

These prophecies had been, to a certain degree, fulfilled in other parts of their history : but there was to be a time, when the wrath of God should come upon them to the uttermost\*. This time was now come, when their city was destroyed, and their land desolated, by the arms of Titus. Then, as Jesus prophesied of them, were the days of vengeance, that all things, which were written, should be fulfilled : then, were they to be led away captive into all nations : and thenceforth, was Jerusalem to be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the TIMES of the Gentiles should be fulfilled †.

4. Of the conversion of the *Gentiles*, our Lord, though a Jew, and considered as a man only, in the lowest class of the Jews, that is, of the most confined and bigoted education, was not restrained from giving that sublime command to his followers.—GO AND TEACH ALL NATIONS. He quoted a prophecy from

\* 1 Thess. ii. 16. † Luke xxi. 22, 24. See Bishop Hurd on Prophecy; Vol. I. Sermon VI.

Isaiah, in the following words— Behold, my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased : I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment, i. e. DECLARE A NEW LAW, to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets ; a bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench ; i. e. (as all interpreters explain these proverbial expressions) he shall not employ the least degree of force or violence in the propagation of this law, till he send forth judgment unto victory ; till it finally prevail against all opposition ; and in his name shall the Gentiles trust\*.

How far these prophecies have been fulfilled, though they once seemed as incredible as any prophecy yet unaccomplished, merits your serious consideration. Indulge it, by comparing what is *now* history with these remarkable predictions. Thus, what is fulfilled

\* Matt. xii. 18, 21, as expounded by BISHOP HURD.

already,

already, will lead you to expect the accomplishment of other events in their appointed seasons. But, I hope, you will always be upon your guard, lest you should pretend to open what is yet concealed, or assume the gift of prophecy to yourselves, or listen to the spurious prophecies of illiterate and conceited people.

II. The objections which are thrown in our way, to make us inattentive to the prophetic declarations of Jesus Christ, are trifling; at least such as I have met with are no better; and, therefore, they may soon be dismissed.

1. It is said, the prophetic declarations of Jesus Christ cannot prove him to be the Messiah, because Moses, and other prophets, have prophesied of the *same* things.

We answer, if there was not a single prophecy peculiar to Christ, (which is far from being the fact,) it is plain, that two prophets might prophecy of the same events, by the  
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same spirit, without the second, in any respect, being indebted to the first : and their agreement, though it indicates equal inspiration, does not allow us to suppose, they were, in every view, of the same character.—Moses and Balaam prophesied of the same events : yet Balaam was not the servant of God ; nor was he king in Jeshurun.

Besides ; the prophets who were *before* Christ, spake of him as the promised Messiah. To him, as hath been noticed\*, give *all* the prophets witness ; and, of those who came *after* him, they not only confirm what their predecessors had said of our Lord, but the *last* of them affirms, that the *spirit* of peophecy is the testimony of Jesus.

Further ; we may observe, that Christ prophesied of himself as the HEAD of his church, and that, as such, he was to be revered to the end of the world : a thing unattempted either by any prophet in the former

\* See SERMON I.

dispensation,

dispensation, or under the present state of divine favour. Yet he who prophesied thus of his peculiar dignity said, Learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly in heart. How to account for this, without distinguishing between the nature which he took upon him, and that, which may, with emphasis, be called his own, I cannot conceive.

In short, only of Jesus can it be said, that he hath prevailed to open the book of future events, and to loose the seven seals thereof. All, therefore, that John saw was by his favour. Of this we are informed in the *beginning* of the Revelations, and we are again reminded of the same fact at the *close* of that mysterious book. The first words of the Apocalypse are these: The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must, some of them, shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel, unto his servant John: and near the close of these revelations we read, I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto *you* these things in the churches:

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I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

2. Some have objected, that if from the *miracles* and *prophecies* of Christ, it appears he was the promised MESSIAH, and that we are not to look for another, it does not follow, that his Person is truly divine, or that he made a real atonement for sin by his death on the cross.

We ask then, *who* is he that we might believe in him? and *what* hath he done, that may sufficiently induce us to confide in his mediation? To these questions, they who thus object, reply so loosely, and in a manner so inconsistent with what is written of him in the sacred scriptures, that, for my own part, while those writings are properly revered, I have no notion that any person who fears God, will be much hurt by their chicane: what injury they may do to them who choose to live by sight, and not by faith, and who are fonder of ancient or modern philosophy, than of the doctrines of inspiration, I pretend not to de-

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termine. How far the words of Jeremiah are applicable to such people, they would do well to consider. The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed, and taken : lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord ; and what wisdom is in them ?

I shall now conclude this discourse by deducing some of those inferences which the subject of it thus proposed and pursued, seems to excite.

From the prophetic powers of Jesus Christ, we may infer, that those things he has not foretold, as well, and as much, as those things which he hath thought proper to predict, are open and manifest in his sight. Peter said nothing more than the bare truth, when he said, Lord, thou knowest all things. To entertain, therefore, the strongest views of the omniscieney of Christ, is to indulge a temper which cannot be criminal, but which may be improved by us to our daily advantage.

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If we unite the combined powers of prophecy and miracles that meet in him who is the Son of God, we must believe that he is able to subdue even all things to himself; and that, if his kingdom does not approach so rapidly, or increase to that extent, as some have expected, other reasons than want of power must be assigned for its present contracted state.—Till the Apostles were endued with power from on high, of his kingdom they had the grossest apprehensions; and we have facts in plenty to convince us, that without the continued operations of divine power, the kingdom of our Lord is never augmented in the minds, or hearts, of men. But we are sure, that divine power cannot languish; and we have reason to believe, that infinite understanding is unsearchable. Why, therefore, should we censure what we cannot comprehend, or despair of the final accomplishment of that which Christ hath purposed to fulfil? I must again repeat it, that what hath come to pass, warrants our firm belief in what is



yet to be fulfilled ; and authorises us to say of  
Jesus Christ, Blessed are all they who put  
their trust in him ! AMEN.

SERMON

## SERMON XII.

### ON THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

LUKE XXIV. 26.

SHOULD NOT CHRIST TO HAVE SUFFERED THESE  
THINGS ?

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**M**EN in all ages have believed, that there is a close connection between suffering and salvation. The great question on which they have been so much divided, is not, whether sinners can be saved without stripes, but by *whose* stripes they are healed.

Of being saved by the sorrows of a substitute, we have no notion from the mere light of nature, nor any instruction from the moral law of God : but by the scriptures we are taught expressly, that Christ died for the

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unjust ;

unjust; and that, there is none other name under heaven, given amongst men, whereby we must be saved.

A fact of this importance could not be withheld from the church of God in the earliest period of its existence : and from Paul's defence of himself before king Agrippa, it appears, that what this Apostle taught of redemption by Jesus Christ, was nothing *new*. Having, said he, obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing to both small and great, saying, *none* other things than those which the prophets and Moses DID SAY SHOULD COME ; that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead.—The same fact appears with equal evidence from our Lord's language to the two disciples who were going to Emmaus. O! fools, said he, and slow of heart to believe, all that the prophets have spoken ! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into his glory ? And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he EXPOUNDED unto them in all the  
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the scriptures, the things concerning himself.

From the words I first read, permit me to remind you of **THOSE THINGS** which Christ suffered, and why he **OUGHT** to have suffered those things.—Of his entering into his glory, I shall have occasion to say something in the following discourse.

I. Concerning the **SUFFERINGS** of Christ, I would first of all remark, that whatever he suffered, it was from *others*; never doing any thing **HIMSELF**, which he wished he had left undone, never leaving any thing unfinished which he desired to perform, never doing that which was disproved of his Father, nor that his friends could justly censure, or his enemies properly condemn.

This excellence of character in Christ, exempted him from those pains which are most tremendous to human nature: for a wounded spirit who can bear? But then, his character exposed him to many sorrows, which, next

to a guilty conscience, are insupportable. To be hated without a cause, to be rejected without, nay against all reason, and to be put to death for the most benevolent intentions, and actions, by his own nation; this, however we may affect to treat it on speculation, this, in real anguish, must be considered an inconceivable affliction.

But, to form proper notions of the sorrows of Christ, in those things which he suffered on our account, let us descend to particulars, and attend to his amiable temper when he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

It is obvious, that he suffered much in his personal character, in his body, and in his soul; and chiefly from his bearing the full force of that *curse* which was due to the sins of his people. But, we have already observed, his sufferings were from *others*, not from HIMSELF. Let us then distinctly consider, from whom he suffered those things which he so wisely, and so patiently endured.

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1. He suffered much from MEN. In those who were, comparatively speaking, *good* men, he saw there was that degree of unbelief, hardness of heart, and perversity of temper, which he could not behold without that compassion for them which increased his painful sensations.—As the ridicule, and revilings of *bad* men, were a more direct attempt against his ministry, and mission, and, as by them, he was betrayed and crucified, from such men, his sufferings were much augmented: under their hands, his afflictions were, by divine permission, carried to the last extremity.—But, among *these* bad men, the majority of them, were mean and despicable offenders; without honour, without learning, without common sense; slaves to the vilest appetites, prejudices, and passions; men who were driven to any point which their unprincipled leaders wished them to turn; by such miscreants, to be spit upon, blindfolded, smitten, and crucified, these were sufferings which none but the Son of God could have sustained, to answer that end for which he died.—If mighty men did not descend to such

such illiberal actions, *they* must be considered as the immediate sources of those affronts and abuses, which the Lord of glory received. They took counsel against him, and, by their iniquitous decisions, delivered him up into the hands of their contemptible creatures.—In short, as those *individuals*, who possessed every bad quality which our nature will admit, threw something into that cup which our Lord was ordained to drink, so *collective* bodies of men, both Jews and Gentiles, added so many bitters to the nauseous draught, that we cannot conceive how either folly, or madness, could have made it more irksome to humanity.

2. From *evil* ANGELS, the sufferings of Jesus Christ was attended with additional aggravations. Either by their direct temptations, or by the influence of their suggestions, our Redeemer was very much molested.—Of the first of these afflictions, we have taken perhaps sufficient notice in a former discourse\*. Of the second, I presume

\* Sermon VI.—On the Temptations of Christ.

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the current doctrine of the scriptures, in reference to the influence of evil angels over bad men, to be well known.—Add to this, the rebuke that was given to Peter, and what is said of the fall of Satan, and you will conclude, that what our Lord suffered from such agents was very grievous. But,

3. The most affecting view of the sufferings of the Son of God, is that which exhibits him as *immediately* suffering from his FATHER. We are told, he spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all; that it pleased him to put him to grief, and to make his soul an offering for sin. All that Christ suffered was undoubtedly under divine direction; but those sufferings which were most grievous seem to have proceeded more immediately from his father's vengeance, than uninstructed, we should have dared to have thought. Yet when we attend to such expressions as these, He began to be sorrowful, and very heavy—My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death—O! my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me—

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My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? we must, I think, conclude, that what Christ suffered from the vengeance of his Father, was much more than all he either felt or feared from angels and from men. Beneath that stroke which smote the shepherd of Israel, and scattered his sheep, our Lord expired; and, from the nature, manner, and circumstances of his death, we may conclude, no sorrow was ever like, or equal to his sorrow, and that the blessings of his grace are proportioned to the merit of his oblation.

But, as the sufferings of Christ are essential to our peace, it may be worth our while to take some notice of those things which he suffered during the last week in which he dwelt among us in this present evil world: since in that, according to the prediction of Daniel, he finished transgression, and made an end of sin; made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness.

On the *first* day of this memorable week,  
which

which is now called SUNDAY, our Lord made his public entrance into Jerusalem, in the manner which had been foretold by Zechariah. He was met by a very great multitude, who spread their garments in the way, and by others, who cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth, of Galilee. But our Lord, to shew that his kingdom was not of this world, went, not to the palace, but to the temple, where it seems, the merchants and money-changers had ventured to return. They were again driven out, and several miraculous cures were performed. At the proceedings of this day, which was afterwards called *Palm Sunday*, the chief priests and scribes were much displeased. Our Lord having rebuked them for their pride and unbelief, went out  
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of the city, to Bethany, to the house of Lazarus, and lodged there.—Of the transactions of this day it is said, These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

On the *second* day, which is now called **MONDAY**, Jesus returned again to Jerusalem, and taught in the temple. It was in his way thither that the fruitless fig-tree was cursed. Jesus said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it. Now his zeal for his own house, was very conspicuous. Is it not written, said he, My house shall be called of all nations, the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves. And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people were astonished at his doctrine. And when the evening was come, he

he went out of the city, and returned again to Bethany.

On the *third* day, which is now called **TUESDAY**, a third time our Lord went up into the temple ; and, it is supposed, that it was on this journey his disciples looking on the barren fig-tree, said, How soon is the fig-tree withered away !—While our Lord was preaching this day in the temple, the scribes, pharisees, and sadducees, proposed to him many ensnaring questions ; who were each of them answered according to their folly. Exasperated at the wisdom of Christ in his answers and parables, they sought to lay hands on him ; but they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet. —In the afternoon of this day, as Christ departed from the temple in order to return to Bethany, he seated himself with his disciples, on mount Olivet, from whence he had a full view of that magnificent structure. In this situation, one of his disciples said to him, Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here. Jesus replied, Seest thou  
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