

Forgiveness of Sins

By Elder Gregg Thompson

“Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins,” Acts 13:38.

Truth is a treasure all should seek after; yet truth has been unpopular in all ages of the world. The prophets, and the first messengers through whom God spoke the truth to men, were persecuted, stoned, and put to death. John the Baptist, when he had borne his faithful testimony, was thrown into prison, and beheaded. The Son of God was rejected, persecuted, and crucified; and the little band who had received the truth from his lips, and were by him commissioned to preach the gospel of peace, love, and salvation to dying men, had to meet the same opposition, and many of them died as martyrs for the truth. This persecuting spirit belongs to the world, and it is of the devil, and must be felt in a greater or less degree by every faithful servant of Christ, who boldly bears witness to the truth. For it is written, “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” The Holy Spirit testified to Paul that bonds and afflictions awaited him wherever he went; but this did not make him shrink from a faithful discharge of his duty to declare the whole counsel of God, both to Jew and Greek. From him let us learn to be faithful, and bear with patience the afflictions of Christ. The opposition of the world, and the persecutions we are called to endure, can never do the cause of truth any real harm. Indeed, the trial of our faith is necessary, and it is often good for us to be afflicted. Persecution and opposition from without are calculated to drive the saints together, and to strengthen their love for each other; for love is the bond of union that sweetens all our Christian associations, and under its influence we will esteem the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the honors of the world. Internal strife, and brother warring against brother, are what destroy the peace of Zion, and fill her children with mourning. “He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” There is no spiritual life and enjoyment where

hatred reigns. It belongs to the flesh, and, if nourished in our hearts, brings death to all our spiritual comforts. When men of our own selves arise, and speak perverse things, to lead away disciples after them, and sow the seeds of discord among the saints, it is then that the ways of Zion do mourn, the little, ones are trampled down, and we suffer a worse affliction than the world can possibly bring upon us. With these things Paul was acquainted, and calls them "perils among false brethren;" and many of us can witness that they are the severest trials that have befallen us in our Christian pilgrimage. It is not to be thought strange if the world hate us; it hated our Lord, and rejected and persecuted him; and the servant ought not to complain if he fares as his Master. No; we should rather rejoice if we are counted worthy to suffer for his sake; for, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

God's ministers may be turned out of houses, excluded from pulpits, and be refused to be heard in their own defense; but when the world persecutes them, and brethren prove false, and forsake them, like John the beloved disciple, they lean on the bosom of Jesus, and in that unchanging heart have a friend that will never forsake them. It is sometimes a great privilege to speak in our own defense. Paul once felt happy that this privilege was granted him. But it is a greater one to speak in the defense of our Lord and Master, and to maintain his honor and the glory of his character before a world that can have salvation in none other.

When Paul and Barnabas, by the direction of the Holy Spirit, had been set apart to the work whereunto they were called, they went forth visiting different cities, preaching Jesus and the resurrection. But they had not traveled long until they met one Elymas, a Jew, and a sorcerer, who opposed them all he could. This Elymas was a pretender to the gift of prophecy - a false prophet; one that would be taken for a divine, but

doubtless was in league with the devil, and ready to pierce the servants of Christ. But Paul's labors and sufferings were not in vain; for there was there also a Sergius Paulus, who, "when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." But Paul and his company left Paphos, and came to Perga, in Pamphylia, and John, departing from them, went back to Jerusalem. When they left Perga, they went to Antioch, in Pisidia, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue, and sat down. Paul: and his companions were strangers; they entered the synagogue quietly, and sat down among the people, to join with them in worship. "The law and the prophets were read, and the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, ye men and brethren, if ye have a word of exhortation for the people, say on." Thus a door was opened to Paul to speak for his Master; to expound the law, the prophets, and the promises, and shew their fulfillment in Christ, the Redeemer. In meekness he arose, but stood up bold and undaunted, feeling that he was not ashamed of the gospel, to bear his testimony as a witness for Jesus. He beckoned with his hand, to call the people to silence, and to give attention to what is about to be spoken. It was a privilege he was glad to embrace, and he wanted all to hear, and said, "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience,"

This was a solemn appeal, for they professed to fear God, and to believe the law and the prophets. The apostle uses no hard and insulting language, but speaks to them as a brother, and a believer in the law and the prophets, and a worshiper of the God of Israel. He does not charge them with hypocrisy, and with being the servants of the devil, but calls God their God, by saying, "The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it." He shows the long forbearance of God with that people, and how he destroyed the nations out of the land of Canaan, and divided their land to them by lot. How he gave unto them judges for the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet; but that the people were dissatisfied, and desired a king; and that God gave them Saul, the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the

space of forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king, to whom also he gave testimony, and said, "I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will." "Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus."

This Jesus is the subject before us today. He is the "man" spoken of in our text, through whom forgiveness of sins is preached to ruined, perishing sinners. How welcome this gospel of Christ should be to a perishing world! It proclaims a Savior for the lost, a Deliverer for the captive, and that through him sin is pardoned, and the sinner justified. It is worthy of all acceptance. At his birth angels would sing, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to men;" a Savior is born, the promise made to David is fulfilled. When Christ rode into Jerusalem on an ass the people shouted, "Hosanna! hosanna to the Son of David!" and when he entered the temple, the little children cried out, "Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David!" Matthew and Luke both trace his generation back to David, and to Abraham, to show that he was David's son, and the seed promised to Abraham in whom the families of earth are to be blessed. I once heard a preacher quote the first verse of Matthew to prove that Christ had "a generation created in him, and that descended from him." Such ignorance is really to be pitied, for the evangelist traces the generation from Christ back to David and Abraham, to show the fulfillment of the promise, and that Christ, according to the flesh, is David's son. That the Christ was to be the offspring and son of David was understood and believed by all the Jews, and all who believed the Old Testament. And when Christ asked the Jews, saying, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son, of David." Zacharias, when he was filled with the Holy Spirit; prophesied, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began." Zacharias also regarded this as the fulfillment of the oath or promise made to David, and of the prophecies that had gone before concerning

Christ, and reference is had to Jeremiah 23:5,6; "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his day Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." That Christ is the seed of David is affirmed by Paul, when he says, "Concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;" Romans 1:3.

In our text, Christ is called, "man," and "the Son of man;" and it is in his manhood or humanity that he is the seed or son and offspring of David, for he is both David's Creator and David's son. The divine nature of Christ was not divine by delegation, for he says, "I and my Father are one." "If you have seen me you have seen the Father." And we are taught by inspiration, that the whole fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in him. The divinity of Christ was never begotten, was not the seed of David; divinity did not violate the law, and the law could not look to it for satisfaction. "By man came death; by man came the resurrection of the dead." While Christ was God in his divine nature, he was as truly and perfectly man in his humanity. For "there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the MAN Christ Jesus." That Christ exists in any other nature besides his divine and human, and that it is in this third nature, that he is the Son of God, and the Mediator, is a vain speculation, and a palpable contradiction of what Paul says; #1Ti 2:5.

In the first intimation or promise given to fallen man of a Deliverer, he is called "the seed of the woman;" Genesis 3:15. There is a strong presumption, from the language used by Eve at the birth of Cain, that she then thought she had gotten the promised deliverer, for she said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord." But if such thoughts were in her mind, they were soon dispelled by the wickedness of Cain, and she was convinced that the coming of the promised one was yet future.

If the doctrine be true, as taught by some, that the flesh and bones, or literal body, or corporal substance of Christ did actually exist before time, he could not be the seed of the woman; for he existed before the woman existed, of whom he was made when he was made under the law. The criticism on the word made, will avail nothing, for if it means to form or fashion out of a preexisting substance, it is of that substance it is made; and that substance must have existed before the making or forming of the thing. Christ was made of a woman, as taught by Paul, Galatians 4:4; "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." When the angel visited Mary to announce to her the birth of Jesus, he said to her, "And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David;" #Luke 1:31,32. In Mary's son is fulfilled the oath of the Lord to David, for it is said, in Psalms 132:11; "The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne." Peter affirms the fulfillment of this oath, and that Christ, according to the flesh, was of the loins of David; #Ac 2:30.

It is true that the Lord appeared to Abraham, and Manoah, and others in human form, and it is also true that he spoke to Moses out of the burning bush, and came down upon Mount Sinai in fire. There is a heavenly lesson to be learned from the form the Lord assumed when he spoke to his people anciently; for no one, I presume, will admit that the Lord is a literal fire, that covers a mountain with literal smoke. When he appeared to Moses in the burning bush Israel was suffering in the furnace of Egypt; his people, like the literal bush, were in the flames, but not consumed. A thought that might be improved upon, and give comfort to afflicted, persecuted saints of all ages; for the fires may burn, but can not consume them; for God is in the bush. The law is called the administration of death; and when the law was given the Lord came down upon the mountain in fire, and the mountain was covered with smoke; the sound of a trumpet was heard, and the voice of words which the people could not endure; and so terrible was the sight that

Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." But when he appeared to Abraham and others in the form of a man, a deliverance was about to be performed, and the son of Mary is to be called "Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." The deliverance of sinners is through the man Christ Jesus.

I have now sufficiently proved that Christ is, according to the flesh, the offspring or seed of Abraham, and of David, and that in him the oath and promise of God to David is fulfilled. But there is another thought that is worthy of attention and calculated to bring comfort to the Christian mind, for it presents Christ as a Savior, adapted in every point of view to the wants and necessities of fallen man. Paul, in the second chapter of Hebrews, tells us what man was in his creation, in these words: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all things in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him;" Hebrews 2:6-8. From this we learn that man has fallen, and lost the crown of glory and honor he received from his Creator, that all things are not now in subjection to him, but that he himself by his own act has become the servant of sin, and the subject of death. Man is the author of all his calamities, they are the fruits of his disobedience; by him sin entered into the world and death by sin. Paul, in tracing the stream of human depravity up to its fountainhead, says, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Sin is a transgression of the law, and how, or where sin existed before the law was transgressed, I know nothing about, and shall not pretend to say, leaving every one to draw their own conclusions, and speculate as much as they please. I shall be content to preach what is revealed in the Bible, and there I learn that, "By man came death," and that by one man sin entered into the world. When man reached forth his hand and took and ate the forbidden fruit, the law was transgressed, sin was

committed, it was man's act that transgressed the law, and sin is the result of that act, for, "when lust conceived it brought forth sin, and when sin was finished it brought forth death." Paul says, "By the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation;" Romans 5:18. Man has sinned; the law looks to man for satisfaction, and as judgment had been passed upon all men to condemnation, there was no justification by the deeds of the law, for the law could receive no righteousness that was not commensurate with its own perfections.

The law was weak through the flesh, and could not justify the sinner, therefore righteousness could not come by the law. This state of condemnation is the state of all men without distinction in their relation to Adam; there is no difference. Paul tells the Ephesian brethren, that when they were in their natural, unquickened state, they were the children of disobedience even as others, and 'even as others means just like others.' As the creatures of God, the children of Adam, and fallen sinners, there is no difference in the human family, for, "The Scriptures hath concluded all under sin;" Galatians 3:22. And it is again said, "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief;" Romans 11:32. So there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, all are alike dead in sin, without hope, and without God in the world. If I differ from any other man it is grace that makes the difference, and not my creation in Adam, for in him all were created alike; for of one blood God has created all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth. Cain was as much the son of Adam as was Abel, for it is said, "Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. And she again bare his brother Abel;" Genesis 4:1,2. Moses is particular to let us know that Cain is the offspring of Adam, the fruit of his body; and afterwards, speaking of the birth of Seth he says, "And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his own image; and called his name Seth;" Genesis 5:3. Cain and Seth were full brothers, and as far as the Bible account goes the devil had no more to do in the begetting of one than the other; and if it be true that Christ redeemed all that fell or sinned in Adam, he redeemed Cain, or

Adam begat a son that did not exist in his loins. This is an irresistible conclusion, and shows the fallacy of that vain philosophy that is troubling the church, and leading God's children astray.

If Cain existed in Adam, he fell in Adam; but if he did not exist in Adam, Adam never begat him, and Moses is convicted of falsehood I believe Moses has told the truth, and that Paul has told the truth when he says, in speaking of God as the Creator of all things, "That he hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." This being true, we can at once see how all have sinned in Adam, and death hath passed upon all. The apostle, having thus spoken of man in his creation and fall, says all things are not now under him; he has lost his crown of glory, and become a fallen sinner, and death hath passed upon him and all his posterity in him. He then says "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death." Jesus is here spoken of as being made where man was made, a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death.

Man had violated the law, and its penalty must be executed upon man; hence Christ took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and in his likeness of sinful flesh he is called the Son of God. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh;" Romans 8:3. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;" Hebrews 2:14. This flesh and blood was evidently the same as ours, only without sin; for Paul sees him as Adam was before he had sinned, a man without sin; for this man, Jesus, was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; Hebrews 7:24,25, But some will say, "If Mary contributed any thing to the body of Jesus, it would be sinful." These persons forget that the Holy Ghost came upon her, and the power of the highest overshadowed her, and that the thing conceived in her "shall be called the Son of God." But say

others, "He received nothing from Mary but the blood, and that was all spilt on the ground." What vain philosophy this is. For his is the precious blood, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son," that "cleanseth us from all sin." The truth is, he was made of a woman, or the Bible is false, or Christ has never yet come in the flesh. As the Word of God, and the Wisdom of God, he existed before time, and it was by him that all things were made; but it was in time that he was made flesh and dwelt among us. The existence of Christ as the Word before the creation of the world is positive; but his being made flesh was prospective; for it was in the fullness of the time that he was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Before time the Word existed, but in the fullness of the time he was made flesh, made of a woman.

We have now got a flesh and bone relationship between Christ and his people; for he is made a little lower than the angels; he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and according to the flesh sprang from the loins of David. His kindredship to his people is affirmed by Paul in these expressive words: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one;" (one father;) "for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee;" Hebrews 2:11,12. Christ is the seed of Abraham, and all Christians, all believers in Christ, are Abraham's children. This is a covenant relationship; for it is not according to the flesh, but according to promise, and in this sense the believing Gentile was as much Abraham's seed as the believing Jew, although not existing in Abraham's loins. If we be Christ's, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, we are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise; Galatians 3:29. The inheritance was given to Abraham by promise; his seed was a promised seed, and embraced Christ and all the chosen people of God. Paul has illustrated this in the fourth chapter of Gal., verse 22 (Galatians 4:22); "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which

things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." As Isaac was, so are we the children of the promise, or the children of the covenant; for these are an allegory, and are the two covenants. When the promise was made to Abraham, "He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." The inheritance could not be by the law; if it were it would make the promise of none effect; for it was given to Abraham by promise. This covenant is the mother of God's children.

When Christ speaks of God's children, he always speaks of them as a gift, saying, "Behold, I, and the children which God has given me;" "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me;" "Of all the Father hath given me;" "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him;" "My Father which gave them, me, is greater than all." They are never said to be created in him, only where the writer is speaking of their regeneration; they are then called "new creatures," and said to be "created in Christ Jesus unto good works." The idea that there was a creation before the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth and that Christ and his people were in that creation, is preposterous, and destroys the whole doctrine of redemption through the man Christ Jesus. For children, created in him before the world was, and before Adam was created, could not have sinned in Adam, and could not need redemption. The truth is, if they existed in essence and substance before the world was, as some affirm, they can be no part of Adam's family, were not created in the six days, and belong to some other world than this. I am astonished that intelligent people will listen to such nonsense, and more astonished that professed Christians will pretend to believe it, when it palpably contradicts the Bible.

The Savior says, "Thine they were, and thou givest them me;" they are his portion, his lot; for "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." He has in them a property relation; for he is the Shepherd to whom the sheep belong, and as shepherd and owner of the flock he is responsible for the trespasses of the flock. Hence it is said, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones;" Zechariah 13:7. If a flock trespasses, the owner is responsible, and has to answer for the sins of his flock. "The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep." He has no property in the flock, and is no loser if the whole flock is destroyed. But Christ says, "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." The sheep belong to him, are his portion, his estate, given to him by his Father. And that we might know that he had other sheep besides those belonging to the Jewish nation, he says, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd;" #Joh 10:16. By virtue of this relation the iniquities of the flock were laid on him, and he died for his flock, as their substitute.

God by the prophet hath beautifully expressed this truth in the following language: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." "He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken." "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." "He was wounded for our transgressions he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed;" Isaiah 53. The sins of the flock are imputed to or laid on the

Shepherd, and he puts them away by the sacrifice of himself; for he bore our sins in his own body on the tree.

This glorious doctrine of relationship is clearly taught in the doctrine of election. Christ is called the elect of God, for God says by the holy prophet, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law;" Isaiah 42:1-3. Again: "Behold, I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded;" 1 Peter 2:6. His people are called a "chosen generation," chosen from the beginning, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings. Grace was given them in him before the world began; so, they have a portion in him, and can say with David, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance." And again: "Thou art my portion, O Lord." His people were given to him, and he was given to them, as it is written, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things;" Romans 8:32.

Election is personal, and positive, made in Christ before the world began. "According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love;" Ephesians 1:4. I have heard some quote this text in a way of triumph, and say, "How could they be chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, if they did not exist in him before the foundation of the world?" And this existence, they say, "is both in essence and substance." So that I cannot understand them, unless they mean that the elect existed in him before the foundation of the world as wheat exists in a sack, or a pig in a pen. They who use such expressions, must be careless readers of their Bibles, or ignorant of their own language; for there is no such an idea contained in the

text. A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet water: a sinful seed cannot exist in a holy parent. If the elect existed in Christ before the foundation of the world in substance or seed, it was a holy substance or seed, and could not be chosen that it "should be holy;" for it was already holy, and could be nothing else but holy while it existed in Christ unless he became corrupted and unholy; the seed would then inherit the corrupt nature of the parent, and all would be sinners together. God the Father chose his people before the foundation of the world, and he made that choice in Christ, and in Christ he blessed them with all spiritual blessings or things. While God in Christ made this choice, he chose them out of the world, out of all nations, and from among men. The choice was made in Christ, and not in Adam; but they were chosen out of Adam's fallen race.

**God, in the riches of his grace,
Did from eternity ordain,
A seed elect of Adam's race
Eternal glory should obtain.**

The psalmist, in personating the elect, or church of God, has used language that will cast a volume of light upon this subject: "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them;" Psalms 139:15,16. In this text we are taught; first, that God's people were never hid from him, that they were present before him in his foreknowledge, before there was any of them in substance or actual existence; second, that they were written in his book, or positively chosen unto salvation; for it is said, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire;" #Rev 20:15. It is also said that all who dwell upon the earth shall worship the second beast, "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" #Re 13:8. This choice, or writing in the book, was not prospective, or in purpose, but

was positive and absolute, and was before there was any of them in actual existence, or before they were created. Third, that in continuance they were fashioned, or brought into actual being, and were just such beings as existed in his foreknowledge. Some will then say, "Then God chose a nonentity, a nothing." There can be no such thing as nonentity with God; for in his foreknowledge all things are present with him, and are as complete in his knowledge as they will be when time closes. He is not like man, who can not know any thing, only as it actually exists; but he says to man, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yet, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it;" Isaiah 46:9-11.

If God from the beginning knew the end, and from ancient times declared the things that were not yet done, the election was positive, but the holiness of his people was prospective; for it is said, "That we should be holy and without blame before him in love." The relation of Christ to his people is as eternal as their election, and when they were blessed with all spiritual blessings and grace in him, by the decree of God, they had a portion in him; and in time, according to his purpose, are saved, and called, and put in possession of that portion. "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace;" #Joh 1:16; grace given us in Christ before time; grace received by us in time, and this "according to his purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

The married state is used by the inspired writers to illustrate this relationship, and show how the sins of his people could be imputed to Christ, and he be legally bound for their trespasses. I have often heard it said from the pulpit that Eve was a figure of the church. Of this I know nothing; for Moses, the prophets, Christ, and the apostles have not said one word about

it, and I only know what I learn from my Bible on this subject. If God has made a revelation upon this subject to these men, that he has not made in the Bible, of course they must preach it, and believe it; but as I have had no such revelation, I know nothing about it, and cannot and dare not preach it.

The woman as unmarried is never used as a figure of the church; she can not be a figure of it, for she has no husband; but it is as a married woman that she is a figure; and in this relation God speaks of her and says, "For thy Maker is thine husband: the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel: the God of the whole earth shall he be called;" Isaiah 54:5. The husband here is the Maker, the Creator; the wife could not, therefore, have been as old as he, nor existed in him in substance; for if that were true she was not created by her husband, but existed in him, and was really of his own substance. This contradicts God, and I cannot believe it. The apostle says, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." To suit those people who hold an actual, eternal substance existence, this text should read, "For this cause should a man leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife: for they two were eternally one flesh." Paul says this union is "a mystery;" it is not a literal union, like the union between my hand and my head; for, if you pierce my hand, I feel the pain; but you may pierce the wife, and the husband does not feel the pain. The wife may die, and the husband still lives, or vice versa. The oneness or union of the husband and wife is a legal union or oneness, and while it may exist in purpose, it does not legally exist in fact until they are legally married, and when married they are in law one flesh.

Having assumed this relation, and being made legally one, it is just as unreasonable for a man to hate his wife as it is for him to hate his own flesh; Ephesians 5:23-32. The wife should love her husband, and obey him; for he is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church, and as God is the head of Christ. Thus God speaks to his children, when they obey not his

voice: "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion;" Jeremiah 3:14. This relation brings the church under obligations to love and obey Jesus, and to have no beloved beside him; our whole heart should be given to him. If we love him with a feigned or hypocritical love, he knows our hearts, and is not deceived in us. He is a jealous husband, and will not allow his wife to have any other beloved. Christ is a faithful husband; his love is eternal and unchanging; he gave himself for his church, his bride, that he might redeem her from all iniquity; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Not that it was eternally holy and without blemish. And he thus describes his beloved: "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.

Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lion's den, from the mountains of the leopards. Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices! Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon. A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard; spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon;" #So 4:7-15.

Thus Christ expresses his love for his bride, and declares that his dove, his undefiled, is but one; for there is but one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. Christ is no polygamist, he

has but one bride, one church; to her he is married, and she owes perpetual obedience to him. Paul says, "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then, if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but, if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another;" (not that ye eternally had been married to another; for then ye never could have had but one husband;) "even to him who is raised from the dead that we should bring forth fruit unto God;" Romans 7:1-4. Love is the bond that sweetly unites the husband and wife, and makes it their delight to serve each other; marriage legally unites them, and makes the husband the head of the wife, and answerable for her contracts and trespasses.

If the wife should commit a capital offense, such as murder, it can not be imputed to the husband according to human law; but if the sovereign power that framed the constitution of the State, and made the law, had put such a provision in it, the imputation of a capital offense would then be legal, for it was ordained and fixed by the constitution and law under which the marriage was solemnized. The man Christ Jesus was set up in the covenant of redemption for this very purpose, and it is according to the constitution, purpose, and decree of God. "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne: and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both;" Zechariah 6:12,13. And again: "Hear, now, O Joshua, the high priest, thou and thy fellows that set before thee; for they are men wondered at: for behold, I will bring forth my servant, the BRANCH. For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one

stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig-tree;" Zechariah 3:8-10. Seven women may take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach;" but the reproach of none can be taken away except the lawfully married wife And by virtue of this marriage union it is said, "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning;" Isaiah 4:2-4.

The people of God, in their fallen state, are represented as being dead in sin, and Christ is called their life; so that, when he died, the law received all it could demand. With this view Paul says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again;" 2 Corinthians 5:15. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory;" Colossians 3:3,4. When this life is imparted or given to the sinner dead in sin, he is resurrected from that death, and the exhortation comes to him, "If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

The priestly office of Christ is another blessed relation he bears to his people, and as our High Priest he makes atonement for the sins of his people. The priests, under the law, could not continue by reason of death;

but Christ was made a High Priest after the power of an endless life. Watts has most beautifully expressed this in the following verse:

**Their priesthood ran through many hands,
For mortal was their race;
But thine eternal priesthood stands,
Unchanging as thyself.**

The perfection of Christ's priesthood is confirmed by the apostle, in contrasting it with the Jewish priesthood. For the priests under the law were sinners, and they had first to offer for themselves, and then for the people; but Christ had no sins of his own; he was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, and had nothing to do but to offer for the people. The atonement made by the priests under the law, was retrospective, and not prospective; that is, it was for the sins of the past year, and had to be repeated every year; but Christ offered himself up once for all, and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; so that he did not have to offer often, as did the priests under the law. Where sin is once put away, and a full and sufficient atonement made, there is no more remembrance of sin.

Every high priest under the law is taken from among men, is ordained for men, in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin; and he himself is compassed with infirmity; and by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. The law made nothing perfect; for if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. The first covenant had ordinances of divine service, and a worldly tabernacle, which was a pattern of the one shown Moses on the mount. In it "was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candle-stick, and the table, and the shew-bread, which is called the sanctuary. And after the second vail, the tabernacle, which is called the holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory, shadowing the mercy-seat."

“Now, when these things were thus ordained, the priest went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people, the Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”
See Hebrews 9.

Now Christ, our High Priest, is not entered into the tabernacle made with hands, which was only a figure of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Neither does he have to offer himself often, as the high priest entered into the holy place every year with the blood of others; but now, once in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. The priests under the old covenant stood daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which could never take away sins; “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting until his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.” Thus the perfection of Christ’s offering, and the fullness of his atonement for the sins of his people is established, so that the saying is true, “The blood of Jesus

Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." By him the bride is redeemed, her garments are made white, which is the righteousness of saints, and shall be presented unto her husband a glorious bride, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

In the order of Christ's priesthood he was greater than the priests under the law, for they were made priests without an oath, and their priesthood was changeable, descending from father to son; for by reason of death they could not continue, and others had to take their place in the priestly office. But Christ was made a priest by the oath of him that said unto him, "The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." And those priests were truly many, and could not continue by reason of death; but of Christ it is said, "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."

Christ was made a priest after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron; and the superiority of this Melchisedec was acknowledged by Abraham when he paid to him the tenth part of all the spoils; for it is the less that pays tithes to the greater, and not the greater to the less. And Melchisedec blessed Abraham; and without contradiction it is the less that is blessed of the greater. How great, then, must this man Melchisedec be, to whom our father Abraham paid tithes. And the sons of Levi, who received the office of the priesthood, had a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they came out of the loins of Abraham. Thus Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes in the loins of his father Abraham; for he was yet in his loins when Melchisedec met him. Melchisedec, in the order of his priesthood, had neither father nor mother, beginning of days nor end of life; his was not a hereditary priesthood. If perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, there would be no need for another priest to arise, after another order. The order of Christ's priesthood was after the order of Melchisedec, and not after that of Aaron.

Our Lord could not be a priest according to the law, for he was of the tribe of Judah, of which there was no remembrance at the altar. "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar." Our Lord was of the tribe of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. "And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." There was a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof; for the law made nothing perfect, "but the bringing in of a better hope did, by which we draw nigh to God." We may now draw near to God, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water; "by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is, his flesh."

Christ, as the Son of God and the High Priest of our profession, hath a name above every name: "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son. And again, when he bringeth in his first-begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him." As far as the object of worship is above the worshiper, so far is Christ above angels. "For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those priests to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

As man, he was the promised seed of Abraham, the son of David, proceeding and coming out of his loins, according to the oath and promise of

God; but as the Word of God, he existed with the Father, and by him all things were made. For "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." As man he was made of a woman, made under the law, and his obligation to the law was acknowledged when he was circumcised; for every man that is circumcised is a debtor to do the whole law.

He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill, and magnify, and honor it; and the law finds in him a righteousness commensurate with its own purity. The law is the transcript of God's perfections; the Son is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. Hence it is said that the law and the prophets bear witness to his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of them that believe in him. The law could not justify the ungodly; therefore through the weakness and sinfulness of our flesh, none could be justified by the deeds of the law. "God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." He that knew no sin, was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. And he has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.

As Redeemer, he sustains a relation to his people, for a previous right of property in thing redeemed must exist, to give the right of redemption. This property relation I have already sufficiently proved. To redeem, there must be an equivalent given, a price paid. Gold and silver, rivers of oil, and the cattle of a thousand hills could never redeem the sinner; it must be the sacrifice of a nobler object, and of richer value than they; for these things are valueless when compared to the soul, which is worth more than this

world. But in the Redeemer we find the precious price, the equivalent; so that it is said he obtained for us eternal redemption. That blood that ran from the side of the dying Jesus was of more value than all the blood that ever stained a Jewish altar. This precious blood cleanses his people from all their sins. It is the blood of the covenant, the blood of the testament, shed for the sins of many.

**There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged into that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.**

**Dear, dying Lamb, thy precious blood,
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God,
Be saved to sin no more.**

Christ was a man; he had both soul and body, and could, and did pay the redemption price for the whole man. It is said, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand: he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities;" Isaiah 53:10,11. Jesus said, when in Gethsemane, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." God says by the prophet, "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 was numbered with the transgressors; and he bear the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." This soul-suffering was evidently endured by Jesus, when, "being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." There is no suffering to be compared with soul

or mental suffering. If the mind is easy, and there is no guilt on the soul, the body may be burned at the stake, and the dying martyr will shout and sing praise and seem hardly to feel the pains of death. But it is when guilt rests on the soul, and is felt and realized, that the man is crushed, and cannot bear up under it. Some of us have felt this soul-sorrow so heavy upon us that we could not take one more step, or stand upon our feet one moment; but fell prostrate on the ground, and felt that the very earth was giving way under us; surely, we could not have borne it much longer, had not relief come.

Dear, dying sinner, listen to the words of Jesus, and may God enable you to comprehend to some extent their solemn import: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." "Exceeding sorrowful." Who can comprehend what is expressed in that word? No sorrow equal to it. Oh! see the sweat, like great drops of blood, fall to the ground! Does not that tell of sorrow and suffering that exceeds all other sufferings? I have been on the battlefield; I have seen the ground covered with the dead and dying; I have approached the dying soldier, bleeding from a dozen wounds, and sinking in death upon the cold and wet ground; I have seen him turn his eyes to me, filled with big tears, and heard him say, "I am dying here upon the cold ground, away from all my loved ones, to be left without a burial. No mother to hold my aching head, or sister to kiss my burning lips." Here was pain and suffering; but in it all I never saw the sweat, like great drops of blood, burst from the unbroken pores, and fall to the ground. Dying sinner, think what sorrows Jesus bore when he bowed himself, and prayed so earnestly, "Let this cup pass; but not my will, but thine be done;" and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, falling to the ground! And it was our sins, which hung like a ponderous weight upon his soul; and in love for lost and ruined man, he bore the mighty load, and drank the bitter cup.

**For love like this let rocks and hills,
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious human tongues**

The Savior's praises speak.

Well might the prophet, when carried forward in prophetic vision to Gethsemane, cry out in the following language: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come;" Isaiah 63:1-4. He that was so poor that he had no downy bed to lay upon, and no shelter to protect his locks from the chilling frosts, but could say, "The birds have nests, and the foxes have holes, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," did tread the winepress of the wrath of God; vengeance was in his heart; his raiment was stained with blood; so that it was said, "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God;" #Re 19:13.

This soul-sorrow Christ endured to make the redemption of his people complete; so the soul-suffering at the place called Gethsemane was just as necessary as was his bodily sufferings on the cross when crucified, in the great plan of man's redemption. All that Christ suffered was absolutely necessary to accomplish the work the Father had given him to do. When his soul was made an offering for sin, and he cried out, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," there was still another bitter cup to drink, another painful ordeal to pass through; for his body must be made an offering; it must be nailed to the Roman cross, and his precious blood must run from the wounds inflicted on him, and stain the cross on which he hung and died.

It was while he was at the foot of mount Olive that he prayed so earnestly, and said, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me;

nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." It was there that Judas betrayed him with a kiss; and from that place he was taken by the multitude, and brought into the high priest's house; and it was there Peter denied him, and the man that held him mocked him, and smote him. "And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, if I tell you, ye will not believe: and if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art thou the Son of God? And he said unto them, ye say I am. And they said, what need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth;" #Lu 22:66-71. After this the whole multitude of them arose and led him to Pilate, and began to accuse him, saying, "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying, that he himself is Christ, a King." After Pilate had questioned him, he said to the people, "I find no fault in this man." This made them more fierce, and they accused him, saying, "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place."

When Pilate learned that this man was a Galilean, and belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod; for Herod was at this time at Jerusalem. Herod, when he saw Jesus, was glad, for he had heard many things about him, and expected to see some miracle done by him. Herod then questioned him with many words, but Christ answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. And Herod, with his men of war, set him at naught, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate. When Pilate had called together the priests, and the rulers, and the people, he said unto them, "Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man, touching those things whereof ye accuse him. No, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him: I will therefore chastise him, and release him." But they cried all at

once, and said, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas." Pilate, willing to release Jesus, spake unto them again; but they cried, saying, "Crucify him, crucify him." And the third time Pilate said unto them, "Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him; I will therefore chastise him, and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified: and the voices of them and the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required." Then they took him, and led him away. "

And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus, turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me; but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bear, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, fall on us; and to the hills, cover us. For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death." When they had come to a place which is called Calvary, they crucified him, and the two malefactors, the one on his right, and the other on his left. While Jesus was hanging on the cross, he looked upon his relentless persecutors, who had unfeelingly nailed him to the wood, and said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, and offered him vinegar, saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him, in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

In the crucifixion of Christ we have the literal fulfillment of what was spoken by the prophets hundreds of years before. First, in the meekness of his death, between two malefactors; for it is said by Isaiah, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought

as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison, and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living? for the transgressions of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth;" Isaiah 53:7,8; and secondly, in the words of the sweet singer of Israel, who in prophetic vision saw the multitude press about him and pierce his hands and his feet, and part his garments among them, and cast lots upon his vesture; Psalms 22:14-18. David not only describes the multitude that pressed about him, and pierced his hands and his feet, and took his garments and gave them to the soldiers, every one a part, but his coat, being without seam, woven from the top throughout; they cast lots for it, whose it should be. He tells us of the very drink that should be given him in his dying moments; for he says, "They gave me gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink;" Psalms 69:21. Now, when Jesus knew that all things were accomplished, he said, "I thirst." And they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop and put it to his mouth. When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

All that a man could suffer by being barbarously and cruelly put to death, Jesus suffered on the cross. How hard must be the heart that cannot feel, and the eye that cannot shed one tear, when we read the story of the cross, and the dying groans of the sinner's Friend! Dear friend, will you sit for hours, charmed over the pages of a novel, and shed tears, as you sympathize with the sufferings of a fictitious heroine? but open the sacred book, and read the sufferings of the Hero of our salvation, and not feel one tender emotion in thy hard and unfeeling heart and not one tear of pity start from thine eye? Poor, fallen sinner! the poet knew the hardness of thy heart, and has thus described it;

To hear the sorrows thou hast felt,

**Dear Lord an adamant would melt;
But I can read each moving line,
And nothing moves this heart of mine.**

The dying groans of the Man on the cross melts not thy heart, nor moves thee to tears. O, no! he is to thee as a root out of the dry ground; you have no love for him; you see no comeliness in him, that you should desire him; you esteem him not. While I speak to you, dear dying sinner, in my own heart I can witness the truth, that nothing short of almighty power can ever melt your heart down in love at the feet of Jesus. The Christian knows it and can sing

**But something yet can do the deed,
And that dear something much I need;
Thy Spirit can from dross refine,
And move and melt this heart of mine.**

May that blessed Spirit melt thy heart and bring thee humble at feet of Jesus, for there is salvation in none other.

When the work was done, Christ said, "It is finished." Upon the cross the seed of the woman bruised the head of the serpent; for through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. The oath and promise made to David are finished and fulfilled; the words of the prophets are finished and fulfilled in the dying Son of God; all the types and shadows under the law are finished and ended in Christ. The vail of the temple is rent asunder; no longer is the holiest place concealed from the sight of the common people; no longer need the Jewish nation drive their bellowing herds up to the temple, to be slaughtered, and offered in sacrifice for the sins of the people; no longer need the high priest catch the blood, as it runs from the dying victim, and with it enter the holy of holies, and sprinkle it before the mercy-seat, overshadowed with the Cherubim; no longer shall God shine upon the mercy-seat, beneath the Cherubim, in approbation of their offerings. It is all finished in the dying Jesus, who has

entered heaven itself by his own blood. The atonement is made, the debt of all his people is paid; he has made an end of transgression, and put away sin. So the apostle, in view of the finished work of Jesus, will ask the question in triumph, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us; Romans 8:33,34. "By him we are freely justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses." For he "was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification."

Pardon and justification are distinct things. The criminal may be pardoned from under the gallows, or out of prison; but still he remains a guilty criminal; the pardon does not remove the guilt; it only arrests the law, and relieves the guilty one from its penalty. But to justify, is for the judge to declare the person arraigned, clear of guilt, just and innocent before the court and the law.

Here, again, is the legal relation of Christ and his people brought up before us as clear as the noon-day; for our sins were laid upon him, imputed to him, and he bore them in his own body upon the tree, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself; and his righteousness is imputed to us, and we are complete in him. In view of this truth, Paul, quoting from David, says "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin;" Romans 4:6-8. And the apostle affirms that, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Some will say, then, "It is foolishness to talk about forgiveness, for if the redemption is full, the debt all paid, their iniquities all removed, and his people justified; there is nothing to forgive." Such people forget what we are trying to prove in all this discourse, and what is so abundantly testified in

the word of God; that Christ died for us, in the room and stead of the transgressor, and as surety paid the debt of the principal, and holds the judgment or claim in his own hand; and having paid all, he has the power to forgive the debtor; while the debtor, so far as the original creditor is concerned, stands justified; there being no claims against him, for the surety has paid all. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Forgiveness of sins is preached through the man Christ Jesus. After his resurrection, Christ, in teaching his disciples said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem;" #Luke 24:46-47.

In Christ the law has been satisfied and honored, the debt of his people paid, and their sins put away by the sacrifice of himself, their Surety and High Priest. For their sins were laid upon him, or charged to his account, by virtue of the legal or covenant relation he bears to them. This doctrine of covenant relation underlies the whole plan of man's salvation; and without it the atonement is not vicarious, none can be saved by it, and my hope is forever gone. But if Christ, as the head, husband, shepherd, surety, and high priest of his people, has redeemed them, paid their debt, borne the curse, being made a curse for them; then all is under his control, and forgiveness is with him, and it is to be preached in his name. When Christ had paid the debt of his people, destroyed him that had the power of death, spoiled the grave, and rose from the dead, he was exalted a Prince, and a Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel.

The law knows no forgiveness; it has no heart to feel for the suffering criminal; with iron-grasp it holds him, and says, "Pay me that thou owest."

Could rivers of tears flow from our eyes, and we lay prostrate in the dust, and with an humble, aching broken heart pray for mercy, the law cannot hear our prayers, nor pity our helpless misery. But in its stern, unfeeling voice, says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The law is the administration of death; its demands must be satisfied; not one jot or tittle can pass until all be fulfilled. "For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Again, "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily, righteousness should have been by the law." As we have already proved there was no perfection by the law, nor by its priesthood; for if there had been, what further need was there that another priest should arise, after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? The law was fulfilled and honored in Christ, and he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes.

Christ, having fulfilled the law, and obtained for his people eternal redemption, holds the keys of their prison in his own hands; he can open the door and give liberty to the captive; he can say to the prisoner, Go free. He has the legal right, for he has paid all; the law is honored, and the prisoner goes free. The Holy prophet, inspired with these views, says, "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be delivered? But thus sayeth the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." Christ can deliver the lawful captive, and bring forth the prisoner out of his filthy pit wherein is no water; for it is said, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant," (margin, whose covenant is by blood,) "I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water," Zechariah 9:11. When the man sick with palsy was brought to Jesus, he said unto him, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." At these words the scribes began to say within themselves, "This man blasphemeth;" believing, as they did, that none but God could forgive sins, in their hearts they accused Christ of blasphemy, because he said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." Christ, understanding their thoughts,

asked them, "Whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?"

The case before them was beyond the reach of human skill; earthly means could not heal the man, and restore him to health and friends. Nothing short of the power of God could cure the man; hence it was just as easy to forgive his sins as to cure him of the palsy. "But," said Christ to them, "that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine own house. And he arose and departed to his own house;" #Matt 9:1-7. When Christ had taken the cup, he gave thanks, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

One of the glorious provisions of the new testament or covenant, of which Christ is Mediator, is expressed in these sweet words: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." When Jesus was at the Pharisee's house, there was a woman who was a sinner, who brought an alabaster-box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him, weeping, and began to wash his feet with her tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him, saw it, he spoke within himself, saying, This man if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor, which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned unto the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and

wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore, I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven; #Lu 7:39-48. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;" and it is not the righteous that Jesus came to call, but sinners; "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

This cannot be true, if his people eternally existed in him in seed or substance; for existing there, they could not need a physician, nor be sinners, nor be lost. Neither can his people, if they so existed, be any part of Adam's family; for this family were all created when Adam was created, and did not exist before that, only in the foreknowledge and decree of God. But his people are sinners of Adam's fallen race; and the angel so testified to Joseph when he appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Take unto thyself thy wife Mary; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins." To save sinners! What a sweet word that is to proclaim in the ears of dying men and women. The angel may bear the news to Joseph; and again the angel may come down and proclaim it in the ears of the trembling shepherds; "For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." And a multitude of the heavenly host may fill the air with their songs of praise to God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

What a contrast is this with the giving of the law! God came down on Sinai in fire, covering the mountain with smoke, and the words spoken were so terrible that Israel could not hear them, and Moses feared and quaked; but now, veiled in humanity, he is proclaimed the author of peace. In union with flesh, he is in union with his poor and afflicted people, and can be touched with the feeling of their infirmities; and being in all points tempted

like them, he can succor them that are tempted. He is our peace, having made reconciliation for the sins of his people.

Peace through him is now proclaimed to the troubled, sorrowing, dying sons and daughters of men. O, let the poor, sorrowing, heavy-laden, heart-broken sinner, who is at the foot of Sinai, trembling with despair while the terrible words, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," are sounding in his guilty ears, and filling him with hopeless despair under a sense of just condemnation, turn away, and listen to the sweet words of Jesus who says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." It is not to that mountain that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words that were so terrible that they who heard them entreated that they should not be spoken any more, that God's humble poor now come; "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel;" Hebrews 12:22-24.

The blood of Abel cried from the ground against his guilty brother; but the blood of Jesus brings peace and pardon down to guilty sinners. "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; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

Thus, Christ is the great Preacher of peace, and when he speaks to the sorrowing heart, its troubles are all gone, and peace, such as the world can not give, is felt in the soul. The prophet understood this when he said, "The

Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed, me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn;" Isaiah 61:1,2. When Christ read this prophecy, he closed the book, and said, "It is this day fulfilled." He is therefore the Preacher who is to preach good tidings unto the meek; and I hear him say, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth."

The humble poor are the peculiar objects of the love of our God, "Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in earth. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; that he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people." To the meek, the humble and contrite spirit that claims no good of its own, does this great Preacher speak comfortable things. "For thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones;" Isaiah 57:15. The Lord says, "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my word." This Preacher binds up the brokenhearted, and proclaims liberty to the captive. None but the poor, renewed sinner, who is made acquainted with his own guilt and just condemnation, can fully understand what is meant by "the brokenhearted." In it is expressed a sorrow of heart that no human words can soothe.

We have seen the poor mother look into the face of her lifeless babe; her heart was broken; the little thing that had lain upon her bosom, and that she had kissed a thousand times, as a mother only can kiss, is gone, and gone forever. She can't call it back; no words of friends can soothe her great sorrow, or heal the wound that is in her heart. The wife may drop her tear on the margin of her husband's grave, while the earth that is to conceal him from her sight is falling upon his coffin, and turn away with a broken heart-

no one can comfort her; she is bereaved; her best earthly friend is gone; she can no longer lean upon his breast, and feel the beating of his loving heart. Some of us know something of these things, and know that none like Jesus can heal our broken heart, and make us feel reconciled to our lot; but he can bind up the brokenhearted sinner. Ah, dear child of God! you will never forget when your heart was broken, and when in vain you looked to earthly friends for help.

Your unworthy speaker will never forget the day, although he was but a boy, when his heart was broken. He had visited the silent grove; he had fallen upon his face, and cried for mercy; but he was a sinner, and he felt that God could not hear such a sinner pray. Finally, he concluded, "I will go to my father; he is a Christian, and I will ask him to pray for me; perhaps God will hear him, and have mercy on the justly condemned child." When he approached his father, and said, "Father, will you pray for your lost and ruined child?" the father said, "My child, I have been praying for you ever since you were born, and I can still try." The big tears stood in his eyes, which showed that his heart felt, but his words seemed like they would kill the poor boy; for they said to him, "If father has been praying so long for you, he can do you no good." Ah! the heart was broken; no friend on earth could bind it up. Poor, dying sinner, have you ever felt it? Blooming youth, that I address today, can you, from an experimental knowledge, sympathize with that poor boy? If you cannot, some of these old gray heads around me can. The tears that are running from their eyes tell that they have not forgotten the day when their hearts were broken, and they felt that they had no friend in heaven or earth; that justice called for their life, and that there was no heart that loved, nor eye that pitied them. But when this great Preacher spoke and said, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more," the broken heart was bound up, all its pain was gone, its sorrows soothed, and the poor, deserted one made to say, I have a Friend in heaven, a Friend that never will forsake me.

**Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace,
Of a soul in its earliest love.**

Will you go with me today to the dark and dreary prison? Will you look down into the cold and filthy vault, and see the poor, guilty, heartbroken, condemned criminal, lying helpless in his chains? Every petition he has made has met with no response; no one looks with a pitying eye upon him; he can hear no voice, or word, but the hard, unfeeling, cruel, but just sentence of the law, saying, "You must die." Not one ray of light enters the dark cell to cheer him; not one gleam of hope is felt within him to bind up his broken heart. O what a sad condition this is! But I talk to some today who know that it is not a fancy picture. Ah, they will never forget the gloomy cell of their prison-house! They will never forget when they felt that the hour of their execution had come, and the last ray of hope had forsaken them; the glittering sword of justice was raised above them, ready to execute the sentence of the law. Ah, you will never forget when you cried, "Gone, gone, gone! Justice binds me here, and demands my life; I can not lift my eyes toward the holy throne, and bring one argument in my own defense; but with guilty lips and broken heart, must say, -"

**And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well.**

It was in this dark hour of despair that this glorious Preacher opened thy prison door, and gave thee liberty; took off thy filthy rags, clothed thee in the bright garments of salvation, and said, "I have redeemed you; behold my hands and side; the law is satisfied. I have borne its penalty, and all is freely forgiven." O, sweet Preacher! Like the poor woman at Simon's house, I will wash thy feet with my tears, and wipe them with the hairs of my head, and I will ever lay at thy feet and kiss them; for surely there never was one that owed so great a debt of gratitude as I do. Dear brethren and sisters, did you ever hear such a sermon before? Can you ever forget the comfort felt in your heart when Jesus took your load of guilt away, and spoke your sins

forgiven? You then felt that the days of mourning with you were past, and that you would never sorrow again. "My sins are forgiven; Jesus is mine, and what more can I want?" But alas, alas! it is not long before the clouds arise; the tempter comes in, and tells you that you are deceived; your heart aches, and like the spouse, you weep upon your bed, and wet your pillow with tears. None can comfort you; no voice can take away your sorrows until this glorious Preacher speaks, and his voice binds up your broken heart, turns your prison into a palace, and fills you with joy that is inexpressible and full of glory.

Dear brethren and sisters, your voyage upon this stormy ocean will not be long; the fiery trials that befall you in this life will soon be over; and he who has spoken your sins forgiven, and delivered you from the power of darkness, shall call you up to the mansions above, where sorrow, sin, and death will be felt and feared no more; where there will be no more night: God and the Lamb shall be the light of the place, and your never-ending song will be to him that has loved you and redeemed you unto God.

Dear friends, I fear that many of you are today in the dark prison of just condemnation, and know it not, feel no concern, but love the chains that bind you down. Your heart is not broken; you feel no pain on account of sin, but drink it down as water. My heart feels for you; Christians feel for you; but our arms are too short to reach you, and my voice is too feeble to move your hearts to feel, or open your eyes to see. But O, dear, dying sinner, may the great Preacher, whose word is spirit and life, speak to thee, and arouse thy guilty fears, and may cords of love divine draw thee to the dear Savior; for there is salvation in no other. "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."