justly. It is true, as it hath been handled by divers schoolmen, and as it is referred merely to the glorification of Christ's humanity, so it is a curious question; but as it importeth the carriage of all things appertaining to our comfort and salvation between God and Christ in a way of rigour and justice, so it maketh much for our comfort and consolation.

Use 1. Here is a sealing of your comfort, it was merited by Christ you can do nothing to merit it, but Christ did. What is free grace to you is due debt to Christ. Alas! what can you do to find so much grace with God as to prevail over Satan or your own spirit, to lift up the head in triumph, so as to be raised to glory? Though you cannot tell how, yet Christ did. God is bound in justice to

Christ to do all these things for you. You have a double claim in God; you can lay hold of his mercies engaged by his promises to you, and of his justice engaged by the merits of Christ for you. Things are not now uncertain; Christ hath merited such a capacity as to bestow grace and glory and every good thing upon you. You cannot hope to prevail over Satan, but God hath indented with Christ; 'Therefore he shall divide a portion with the great, and divide the spoil with the strong.' You cannot hope for glorious privileges; alas! you are poor; vile, worthless creatures: but 'He drank of the brook in the way, therefore he shall lift up the head,' and your head too. You cannot look for the power of the Spirit to draw you to Christ these are great comforts, but not for you: 'But if I be lifted up, I will draw all men after me.' Christ merited that privilege by his sufferings. You cannot open the book, neither can you find anything in yourselves to encourage you to hope for such a privilege; no more indeed you should not find any merit in yourselves, but seek it in another. Christ was worthy, for he was slain; and if you are Christ's, and Christ be yours, you are worthy, for you have his merit, though none of your own.

2. If the ground of Christ's triumph were his death and sufferings, then here is great comfort to you in all your inward and outward abasements. Here is a double comfort, one to allay fear, and the other to encourage hope. To allay fear: be not dismayed, great abasements usually go before glory. And then to encourage hope; the greatest abasements will turn to the greatest glory. Christ's death and sufferings were not only the antecedent, but the cause of his conquest and exaltation. 'Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great.' Consider with yourselves:—

[1.] Great abasements often go before glory. This was the dispensation God used to Christ: Luke 24:26, 'Ought not Christ to suffer these things, and then to enter into glory?' and will not you take it well at the hands of God to drink of Christ's cup, to be first crowned with thorns before you be crowned with glory, to be humbled before converted; to be slurred with the bishop's coal-dust before you be shining platters upon God's shelf, as that martyr said; to be full of wants before you be full of Christ? What is your abasement? If you look inward, you have a vile heart, a destitute, naked soul, no grace, but much corruption; therefore there are some hopes of crumbs when you find yourself a dog; as the woman of Canaan maketh it a motive, Mat. 15:27. Oh, be not discouraged! Blessed be God, he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. There is no sentence repeated so often in the New Testament as that, Prov. 15:33, 'Before honour is humility.' This is the Lord's course, to make us poor in spirit, and then rich in grace. But is the trouble outward? Are you low in the world, of base account and esteem? Oh, remember, Jesus Christ was first accounted a glutton, a wine-bibber,

one that had a devil in the eye of the world, and then had a name above all names. Mordecai was first envied for sitting at the king's gate, and then honoured by his adversary with sitting upon the king's horse. Job was brought from a large estate to the very dust, because God would bless his latter end more than his beginning, Job 42:12. As Samuel saith to Saul, 1 Sam. 15:17, 'When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel?' It may be God hath more eminent providences for you after your great abasement.

[2.]. This should be so far from being a discouragement, that it is a ground of hope. Usually we get great advantage by our sufferings. Consider the conflict of Christ, upon the cross, his cross was his triumph; like Sampson, he destroyed more enemies at his death than in all his life; his cross was his chariot of triumph: Col. 2:15, 'And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.' 'Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great,' because made so small: James 1:9, 'Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted.' Your abasement is your preferment and exaltation: 2 Cor. 1:5, 'As 'the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation aboundeth in Christ.' The greatest grace meets with the greatest conflicts, because it is the greatest grace. This is so sure a truth, that even their spiritual abasements, their falls, their sins, do work for their good; the soul groweth the more humble, holy and watchful. Paul was the more fervent and frequent with God in prayer because of the messenger of Satan, 2 Cor. 12:10. David came to number the people, and by that means came to know where the temple should be built, which he so earnestly desired to know. Hezekiah was the more humble for his fall, 2 Chron. 23:31; he knew all that was in his heart. But especially it holdeth good in outward abasements; they are cause of more good to their souls. The setting of the day-star maketh way for the sunrising, and the loss of some petty comfort for their abundant consolation in Jesus Christ.

I shall now come to the author and donor, God the Father: 'I will divide a portion with the great, and divide the spoil with the strong.'

Doct. That the power and majesty whereby Jesus Christ overcame his enemies was by the gift and appointment of the Father: Ps. 110:1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I have made thine enemies thy footstool;' that is, God the Father said to Christ. And Ps. 2:6, 'I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.' Christ was a king of God's making. So the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son, John 5:22. All the supremacy, power, and majesty that Christ had as Mediator was derived from the Father. So

Mat. 28:18, 'All power is given to me both in heaven and earth.' Christ's power was given to him, and it was meet it should be so.

The condition on God the Father's part was to honour the Son for the elect's sake; and the Son had glorified the Father, John 17:4, by virtue of the compact and agreement between them. And besides, we could not take so much comfort in the advancement of Christ unless we had the consent of the Father. The love of every person was to appear to the creature, especially the love of the offended person; sin in its last result being against the Father: hence it is so often said that he hath 'given him a name above all names;' that he hath 'put all things in subjection.' And therefore it is a mighty pledge of God's love to the creature, and of what God will do for us, now our nature is advanced to such high and glorious privileges. Not only God the Son was willing, who assumed our nature in his own person, but God the Father was willing to do it.

Use 1. To direct us to stick to God's choice and appointment. He hath honoured Jesus Christ to be the king of his church: Luke 22:29, 'I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom.' And therefore we should honour him, and acknowledge no other. God chose Adam a wife in paradise, and he chose a husband to the church, who is bone of our bone: and therefore we should honour him as the captain of our salvation. Now God hath honoured him, and put all things in subjection to him: Hosea 1:11, it is said, 'They shall appoint themselves one head;' Eph. 1:22, 'And gave him to be head over all things to the church.' Thus shall it be done to them whom the king delighteth to honour. Thus shall it be done to the person whom God will honour, that has such faith, dependence, reverence, and confidence. They, appoint him whom God hath appointed. You do as it were anew honour Jesus Christ, when your dependence on him is according to the honour the Father hath put upon him. 2 Sam. 16:18, as Hushai said, 'Whom the Lord shall choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide.' God the Father hath chosen him; look to him as your head, king, and husband, as the captain of your salvation, the author and finisher of your faith. God hath divided him a portion with the great.

2. It teacheth us to glorify the Father in our thoughts, expressions, and affections, for the honour that be hath put upon Jesus Christ. The person that is most in our eye usually intercepts all the love and praise of the creature. Though you can never enough honour and magnify the person of Jesus Christ, yet do not exclude the person of the Father. The persons in the Trinity mutually glorify one another, and why should not we? In every glorious manifestation of the power of Christ, send up a thankful thought, some acknowledgment of love and praise to the Father. As Paul: Rom. 7:24,25, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' It is accomplished by the

power God hath put upon Jesus Christ. Look upon what terms the scriptures do pitch all comfort and expectation upon the person of Christ: 2 Cor. 1:20, 'For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us.' There is the end why all is in Christ. So Phil. 2:11: 'And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' Mark, the person of Christ can never be enough in our thoughts, nor mentioned in our mouths, for he is the Lord; but it is to the glory of the Father. As often as you remember the work of your redemption, remember the work of the Father, and then you will find your hearts raised in thankfulness and love to him. Christ himself, when he saw poor souls receive the gospel, though he saith there the power of dispensing was committed to him, Mat. 11:25, compared with 27, yet he saith, 'Father, I thank thee that thou hast revealed it to them.' See if your hearts be raised and ravished within you with this eternal and free love of God to the glory of the Father.

3. It is a great ground of trust and confidence, when you go to God in prayer to turn your captivity, for power against your spiritual adversaries, as sin, Satan, fears of death, and hell.; or earthly ones, as unjust and tyrannous encroachments without. Urge it to God, did not he divide Christ a portion with the great? You desire but to exalt the king of his own making, a king upon his holy hill. Was it not thine own grant and donation? When we come and urge God's own acts upon him, and he urgeth it to God, you shall see he will own them. The apostle alludeth to that of the Psalms, in Heb. 2:8, 'Thou didst set him over the work of thine hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.' And why not my sins and mine enemies? But alas! 'We see not yet all things put under him;' it is not yet made good to our sense and experience. Lusts are stirring and Satan busy. Lord, didst thou not say, that all things should be put under him? Go to God, and do but press him with his own appointment.

I now come to the third particular, and that is the reality of this conquest. It was not only promised by God the Father, but God the Son was possessed of it: 'He shall divide the spoil with the strong.'

Doct. That the Lord Jesus was a glorious conqueror.

Dividing of the spoil is the effect of a sure and a great conquest. You may perceive that in all respects it maketh a victory glorious. You know the eminency of it lieth in these four things:—

1. Either in the power of the adversaries. There is no triumph in prevailing over weak things: 1 Sam. 26:20, 'For the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.' What honour could Saul get to seek a flea, or hunt a partridge in the mountains,—to chase hares or harts?

2. By the unlikelihood of the means. A thousand men were slain by the jaw-bone of an ass by the hands of Sampson; and a numerous host discomfited by Gideon's pitchers and three hundred lamps. Such things as these make the success memorable.

3. The manner or nature of the victory. Total defeats are most noted. A slight hurt, or some petty brush is nothing, as Amalek's falling upon the weak rear, and putting the hindermost stragglers to shame; what is that? The conquest is not complete till there be a dissipation and dissolution of the whole force that is against us.

4. A conquest is glorious in the effects or result of it. If it be of great importance and consequence to the good of a people, when fears are removed, and privileges are granted and enlarged, spoilers taken, a kingdom subdued,—these things make for the glory of the victory. And, therefore, let us see if such things be not found in the conquest of Christ. There are strong adversaries and weak means, glorious achievements and great effects and fruits of this conquest, for the benefit of the faithful; and therefore he was a glorious conqueror.

First, The adversaries; they are mighty. They are always expressed by such notions as do imply great strength and power: Col. 2:15, it is said, 'He spoiled principalities and powers.' The evil angels, by reason of their power and prevalency in and with the world, are expressed by that name, 'principalities and powers.' So Eph. 4:8, 'He led captivity captive;' that is, he captivated enemies such as are apt to bring us into bondage. It is as much as if it were said, he prevailed over victory,—he led captivity itself captive. And he is called the strong man, Luke 11:21.

But let us a little more particularly consider the enemies, and then we shall see how much they add to the glory and renown of the conquest.

1. There is the devil, who is a powerful adversary. He causeth great disturbance to the people of God, either to the called or uncalled. He either accuseth us, or soliciteth us to evil. He accuseth the called and converted, and so filleth their souls with disquieting, doubtful thoughts. Ay! but 'the prince of this world is judged,' John 16:11. God hath condemned him for an accuser; God hath condemned him for condemning you: and when he cometh to resist you at the time you are about the work of God, judgment is passed upon the liar who would cause you to misjudge yourselves. Sometimes he soliciteth to evil; injects carnal and provoking thoughts. Ay! but Satan is rebuked: Zech. 3:2, 'And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee.' There is grace to check and oppose him. But Satan chiefly worketh upon the uncalled people of God-men in their unregeneracy and sinful estate; he possesseth their hearts, and 'worketh in the

children of disobedience,’ Eph. 2:3, detaining them in blindness, captivates and subjects them to the power of their lusts, and so by this means possesseth the most part of the world by ignorance and superstition, or else causeth them to hold the truth in unrighteousness; and erects strongholds, partly by ignorance, partly by error and superstition, and partly by lusts and violent temptations, which he darts forth that he may keep the world in his obedience. But now ‘the prince of this world is cast out,’ John 12:31. Satan is dispossessed, and his power vacated, his rule disannulled. Great Pan is dead, being like Dagon brought upon his face in the presence of the ark. And so, some stories say, the idols were overturned at the time of Christ’s birth. Certain we are, spiritually it is true, if not fulfilled in a literal miracle. Thus Satan is an enemy.

2. The law, that was an enemy, as it condemns us; the law of ordinances was against us. Now Christ hath abolished it, so far as it was contrary and prejudicial to our acceptance with God, as it made for our discomfort and condemnation, and bound us to wrath, and to such obedience as could not be fulfilled by us: Col. 2:14, ‘Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.’ Christ contended with the law, and took us out of the hands of it, abrogated the curse and rigour of it. Alas I we were all a prey to the law, till Christ did arise and plead our cause, and removed the curse and the difficulties of obedience, and made the craggy hill to become a plain to us. He ‘slew the enmity by his cross,’ Eph. 2:16. Now, as great an enemy as the law was to us, it was by God’s appointment, and it may be thought much that God should abrogate his own law. Christ was not only to deal with rebels, but with his Father’s appointments, that he might abolish them so far as there was any enmity and contrariety in them, to our good.

3. Death and hell. I join them both together, because the scripture doth so often. Of all enemies, these are the most potent and severe, yet are overcome by Christ. Christ, conquering the law, must needs conquer death: ‘The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law: By Christ death is made a friend, as Haman served Mordecai. It doth but help us to honour and advancement: 1 Cor. 15:54, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory,’—destroyed and brought to nothing. We may outdare death, it cannot harm us, it doth but midwife us into glory. And then for hell, the mouth of it is shut up, so that it serveth only as an aggravation of our mercies: Rev. 20:6, ‘Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; over such the second death hath no power;’ 2 Tim. 1:10, ‘He hath abolished death,’—overthrew it. When the fears of death encroach upon our spirits, you may see a stone rolled upon the mouth of hell by Jesus Christ: Rev. 1:18, ‘I am ‘alive for evermore, and have the keys of death

and hell;’ and Rev. 20:14, ‘Death and hell are cast into the lake of fire.’ What comfort is this for those that have an interest in Christ, that Christ hath the keys of death and hell!

4. The flesh. Corruption is a bosom-enemy, that insinuates with us, and worketh upon us in our most pleasing desires: Rom. 8:7, ‘The carnal mind is enmity to God;’ and Gal. 5:17, ‘The flesh lusteth against the spirit.’ It is a great trouble to a gracious heart. Though it be flesh, as dear to us as our own skin, yet it is a thorn in the flesh, a great cumber to a gracious heart. Nehemiah was very much troubled with his adversaries, because divers about him that abode with him held secret correspondence with his enemies, Neh. 8:18. So we carry somewhat about us that complies with Satan’s rebellious lusts, and vicious affections, and proud thoughts swarm in our hearts, to the disdain of the yoke of Christ: 2 Cor. 10:5, ‘Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.’ But it is said, Rom. 8:3, ‘God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.’ O beloved! sin in your flesh is rooted in your corrupt desires; but it is a condemned thing, and it will be executed. Mat. 12:20, ‘A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he bring forth judgment unto victory.’ he will make the cross triumphant.

5. The world,—take it either for the baits and allurements, or the concernments and interests of it, anything that may be dangerous to us in the work of our salvation. But Christ hath overcome the malignity of it. Christ would put all out of doubt and danger: John 16:33, ‘Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.’ Height shall not separate no more than depth, neither favour nor frowns. Christ hath taken away the noxiousness and harm of everything that may be propounded to us.

6. All the adverse powers in the world. Stubborn enemies are sometimes armed with power: Rev. 17:14, ‘These shall make war with the Lamb;’ that is, the kings of the earth. This is a great terror, when a man seeth all the combined force of a nation, all the force, authority, and strength combined against Christ: Ps. 110:6, ‘He shall wound the heads over many countries, and strike through kings in the day of his wrath;’ and Ps. 2:10-12, ‘Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth: serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.’ A little wrath will destroy a great person. Sometimes our enemies are enraged with malice. Herod being vexed at the wise men’s words, he vowed revenge; but, alas! he could not overcome Christ in his

cradle. What will they do now he is in heaven, out of their reach? Ps. 124:3, 'They had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us;' that is, when their courage is heightened by wrath. Ps. 76:10, 'Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee;' i.e., shall keep an holyday. This wrath shall serve the design of Christ, for God will make every stiff knee to bow, Phil. 2:10. Alas! fear surpriseth us when a provoked enemy cometh with rage and fury, as if like a flood he would bear all before him. But this may occasion a day of praise to God. And then sometimes your enemies are advantaged with wit, wealth, and all outward sufficiencies and supplies: Luke 16:8, 'The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light;' that is, more dexterous in the course of their affairs. And Mat. 11:26, the things of Christianity are 'hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes.' So Ps. 64:6, 'They search out iniquity, they accomplish a diligent search; but the inward thought of every one of them and the heart is deep.' They may be men of great parts, pregnant invention, full of politic enterprises; ay! but all this is nothing: Job 5:13, 'He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.' Christ hath died to recover the truth, and to free the souls of his servants from such kinds of assaults as these. These are the enemies that are most stubborn, but they are forced to stoop, though they are advantaged with power, armed with malice, and stored with all outward sufficiencies.

Thus you see the enemies whose opposition adds to the glory of the conquest: the devil, the law, death and hell, the flesh and the world, and all the adverse powers and dominations that are combined against Christ. Christ can have no spoil, no prey, no kingdom, no saints, till he had combated with these enemies; their opposition addeth to the renown of the conquest.

Secondly, Let us look to the means. The weapons of this warfare are not carnal; that is, there is little pomp and appearance in them. Look upon them, and the matter will be the more wonderful.

1. As to his death. His very conflict was his triumph. The Lamb overcometh, and Christ conquered Satan, and sin, and the law, when they seemed to have most power upon him; like angry bees that sting others and disarm themselves. When Satan had the greatest hand over Christ, Christ overcame him: Heb. 2:14, 'That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.' Satan lost his life in his sting. It is observable, that the scripture twice or thrice mentioneth it as a remarkable circumstance that Christ triumphed in his cross: Col. 2:15, 'Triumphing over them in it.' So Eph. 2:16, 'Having slain enmity thereby;' that is, the cross spoken of before, when he was slain himself. His cross is in two places expressed by lifting up: John 3:14, 'Even so the Son of man shall be lifted up;' and John 12:32,

‘And I, if I be lifted up from the earth.’ Indeed it was his preferment and exaltation.

2. By the word of the cross, called the foolishness of preaching Ps. 8:2, ‘Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength.’ Weak men, whose strength is in their Messiah, may bring men upon their faces by a sermon: 1 Cor. 14:25, ‘And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and falling down upon his face, he will worship God, and report, saying, God is in you of a truth.’ And recover the world unto his obedience by these arts: Mat. 4:23, ‘Jesus went about preaching the gospel of the kingdom.’ And his kingdom is gained by that, and it maketh much for the heightening of the conquest.

3. By his Spirit: Zech. 4:6, ‘Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.’ A great force, but secret and undiscerned; mighty to humble, mighty to comfort, mighty to convert and save. The little finger of the Spirit is heavier than the loins of our reasoning, and debates with our souls. Jerusalem is purged by the Spirit: Jer. 4:4, ‘Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest my fury come forth like fire.’

4. By his prayers and intercessions: Zech. 3:2, ‘And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee.’ Christ prayeth Satan into nothing. All the merit of Christ is made effectual by his prayers, and all the efficacy of Christ’s death and satisfaction is applied and conveyed to us by the Spirit; and thereby we have the spiritual virtue of Christ’s prayers: John 14:16, ‘I will pray the Father, and he will send you another Comforter.’ All the actual application is by the power of the Spirit, obtained by the intercession of Christ: Luke 17:20, 21, ‘The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo here, lo there: behold the kingdom of God is within you.’ Well, then, these are the arts and engines that Christ useth for the gaining of the world and spoiling of his adversaries; his death, his word, his Spirit obtained by his prayer. Some take in other things, sometimes God ruineth them by themselves, Satan by his own instruments, by their subtilty, and sometimes other ways; but the cause and ground of all are the death, and prayers, and Spirit of Christ; there lieth his strength, and this is a strange and glorious conquest.

Thirdly, The manner or nature of the conquest, how it is achieved and accomplished. See what a conquest it is.

1. The enemies are overcome and terribly broken; there is a total dissipation of all the powers of darkness. It is expressed in scripture by bruising the

head of Satan, Gen. 3:15. Christ received a slight hurt in the conflict; his heel was bruised, but the serpent's head is broken: 1 John 3:8, 'The Son of man came to dissolve the works of the devil.' All the fabric of iniquity is analysed and dissolved,—all the webs and plots of wickedness are unravelled. The dragon is cast out, Rev. 12:9, being combated by Michael and his angels. Sin is condemned in the flesh, Rom. 8:3. Corruptions captivated, 2 Cor. 10:5. The world overcome, John 16:33. Wicked and adverse powers and dominations in the world broken to pieces and grounded to powder, or else gained and forced to yield to the uses and glory of Christ.

2. Not barely overcome and dissipated, though that were much, but spoiled and rifled. Christ hath divided the prey: Col. 2:15, 'And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.' They are spoiled by disarming the strong man, and dividing his spoils, Luke 11:22. God hath spoiled and dispossessed Satan of the souls that were taken captive by him at his pleasure; they are recovered into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. The nations are got from under his obedience, and subdued to the power of the gospel. So death and hell are under his power; they are, as it were, under lock and key. Satan had the power of them heretofore, and then men were always under bondage: Heb. 2:14,15, 'That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.' They durst not think of judgment and hell, because Satan had them in his power as God's executioner; but now, saith Christ, 'I have the keys of death.' The world is despoiled of all its wit, wealth, glory, and power; these are made to serve the uses of Christ, being recovered out of the chains of wicked men: Micah 4:13, 'And thou shalt beat in pieces many nations, and shalt consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth;' Zech. 14:14,20, 'The wealth of the nations shall be gathered together. And upon the bells of the horses and the pots in Jerusalem there shall be written, HOLINESS TO THE LORD: All this is done so clearly to the eye of faith, that they do even see Christ triumphing Isa. 63:1, 'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.'

3. Such a victory as endeth in a solemn triumph; as conquerors in public view carried their spoils and their enemies tied to their chariots, so Christ would expose them to open shame. Therefore, it is said, Eph. 4:8, 'He led captivity captive,' as it were in triumph, as you do manacled prisoners. So Col. 2:15, 'He made a show of them openly;' he put them to open shame. How so?—before God and the eyes of believers. We may see the triumphant chariot of Christ,

and Satan, hell and death, and the world haled after it. As soon as the soul is possessed of Christ, and beginneth to have some interest in him, it feels this benefit, and seeth how these things are captivated by the death, Spirit, and power of Christ. Christ doth, as it were, call upon your souls, Come, look! here is Satan disarmed, death unstinged, hell shut up, and I have the keys; sin is manacled, wrath satisfied, the law's curse and rigour taken out of the way, heady enemies despoiled and discouraged, the world subdued and brought to my obedience, or forced to serve my glory. So that you see the conquest is full and absolute.

Object. But you will say, I feel none of these things; why are these enemies so busy and cumbersome about my soul, if totally dissipated by Christ?

I answer briefly in these considerations:—

1. It is true in faith, though not in sense and feeling, that these adversaries received their death's wound at the death of Christ. This was done in the merit of Christ, and in God's decree and ordination. Christ was possessed of this promise of having a portion with the great, and to divide the spoil with the strong; all things were put under his feet. The crown was put upon the head of Jesus Christ, though it be not effectually made out to sense. There is the objection from sense: Heb. 2:8, 'But now we see not all things put under him.'

2. Though it be so that these things are left for a while, it is partly to exercise our souls, and to draw forth the life of our graces. Opposition keeps the soul humble and wakeful. Paul had a thorn in the flesh, and a messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure, 2 Cor. 12:7. It is partly to prove us, to see if we will enter into the battle, and powerfully maintain it, and combat against the enemies of Christ; and partly to make us the more thankful for our deliverance by Christ. Christ was tempted like us, that he might be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and that we might be touched with a feeling of Christ's sufferings, and the greatness of Christ's love to us. Experience maketh us the more sensible how it would have been with us, if we had not been freed by the Son of God. Oh, when we are a little scorched with wrath, when we tug with sin, we may begin to think what it is to dwell with everlasting burning. How would it have been if Christ had not died for us? So when there are difficulties abroad, what should we have done with these mountains, if it had not been for our Zerubbabel? Experience giveth us the best sense of things, therefore the Lord saw fit to continue these things for a season. As it is said of Daniel's beasts, Dan. 7:12, that their 'dominion was taken away,' though their 'lives was prolonged for a season.' So their power to hurt or endamage our salvation is gone: 1 Peter 3:13, 'And who is he that will harm you?' Nothing 'shall separate you from the love of God,' Rom. 8:33. Neither

death, nor hell, nor sin, shall prejudice the salvation of the elect; Satan cannot ruin, death cannot disannul it; hell hath no right, and sin hath no reign; the world may kill us, but they cannot conquer us.

3. Though continued, they cannot harm us, rather they may do us good. Even sin and Satan may give us cause to glory in infirmities, 2 Cor. 12:10, to boast of our weakness: they may occasion such supplies and comforts from God; but certain we are they cannot hurt our souls nor hinder our salvation.

4. The work will be thoroughly and completely done ere long; our comforts and hopes in Christ will prove sure: Rev. 12:11, 'They overcame by the blood of the Lamb.' 'We do not as yet see all things put under him,' Heb. 2:8. Mark, that as *yet* implies it is at hand. We do not as yet see the god of this world fully cast out and falling as lightning from heaven; we do not as yet find sin fully mortified, Satan subdued, Christ exalted among all the nations; none of these things are as yet completely done. But here is the comfort of believers: Rom. 16:20, 'The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.' All this will be done, and will not you tarry a little while? As the church saith, Micah 7:8,9, 'Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.' Times will be better and hearts better.

5. If we do find and feel no benefit by the conquest of Christ, it is through our own corruptions. God hath not left us for the present without some sense of it. You will have some rule over your hearts and spirits, more grace to resist Satan, more comfort against the fear of death, and less trouble about the difficulties of obedience: 1 John 5:4, 'Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world.' Thus you see we have gone through the third part, that is, a complete victory, even to the spoiling and triumphing over Satan, who shall be totally subdued.

Fourthly, The next and last thing proposed was the fruits and effects, or what special benefit we have by the conquest of Christ.

I answer—It is hard to mention all the rich communications of grace that we enjoy by it. Those that are most proper are these:—

1. The banishment of distracting fear: holy fear remaineth, but that natural fear which would distract and perplex the soul is gone. The apostle speaks, Heb. 2:15, of some 'who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.' There is a natural fear in us; though not always felt, yet it

is easily awakened, so as we could not think of death, or hell, or judgment, but it filled us with a great deal of terror. But now a child of God hath a great deal of courage and boldness; he may remember it to increase his joy and praise; he can play upon the hole of the cockatrice; death and hell may aggravate his mercies, but cannot increase his fears; so that they are fitted for the worst condition and the greatest duty: Ps. 23:4, 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.' They are fitted for the sorest suffering and the greatest service. In the sorest affliction they may be comforted; hell-gates are shut, and Christ hath locked them up. So for the greatest service: Luke 1:74,75, 'That being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.' It is a mighty weakening to the hands of the soul in duty, when we ponder upon the danger and difficulties, and the powerful opposition we shall meet with in the ways of grace. Ay! but now we may serve him without fear; Christ hath conquered death and hell, lusts and fears. We can the better bear afflictions now they are unstinged, and their venom taken away. We can the better go through duty; the joy of the Lord may be our strength the enemies are fallen before us.

2. It is an encouragement to the spiritual conflict. The difficulty of things amazeth the heart, and causeth the spirit to faint and melt within us. Thus vigorous opposition within, without giants and the sons of Anak, Satan and wicked men, our own hearts and all are against us. Oh! but be not dismayed, you are sure to overcome; you fight against a manacled enemy, a naked enemy, a vanquished enemy. Mice may trample upon a dead lion, and the feeblest creatures insult a dead carcase. Will you fear Satan in chains? He is bound up; he was let loose upon Christ, and hath been bound up ever since. 'Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might,' Eph. 6:10. God is at our right hand, and he will assist us in our endeavours against Satan; you may go on with hope and resolution.: Ps. 110:5, 'The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.' Hope of success is a strength and encouragement to an undertaking.

3. Here is joy unspeakable and glorious. Christ's triumphs are our joy. Oh, what a triumph, even to exaltation, is it to see Satan despoiled and trampled upon, sin disarmed, and hell locked up! Luke 1:47, 'My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.' Oh, you may triumph over the powers of darkness: Isa. 51:11, 'Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.' Why? because the

Lord hath smote Rahab, and wounded the dragon. Spiritual enemies being destroyed, we may make our boast of Christ all the day long.

4. Hopes of glory: we shall conquer with him, and we shall reign with him. There is nothing that can be noxious and hurtful to our salvation. Christ will not leave till he hath settled us upon his own throne: Rev. 3:21, 'To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.' We shall have fellowship with Christ in his glory, as Christ as Mediator had fellowship with the Father's glory; we shall have the throne of Christ, as Christ has that of his Father. He led captivity captive, and then ascended; so he will cause us to conquer and overcome: Eph. 2:6, 'He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' Conquerors enter after the spoil into the secure possession of their kingdoms; so did Jesus Christ, and so shall we.

5. Great comfort accrueth and redoundeth to us by it; the very exaltation of Christ is a great comfort to us. We are happy in the success of our Prince, and we have interest in a great conqueror, in Michael, the great prince, Dan. 12:1. As Joshua put his feet upon the necks of the kings, Josh. 10:24; so our Joshua, our Jesus, calleth to the captains and men of war with him, to come and set their feet upon the necks of their enemies. Nay, the apostle seemeth to express it, as if he did invest us in a surplusage of privileges: Rom. 8:37, 'We are more than conquerors, through him that loved us;' and 2 Cor. 2:14, 'Now thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ.' We have such a glorious Saviour as can help and stead his followers. Therefore, you may be always boasting.

6. There is this fruit and effect of Christ's conquest; it is a token, earnest, and pledge of our victory. Everything is first done in Christ, then in us; he died, rose, and conquered as our common person: John 16:33, 'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' What is that to us? Christ hath overcome, and that is a sign *you* shall overcome too: 1 John 5:4, 'For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.' First Christ, and then your faith. There will something be done proportionably in your souls. God chose him, therefore he is called his 'Elect servant,' Isa. 13:1. And he hath chosen us, John 15:16, 'But I have chosen you.' He calleth him. Christ took this honour when called, then we; Christ dieth, and we die; he was justified in the Spirit, then he riseth and ascendeth, so do we; he conquereth, so do we.

7. What Christ did in this conquest, he did it for our sakes. He will have nothing but we shall share in it. If God give him a portion with the great,

he will divide it with the strong: Luke 22:29, 'I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.' Mark, Christ would have you have the same privileges as he hath John 12:30, 'This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.' Christ eyed us in his actions: John 17:22, 'And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.' Christ would have you come and ride with him in his triumphant chariot, and spoil principalities and powers.

8. Another benefit is usefulness and serviceableness of all that befalls us. Christ doth so effect it that all things work together for good, Rom. 8:28. The crooked sticks help to make the faggot the more decent. You do not only get a prey from Satan and your sins, but they yield you some good, and you may glory in infirmities, and desire to close with him, and cleave to him.

Use. I did here and there interpose matter applicative, but now I shall come to it more formally. The uses concern the people of God, or the adversaries of Christ.

1. To the people of Christ: Behave yourselves towards him as a conqueror.

[1.] Get an interest in him. Oh, who would not strive to get an interest in Christ, that he may have a share in his spoils? Who would not be one of the angels and followers of Michael, the great prince? 'He preserveth the souls of his people,' Ps. 97:10. There is safety under the shadow of his wings. Therefore, apply your souls to this matter. You that think of Christ for a Lord, get your interest cleared. The soul is encumbered with fears for want of clearing up its right in Christ, and entertains these comforts with a loose heart for want of that. The soul is apt to say, Oh, if I were Christ's, then the matter were at end, and therefore, get it cleared up. How sweetly then can you reason and argue, This is my Christ, this is he that died for me: whilst others must be persuaded to seek Christ, and to cleave to him. We all desire to be of the strongest side: consider it, Jesus Christ is a glorious conqueror.

[2.] Believe in him, and depend on him to possess your souls of these glorious privileges. Luther saith, carnal men hear these comforts *quasi somniantes*—like golden dreams, rare things, but presented to fancy rather than faith. Oh, stir up the large and sure apprehensions of faith. These things require a wakeful and believing soul, to see Christ conquering, triumphing, and spoiling the powers of darkness. Spiritual conquests must be discerned with a spiritual eye: Luke 8:10, 'To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom.' Other men may hear them, but you know the mysteries. Oh, it is a great privilege vouchsafed, that when others only hear the voice, you see the

glory; you see him leading captivity captive. It is in your eye that the powers of darkness are put to an open shame. You see the conqueror coming from Bozrah, the blood of his garments that cutteth off his enemies; all this is easily made out to your faith. Oh, therefore, depend upon him in all your assaults and straits; do not think to help and relieve yourselves by your own wit and parts; put forth endeavours, but do not rest in them; disclaim your own strength Isa. 30:15, 'For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.' The less the creature bustles, and the more it believeth, the more safe. Pray and wait in quietness and confidence that you are safe. The Philistines placed much confidence in their Goliath: oh! what hopes will you pitch upon Jesus Christ, the great conqueror!

[3]. Check vain fears of death and hell, Satan, lusts, and the world. Alas! there is no more spirit left in these things; they are like the Canaanites which were stung by God's hornets before the Israelites conquered them: 'I will send my hornets before you.' Fear possessed them, and then they were easily vanquished. Christ hath not only stung them, but broke them in pieces. Will you fear shattered forces? Nay, Christ hath not only broken them, but disarmed them, and not only disarmed them, but bound them; and who would fear naked and chained enemies? Children are frightened at the sight of enemies, though bound. Oh, be not such children in grace! You shall find often in scripture that this is brought in as a just inference out of Christ's conquest: 'Fear not, I have overcome the world.' Some are careless, and fear nothing; others, that mind the danger of their souls, are very apt to be surprised with carnal trouble when they think of death, and hell, and wrath; and altogether it proveth a great consternation to their thoughts: but be not troubled, 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me,' John 14:1. When you think of God and Christ together, God satisfying, and Christ suffering, oh! what an amulet is there, what a cordial for fainting souls! Timorousness in a Christian is a disgrace to Christ. Understand what fears I mean; not a circumspect fear to avoid sin, to shun danger, to put us upon seasonable provisions against evil, but a perplexing fear, such as filleth the soul with amazement. Circumspect fear maketh the soul run to Christ, like chickens under the hen's wings; but the other fear undervalueth the conquest of Christ, as if there were no hope for us in our God, and no hope for us in our Saviour.

[4.] It presseth us to praise, honour, and obey him. Conquerors merit of their country; usually some trophy and statue is erected to their memorial. Oh, what honour do you devise for Christ, now he hath conquered for you, now he hath recovered a church, and it may be your souls, out of the hands of death, and hell, and Satan, and defended you against all the malice of the world! When our knees

bow to Christ, our mouths must confess him, Phil. 2:10,11. Fall down like the elders before the Lamb, with the harps of God in your hands, Rev. 5:9, and give him honour, and blessing, and praise. David, when he had rest from his enemies, he thinketh of building God a temple, 2 Sam. 7:2. God hath given you rest, think of a trophy for God. Honour him in your expressions, affections, and conversations. Serve him now—he hath set you free; you are his by right of conquest; pass over into his power and love as Christ's, Rom, 7:14. The apostle speaketh of himself in his natural condition, 'I am carnal, sold under sin.' He alludeth to a custom among the Romans, who, when captives and prisoners were taken in war, they were wont to sell them to one another, as captives, under a spear. Oh, do not live as carnal, and for the uses and advantages of sin, as if you were the spoils of sin, but as the spoils of Jesus Christ. Oh, be not sold under sin; wholly pass over into his power and right, and live to his glory.

[5.] Set against the enemies with the more courage and resolution. Oh, that the joy of the Lord may be your strength, that in all your endeavours against sin and Satan you may look up to the victory of Christ! It is said, Rom. 7:24, 25, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Oh, you are enclasped within the ribs of the body of death: how shall I get free? Through Jesus Christ there is hope of triumph. Therefore do not fear, but set upon it. You are mistaken, if you think the work was so done upon Christ's cross that there remaineth nothing for your care and endeavours Rom. 16:20. God 'will bruise Satan,' but it is 'under your feet;' implying there is something that we must do. And Ps. 110:5, 'The Lord at thy right hand will smite through kings in the day of his wrath.' God will smite them through, but it will be at thy right hand, which doth imply our endeavours. Christ will divide the spoil with the strong, and the violent take heaven by force; therefore use all due means. Men cherish a lazy wish, a yawning, drowsy prayer; they may read a chapter, and go on in a dead way, perform a cold duty, or make a formal discourse, but they do not stir up themselves to lay hold upon God. They do not pray, with tears and strong cries and supplications, for a share in Christ's conquest. Where is the violence of your spirits, the earnestness of desires, the fervency of raised affections, vigorous and powerful endeavours? Prov. 13:4, 'The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing.' Oh, therefore, stir up yourselves. Who would not put forth endeavours when they are like to be successful? James 4:7, 'Resist the devil, and he shall flee from you.' You shall not only repel him, but chase him. Oh, buckle to it to the purpose, put on the whole armour of God. Christ's death, and Spirit, and prayers aim at this, that he may do it in you; for it should never content you, unless it be done in your souls, that he may

destroy death in you: Col. 1:29, 'Whereunto I also labour, striving according to the working which worketh in me mightily.' Not that he did put forth in his own person only.

[6.] Pray to him that he would show himself Lord and King, that he might rule among his enemies. Christ hath taught us to say, Thy kingdom come: desire that he would powerfully and with his own arm work salvation. Christ's conquest is founded on his prayers and intercessions, therefore help on his kingdom. You know where and to whom to go, when you see the church small, worldly powers enraged, Satan busy. Oh, complain to him, the strong get all the spoils. Urge the promises, especially in the latter days, when the kingdoms of the world are to become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Christ.

2. Here is terror to the adversaries of Christ. His reign is your ruin: Ps. 93, 'The Lord reigneth;' that is as bad a word as David could speak to the enemies. Be wise, you that act contrary designs to the glory, reign, cause, and servants of Christ. The Red Sea, that yielded a passage to the Israelites, proved a grave to the Egyptians. Consider seriously whether it be not against Christ. When your ways are challenged as opposite to God, look more thoroughly into the nature of them.

I come now to the second part of the text: 'Because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and was numbered with transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors: Which is called the conflict of Christ explained, and is set out in four things:—

1. His death.
2. The ignominy of it.
3. The cause of it.
4. The noted circumstance in it: 'He made intercession for the transgressors.'

I shall begin with the first of these: 'He hath poured out his soul unto death.' It doth not only imply the bare death of Christ, simply that he died; but he died willingly and freely, gave up his whole self to death. So David speaks in the person of Christ, Ps. 22:14, 'I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint.' There is nothing left in the vessel, neither sap nor savour; he freely and willingly poured out every drop of his soul, as if he made no account of it, so man might enjoy benefit by it. It noteth both the freeness and fulness of the sacrifice; it was unto death, and it was poured out.

Observe, That the Lord Jesus did freely and willingly yield up himself to die for our sakes. I handled such a like point on verse the 7th, therefore shall be the more sparing and wary in this. For the proof, I shall rather evidence that it was so, than why he desired it: Luke 12:50, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!' He thought the time would never come; he hindered it not: he did not discontinue resorting to the garden, the place of his usual abode and retirement. Judas knew that he often resorted thither with his disciples: Mat. 26:53, 'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently send me more than twelve legions of angels?' The violence of man did not take his life from him: John 10:17,18, 'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life: no man taketh it from me, I lay it down of myself.' It was not an enforced obedience to the will of God, for God did not only give Christ, but he gave himself: Gal. 1:4, 'Who gave himself for our sins;' and Eph. 5:2, 'He loved us, and gave himself for us;' which appeared by the cheerful resignation of his soul into the hands of the Father in his agonies: Luke 23:46, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.' It is said, 'He cried with a loud voice,' which noteth his confidence and willingness.

Use 1. It serveth to commend the love of Christ, in that he gave himself: 'He poured out his soul,' and that 'to the death.' There are three things to be noted:—

1. The gift.
2. The manner of giving.
3. The intent.

1. The gift. We read of great gifts in the scripture: Zaccheus, when salvation was come to his house, Luke 19:8, says, 'Half my goods I give to the poor.' And Herod proffered half his kingdom to his niece when she pleased him, Mark 6:23. God in the creation gave all the creatures to man; and the devil says to Christ, Mat. 4:9, 'All these will I give thee.' Ay! but here Christ giveth himself, poureth out his own soul, and with himself everything that maketh for the delighting and contenting of the spirit. Oh, it is better than a thousand worlds! At our creation God gave us but the creatures, but here God giveth himself.

2. The manner; 'He poured out his soul;' which noteth a copious and bounteous effusion of his blood for the creatures' good. *Nihil in hoc Christo est nisi profusa liberalitas misericordiae, et remissionis peccatorum*, said Luther—I see nothing in this Christ but a prodigality of love; if guilty of

anything, it was of too much freeness: 'He poured out his soul.' Oh, when you are at the Lord's Supper, and see the wine poured out, remember the death of Christ set out by this notion, 'He poured out his soul unto death;' see how freely Christ emptied his veins. In the garden he did sweat drops of blood; every pore in his body became an eye, and it wept blood for your sakes.

3. The end and intent, why he would pour out himself like water. It was to die for you: 'He poured out his soul to death.' Simeon suffered himself to be bound for his brethren, Gen. 13:24. Lot offered his daughter, and the man in Judges prostitutes his daughter; and the Levite, Judges 19:23, 24, his concubine to the lusts of the men of Gibeah; but saith Christ, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.' That is man's heroic honour, and it may be we may find two or three rare instances in history. But Jesus Christ laid down his life for enemies, for 'dead dogs,' as David calleth himself. Such as we are he poured out his soul for, even to death. Oh, enlarge your thoughts on these particulars.

Use 2. It yieldeth useful inferences and enforcements to duty.

1. To humbled sinners. Take Christ as freely as he offereth himself to you: He poured out his soul, and you will not come to him, you will not receive him. Oh, come and pour out yourselves into the bosom of Christ; he hath poured out his soul to death for you. You that complain as the church, Lam. 2:11, 'My liver is poured out,' there is much faintness and fears. The liver is the seat of blood; it is made there, and dispersed from thence into all the veins: your liver is only poured out, but Christ's soul is so. Consider, all the persons in the blessed Trinity are willing, and are not you? The Father, John 3:16, 'He gave his only-begotten Son.' And Christ gave himself, Gal. 1:4. And the Spirit is willing, he is grieved at your refusal: 'I would have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.' He wooeth and beseecheth you, and pleadeth for your entertainment of Jesus Christ. Oh, open to him, and be as willing to believe as Christ was to die: Ps. 142:2, 'I poured out my complaint to him, I showed before him my trouble.' Pour out your souls in faith and prayer, as Christ poured out his soul on the cross.

2. To stubborn sinners, to press them to come out of their sins upon this ground—Jesus Christ poured out his soul unto death. Christ parted with his heart's blood, and will not you part with your sinful delights? Shall we love our sins better than Christ loved his own soul? He laid down his life, and will not you lay down your lusts? Nay, what horrible unthankfulness is this? Christ poured out his soul to death, and we pour out our souls in the ways of death. In the 11th verse of Jude's epistle we read, that 'they ran greedily

after the error of Balaam.' In the original it is, 'They poured out in the error of Balaam;' not as water out of a vessel, drop by drop; but as water out of a bucket, in abundance. Hearts set upon the world, set upon lusts and pleasures, are expressed by giving themselves to work wickedness. Oh, should not you give up yourselves to Jesus Christ, when he gave out himself for you? That is an ill requital, to let loose the reins to your vile affections, and to pour out yourselves in sins without restraint.

3. To the people of God. Christ poured out his soul to death, freely and fully offered himself for your sakes: it presseth you to an imitation in your duties and respects towards God and men. Pour out your souls, discharge them fully and freely; they are both expressed by pouring out the soul. In your duty to God: So Hannah is said 1 Sam. 1:16, to 'pour out her soul before the Lord;' to come freely, and draw out her affections and desires before God. And so for duties to man: Isa. 58:10, 'If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as noonday.' Do both freely.

[1.] Your duties and respect to God. Oh, come and pour out your whole souls; the willingness of your services is the commendation of them: 'Call the Sabbath a delight,' Isa. 58:13; and 1 Chron. 28:9, 'Thou shalt serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind;' and make prayer your joy and pleasure, your comfort and your solace: Isa. 2:3, 'Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways.' Let the meditation of God be sweet to you: Ps. 104:34, 'And I will be glad in the Lord.' See that the thoughts of God are pleasing to you. But now, on the contrary, when the Sabbath is a burden, prayer a task, and you cannot wait upon the Lord one hour in hearing or holy meditation; when the commandments are grievous, meditation irksome, holy company and conference a prison; Oh! then, I say, consider the freeness of Jesus Christ in pouring out his blood for you, and you will find the advantage of pouring out your hearts before God.

[2] In your duties and respects to men. In all offices of love and service, do it willingly; for such was the love of the Lord Jesus to you: 1 Peter 5:2, 'Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly;' especially if it be to instruct and teach them, and to take pains with them about the good of their souls: Phil. 3:1, 'To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.' He often speaks how little good was done, but it was not grievous to him to try again. Labour to put off the sluggishness of your spirits with this consideration—Jesus Christ died freely for souls to relieve them, and shall not I be at some pains to persuade them to accept of him? Forced kindness loseth its acceptance;

God and man prize the willing mind best. The will honoureth God more than the deed; for it is not our act any further than it is done willingly: 2 Cor. 8:12, 'If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.' The widow's mite was noted; the unjust judge did his duty by constraint; and in so doing we do not only relieve others, but ourselves.

Use 3. To press us to act proportionably to the act of Christ. He yielded up his whole self, and did it with his whole heart; so let your abounding be in believing, and your gratitude in yielding up yourselves with your whole heart.

I come now to the second circumstance, the ignominy of Christ's death: 'He was numbered with transgressors.' It is to be understood of God or man. It is true before God, God looking upon him under our guilt; but it is most properly true in regard of men, who counted him a sinner and a transgressor, and so delivered him to the Gentiles: John 18:30, 'If he were not a malefactor we would not have delivered him to thee.' But more especially this prophecy is said to be fulfilled in two places of scripture: as Mark 15:27, 28, 'And with him they crucified two thieves, one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.' That is then eminently fulfilled; for it was also at other times, but then especially, being placed in the middle, not only as a companion of thieves, but as their prince and chieftain. So Luke 22:37, 'For I say unto you, that this that is written must be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end: There he speaketh as if the intent of this prophecy was more general. I told you of all things necessary; for I and you must be accounted wicked persons; it must be so, for it is foretold. You see the sense; now for the points.

Observe, that the Lord Jesus Christ was reckoned among transgressors, especially in his death and sufferings.

For proof of the point, which is general, let me suggest to you that he was so reputed by men; by wicked men, godly men, and by God himself.

1. By wicked men he was counted a glutton and a wine-bibber, Mat. 11:19; and John 8:48, 'Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil.' Nay, they accounted him the prince of devils, but this was chiefly at his death. The high priest charged him with no less than blasphemy: Mat. 26:65, 'He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses?' False witnesses were suborned to accuse him of sedition against his country, as if he would destroy the temple, and as if he were a seducer and perverter of the people; of disloyalty to

Caesar, as if he went about to make himself king, John 18:36. They preferred Barabbas, a murderer, before him. See these things in the Evangelists.

2. By godly men: Luke 24:21, 'We trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel.' In their distrustful thoughts the disciples began to doubt of him, and so looked upon him as an imposter.

3. By God himself. Christ having taken our sins upon him, was dealt with as a transgressor: 1 Peter 4:1, 'For he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin;' and Heb. 9:28, 'He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation.' In his first coming he was not without sin by imputation.

Well, but for the reason why God would suffer Christ thus to be numbered with transgressors. I shall not much trouble you with the allegories of the ancients, recorded by Aquinas, why Christ was crucified between two thieves, and so reckoned as one of them, as the chief of them, to typify that distinction that shall be made at the day of judgment, some being put on the right hand of Christ, and some on the left. The thief on the right hand was received into paradise, so Leo and Austin. Christ's cross, made his tribunal in his sufferings, and a type of his second glorious coming, and he as a judge placed between two others, who are of less avail, implied, as Hilary would have it, that though all did not know the cross and sufferings of Christ, yet some should be placed on the right hand and some on the left. So Beza thought that the thief on the left side signified those that should endure strictness and hardships in Christianity for the praise of men; others for the praise of God, as the thief on the right side. But these are all but flashes of wit. The reasons of the point are:—

1. That these might be sensible evidences of those sins of ours that Christ bore in his body, and had taken upon himself. This reason is in the text, 'He was numbered among transgressors, for he bare the sins of many.' God would give believers this evidence and testimony that he was a transgressor; that you may know all the load of the blasphemies and rebellions laid upon Christ, God gave a taste of it in these imputations—a devil, a blasphemer. God made special use of their malice to direct our thoughts to the guilt transacted on Christ.

2. Because Christ was to make satisfaction by suffering all that we were to suffer. We are cursed, therefore Christ was made a curse, Gal. 3:13. We were to endure the wrath of God, therefore he bore our griefs, Isa. 53:4. We are to blame, and deserve shame, therefore he would undergo that, and suffer in his credit and honour. Our reproach is taken away, because Christ would take it upon himself: he was 'the reproach of men,' Ps. 22:6. We were sinners, and therefore Christ is called a murderer, a thief, a blasphemer, one that had a devil. This was a circumstance that commended the greatness of the

satisfaction. What greater satisfaction could we expect or desire than that Christ, who is holiness itself, should not only suffer, but suffer under ignominies—that innocency itself should suffer as a malefactor? This made the sufferings of Christ exceeding great and valuable. Christ would lay aside all his glory, pleasure, and honour, and sacrifice everything for the good of the creature. You have the life of God, and the honour of God, and all. There is nothing that God prizeth so much as his honour, and Christ would suffer that God's honour might not be obscured by these imputations, but repaired.

Use 1. Is information. It informeth us of the great love of Christ; he not only poured out his soul to death, but to an accursed death. Suppose it had been merely for the cause of salvation, would it then have yielded more comfort? No; but he suffered as a malefactor, a thief, worse than a murderer. An ingenious man valueth his good name above all enjoyments. It stood Christ in much stead to have his innocency cleared, that the world might know that he did not die for his own sins, but the just for the unjust. And yet, though it is true there were evident demonstrations of his innocency out of Pilate's mouth, yet Christ would suffer as a malefactor, so as to suffer everything you were to suffer; he would make his sufferings every way valuable. Oh, what a mercy is here!

2. It informeth us that glory and innocency itself may be beclouded. Christ was under aspersions. Do not believe every report of the godly. Wicked men would fain paint them out in ill colours; but we must drink of the same cup with Christ. What foul things were charged upon the primitive Christians, that they were obscene and turbulent in their practices! Always suspect those aspersions that are cast upon religious eminency.

3. It informeth us how unlike Christ the men of the world are. Christ is innocent, but counted a transgressor; they are transgressors, yet would fain be accounted innocent. 'Honour me before the people,' saith Saul, 1 Sam. 15:30. They are more careful of their credit than their conscience; they would not be accounted sinners, and yet do not fear to be so. They are all for man's judgment, though that is nothing to a gracious heart. Christ was innocent, however he might suffer under misrepresentations. You are most like him when you look to your conscience, and trust God for your credit.

Use 2. Is consolation to you. Here is comfort, for the main Christ was counted a sinner for your sakes; that must needs be a great satisfaction, seeing Christ has suffered his own glory to be obscured and eclipsed. You are a great sinner, but urge the sufficiency of his satisfaction. You have deserved great blame; consider God hath laid it upon Christ. Satan accuseth of foul miscarriages, and you must certainly cry out *Guilty*. He cannot commence a

greater accusation against you than his instruments did against Jesus Christ. They accuse him of sedition, theft, heresy, blasphemy—crimes that run highest against God and men. Oh, what abundant consolation is there, that Christ hath borne the blame, and hath made a great satisfaction. As high accusations were commenced against Christ as can be against you.

2. Here is comfort in this. When you are under undeserved reproaches, comfort yourselves thus: This was the lot of Christ. I do not mean merely under the same reproaches, but sufferings not deserved, for Christ's sake. God knew his Son in the midst of the two thieves, and the martyrs in the common goal, and Daniel in the lions' den, and the lily among thorns. The thieves were crucified with him, yet they justly; but if you do not suffer as an evil-doer, take comfort though you be crucified between thieves, yoked with ill companions; Christ was numbered among transgressors. It was an old trick to bring an odium upon the truth, to put it upon ill company. Though you be bound up in ill bundles, yet God will know his jewels.

I come now to the third circumstance, that which is called the conflict of Christ, and that is the cause both of his death and the ignominy of it: 'He bare the sins of many.' This is a circumstance very often repeated in this prophecy, and often mentioned by the prophet in this chapter; so that I need dwell the less on it now. And it is so often mentioned, because this is the great argument that maketh the glory and innocency of Christ to be clear in our thoughts, notwithstanding the scandal of the greatness of his sufferings from the repetition. By the way observe:—

That when we remember, consider, or make mention of the sufferings of Christ, we should also reflect upon the cause of it, viz., the bearing of our sins and iniquities. This is what the prophet doth frequently here, not only once or twice, but again and again, to show you that other reflections upon the sufferings of Christ were not proper and useful.

The reasons are:—

1. Because this is most for the glory and honour of Christ.
2. For the good and benefit of the creature.

1. For Christ's glory. We are apt to judge men mean under sufferings and disgrace. The prophet bringeth in the Jews' saying here, 'We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted,' Isa. 53:4. Otherwise men would be apt to think something alien and unbecoming Christ, especially when there were such formal accusations commenced against him. But alas! consider they were not occasioned by any fault of his, either against God's or

man's interest. Much was pretended, but nothing proved; nothing to make him obnoxious to God's justice or man's judgment. They talked of destroying the temple, of rising against Caesar; but these were but surmises and malicious jealousies. The person of Christ and the glory of Christ is most clear in your thoughts, when you perceive that on his part there was nothing to occasion his death and sufferings.

2. For the good of the creature. It mindeth us of our comfort and duty.

[1.] Our comfort. When we consider his sufferings under such a notion, we cannot but remember there is our expiation, there is a satisfaction for our sins. God hath found a ransom: 'He died, the just for the unjust,' 1 Peter 3:18. It maketh you mindful of the price and ransom. The price was paid for you: Rom. 5:8, 'Herein God commended his love, that when we were sinners, Christ died for us: Here is a just Christ, that died for poor sinners: remember it for your comfort, mention it for your comfort; here is your expiation and satisfaction.

[2.] It mindeth us of our duty. When we consider these sufferings were for our sins, it mindeth us of our debt of obedience, wherein we stand engaged to his love and liberality; and it giveth us a sense of his love, and so in thankfulness engageth us to obedience. What sufferings are too hard, what duty too great, to go through with for one that hath done so much for us?

Use. By this you may know what reflections upon the death and sufferings of Christ are good and proper; not such only as work a fond compassion, for we are naturally apt to pity those in misery; not foolish anger against the Jews, not a little vain delight—these are effects when you look upon it as a mere story; but the glorifying of Christ and humbling of ourselves, increase of faith, comfortable persuasions and excitations to duty and praise—these show you consider it rightly. I would but hint these things, because they are obvious.

But to come to the sense of the phrase, 'And he bare the sins of many,' I shall content myself with the assertion of the text, and show you what it implieth. *He bare the sin* importeth two things:—

1. The susception of our guilt: he bare it.

2. The sustaining of our punishment. Both were upon Christ as a heavy burden, our guilt and our punishment. He was made sin, and was under wrath. In one respect sin is made to be laid upon him by God in ver. 6, 'The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all;' and in the other he is said to 'bear our sins in his body on the tree,' 1 Peter 2:24, which noteth the enduring of the punishment of them. Both yield a great deal of comfort to those that have

interest in Christ he bare their guilt, and he bare their punishment. It is comfort in three cases:

[1.] When their hearts are ready to sink within them under the multitude and greatness of their provocations: Ps. 38:4, 'Mine iniquities are gone over my head, as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.' Oh, it is heavy and sad with that soul that is compassed about with innumerable evils! This will cause heart-failing and quaking when our sins, our pride, and haughtiness, are set in order before us. Here conscience accuseth for sins of the highest aggravation, slighting of means, abuse of mercies, wantoning in all manner of provocations, serving divers lusts and pleasures, cursed worldliness, carelessness of the great salvation, neglect of our family duties, ill example, gross omissions, seldom praying, or, when it is done, in a drowsy, dead way, little discussion with your hearts and ways. When these things are mustered up against us, the soul is bowed down under its own fears, and cannot look up, nor scarce groan out a sigh for mercy. Oh, consider you are not to bear your sins, but Jesus Christ; see all this load transacted upon the back of Jesus Christ: Mat. 11:28, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest' By putting the burden upon his own back, he bare our sins.

But you will say, I have sinned, but God must have satisfaction; the guilt and punishment must be borne by somebody.

Oh, consider it is borne by Jesus Christ. As Aaron was to bear the iniquity of the holy things of the children of Israel, Exod. 28:38, so Christ will bear the sins of your duties. His soul was heavy unto death, Mat. 26:38. A little before the showers there is a gloominess and sad blackness; so there was upon Christ's spirit a little before the showers of wrath were poured out upon him. To lighten you, Christ's own soul is heavy and exceeding sorrowful; he bare your sins. Thus, in the burden of guilt, it is a lightening of the eyes and a relieving of your bondage.

[2.] When you are oppressed with the burden of punishment, fears of death and hell. We are naturally subject to these things: Heb. 2:15, 'Who all their lifetime were subject to bondage through fear of death.' Conscience, that convinceth of sin, assureth of judgment Rom. 1:32, 'Who knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death.' Our hearts and our own despairing thoughts are upon us; then we smell the brimstone and the stench of the pit that cometh up into our nostrils. Oh, what shall we do, for these everlasting burnings will consume us? Consider, the satisfaction will not be required of you 'He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.' Christ,

that took your sin, bare your punishment; ‘even Jesus who hath delivered us from wrath to come, 1 Thes. 1:10.

[3.] In the case of afflictions. Providence is against us; and then afflictions without raise troubles and discontents within. We think God is against us, and all is ordered by way of satisfaction to divine vengeance; all is wormwood and gall, and the terrors of the Lord possess our spirits. Oh, but hold up the head, and consider nothing is done to a believer by way of punishment and satisfaction of divine vengeance: all that was required of Jesus Christ; he bore that in his body upon the tree. We are not to bear our own sins. Natural men do think that all their misery is formally penal, and ordered by way of punishment, the sting of death, and all afflictions. But yours are not punishments; that is the wormwood and gall of afflictions. The idol priests were to bear their own iniquities, Ezek. 44:10. But Christ hath taken the sins of his people upon himself. You may have the same afflictions with wicked men, or that you had before conversion; but their habit and use is changed to you. Either they are chastisements or corrections, whose use is to instruct or humble.

E To instruct them in their duty: Their ‘ears are opened to discipline,’ Job 36:10; and Christ ‘learned obedience by the things he suffered,’ Heb. 5:8.

To show us the vanity of the creature: Ps. 39:11, ‘When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth. Surely every man is vanity.’ Then they see it to humble them, Job 36:8; and if they be bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction, it is to show them they have been proud. Now, it is a great mercy when we can look upon afflictions under this notion. It is a great mercy to have our afflictions sanctified Ps. 94:12, ‘Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest out of thy law.’ Want maketh the prodigal child think of returning, Luke 15. And for prevention, they are an antidote to keep off poison. It would have been worse with me if it had not been so: Ps. 119:71, ‘It is good for me that I have been afflicted.’ It is a corrosive, like Paul’s messenger of Satan, to cure his pride, 2 Cor. 12:7; and to mind them of duty: Hosea 5:15, ‘I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offences and seek my face; in their afflictions they will seek me early.’ And for the exercise of graces, and to conform them to their head, as patience, obedience, and faith; bruised spices are the more fragrant. So that in all these respects, and many other such like, we may take comfort in the saddest things that befall us: Ps. 23:4, ‘Thy rod and thy staff doth comfort me.’ We do not fear our iniquities when we bear these things.

It followeth in the text, ‘He bare the sins of *many*;’ that is, of the elect, not of all without exception. The same was in the former verse, ‘For he shall bear

their iniquities.’ And so in other places: Rom. 5:19, ‘As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.’ So in the 15th verse, ‘The gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded to many:

Observe, that the merit of Christ’s death was not extended to all. He bare the sins of many.

I shall propose these arguments:—

1. Christ died for no more than are elected.
2. The death of Christ is usually restrained in scripture to such a number and such a company that shall be saved.
3. Christ must needs save all that he intended to save.
4. All those to whom Christ intended the merit of his sufferings, they shall have it applied to them.
5. Because Christ’s special love was only to few.
6. Because Christ doth not pray for all, and therefore he did not die for all.
7. Christ’s offices are of equal extent; those that have Christ have whole Christ.

Use 1. If Christ did not intend the merit of his sufferings to all, and bore only the sins of many, it standeth us upon to see that we be of the number of those for whom Christ died. I shall use a motive or two to you.

1. The misery of those that bear their own sins. In what a sad case are you if you should bear the heavy and insupportable load of your own sins! Consider and look about you for the Lord’s sake, and see if you be some of Christ’s royal priesthood, and a chosen generation. You may know it by the effects of Christ in the hearts of the faithful, in your own sense and experiences, in the communications of the word, and how it will be with you hereafter.

[1.] By what Christ felt when he took our sins from us. Job saith, Job 6:4, ‘The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison thereof drinketh up my spirit; the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.’ Christ lost the comfortable apprehensions of God’s favour. Wherever there is sin, there will be a separation. ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ His soul was exceeding sorrowful, felt strange agonies and passions, which are the more remarkable because of the eminency of the person; had these things been found in us, it had not been so notable. Weak spirits are soon dismayed and terrified at anything that hath but a dreadful appearance. Glover, the martyr,

was so affected with the sense of some backsliding, that for some years he lost the use and pleasure of his senses. But for Christ to be sad, Christ in agonies, Christ to sweat drops of blood, it maketh it the more noted.

[2] By what effects it hath upon the saints. When the little finger of God hath been upon them, oh! how have they roared through their own folly all the day long! Ps. 40:12, 'Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, therefore my heart faileth.' All life and spirit is gone when the soul laboureth under the guilt of one sin. All the racks in the world are nothing to the rack of conscience: Luke 23:31, 'For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done to the dry?'

[3.] Consider your sense and experience. When conscience hath been a little opened, oh! what horrors and disquiets have they felt, and how sore a bondage has there been upon men, good or bad! Sometimes God giveth his own people a taste what it is to bear their own sins, especially under some great judgment or fears of death. A man can divert other griefs: Prov. 18:14, 'The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?' Oh, the intolerableness of a conscience wounded with sin! Do not your joints smite one another for fear when you see the handwriting against you? A man hath the best apprehension, of such things in such a case. And then, oh! for thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of oil, Micah 6:7. Then ten thousand worlds would he give to set his soul free. What would Spira have done when under terrors? So Mr Democke, under what desertion was he for eating with too much delight and inconsiderate greediness, who, as Mr Bolton witnesseth, crieth out, Oh, the hell of my conscience! So for ungodly men. Cain crieth out, Gen. 4:13, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear,' desperately murmuring against justice. And Judas hanged himself, thinking thereby to be rid of the terrors of his conscience. Even in the experiences of this life, God sheweth what it is to bear sin.

[4.] Consider the life to come, and the threatenings of the word concerning those that die in their sins and bear their own transgressions. Oh, how sad will it be to be haled by devils, and added to the rest of the spirits now in prison, and reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day! When sins, that now are like sleepy lions, shall arise enraged and tear our souls, and there be none to deliver, as Ps. 50:22. Oh, this is the portion of them that bear their own burden and their own transgression!

2. The happiness of those whose sins are borne by Christ. No guilt can be charged upon them, no punishment can be laid upon them, no sins, no guilt shall be laid upon them; the scapegoat hath carried them away into a land of darkness

Jer. 50:20, 'In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquities of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found.' So Ps. 103:12, 'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.' They are quite out of sight; our iniquities are not where we are. No punishment is to be laid upon us; God will not exact the debt twice, of us and Christ too. Something corrective may be done to us, but nothing penal; justice is satisfied, anger appeased, the sting of afflictions is plucked out, and all serveth to make us the more meet for glory. It were but a poor pardon if God should retain the punishment. The rod comforteth.

Let these things then persuade you to consider whether you are of the number of those whose sins Christ bare in his body.

But you will say, How shall we know whether we be of that number?

I answer in these propositions:—

1. Your first care must not be to look to God's election. Hidden things belong to God; man must regard duty: Deut. 29:29, 'The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever.' We are overwise when we would pry into the secrets of heaven. God's secret will hath relation to his own actions, his revealed will to ours. We must not look to what he will do, but what he will have us do.

2. Our duty is to believe till the matter be cleared to us. Beg faith, or act faith. There is a double act: To look upon Christ as bearing the sins of the world, and to see a full satisfaction in Christ, and so at least a possibility for our souls being saved: John 1:29, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.' See him bearing sins upon the cross. Men bear their own sins when they cannot look up: Ps. 40:12, 'Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up.' Oh, be not always poring upon sin; a wound always rubbed cannot be cured. See a satisfaction made by Christ, and so you may have comfort in Christ. Secondly, To present Christ to the Father in your own behalf; show him your surety, lay your hands upon the head of the sacrifice before the Lord: when the debt is satisfied, God looketh that you should come to him for an acquittance. Oh, desire it may be sealed up to your souls; say, Lord, was not thy justice satisfied in Christ? Do not make particular exceptions where God makes none. This is that God hath required of thee, to believe and fetch out your pardon. Oh, there hangeth a weight of guilt upon you, and he invited the heavy laden to come to him for ease and rest. Thus doing, you may haply come to know and to determine that you are of the number.

3. This being done, God is many times pleased to clear it up fully to some of his people, that their names were some of those that were given to Christ, whose sins he was to bear and expiate; thy name is written upon the breast of thy High Priest, and thy sins upon his back. Those that lie in the bosom of Christ, they have the Spirit of Christ, that revealeth the secrets of heaven to them, the purposes and decrees of love; the sealed fountain is broke open, and joys flow in upon their spirits. And there are dispositions by which the soul concludeth her interest in Christ. I shall name two. They are—

[1.] A humble and thankful acknowledgment in the sense of so great a privilege; the soul admireth the mercy, and wondereth that he should look after such poor worms as we are, that he should give Christ a charge concerning us, and trust Christ with the care and good of their souls, the expiation of their sins. I say, the sense of all this maketh them humble and thankful: 1 Peter 2:9, ‘That ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.’

[2.] There will be answerable effects to such a privilege in heart and life: 1 Peter 2:24, ‘Who his own self bare our sins in his own body upon the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.’ Corruptions are more mortified, and graces more quickened. If Christ bare our sins, we shall feel his Spirit; he will exchange with us. He felt the wrath of God, and we feel the joys of his Spirit. He took our sins, and he will not leave till he hath communicated to us his grace and glory.

And he made intercession for the transgressors.

These words are the fourth considerable particular in Christ’s *conflict*, a noted circumstance either at or upon his death. Some make them to be of a more private and restrained sense; others, of a more public and general. I shall exclude neither, for they are one subordinate to the other. Those that look upon them as words of a private and particular concernment, make them to relate to that prayer of Christ on the cross, Luke 23:34, ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;’ a circumstance that extremely commendeth the love and patience of Christ, when, in the midst of the extremity of his sufferings, he doth not think of revenge and retaliation, but of mercy, and doing his persecutors good. Others look upon them as if the prophet did aim at some greater matter, namely, as implying the whole mediation and intercession of Christ, which as a high priest he presenteth to the Father, and by

virtue of it pleadeth to him in our behalf. I shall exclude neither of these senses; for the former is but a part and pledge of this, it is a discovery of those bowels that are in Christ to poor sinners.

From the former observe, that Christ prayed for his persecutors. Our translation inclineth to this sense, as reading in the praeter tense ‘He made intercession for the transgressors;’ whereas the original will bear, ‘He shall make intercession for the transgressors,’ as referring it to some particular men, not transgressors indefinitely. The point being historical, the prophecy of the text and the testimony of Luke is confirmation sufficient. I shall inquire under what notion and consideration he made this prayer, and so apply it.

Christ in this and such like actions is to be considered in a double regard:—

1. As a holy, godly man; so he was to fulfil all righteousness.
2. As a mediator and public person, that was to be our High Priest, to satisfy and intercede.

In the first sense the scripture proposeth Christ as an example; in the second, as an object of our faith. His actions are partly for satisfaction, so his mediatory actions; and partly for our imitation, as an exemplary pattern. Which distinction and several references not being weighed, we lose much comfort and instruction which otherwise we might find. You shall see these actions of Christ in scripture are joined both together in one place: 1 Peter 2:21, ‘Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.’ In the former clause he is to be looked upon and considered as Mediator; in the other as an eminent, holy, and godly man, as a pattern. Both these two must be carefully distinguished, as in all other matters of this nature, so especially in the prayers of Christ; as in that prayer, ‘Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,’ Mat. 26:39. That prayer was uttered by Christ as a private, godly man, for as Mediator he did not desire it. As a private godly man, he was to have such natural abhorrences of evil as we have, and to refer himself to the will of God. And this distinction is the rather to be marked, because Christ’s prayers as a godly man, his private prayers, were only a testimony and instance of duty, and so might not be granted. But as to his mediatory prayers, he was heard always, John 11:42; for these were of equal merit with his sufferings, whose fruit and intent could not be frustrated and disannulled.

To apply this to the matter in hand: Was this prayer of Christ for the persecutors uttered as the private prayer of a godly man in obedience to the law, or as Mediator of the covenant?

I answer—You must consider it both ways:—

1. As of a private man, a man subject to the law, and that would fulfil all righteousness, and would exemplify his own doctrine: Mat. 5:44, ‘But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.’ Christ would teach us by his practice, as well as by his precept, to, pray for enemies. For ‘knowing what was in man,’ John 2:25, that is, the state of men’s hearts, whether they would be saved or no, and knowing some of these would not be saved, he could not pray for them as Mediator, but as a private man; his prayers were conditional, that God would forgive them, in case they did repent and believe. As when we pray God to bless a wicked man, and give him eternal life, we imply by giving him faith and repentance; so did Christ as a testimony of duty and obedience, and so far as he prayed for them he was heard; and therefore to some of the persecutors they were but as the prayers of a private godly man, with a condition.

2. The prayers of a mediator, and so Christ absolutely prayed that God would look upon them in mercy; and so he did, upon all those that did it in ignorance, for they enjoyed the fruit of these prayers. That intercession was the cause of the conversion of the three thousand; for to those Peter speaketh, Acts 2:23, ‘Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain;’ and from the 37th verse downward, you shall see their conversion described, ver. 41, ‘There were three thousand souls added to the church;’ they began to feel the effect of Christ’s prayer. So Acts 3:17, ‘And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.’ He goeth by that argument that Christ useth in his prayers: the Mediator prayed for the pardon of those that did it in their ignorance. So that you see Christ’s prayers were partly as the prayers of a mediator, and partly as of a private person. In the one there is something propounded to our imitation; in the other, to our comfort and faith.

First, For our imitation. Consider this act as the duty of a glorious saint who is gone before us. Christ is a rare and eminent instance of meekness, and patience, and love, nay, even love to his enemies. Oh that we could transcribe this copy, that such instances of obedience might be found in our hearts and ways! We are poor, passionate spirits, that are ready to lose our lives with our sting; like fine glasses, broken as soon as touched. We take up every discontent, and aggravate it, being ready to revenge the wrongs that are done to us, and cannot

put up the least injuries and affronts without storming and indignation. Angry spirits will have satisfaction. We think provocation an excuse for passion. The son of an Israelitish woman and an Israelitish man strove in the camp, and the son blasphemed the name of the Lord, for which he was stoned to death, Lev. 24:10-14. Christ was provoked, but he was not passionate, but prayed for his persecutors.

We learn three things in this instance, which we cannot reflect upon without the shame of our own faces. This mirror will kill like the basilisk when we look on it.

1. Not to retaliate, hate, curse, revile, and pursue injuries with injuries. We cannot come to this: 1 Peter 2:23, 'Who when he was reviled, reviled not again.' It is otherwise with us; rather than take an example from Christ, we take it from our enemies, do as they do to us. Why should a man imitate that which be judgeth evil in others? Revenge and injury differ but in order; the one is first, the other second. Revenge is a sweet evil; nothing more pleasing to nature, and more contrary to grace. Nothing more pleasing to nature Patience, in the eye of nature, is a kind of weakness and servility. Men will plead for this; but Solomon saith, Prov. 24:29, 'Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me.' Aristotle saith, it is as reprobable to love an enemy as to hate a friend; and he saith, it argueth a servile, slow wit, and a disingenious spirit. In direct opposition to which Solomon saith, Prov. 19:11, 'The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.' It is a man's honour; it is not a servile, but a Christian and free spirit. And it is the most contrary to grace; for giving is many times made the condition of the promises, and the measure of our expectations from God: 'Forgive as we forgive.' It is much, even a meritorious act in our thoughts, if we do but pass by an offence.

2. We learn to do good, and seek the good of others, to feed' and supply a hungry, thirsty enemy: Prov. 25:21, 'If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink.' David saith, Ps. 35:12, 'They rewarded me evil for good, to the spoiling of my soul.' But in ver. 13, he saith, 'When they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth, I humbled my soul with fasting.' It is much that the scripture requireth obedience in the least and lowest offices, where one would think our care were excused: Exod. 23:4,5, 'If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou seest the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.' To reduce the straying ox or ass, and to ease the oppressed, these are offices of humanity that men express to their friends; but God requireth it to enemies: 'Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully

use you and persecute you,' Mat. 5:44. Nay, do not excuse yourselves by a colour and show of religion. Religion, that should be the judge, is a party, and the restraint is made the fuel to passion. The very persecutors are named. We are apt to allow ourselves in the exorbitancy of our passions, under the colourable pretences of religion and duty; nay, not only when it is your enemy, but God's when a man is a persecutor, you are to do him good.

3. To do the best good for them, not only to wish them all the good in the world, but seek the good of their souls. Christ prayed, 'Father, forgive them;' that God would convince them of their sin, and reform and pardon them. Thus John converted a man that came to rob him. Our duty is expressed, not only by doing good, but by blessing and praying for them, Mat. 5:44. You should mind their good, pity poor blind souls, which we too often neglect for our friends, and those to whom we are engaged. Oh, when have you done this to those that have wronged and injured you? Alas! they have no light, they have no better principles; go and mourn over their souls to God. What sweet comfort shall a man have in his spirit, when he doth so really mind their good. This is a hard lesson, how shall we make it easy?

[1.] Consider you have God the Father's pattern for it, and the special precept of Christ for it: 'Do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.' And you have the pattern of Christ for it, who prayed for the persecutors and transgressors. And the pattern of God the Father: Mat. 5:45, 'He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust.' They come not, by chance and the ordinary course of nature. None can be so much an enemy to you as sinners are to God, yet they have his rain and his sun. It is at God's disposal to exclude their right; there are none of these things but God could keep from them, and that justly too, yet it is godlike to bestow them, and it is man's perfection. It is the glory of man to imitate the superior beings, God and angels. Children, you know, when they first come to have the use of their reason, their pride is to imitate the actions of grown men. Why should not we then imitate those of God? Nay, further, you have the pattern of the saints, as well as the pattern of the Most High, that you may not think it an inimitable pattern. Stephen cried with a loud voice, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,' Acts 7:60. Note his vehemency, 'He cried with a loud voice;' his tender love and compassion, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.' The sense of your privileges and prerogative should make you do more than others. It was an accusation, 1 Cor. 3:3, 'Ye walk as men.' Should not Christians do more than publicans and heathens? Mat. 5:46, 'If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?' Christians must have

something preeminent and rare. Where is your differing excellency? Oh, go and shame yourselves with these considerations.

[2.] Consider the inducements; such as these:—

(1.) The calmness of your spirit. If ever any were wise, they are wise that get and keep this frame of spirit. Men would find more pleasure in holy meekness and Christian endeavours for patience, than possibly they can in the pleasure of revenge. Vexations disturb the quiet of the heart; not only your affections, but your consciences. For can I do mine enemy a greater pleasure than to let him take away my contentment from me? It is a madness, when I am wronged by others, to wrong myself. David's heart smote him for cutting off the lap of Saul's garment, that was his enemy; but what a comfort is it when, like an oak, we can endure the angry blasts in an unmoveable posture.

(2.) The likelihood of gaining upon them. Saul wept when he saw David's tenderness towards him: 1 Sam. 24:19, 'If a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away?' This is not usual. It is expressed by 'heaping coals of fire upon his head,' Prov. 25:22.. You may make him pliable to your purposes. They are men of distorted depraved natures, that will not be won by kindness.

(3.) Your acceptance with God: Prov. 25:22, 'And the Lord shall reward thee.' You will say, it will be labour lost. The sincere endeavours of duty are not lost with God; the Lord shall reward thee. Christ did much for the unthankful Jews, but he comforts himself with this, 'My reward is with thee.' A pattern for ministers to deal with opposers in meekness; you get nothing but scorn and contempt with men, but your judgment is with the Lord. There is much comfort in the sincerity and faithfulness of your endeavours.

Secondly, Look upon this intercession of Christ as a part of his mediation. Oh, what a glorious instance is this of Christ's love! What a pledge and token of those bounteous dispositions that are in his heart to poor sinners! Do but consider the circumstances that may commend it to you:—

1. Who prayeth: Christ, one that could destroy them with his glory easy enough. We say we forgive men when we cannot harm them; power swells the mind; many would be cruel enough if it were in their power. Christ could command twelve legions of angels if he would have prayed in another strain: Mat. 26:53, 'Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?' But he doth not say, 'Father, send me twelve legions of angels;' but, 'Father, forgive them.' Alas! one angel was enough, 2 Kings 19:35, to destroy a hundred fourscore and five

thousand in Sennacherib's camp. But he prayeth for plenty of compassions, though in man's eye the other would have been a rare vindication of his glory.

2. Consider when he prayed. In the very act of his sufferings he seeks mercy for the instruments of his sufferings; he is full of love when the world is full of spite: 1 Cor. 11:23, 'The same night in which he was betrayed, he took bread.' When they were devising mischief, he was devising comfort. He taketh Paul, Acts 9, breathing out threatenings; and scorers have been brought upon their faces by an ordinance. We pardon when got rid of the misery, and perceive it is advantageous to us; but Christ pardons in the height of his sorrows. A man would have thought that the sharp sense of his sufferings should have embittered his spirit. Oh, the invincible love of Christ to poor sinners! It is much that he intercedeth in heaven; but that he should upon the cross say, 'Father, forgive them,' we cannot but admire and adore till there be no spirit left within us.

3. For whom he prayed. For the transgressors, vile sinners, that offered him all the indignities in the world; them that had mocked, buffeted, spit upon him, and by their clamorous importunity got him to the cross, and gave him vinegar to drink, and placed him between two malefactors, and desired a murderer to be released before him. They cursed themselves, 'His blood be upon us;' they prayed backward, as we say, for themselves. He was placed between two thieves. Now, he made intercession for these transgressors. Go home now, and see if you can find any just exception, among all your sins, against the love of Christ. Come and urge it; he prayed for the transgressors, for scorers of love, men that did not pray for themselves, injurious, blasphemers; name anything of higher aggravations; for those that scorned him in the very service and labour of love. Holy David vowed he would cut off all in the house of Nabal, that scorned and slighted his love. He vowed, but Christ prayed for such.

4. How he prayed. He pleadeth for them: 'Forgive them, for they know not what they do.' You see he pitcheth upon the most favourable construction that could be made of their fact; it is a bad fact, but they are poor ignorant people. Arguments in prayer imply earnestness; and Christ useth such an argument as might most lessen the offence, and be accepted with God. The usual plea is bare ignorance; and therefore Peter useth that: Acts 3:17, 'I wot ye did it in ignorance.' So Acts 17:30, 'The times of ignorance God winked at.' So 1 Tim. 1:13, 'I did it ignorantly, and in unbelief.' If any excuse will serve, that doth. Oh, consider how willing Christ is to save poor lost sinners! Here is a great deal of comfort for poor, humble souls, whoever they be.

[1] Are they men that are sensible of their natural estate, oppressed with the sense of their sins, that think Christ will not regard them? He prayeth for

the transgressors. Cannot you believe? See that place, John 16:10, 'He shall convince the world of righteousness, for I go to the Father.' Christ is gone to send the comforting Spirit, that shall give you clear gospel; he is gone to heaven to plead with the Father for you. You desire to believe, and Christ prayeth that you may. Do not think that Christ is only careful of the elect regenerate, he is also careful of the elect uncalled: John 10:16, 'And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice.' He hath regard to those in that state you apprehend yourselves to be in. And he doth not only care for you, but pray for you: John 17:20, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word.' As he wooeth you by his Spirit, so the Father for your sakes. Would you believe, then all were clear: Christ is praying you may believe. You are dealing with yourselves, with your own hearts, and Christ is dealing with the Father in heaven about the same matter. There is comfort in this word *transgressors*.

[2.] Are they believers that groan under wants, or inward and outward distresses? Christ, that interceded for transgressors, certainly will intercede for you. Oh, if unbelievers have comfortable hopes—Christ prayed for them—what will he do for you? It is a mighty comfort that you have by Christ's intercession what you would have: Jer. 30:21, 'Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?' Christ hath engaged all his bowels and pities, that he will draw nigh to God, and plead with him for your sakes. Christ prayeth when you pray; the Spirit of Christ prays in you, and Christ himself prays for you. What is it that troubleth you? Do the cares of the world encroach upon your spirits and encumber them? Or else are you dejected by the fears and sorrows of it? In John 17:15, Christ prayed that you might be 'kept from the evil' of the world, either the one or the other way. Do you want the comforts of the Spirit, and do you sit in darkness, and see no light? John 14:16,17, 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.' Is it opposition against your private endeavours in duty, or public endeavours for reformation? Zech. 3:2, 'And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee.' Is it for unity among God's people? John 17:21, 'That they may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.' Or for success in duties? Rev. 8:3,4, 'Another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne: and the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out

of the angel's hand.' Or is it for deliverance? Zech. 1:12, 'And the angel of the Lord answered and said, How long wilt thou not have mercy upon Jerusalem?' And he would not give over till God gave him some comfortable words, ver. 13.

And he made intercession for the transgressors.

The last observation from this last clause is this:—

That Jesus Christ is, and is alone, the Intercessor for poor sinners.

I shall be very brief on this point, because so many English authors have treated upon it, to whose judicious resolution I refer you.

Now, that Jesus Christ is so, appeareth by many places, which show this is his work now in heaven: Rom. 8:34, 'It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;' Heb. 7:25, 'Who liveth for ever, to make intercession for us.' It is the business of his endless life. And that he alone is the Intercessor is also fully manifest from the scripture: Isa. 59:16, 'And he saw, and there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor;' no man that would come between him and wrath, though the case of his people was sad and deplorable: Isa. 63:5, 'I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold.' The prophet speaketh there as if it were the inquiry of God's eternal thoughts to find out a meet person for intercessor, but none could be found. But why is Christ the alone Intercessor? The reasons of the point are:—

1. To answer the high priest under the law, who was not only to slay the sacrifice, but to intercede; both were the duties of the priesthood. First, the beast was slain without the camp, and then blood was carried into the holy of holies, and then prayers were made. This the apostle proveth in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. 13:11, 'For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burnt without the camp.' So Christ, after he had offered himself a sacrifice for sin, 'is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,' Heb. 1:3, and in many other places. We were to have a perfect high priest in all points.

2. To carry salvation in a way of mercy as well as justice, and to have it by entreaty as well as satisfaction, Lev. 16:14, as the high priest was to bring the blood within the veil, and to sprinkle it on the mercy-seat, so our High Priest, having satisfied divine justice, by giving himself for us an offering

and a sacrifice to God, he hath carried blood within the veil, so that now we may take hold of God with both hands, we may present the satisfaction of Christ, and yet beg mercy. The sending of Christ did not only glorify justice, but grace; and, therefore, Christ's address must be to both: Rom. 3:24, 'Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ' There was an act of free grace as well as justice. These two are sweetly coupled together: 'Ask of me, and I will give thee,' Ps. 2:8. Though it were his purchased inheritance, yet he would ask.

But secondly, Why is it Christ alone?

1. Because none else would undertake it; none of the creatures have such bounteous affections: John 15:13, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' The two emphatical words are *life* and *friends*. Some creatures have gone far, as Abraham in offering his son, Lot his two daughters, and the father of the Levite's concubine in Judges.

2. Because none could intercede and come between wrath and justice, as Christ did. Not man for man; one rebel cannot undertake for another: Ps. 49:7, 'None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.' One man cannot undertake for another. 'It became us to have a high priest, who was holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners.' Nor any angel, for he would have perished in the attempt; they needed an intercessor themselves to confirm them.

But what is this intercession? I shall open the matter to you a little. The word signifieth coming between; one that undertaketh for us, that intercedeth for us; that was the duty of the high priest after slaying the sacrifice. This Christ did as a high priest, after offering himself upon the cross.

For distinctness sake I shall give you the parts. This intercession is despatched:—

1. Partly in heaven; and —
2. Partly in the hearts of believers.

1. Partly in heaven. There these acts are performed by Christ:—[1.] His presenting himself in our natures, and in our stead: Heb. 9:24, he is said to 'appear in the presence of God for us.' Christ is 'not entered into the holy place made with hands, but into heaven itself.' The high priest had the names of the twelve tribes written on his breast, and Christ the names of his redeemed ones on his heart. He cometh there not only in our nature, but as our common person, as one that was to represent, and to do our business with the Father.

[2.] He presents his own merits, that the Father may turn his eyes from us, and look upon that everlasting righteousness that he brought with him into heaven in our nature. He bringeth his blood within the veil. Though Christ were on earth, yet he could not despatch all his offices of priesthood on earth, as those that had to do with typical sacrifices: Heb. 8:4, 'For if he were on earth he should not be a priest, seeing that there priests offer gifts according to the law.' And this blood of Christ is 'the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel,' Heb. 12:24. We by our sins causing the Lord Christ to die, had deserved that his blood should speak against us, as Abel's did against Cain; no, but it speaketh to God to pacify wrath, and pardon our sins, and give peace to our consciences. These merits plead hard for us, which is what we call the mediation of Christ.

3. He undertaketh for us, and promiseth obedience to God the Father in our behalf; therefore he is said to be our surety, Heb. 7:22. He promiseth that we shall subscribe to the conditions of God, and pass over into the power of the covenant.

4. He prayeth and intercedeth, and maketh his request for *us*, as being sensible of our infirmities, as the high priest was to bless the people, that is, to pray for them. Therefore it is said, 1 John 2:2, 'We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' There Christ is dealing with God for us. When he was here upon earth, he was a-praying whole nights, and there he is praying whole ages: Jer. 30:21, 'Their governor shall proceed from the midst of them, and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: who is this that engageth his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord.' His heart is engaged, even all his bowels and pities, to draw near to God, and plead with him for your sakes. These are the acts of Christ's intercession in heaven.

2. In the hearts of his people; and there the acts of Christ coming between us and wrath are these two:—

[1.] He applieth his merit: the application is by virtue of his intercession. The scriptures everywhere put a great deal of weight upon this, Rom. 5:10. Therefore it is said, 'Much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life: He beginneth to save us here by his Spirit, sanctifying all inward and outward means for the bringing of us to the full participation of all the benefits he hath purchased for us; but the actual application is afterwards.

[2.] He prays in us. The Spirit's interceding in our hearts is but the answer and echo of Christ's intercession in heaven: Rom. 8:26, 'The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.'

The workings of Christ's Spirit in prayer show how Christ's heart is affected towards you in heaven.

Use. Is comfort. Think of Christ as a Mediator and Intercessor, for whose sake we shall be accepted with God. To open this comfort, consider for whom he prayeth, not only for present believers, but for all them that shall believe hereafter. For what? All mercies, the public glorifying of God's name: John 12:30, 'This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.' Private acceptance in duties, efficacy of ordinances, doing away guilt in holy services. Exod. 28:38, the high priest was to bear the iniquity of their holy things. Here is comfort in Christ's success in prayer: the Father always heareth him, John 11:42. In the person praying, the Son of his love, a Son that hath made satisfaction; he can bring blood with him. It is a great privilege for us to pray to God, but it is a much greater to have God praying for us.

THE END OF VOL. III.

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