

THE
Efficacy of the Blood of Christ:

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, WOOD STREET,
October 22, 1809.

1 JOHN 1. 7.

AND THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST, HIS SON,
CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN.

THIS passage at once proves, that the church of Christ is, naturally, in a filthy and polluted condition, far from God, and incapable of coming to him, having neither will nor power; and that even where the Lord influences the soul, both to will and to do of his good pleasure, the Mercy-Seat is inaccessible, without the cleansing Blood of the GREAT HIGH PRIEST of our profession, Jesus Christ, the Righteous.

Through the great atonement, and the purifying, and cleansing efficacy of that infinitely precious, and peace-proclaiming blood, and through that alone, we have boldness of access unto the

inconceivably pure, and righteous Jehovah: entering the holiest of all, and with an energy peculiar to the faith of God's elect, fervently, familiarly, and affectionately cry, ABBA, FATHER!

The atonement prevails in our behalf—no tremendous frown is seen on the brow, no thunderbolt of vindictive vengeance in the hand of inflexible justice—no fiery law denounces everlasting curses against us—JESUS *fills the throne*—the Father looks upon the face of his own ANOINTED, his best BELOVED, in whom he is well pleased!

His blood speaketh in the heavens!—His blood speaketh in our consciences, better things than that of the blood of *Abel*. It speaketh *to us, in us, and for us*; in language so forcible, so sweet, and overcoming, that it always prevails to the liberation, consolation, and joyful festivity of our souls. It speaketh for us universally, and perpetually. To *justice*—“Atoning blood hath cleansed them, and purged away all their crimes—Where now are thy charges of guilt? His blood is a full receipt for thy tremendous account.” At which justice satisfied, *looks, approves, and smiles!*—To Satan, when accusing a poor sensible sinner, it speaks thus: Take away his filthy garments: Is not this a brand plucked from the burning? Or, Is not his *filth* all cleansed away? And, are not the garments of salvation; those spotless, noble, royal, crimson garments, most

exquisitely wrought by Christ's own hand, and dyed in his blood, sufficient to present him, without spot, before the throne of love? and to introduce him into the company, and give him boldness in the presence of the inconceivably splendid, magnificent, and august courtiers, who encircle the throne of God, and the Lamb? Nay, to give him boldness in the sacred presence of the KING of KINGS, and the LORD of LORDS? Satan, the Lord rebuke thee! He is a brand plucked from the burning, by that omnipotent arm of redemption, which none of your malicious forces, nor artifices, shall ever, in the least, *unnerve*, till judgment be brought forth unto victory; till thine empire in the hearts of God's elect be overthrown, and all the redeemed plucked from the burning of sin, the world, and thy temptations, by the hand of eternal love, into the world of eternal glory.

IN us, sprinkled upon the conscience, it proclaims peace: and TO us, declares, in the most delightful accents, "Though your sins be *many*, and of *long* standing, very aggravating, and so grievously stubborn, that you cannot subdue, nor obtain a victory over it, notwithstanding all your endeavours:"—though sin dwells within you, and does so easily beset you, fear not, look to JESUS, who has suffered, and atoned, for those very sins which are now your burden, grief, perplexity,

and bitterest complaint before the Lord. He receiveth sinners, because he died for them; and such redeemed sinners, called, and established in the truth, daily live upon the great contents of this delightful sentence; “*The blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin!*”

As sin is felt, acknowledged, and hated, by every regenerated sinner, and is our daily, and almost perpetual plague, by its internal hostility to the new, and hidden man of the heart; surely nothing can be more encouraging, animating, and delightful, than to hear of the “*Great Purifier of the sons of Levi,*” whose heart’s blood is an open fountain, accessible to every poor sinner led there by the eternal Spirit, to know its cleansing efficacy, in producing unspotted purity of heart. Redemption by the blood of Christ, particular and certain redemption, is the good hope, fervent plea, and sure refuge, of the sinner who feels sin’s impurity, plague, and power: salvation flowing from the heart of Jesus in crimson streams; the complete removal of ALL SIN from the church of God, by that great and complete atonement, is the foundation upon which the great apostle stood, when exulting, with a joy peculiar to the divine life, in the purity, justification, and certain salvation of God’s people: Romans viii. 34. “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ who died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession

for us!" And in this, we, who know the Lord rejoice, confide, and triumph; knowing that "There is no other name given under the heavens, among men, whereby we must be saved," but the divinely sweet name of **JESUS CHRIST OF NAZARETH**; and that there is no deliverance from the guilt, filth, and consequence of sin, but by the cleansing of his blood; and, above all, knowing its virtue to cleanse, not only by the apostle's testimony, but more especially by a purged conscience, and purified heart, we esteem it our exalted privilege to investigate the great concerns of our salvation; and, at this time, the **ATONEMENT**, the complete atonement of our **IMMANUEL**, by which we are cleansed, and eternally exempt from the charge of sin!

May the Lord, then, favour us with his gracious presence, in the discussion of this admirable subject, that we may pursue it with ardent affection, glowing and intrepid zeal, serious solemnity and increasing delight!

I propose to consider,

I. Whose blood cleanseth—the blood of **JESUS CHRIST, HIS SON.**

II. What it cleanseth from—**ALL SIN.**

III. Its cleansing efficacy and effects.

IV. Who it cleanses—us;—poor sinners,
called to know ourselves, and our
election in Christ.

With an animating hope that the Lord will attend me with his presence and blessing, and render his truth effectual in our abounding consolation, I proceed to offer to your serious consideration,

I. Whose blood cleanseth.

The blood of JESUS—by this glorious, and supereminently exalted name, his Eternal Godhead is asserted, and revealed too conspicuously to admit the shadow of a doubt, or to suffer any wise and unprejudiced man, who will allow the literal meaning of the word, to advance a single argument against it!

JESUS! O precious name! soul-enamouring word! Beaming with all the glories of heaven, proclaiming the deliverance of sinners from the ruins of the Fall, and breaking upon the attentive ear with sounds too melodious for nature: sounds which vibrate only through the regenerate soul, and to which no other powers can give reverberation, but those of the new man in Christ. JESUS! What does it mean? literally, JEHOVAH, A SAVIOUR: God manifest in the flesh, (1 Timothy iii. 16.) A child, born into this world, and yet

the MIGHTY GOD! (Isaiah ix. 6.) Immanuel,
God with us. (Matthew i. 23.)

Wonderful mystery! unparalleled condescension! immeasurable descent! The mystery of Deity incarnate, the condescension of a God, and the descent of the King of Glory, the Creator of all things, to dwell among worms of the earth! Jesus, Jehovah the Saviour, the only wise God, arrayed in human flesh! Taking our place, that he might take our sins, conquer our foes, and crown his triumph over them, with our eternal salvation! Blessed be the name of Jesus! Blessed be the glorious name of his Majesty for ever! That divinely illustrious name, hated by infidels, dreaded by devils, but loved, and adored, by all the regenerated sons and daughters of the Almighty! Jesus hath cleansed us from all our sins! JEHOVAH is our Saviour—wearing our flesh—our brother near a kin, clothed in a body like unto our own, in which, not only dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, but all the immense riches of unfading love, and all the fulness of grace, and everlasting salvation!

2. CHRIST; *the anointed.* Anointed, and set apart by everlasting love, for the filling and executing of certain glorious, infinitely holy, and exalted offices. As the High Priest, under the ceremonial law, was anointed with a *sacred unction*, as a qualification for the execution of his office, so JESUS, arrayed in human flesh, received the

Spirit without measure ; who through the Eternal Spirit, offered, not the sacrifice of bulls and goats, but HIMSELF ; his human soul and body upon the altar of his divinity : and, as “ the altar sanctifieth the gift,” it became eternally efficacious in removing sin, and infinitely satisfying to offended justice ; purifying, everlastingly, all for whom he died.

CHRIST, the Lord’s anointed, a Lamb of his own providing, a body of his own preparing ; anointed, and set apart, to die for his people : according to his own declaration, “ Thus it is written, and thus it *behoved* Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day :” (Luke xxiv. 46.) which, according to the apostle’s account, he hath done effectually : “ Those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath fulfilled ;” (Acts iii. 18.) and, according to Paul’s account, of indispensable necessity, who, as his manner was, reasoning with the Jews out of the Scriptures, “ opened and alledged that Christ must *needs* have suffered.” (Acts xvii. 3.) Hence we may fairly infer, nay, must unavoidably conclude, that Christ, as the second person in the Trinity, in the Covenant of Grace, proposed, at a certain specified and appointed time, to become very man, in order to be capable of dying ; and that by so dying on the cross, and cancelling all their sins, he should infallibly bring many sons to glory ; even as many as the Father had given him.

And as all things written in the prophets are fulfilled by him, he certainly hath brought forth judgment unto victory, and shall see his seed, the travail of his soul, the trophies of his conquests, all in the world of glory; encircling his royal throne, with palms of victory in their hands, and crowns of salvation on their heads!

CHRIST, the anointed *King of Israel*: and being lineally the Son of David, he had certainly an hereditary right to that crown and kingdom: and it appears, his disciples must have entertained an idea of his coronation, and accession to that throne; for, immediately after his death, they lamentingly said, "We thought it had been him who should have restored the kingdom unto Israel:" and hence those who imbrued their hands in his blood, mockingly exclaimed, "Let Christ, the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." But what a gross and fallacious idea! "His kingdom is not of this world:" it is all glorious, spiritual, heavenly, and eternal. "Him hath God exalted with his own right hand to be a *Prince* and a *Saviour*, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts v. 31.) His reign on earth is maintained in Sion by the Spirit's powerful application of the Gospel, by which we know that his "kingdom is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost." (Romans xiv. 17.)

And he will extend his empire, by carrying

his Gospel to the ends of the earth ; for he is KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS ; which unparalleled title is written on his thigh, to show that he will “ Gird his sword there, and with his glory and majesty, ride prosperously because of truth and meekness, that his right hand may teach him terrible things.”

And when, as the *anointed King of Israel*, he shall have gathered all his elect from the “ four winds of the earth ;” they shall be for ever with him, their Lord, to behold him, in all the inconceivable grandeur of heavenly majesty and magnificence, crowned by saints and angels, THE LORD OF HOSTS, MIGHTY IN BATTLE, THE KING OF GLORY !

3. HIS SON. The Son of God in a two-fold sense, pre-eminently, and *eternally*, as the second person in the Trinity ; not begotten ; that is too gross an idea ; but in the economy of the Covenant of Grace, and in his official capacity, as *Mediator* between God and man, set up from everlasting : not the human soul of Christ set up from everlasting : that sentiment, though embraced by some, who, I believe, are taught of God, is absurdity in the extreme ! and though taught by the Spirit, in other important matters, I am persuaded he never taught them to imbibe a sentiment so averse, both to the divinity and humanity of Christ ! But the glory which the Eternal Son had with the Father, before all worlds, was his

mediatorial glory—proposing, and engaging, to take upon him our nature, exempt from sin; and in order to accomplish this, he became the Son of God, in a *secondary* sense, by the Holy Ghost overshadowing the Virgin, and his consequent miraculous conception in her womb. On which account the Spirit saith, “When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his SON, *made* of a woman, *made* under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Galatians iv. 4, 5.

Thus I have considered, and I am persuaded, clearly proved, to the satisfaction of all who know, and love the gospel, WHOSE blood cleanseth from all sin: that it is no less than the blood of Jesus, Jehovah the Saviour—Christ, the Lord’s anointed—The Son of God—whose precious blood, by virtue of the wonderful union of God and man, in *One Person*, is most emphatically denominated “*The blood of God* ;” not that Deity could bleed: but the man, being a part of the very same Person with the Godhead, is, alone upon the ground of this delightful union, very consistently, and truly entitled, “*The Man, God’s fellow* ;” whose blood was shed by Deity, in as much as Deity dwelt in, and actuated the humanity: and, therefore, though God was not sacrificed, it was a sacrifice made by the eternal God, Christ Jesus our Lord!

This is a great and unsearchable mystery; but it is also a great, essential, and very precious truth: for if his blood could not be proved thus DIVINELY RICH; but, on the contrary, disproved, I must for ever sink in despair, the church of Christ perish, and every individual of the human race fail of salvation!

But our Jesus fills the throne above, and it is the express command of heaven, "That all men honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." When he bringeth his first begotten into the world, he saith, "And let all the angels of God worship him."

I proceed then to shew,

II. From what his blood cleanses—from sin, from ALL sin.

Sin, the most potent enemy, and perpetual plague of a new man in Christ, is that most monstrous, detestable thing, which no terms can ever fully define, nor language, the most powerful and expressive, ever sufficiently reprobate!

Those who daily feel, and lament the power and plague of sin, alone, are able to form any idea of its nauseousness, filthiness, and mischievous, malevolent, and direful effects! Sin, dwelling within him, was the greatest enemy Paul ever met with, and the heaviest burden he ever com-

plained of, or groaned under. Though, in other instances, he endured much, we scarcely hear a complaint.

He tells us himself, of his amazing sufferings from the cruelty of the Jews, from whom he had received many *stripes*, and buffetings; and from hunger and nakedness—"but, none of these things, saith he, move me;" "I have learned, in whatever state I am, therewith to be content," (a lesson we can learn as soon as Paul, when it pleases the Lord to teach us.)—He appears in the midst of all, to make no kind of complaint; cheerfully submitting to the will of the Lord. But, when this grand enemy, SIN, attacked him, got him down, wounded, and stript his soul of spiritual delights, his anguish was extreme; his sorrows swell too enormously for mental detention, he must give them vent by an exclamation the most bitter, and a metaphor the most nauseously and horribly striking—"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Romans vii. 24.

On no other occasion, that I know of, did Paul call himself a *wretch*. An apostle, and yet a *wretched man*! O the bitterness and plague of indwelling sin, to the regenerated soul! Comparable to a putrified carcase, chained to a living man; after that cruel punishment inflicted on culprits in some of the Eastern nations.

Sin is that diabolic poison, which, upon all occasions, imbitters the cup of human life, and produces the most pungent and melancholy woes!

It is that cloud of darkness which has overspread the universe, and thrown all the posterity of *Adam* into an abyss of the extremest ignorance of God and truth! It is that cloud, that thick cloud, which veils the christian mind with gloominess, and hides from him the light and beauty of the Sun of Righteousness! a cloud, which none but the Lord can remove; and which, according to his own declaration, he has done, for his dear people, by the shedding of his blood, and often chases away, by the brightness of his appearance: "I have, saith the Lord, blotted out, as a *thick cloud*, thy transgressions, and as a *cloud* thy sins: return unto me for I have redeemed thee." Isaiah xliv. 22.

It is that hell-born tyrant, which usurps dominion over every human soul, and holds them all, bound in adamantine chains, its servile and perpetual slaves!

Who, then, that knows sin, can love it, show it any favour, or give it any quarters?

The *New Man* has an everlasting hatred to sin, and can no more be reconciled to it, than a

slave to his chains, or a person of a most delicate appetite, to feeding upon the most *putrified* human body!

It has marred the most beautiful part of God's creation, spread devastation round the globe, and brought ruin upon an universe of men and women! Nay, more, it has, doubtless, consigned to the regions of everlasting misery, thousands and thousands of souls, who are justly suffering the punishment proportioned by inflexible justice, to their demerit, and sinful deserts! But, above all, O ye believers in Jesus! it has put to death, to the most ignominious, painful, and unparalleled death, the Son of God! Who was led as a sheep to the slaughter, by a banditti of sin's slaves, that imbrued their hands in his most precious blood!

Sin nailed him to the cross, pierced his hands and feet, wrung his soul with anguish never felt before, and produced the indignant sword of justice, which entered his affectionate heart!

Sin! hateful monster of innumerable and untold cruelties! which causes our hearts to ach, by perpetually interrupting our comforts, and promoting our afflictions and sorrows!—It shall not always reign! Blessed be God for the unspeakable gift of his dear and well beloved Son! who hath, by his sufferings, and atonement, taken away, and cleansed us from, all our sin!

We yet lament its plague and power, and the many innovations, and grievous inroads which it makes upon us: but, notwithstanding its molestations, and inimical hostility to our best interests, we triumph over it, as a *vanquished* enemy; which, however it may grieve, shall never be able to injure our *new man*: for, "Sin shall not have dominion over you," is the gracious promise. However it may fight and rage, and even though you feel it a whole *putrid* body, it shall not have dominion—it shall not, it cannot *conquer* and *govern* the hidden man of the heart; who never will give approbation, nor consent to the *reign of sin*; although our old man, who is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ever loves it, and most strongly pleads for its sole, and absolute dominion.

But it never can be said that dominion is obtained, till the party to be subdued strikes colours, lays down arms, and, with a discontinuation of defensive exertions, quietly resigns, with acknowledgments of being completely conquered, swearing, through necessity, allegiance to the conqueror.

This our *new man* will never do: and till that is done, sin can never be said to have dominion over you, though it dwells in your hearts.

As soon shall heaven and hell be reconciled, become one, and shake hands in friendly union,

as the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*; for “these are contrary the one to the other;” (Galatians v. 17.) so that we may, each one, for ourselves, safely, and fairly conclude with the apostle, “I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the *mind* I myself serve the law of God; but with the *flesh* the law of sin.” (Romans vii. 24.)

I shall now proceed to consider the subject more *doctrinally*, and with a triumph over sin, through my dear bleeding Lord, to give such a definition of it, as the Lord may enable me, for his glory, to give, upon the ground of *scriptural* representation. What the Scriptures declare, I wish, upon all occasions, positively to affirm: and upon that consideration shall say,

1st. *Sin* is the transgression of the law. “Who-soever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.” (1 John iii. 4.)

Every action, word, or thought, hostile to the divine purity, incompetent with the most unimpeachable justice, and derogatory to infinite and everlasting holiness, is justly denominated *Sin*: and as “by the law is the knowledge of sin,” such an hostility to immaculate purity, such incompetibility with strict and undeviating justice, is very rightly called, the transgression of the law: and, therefore, every thing which is a violation of that infinitely holy law, whether an action, an

expression, or a thought, exposes a sinner to all that fiery condemnation, and those vengeful curses, which it so inflexibly, and awfully denounces against those "who continue not in all things written therein, to do them."

"All unrighteousness is sin," (1 John v. 7.) the least unrighteousness, if only in a thought, deviating from unspotted holiness, is a flagrant violation of God's law: for "he who offends in one point is guilty of all;" and as "in many things we all offend," I may fairly infer,

First, The utter impossibility of salvation by works, or the deeds of the law; and *Second*, The absolute necessity of Christ's fulfilling the law, punctually, and completely, in order to our deliverance from its curse, and the tyrannic dominion and dreadful consequences of *sin*; or, in other words, he must take the offences of his people into his own account, and endure the penalty threatened and incurred, to procure their discharge, and bring them into the presence of his Father, without a sinful spot, a dishonourable blemish, or so much as a wrinkle in any one part!

For except sin is cleansed away, even though the Lord loves his people unremittingly and everlastingly, He cannot, consistently with his holiness, take possession of them; neither can they enter into his divine and glorious presence.

2nd. Sin hath usurped sovereign, and absolute dominion over all mankind : and, so clearly is this melancholy truth stated in Scripture, and confirmed by the ravages which sin has made in the world, as well as, secretly, in our experience, that I do not hesitate to pronounce man, not only a willing slave to sin, but so securely bound in its massy chains, that he is incapable, even when the Lord hath given him a will, of leaving its vassalage, and detestable servitude. This the inspired Paul, after the most critical examination, found to be the melancholy fact : “ I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.” Romans vii. 21. “ For,” saith he, at another time, “ Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.” 2 Corinthians iii. 5. Where, then, is the boasted free-will of man, to obey and love God, and, believingly, to embrace the Great Saviour of sinners? If man’s heart is thus deceitful above all things, desperately wicked, and a source of every thing vile and iniquitous, where are those pure streams of inherent holiness, fleshly sanctification, and natural love to God, which we are, sometimes, gravely told, are produced by some holy people, as an essential recommendation to God, and an indispensable preparation for death and glory? Such a boast of *free-will*, such pretensions to creature-goodness, and inherent righteousness, in my opinion, stand among the most lucid evidences of sin’s dominion