

SERMON XVI.

ON THE FINISHING THE TEMPLE BUILT BY SOLOMON, SETTING THE FURNITURE OF IT IN ITS PROPER FORM AND PLACE, OPENING IT WITH SOLEMN, COSTLY, AND MAGNIFICENT SACRIFICES, WITH GOD'S TESTIMONY OF APPROBATION, BY THE CLOUD OF GLORY WHICH CAME DOWN ON THE HOUSE AND FILLED IT; A PREFIGURATION OF CHRIST'S INCARNATION, AND FILLING THE TEMPLE OF HIS BODY WITH ALL THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD.

2 CHRONICLES V. 13, 14.

It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lift up their voice with the trumpets, and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For he it good, for his mercy endureth for ever; that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God."

THE tabernacle built by Moses, and the temple built by Solomon, were one and the same, as to their spiritual and mystical significancy. The former was reared up after the

pattern which the, Lord shewed Moses in the mount ; the latter was built after the pattern. which the Lord God caused David to understand by the Spirit, which David made known to Solomon, and which he caused most exactly to be executed.

I am not about to treat of the Lord's temple at Jerusalem, so as to give an exact account of its situation, dimensions, platform, fabric, and furniture, both within and without, with the walls, gates, courts, cloisters, chambers, and buildings that were about it; nor of the altar, lavers, brazen sea, rings, pillars, hooks, tables, and stations for men; slaughter places for beasts, and all the offices belonging to it ; this is beyond my present attainment and ability, though a right knowledge of all these particulars would most surely be very pleasing and profitable; but I must be content with a brief and general a-count of the temple, and its holy vessels, such as may lead to an opening and explaining the subject before me; in which I design to, set forth the following things.

First. I will chew how the temple of Solomon being finished, and the furniture of it set in its proper place, it was opened with very costly, solemn, and magnificent sacrifices.

Secondly. The testimony' which the Lord God gave of his acceptance of the work and services, both of building the temple, placing the furniture, and offering the sacrifices. This is expressed in our text, " It came even to pass, 'as the

trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord ; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister, by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God."

And lastly. That this was a type-and pre-figuration of Christ's incarnation, and filling the temple of his body with all the fulness of the Godhead.

I am, first, to shew how the temple of Solomon being finished, and the furniture of it set in its proper place, it was opened with solemn, costly, and magnificent sacrifices.

The temple was begun in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, in the month Ziff; or Jair; which was the second month of the ecclesiastical year, A. M. 2993. It was seven years in building; when finished, it was shut up eleven months, and opened for worship in the month Ethenim, or Tizri, and dedicated, with great solemnity,. A. M. 3001. A proclamation was issued, the, day fixed, and a very great congregation from the entering. in of Hamath, unto the river of Egypt, were gathered together. They knew the temple was a type of the body of Christ, a solemn symbol and memorial that the word would be made flesh, and tabernacle on earth; and they came to the dedication of it, knowing and believing that it was a pre-figuration of the

Son of God coming from heaven to dwell with men on the earth.

The people being solemnly gathered together, and the elders of Israel, at the day appointed for the consecration, "The levites took up the ark, and brought it and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle : those did the priests and levites bring up. Also king Solomon, and all the congregation that were assembled before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude."

Before I enter on a view of. these costly, solemn, and magnificent sacrifices, which were sacred memorials of Christ's most precious blood shedding, sacrifice, and death, it may not be amiss to give the following brief hints concerning the temple.

If was built after a pattern which David received from the Spirit of God. The preparation that he and his nobles made for it, was immense: 'one hundred and eight thousand talents of gold; one million and seventeen thousand talents of silver; both of which together, (says Brown, in his Dictionary of the Bible,) amounted to about nine hundred and forty-two millions, seven hundred and nineteen thousand, seven hundred and fifty pounds, sterling; and in weight amounted to about forty-six thousand ton weight of gold and silver, which was set apart for this good work. You may view the account given of this in the 28th and 29th chapters of the first book of Chronicles.

No less than one hundred and eighty-three thousand and six hundred men, Hebrews and Canaanites, were employed in the work. Every thing was made ready 'ere it came to the spot, so that there was nothing to do, but to join the materials; and yet it was seven years in building.

It was erected on mount Moriab. The top of this hill was enclosed with a wall: into this there was an entrance on every side, besides one towards the south west, for the royal family, whereby, by a raised way, called the gate of Shallecheth, they came to their place, in the covert of the sabbath. ' The east gate was called Sur; the south gate was called Asuppim, because it seems there the levites convened to receive their directions; and the gate Parbar, was at the north-west of the temple. At the side of every gate, and at every corner of the court, houses seem to have been built. Vide John Brown. In this outer court, every clean Hebrew and proselyte of the covenant, might enter.

In the middle of the outer court, but nearer to the west end, there was a court for the priests and levites, stretching oblong from west to east, and was surrounded with a low wall, about four feet high, that the people might, over the top of it, see what was doing by the priests. This court had two entrances: one on the north side, and another on the south.

In this court, just before the east end of the temple, stood the brazen altar, a memorial of Christ, as God's ordinance of salvation. It was twenty cubits long, and twenty cubits broad, and ten cubits high. On one side of the courts was the brazen sea, emblematical of the blood of Christ, which

is abundantly sufficient in its virtue and efficacy to purify, cleanse, and sanctify, all the people of God ; and near it stood the brazen lavers, expressive of the fountain set open in the blood of Christ, for sin and for uncleanness.

The temple, properly so called, stood from west to east, near the west end of the court of the priests, and had its sole entrance on the east end. First, you came to the porch, which was twenty cubits from north to' south, and ten cubits from east to west, and one hundred and twenty cubits in height. This served as a steeple to adorn it, and was a place of shelter and of prayer to the serving priests.

On each side of its entrance was a pillar about eighteen cubits high, and twelve cubits in circumference, adorned with chapiters, and about two hundred figures of pomegranates. The one was called Jachin, i. e. stability ; the other Boaz, i. e. strength. Christ is the stability and strength of his church: " He will bear up his people in time, and he will make them pillars in the temple of God, and they shall go no more out."

Passing through this porch, the priests entered the holy place, which was forty cubits in length, and twenty in breadth, and thirty in height ; at the west end of which stood ten golden candlesticks, which with the light in them, were sacred symbols of Christ, the light of everlasting life, who is the light of his church and people. These were placed on the south side; and on the north side were placed ten tables, with twelve loaves of shew bread on each, presenting Christ to the view of faith, as the representative of his people, as perfuming" their persons and services with

the odour, perfume, and fragrancy, of his divine mediation. Thus he was exhibited as the ,bread of life, on whom his people live, and by whom they will live for ever.

In the middle, not far from the veil, which divided the holy and most holy place, stood the golden altar of incense. This was figurative .of Christ's intercession.

Passing through the holy place lengthwise, the high priest once a year, entered by a fine veil, and a two-leaved door of olive tree into the oracle, or most holy place. It was a square of twenty cubits every way. The floors, walls, and roof, were overlaid with pure gold : there was no window in it: here were two cherubim's of olive tree, made by Solomon, overlaid with pure gold under these, the ark, with its mercy-seat and cherubim's of glory, was placed. This was a most sacred type of Christ's person and atonement. It was also a record and memorial of the sacred and essential Three, in the one incomprehensible Jehovah, in their covenant acts and transactions in their council and engagements, before the world was.

The pot of manna, in, or just by the ark, was to the saints under that economy, a pledge of immortality, a token of the everlasting fellowship between God. and his people in heaven, where he will be their everlasting light, and their everlasting glory. Aaron's rod which budded, which was also in the holy of holies, was a figure of the unchangeable priesthood of Christ Jesus, and of the perpetual enjoyment that his people will have of the blessings thereof for ever and ever. The walls, floor, roof, doors, posts, &c. of the temple, were overlaid with solid gold. The figures of

cherubs, palm-trees, and open flowers, were inscribed on the walls, within and, without : on the walls within, were fixed precious stones, which shone like so many stars in the firmament. This sacred edifice, a type and figure of Christ, was all glorious within; but as I did not_ propose to give a particular account of it, what has been dropped concerning it must suffice, whilst I pursue what I proposed concerning the solemn dedication of it.

The temple was finished in the month Bul, the eighth month of the Jewish year. When completed, and the vessels and furniture belonging to it, being put in their proper places; the day fixed for its opening being come, and the congregation being assembled, the worship is begun with sacrifices. Those offered were twenty-two thousand oxen, and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep : and as the altar of burnt-offering was too small for the fat of all these, the middle of the court was consecrated to be an occasional altar.

Thus burnt-offerings, peace-offerings, meat and drink-offerings, expressive of Christ's death, were made use of on this solemnity, to contemplate both the benefit of his incarnation, the love of his heart, and the fixedness of his will in the performing the work of salvation. It would be', his meat and drink to do the will of him that sent him. He would, by bearing the sins of his people in his own body on the tree, and sustaining the whole curse, wrath, and punishment of it, in his making his soul an offering for sin, save his church and people with an everlasting salvation.

These costly sacrifices were testimonials of the costly price of our salvation, the precious blood of Christ, which exceeds in worth all the treasures of earth and heaven. The abundant number of these, skewed the fulness and sufficiency of Christ's oblation of himself.

The burnt-offerings, pointed out the removal of sin, and the curse from his people, by the substitution of his person, and the sacrifice of his body and soul, in union with his deity. The peace-offerings proclaimed that he would make peace by the blood of his cross. The whole was a most solemn and magnificent exhibition of the ever blessed Immanuel, God in our nature, and of his priestly office, and propitiatory sacrifice.

Thus as the first act of worship, immediately upon the fall, begun with sacrifice, a memorial of Messiah's death; and the, new world, after the deluge, was begun with sacrifices, in the faith of Messiah's future sweet smelling offering; so the temple, the type of the Messiah, is opened, and the worship there is begun with costly, solemn, and magnificent sacrifices. The design of which was to record the one everlastingly efficacious and all-sufficient sacrifice of the immaculate Lamb of God, who was to take away sin, who has been manifested in the flesh, and hath taken away the sin of the world; and his blood cleanseth from all sin. I proceed,

Secondly. With the testimony which the Lord. God gave of his acceptance of the work and services, both of building the temple, and placing the furniture, offering the sacrifices, and offering up the prayer of dedication.

The worship and temple were of divine institution : great preparations had been made for the consecration of the house of God. The services to be performed, consisted in sacrifices and songs, which were to be performed with vocal and instrumental music and prayer. That every thing might be done decently and in order, a high scaffold was erected, and it is probable a throne placed on it for king Solomon. The sacrifices of burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, with their meat-offerings and drink-offerings, were properly prepared. The musicians, singers, and trumpeters, were placed at the east end of the altar. The hymn was chosen : the chorus of it was, "For he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever." All that vocal and instrumental melody could express, was on this occasion exerted to glorify God, for his unspeakable grace in the gift, incarnation, and mission of his Son; the promise of which they believed: and a pledge of his tabernacling, in the fulness of time, with poor sinners, was' now before them, both in the temple, a type of it, and in the festival of its dedication.

David before his death, distributed four thousand sacred singers into twenty-four classes, who were to serve at the temple, in their turns. The three chief musicians were Asaph, Heman, and Jedutban : the four sons of Asaph, six of Jeduthan, and fourteen of Heman, were constituted the chiefs of the twenty-four classes. It is probable they all, or most of them, attended at the solemn festivals : we are sure they did at this, because our text declares it. The king and people, the priests and levites, the singers and trumpeters, being properly arranged, and the ark being carried into the

holy of holies, and all the furniture, vessels, and utensils of worship, belonging to the temple, and the courts of it, being properly placed, it came to pass, when the priests having deposited the ark in the holy of holies, and were come out of the holy place, (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course:) also the levites, who were singers, all of them, of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthan, With their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals, and psalteries, and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets." Thus the worship began with sacrifice, which while they were burning on the altar, all that sound could possibly do, with voices and instruments, was exerted, to rouse the attention, and to inflame the affections of the worshippers. The subject, the concert, the number of voices and instruments, the excellency of the music, and of the performance, were inconceivably great and glorious. It was a little heaven below. And the Lord was so well pleased with the temple built to his name, the placing the sacred furniture in its proper apartments and places, with the sacrifices offered, the song sung, and the triumph which the people expressed, that he crowned the whole by a miracle; confirming thereby the faith, and strengthening the hope of his people, who were now present, in the future advent of his co-equal Son: " It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord ; and when they lift up their voice with the trumpets, and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever, that then the house was filled with a

cloud, even the house of the Lord : so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God."

The glory of Jehovah, or, Jehovah the essential Word, descended in a cloud of light, splendor, and glory, as a symbol of his presence, and took up his habitation and dwelt between the cherubim, in the holy of holies; and from thence shed forth his light and brightness with such effulgence as to fill the house, and rest upon it; So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God." Thus Jehovah sanctified the temple by his presence in this cloud of glory, and with it he filled it at this time with his glory. He did the same, and manifested himself thus, when the tabernacle was set up by Moses. See Exodus.

This supernatural visible appearance of fire, light, and splendor, surrounded with a cloud, which came down upon the house, entered it, and filled it, by which the Lord God most graciously attested his divine presence, with his own divinely instituted worship and emblems, which was an evidence of his acceptance of the temple, and that it was erected and framed according to his own will.

This glory, in fire, light, and splendor, surrounded with a cloud, dwelt in the holy of holies, and is the same with what the jews call the divine schechinah, on the day of atonement; this glory was seen, as it is probable, in a human form, by the high priest, as a pledge of the incarnation, and as a type of the personal glory of Jehovah-

Jesus, who is God-man, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead personally.

On a sight and view of fire, light, and splendor, surrounded with a cloud, descending from heaven on the temple, entering and filling it with glory, the minds of the priests and people were filled with the most profound solemnity and devotion ; upon which account Solomon stood up upon the brazen scaffold, and addressed the congregation, saying, " The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness, but I have built an house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever." These last words he addressed to the Lord. Then he turned his face, and blessed the whole congregation ; and all the congregation of Israel stood up to receive the benediction. Then he blessed the Lord God of Israel, who had fulfilled what he spake with his mouth to David concerning the succession of his throne and kingdom, Jerusalem and the temple, which were relative to, and figurative of, Messiah, and which he had now fulfilled ; which leads him to give an account how he became concerned and engaged in building the temple, and that the ark was deposited therein. Then he stood before the altar of the Lord, in the presence of all the people, and kneeled down upon his knees, and spread forth his hands towards heaven, and prayed the dedication prayer. In this he represented Christ, and was now acting in a manner in which he typified him. Solomon now turned his face to the temple, a type of Christ's person ; he stood indeed still upon the scaffold, but he was so placed as to be before, or opposite the brazen altar, on which the sacrifices were laid, so that his prayer was founded on what they were

memorials of, the one offering of Christ, which perfecteth for ever. He stretched out his hands towards heaven, and intercedes for the whole Israel of God : a figure of Christ, our Intercessor, who prays on the behalf of his whole church, and his intercession is founded on his oblation., Solomon's prayer is very comprehensive, it takes in every case they could possibly be in. So does the intercession of Christ ; and his prayer, recorded in the 17th of John, takes in all the cases, and comprehends all the necessities of his people. Solomon intreats that the Lord would keep his covenant promise, which he had made to David, and which he had thus begun most gloriously to make good : and, in a parenthesis of wonder, he breaks forth, saying, " But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth ? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens can not contain thee ; how much less this house that I have built!" This, I think, is a full proof that Solomon looked on the temple as a type of Christ's body, that it was a solemn pledge and evidence of his incarnation ; a realizing view and belief of which caused him to break out thus, without any connection or order, expressing his surprize in holy wonder, at the contemplation that the Word would be made flesh, and that his name would be " Immanuel, God with us." He prayed that the Lord would bless the temple services, hear the prayers of the people of Israel, which they, in their various cases and afflictions, collectively or individually make, looking towards the temple, and that he would graciously answer them at all' times, as the matter should-require; and concludes thus, " Now, O my God, let (I beseech thee) thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. Now, therefore, arise, O Lord

God, into thy resting-place, thou and the ark of thy strength : let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness. O Lord God, turn not away the face of thine anointed : remember the mercies of David, thy servant." He then turned himself to the people, and blessed them. ' See I Kings viii. 55, &c. In which he expresses his best wishes for them, and closes with a most important and affectionate exhortation to them. Then the Lord, as an evidence of his hearing and accepting Solomon's prayer, sends fire from heaven, which consumed the sacrifices on the altar; and the glory of the Lord, i. e. fire, light, and splendor, surrounded with a cloud, came down again the second time, and filled the temple: " Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices ; and the glory of the Lord filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord." 2 Chron. vii. 1, 2. Upon the sight and visible appearance of these emblems of Jehovah's presence, which was also a token of his most gracious acceptance of the' prayer offered, of the temple consecrated to his name, and of the sacrificial services, the whole congregation fell down and worshipped Jehovah.

And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped and praised the Lord, saying, " For he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever." 2 Chron. vii. 3. Thus the temple was dedicated by Solomon with

sacrifice and prayer ; and by the Lord with fire from heaven and the cloud of glory.

Mr. Romaine says, When the temple was finished, and the furniture of it set in order, then they open the service with sacrificing to the Lord ; and while the priests were blowing the trumpets over the sacrifices, triumphing in the Lamb, who was, by one offering of himself, to take away sin, then the glory of the Lord filled the house, by which he gave evident sign, that God would come and dwell among men, and they should see his glory tabernacling in the flesh.

Seven days were spent in observing this feast of the dedication, and great was the joy of God's chosen amongst the people of Israel. On the fifteenth day of this same month was the feast of tabernacles; and Solomon and the congregation kept that feast also for seven days, which, added to the former, makes fourteen. On the three-and-twentieth day of this seventh month, Solomon sent away the people into their tents, glad and merry in heart for all the goodness that the Lord had shewed unto David and Solomon, and to Israel, his people.

In this month, Ethenim, or Tizri, our Lord Jesus, the antitype of the temple, was born, as the learned generally conceive, and was baptized in this month, according to Dr. Lightfoot, being about thirty years of age. I come,

Lastly, to shew, that this temple, with its dedication, and the cloud of glory which filled it, was a type and pre-figuration of Christ's incarnation, and filling the temple of his body with all the fulness of the Godhead.

That the temple was a type of Christ's body, we have our Lord's own words to confirm our apprehensions. He declared it, when he said to the Jews, " Destroy this temple, and in three days will I raise it up; but he spake of the temple of his body." John ii. 19, 21. He spake of the one as a figure of the other; it was a type of Christ's body thus: the model of the temple was given by the Spirit of God to David, and the temple was built by Solomon in direct conformity there unto. So the same Spirit Jehovah framed, articulated, And built up the human nature of Christ. Jehovah the Spirit formed it fit for the essential Word to assume into personal union with himself; by his assumption of it, he became God-man, perfect God and perfect man, in two distinct natures in one person ; in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the infinite incomprehensible Essence; so that he is " over all God, blessed for ever. Amen."

The temple, with its curious workmanship and sculpture, with its value and glory, with its furniture and veils, with its services and ordinances, was an exhibition of Christ's body; the perfection of which exceeds all description; the purity and holiness of it extends beyond the utmost stretch of conception.

The temple was a type and pre-figuration of Christ's incarnation ; it was an outward, sacred, and solemn pledge and memorial, that in the fulness of time, the everlasting covenant, which obtained between the Eternal Three, before all worlds, would be realized and carried into execution by the incarnation of Jehovah, the essential and only-begotten Son of God, who would be made flesh, made

of a woman, made under the law, to redeem his people who were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons.

Christ, the Holy One of Israel, the Holy One of God, is stiled the Most Holy, Dan. ix. 24. in allusion to the holiest of all in the temple of Solomon. The cloud of glory which came down and filled the house, was a divine and solemn pre-figuration that the Son of God would fill the temple of his humanity with all the fulness of Godhead. And, like as the glory of, the Lord filled the house of the Lord, and Jehovah dwelt in the cloud in the holiest between the cherubim ; so in Christ, God-man, the true and living temple, which the Lord pitched and not man, the antitype of Solomon's, all the essential fulness of Godhead, with all the incommunicable perfections of the divine nature, invariably dwell. His name is, " I AM," John viii. 58. which he declares and asserts, to prove his own necessary self-existence, or, that he was a person of the essence existing.

The testimony which God gave of his approbation of what Solomon had done in building the temple, when the cloud of glory came down, and filled the house, was an outward, visible, solemn evidence of the infinite acceptance and delight his co-equal Son, the blessed Mediator, the Head and Saviour of his church and people, had found with him, and that the memorials of his incarnation, and emblems of his oblation and passion, were well-pleasing unto him; which may remind us what Jehovah, the Father, afterwards uttered, by the mouth of his servant Isaiah, " Behold mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth ;" which he confirmed

by his own voice from heaven, saying, concerning our most precious Immanuel, " This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The whole congregation uniting at the dedication of the temple, with one heart and one voice, in praising the Lord, expressing their faith, and thus triumphing in the prospect of the accomplishment, that God would be incarnate in the person of his Son, and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, which would be an all-sufficient sacrifice, infinitely and everlastingly efficacious ; which they were as fully assured of, as that they saw the temple with their bodily eyes, and beheld the cloud of glory which rested on it, and filled it, and the fire which came from heaven consuming the sacrifice, may skew us what unity there is in the hearts and affections of true believers, and how it is expressed in heaven. There all the redeemed of the Lord " Sing a new song to him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." Because all the communicable blessings and glories of Godhead will flow into their minds through the incarnation and sacrifice of the worthy Lamb, throughout eternity,

I will conclude with a quotation from Mr. Romaine, ` The dedication of the temple was a great feast : they looked forward by faith to God incarnate as the completion of all their hopes; and when they saw the fire fall and burn up the offering, but spare the offerer, they knew that the divine wrath would fall on the Lamb of God, and consume him to spare them.' The Lord bless what I have set before you on

this subject, and lead you afresh into communion with him
by faith in Jesus. Amen.