

# A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY, BOOK 5

by John Gill

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*The fifth book of Gill's systematic theology, covering the doctrines of grace including effectual calling, justification, adoption, sanctification, and perseverance of the saints. A comprehensive treatment of soteriology from a thoroughgoing Calvinist perspective.*

14 Chapters

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## 05-01 Of the Incarnation of Christ

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### A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 1 Of the Incarnation of Christ

Having treated, in the preceding Book, of the exhibition of the covenant of grace, both under the Old and New Testament dispensations, and of the law and gospel, as held forth in both; and of the latter only in a general way; I shall now proceed to consider, the particular, special, and important doctrines of the gospel, which express the grace of Christ, and the blessings of grace by him; and shall begin with the incarnation of the Son of God. This is a very considerable part of the glad tidings of the gospel, and which give it that name: when the angels related to the shepherds the birth of Christ, he said unto them; "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy", &c. (Luke 2:10, Luke 2:11). The whole gospel is a mystery; the various doctrines of it are the mysteries of the kingdom; the knowledge of which is given to some, and not to others; it is the mystery of godliness, and, without controversy, great; and this stands the first and principal article of it; "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16). This is the basis of the Christian religion; a fundamental article of it; and without the belief of it no man can be a Christian; "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God;" born of God, and belongs to him, and is on the side of God and truth; "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God" (1 John 4:2, 1 John 4:3). The incarnation of Christ is a most extraordinary and amazing affair; it is wonderful indeed, that the eternal Son of God should become man; that he should be born of a pure virgin, without any concern of man in it; that this should be brought about by the power of the Holy Ghost, in a way unseen, imperceptible and unknown, signified by his overshadowing; and all this in order to effect the most wonderful work that ever was done in the world, the redemption and salvation of men: it is a most mysterious thing, incomprehensible by men, and not to be accounted for upon the principles of natural reason; and is only to be believed and embraced upon the credit of divine revelation, to which it solely belongs. The heathens had some faint notions of it; at least say some things similar to it. The Brachmanes among the Indians, asserted, that Wistnavius, the second person of the trine-une god with them, had nine times assumed a body, and sometimes an human one; and would once more do the same again; and that he was once born of a virgin [1]. Confucius, the famous Chinese philosopher, who lived almost five hundred years before Christ, it is said [2], foresaw that the Word would be made flesh; and foretold the year in which it would be; and which was the very year in which Christ was born: but this seems to savour too much of the tale of a Christian in later times. However, several of the deities and heroes of the heathens, Greeks and Romans, are represented as having no father [3]. Now whatever notion the heathens had of an incarnate God, or of a divine Person born of a virgin, in whatsoever manner expressed; this was not owing to any discoveries made by the light of nature, but what was traditionally handed down to them, and was the broken remains of a revelation their ancestors were acquainted with. Otherwise the incarnation of the Son of God, is a doctrine of pure revelation; in treating of which I shall consider,

1. First, The subject of the incarnation, or the divine Person that became incarnate. The evangelist John says it was the Word, the essential Word of God; "The word was made flesh, and dwelt

among us" (John 1:14). And therefore not the Father; for he is distinguished from the "Word", in the order of the Trinity (1 John 5:7). And, he is said to be the "Word with God;" that is, with God the Father; and therefore must be distinct from him (Revelation 19:13; Acts 20:32; John 1:1). Besides, the Father never so much as appeared in an human form; and much less took real flesh; nay, never was seen in any shape by the Jews (John 5:37). And though their ancestor heard a voice, and a terrible one at Sinai, they saw no similitude (Deuteronomy 4:12). And wherever we read of any visible appearance of a divine Person in the Old Testament, it is always to be understood, not of the first, but of the second Person. And it may be further observed, that the Father prepared a body, an human nature in his purpose, council and covenant, for another, and not for himself, even for his Son, as he acknowledges; "A body hast thou prepared me;" (Hebrews 10:5). To which may be added, that that divine Person who came in the flesh, or became incarnate, is always distinguished from the Father, as being sent by him; "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3). And again; "God sent forth his Son made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4), that is, God the Father, in both passages; as appears from the relation of the Person to him, sent in the flesh, his Son. Once more, if the Father had been incarnate, he must have suffered and died; for that is the end of the incarnation, that the Person incarnate, might obey, suffer, and die, in the room of sinners; so Christ suffered in the flesh, and was put to death in the flesh. There were a set of men in ancient times, who embraced the Sabellian folly, and were called Patripassians, because they held that the Father suffered; and, indeed, if there is but one Person in the Deity, and Father, Son, and Spirit are only so many names and manifestations of that one Person; then it must be equally true of the Father as of the Son, that he became incarnate, obeyed, suffered, and died. But this notion continued not long, but was soon rejected, as it must be by all that read their Bible with any care. Nor is it the Holy Spirit that became incarnate, for the same reasons that the Father cannot be thought to be so: and besides, he had a peculiar hand, and a special agency, in the formation of the human nature, and in its conception and birth: when the Virgin hesitated about what was told her by the angel, she was assured by him, that the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and the power of the Highest should overshadow her; and accordingly the birth of Christ was on this wise, when Joseph and Mary were espoused, before they came together, "she was found with child of the Holy Ghost;" and Joseph was told, in order to encourage him to take her to wife, that what was "conceived in her, was of the Holy Ghost;" and therefore he himself was not incarnate; (see Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:18, Matthew 1:20). It remains, that it is the second Person, the Son of God, who is meant by "the Word that was made flesh", or became incarnate; and, indeed, it is explained of him in the same passage; for it follows; "And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," And it is easy to observe, that the same divine Person that bears the name of the Word, in the order of the Trinity, in one place, has that of the Son in another; by which it appears they are the same; (compare 1 John 5:7 with Matthew 28:19). When this mystery of the incarnation is expressed by the phrase, "God manifest in the flesh;" not God the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, but God the Son is meant, as it is explained (1 John 3:8), for "this purpose the Son of God was manifested;" that is, in the flesh; and as before observed, it was the Son of God that was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in the fulness of time was sent forth, made of a woman (Romans 8:3; Galatians 4:4). He, therefore, is the subject of the incarnation, or the divine Person that became incarnate.

Now the Logos, the Word and Son of God, who is made flesh or become incarnate, is not to be understood of the human soul of Christ; for this Word was "in the beginning with God;" that is, was

with him from all eternity; (see Proverbs 8:22-30), whereas the human soul of Christ is one of the souls that God has made; a creature, a creature of time, as all creatures are; time is an inseparable adjunct and concomitant of a creature; a creature before time, is a contradiction: besides, this Word "was" God, a divine Person, distinct from the Father, though with him, the one God; which cannot be said of the human soul. Likewise, to it is ascribed the creation of all things; "All things were made by him;" not as an instrument, but as the efficient cause; "And without him was not anything made that was made;" and since the human soul is what is made, being a creature; if that is the Word and Son of God, it must be the maker of itself, seeing nothing that is made is made without it; which is too great an absurdity to be admitted. So the creation of all things is elsewhere ascribed to the Son of God, who therefore cannot be a creature; (see Hebrews 1:1, Hebrews 1:2, Hebrews 1:10; Colossians 1:16, Colossians 1:17). To which may be added, that the human soul of Christ is a part of the human nature assumed by him; it is included in the word "flesh", the Word, or Son of God, is said to be made, as will be shown presently; it is a part of that nature of the seed of Abraham, in distinction from the nature of angels, which the Word, or Son of God, a divine Person, took upon him, and into union with him, and therefore cannot be the assumer; the assumer and the assumed cannot be the same, but must be distinct from each other; (see Hebrews 2:14, Hebrews 2:16). Nor by the Logos, or Word, made flesh, are we to understand the divine nature, essentially considered, or the essence of God, as common to the three divine Persons, Father, Son and Spirit; for then it would be equally true of the Father and the Spirit, that they are made flesh, or become incarnate, as of the Son; as it must needs be, if the divine nature, so considered, was incarnated; or the human nature was united to it as such: such phrases are therefore unsound, unsafe, and dangerous; as that the man Christ stands in the divine nature; and that the human nature is united to Deity: this is not the truth of things; the human nature is not united to Deity absolutely considered: but as that in a distinct mode of subsisting, is in the second Person, the Son of God; it was the Son of God, by whom God made the world, and by him speaks to men, in these last days, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; the Creator of angels, and the object of their worship and adoration; and who upholds all things by the word of his power, who partook of the same flesh and blood with the children, and has taken upon him, and assumed to him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; he who was in the form of God, of the same nature with him, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, is he that took upon him the form of a servant, the nature of man in a servile state, was made in the likeness of man, and found in fashion as a man, or really became man. I proceed,

2. Secondly, To observe, in what sense the Word, or Son of God, was "made flesh", became a partaker "of flesh and blood, came in the flesh", and was "manifest in the flesh": all which phrases are made use of to express his incarnation (John 1:14; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 4:2, 1 John 4:3; 1 Timothy 3:16), and signify, that he who is truly God really became man, or assumed the whole human nature, as will be seen presently, into union with his divine person. Socinus is so bold as to say [4], that if any passages of scripture could be found, in which it is expressly said that God was made man, or put on and assumed human flesh, the words must be taken otherwise than as they sound, this being repugnant to the majesty of God. The contrary to this will soon appear; and though this is not to be found in scripture just syllabically, the sense clearly is, as in the scriptures referred to. But there is no dealing with such a man who will talk at this rate; and who elsewhere [5] says, on another account, that the greatest force must be used with the words of the apostle Paul, rather than such a sense be admitted, which yet is obvious. It will be proper to inquire, both

what is meant by flesh, and what by being made flesh.

2a. First, What is meant by flesh, in the phrases and passages referred to. And by it is meant, not a part of the human body, as that may be distinguished from other parts, as the bones, &c. nor the whole human body, as that may be distinguished from the soul or spirit of a man; as in Matthew 26:41 but a whole individual of human nature, consisting of soul and body; as when it is said, "There shall no flesh be justified in his sight": and again, "That no flesh should glory in his presence" (Romans 3:20; 1 Corinthians 1:29) with many other passages; (see Genesis 6:12; Luke 3:6), for such acts as being justified and glorying, can never be said of the flesh or body, abstractly considered; but of the whole man, or of individuals of human nature, consisting of soul and body; and in this sense are we to understand it, when it is used of the incarnation of the Son of God, who took upon him the whole nature of man, assumed a true body and a reasonable soul, being in all things made like unto his brethren; so his flesh signifies his human nature, as distinct from the Spirit, his divine nature (Romans 1:3, Romans 1:41; 1 Peter 3:18).

2a1. He took a true body, not a mere phantom, spectre, or apparition, the appearance of a body, and not a real one; as some fancied, and that very early, even in the times of the apostle John, and afterward; and who imagined, that what Christ was, and did, and suffered, were only seeming, and in appearance, and not in reality; and hence they were called "Docetae": and this they argued from his being sent in the "likeness" of sinful flesh; and being found in fashion as a man; and from the appearances of Christ before his coming; of which same kind they supposed his appearance was when he came. As for the text in Romans 8:3 "likeness" there, is not to be connected with the word "flesh", but with the word "sinful;" he was sent in real flesh, but that flesh looked as if it was sinful: it might seem so to some, because he took flesh of a sinful woman, was attended with griefs and sorrows, the effects of sin; had the sins of his people imputed to him, and which he bore in his own body on the tree; all which made his flesh appear as if it was sinful, though it was not; and hindered not its being real flesh. As to Php 2:7, Php 2:8 the as there is not a note of similitude, but of certainty; as in Matthew 14:5 and signifies, that Christ was really a man, as John was accounted a real prophet, and not merely like one; and which is evident by his being obedient unto death, as follows: and as for the appearances of Christ in an human form, before his coming in the flesh, the Scriptures speak of; admitting they were only appearances, and not real, it does not follow, that therefore his coming in the flesh, in the fulness of time, was of the same kind; but rather the contrary follows; and since these were preludes of his incarnation, that must be real; though some of these previous appearances were not merely appearances, but realities: real bodies were formed and animated, and made use of for a time, and then laid aside; as seems to be the case of the three men that appeared to Abraham, two of which were angels, and the other the Lord, Jehovah, the Son of God; who were clothed with bodies, capable of walking and travelling, of talking and conversing, of eating and drinking in; so the man that wrestled with Jacob, who was no other than the Angel of the covenant, the promised Messiah; the body he appeared in was not a mere phantom, spectre, and apparition, but palpable flesh, that was felt and handled, and grasped, and held fast, by Jacob; and which he would not let go till he had received the blessing. However, it is certain that Christ partook of the same flesh and blood as his children and people do; and therefore, if theirs is real, his must be so. Likewise, his body is called the body of his flesh, his fleshly body (Colossians 1:22), to distinguish it from the token of his body in the supper; and from his mystical and spiritual body, the church: all his actions, and what is said of him from his

birth to his death, and in and after it, show it was a true body that he assumed; he was born and brought into the world as other men are; and when born, his body grew and increased in stature, as other human bodies do: the Son of man came eating and drinking; he traveled through Judea and Galilee; he slept in the ship with his disciples; he was seen, and heard, and handled by them; he was buffeted, scourged, bruised, wounded, and crucified by men; his body, when dead, was asked of the governor by Joseph, was taken down from the cross by him, and laid in his tomb; and the same identical body, with the prints of the nails and spear in it, was raised from the dead, and seen and handled by his disciples; to whom it was demonstrated, that he had flesh and bones, a spirit has not: yea, the very infirmities that attended him, though sinless, were proofs of his body being a true and real one; such as his fatigue and weariness in travelling (John 4:6), his tears at the grave of Lazarus, and over Jerusalem; and his sweat in the garden (John 11:35; Luke 19:41; Luke 22:44). In short, it was through weakness of the flesh that he was crucified; which was not in appearance, but in reality. The body he assumed was mortal, as it was proper it should be, since the end of his assumption of it was to suffer death in it; but being raised from the dead, it is become immortal, and will never die more, but will remain, as the pledge and pattern of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, which will be fashioned like to his glorious body; and which will be the object of the corporal vision of the saints after their resurrection, with joy and pleasure, to all eternity.

2a2. Christ assumed a reasonable soul, with his true body, which make up the nature he took upon him, and are included in the flesh he was made, as has been seen; and is the flesh and blood he partook of; which is sometimes understood of an individual of human nature, as flesh is; (see Matthew 16:17; Galatians 1:16) The Arians deny that Christ has an human soul; they say, that the Logos, or the divine nature in him, such a one as it is, supplied the place of an human soul. This nature, they say, is not the same, but like to the nature of God; that it was created by him; which they ground on Proverbs 8:22 and read, "He created me;" and they make this the first and principal creature God made, and by which he created others; that it is a superangelic spirit, and is in the room of an human soul to Christ. But Christ asserts, that he had a soul; and which, he says, was exceeding sorrowful; and which was an immaterial and immortal spirit; and which, when his body died, and was separated from it, he commended into the hands of his divine Father (Matthew 26:38; Luke 23:46). Had he not an human soul, he would not be a perfect man; and could not be called, as he is, the man Christ Jesus: the integral parts of man, and which constitute one, are soul and body; and without which he cannot be called a man; these distinguish him from other creatures: on the one hand he is distinguished from angels, immaterial and immortal spirits, with which his soul has a cognition, by having a body, or by being an embodied spirit; whereas they are incorporeal: so, on the other hand, he is distinguished from mere animals, who have bodies as well as he, by his having a rational and immortal soul: and if Christ was without one, he could not be in all things like unto us; being deficient in that which is the most excellent and most noble part of man. But that he is possessed of an human soul, is evident from his having an human understanding, will, and affections; he had an human understanding, knowledge, and wisdom, in which he is said to grow, and which in some things were deficient and imperfect (Luke 2:52; Mark 13:32). He had an human will, distinct from the divine will, though not opposite, but in subjection to it (John 6:38; Luke 22:42). And he had human affections, as love (Mark 10:21; John 13:23). And joy (Luke 10:21). Yea, even those infirmities, though sinless passions, prove the truth of his human soul; as sorrow, grief, anger, amazement, and consternation (Matthew 26:38; Mark

3:5 14:33). Besides, if he had not had an human soul, he could not have been tempted in all points like as we are (Hebrews 4:15), since the temptations of Satan chiefly respect the soul, the mind, and the thoughts of it, and affect and distress that: nor could he have bore the wrath of God, nor have had a sensation of that; which it is certain he had, when the weight of the sins of his people lay on him, and pressed him sore; (see Psalms 89:38; Matthew 26:38). Nor could he have been a perfect sacrifice for their sins; which required his soul as well as his body (Isaiah 53:10; Hebrews 10:10), nor have been the Saviour of their souls; as he is both of body and soul, giving life for life, body for body, soul for soul (1 Peter 1:9).

2b. Secondly, In what sense the Word, or Son of God, was "made" flesh, and so became incarnate; the Word could not be made at all, that is, created, since he is the Maker and Creator of all things; and therefore he himself could not be made or created: nor was he, nor could be, made, converted, and changed into flesh; the divine nature in Christ could not be changed into human nature; for he is the Lord, that changes not; he is the same in the "yesterday" of eternity, in the day of time, and "for ever" to all eternity. By the incarnation nothing is added to, nor altered in the divine nature and personality of Christ. The human nature adds nothing to either of them; they remain the same they ever were; Christ was as much a divine Person before his incarnation as he is since; the union of the human nature to the divine nature, is to it as subsisting in the Person of the Son of God; so it is always to be understood, whenever we speak of the union of the human nature to the divine nature; for it is not united to the divine nature, simply considered; or as that is common to the three Persons; for then each would be incarnate; but as it has a peculiar subsistence in the Person of the Son of God: and so the human nature has its subsistence in his Person, and has a glory and excellency given it; but that gives nothing at all to the nature and person of the divine Word and Son of God. But, as other scriptures explain it, God the Word, or Son, was made and became "manifest in the flesh;" the Son that was in the bosom of the Father, the Word of life, that was with him from all eternity, was manifested in the flesh in time, to the sons of men; and that in order to take away sin, and destroy the works of the devil (1 Timothy 3:16; 1 John 1:1, 1 John 1:2; 1 John 3:5, 1 John 3:8). And the incarnation of the Word or Son of God, is expressed and explained by his partaking of flesh and blood; and by a taking on him the nature of man; or by an assumption of the human nature into union with his divine Person; so that both natures, divine and human, are united in one Person; and there is but one Lord, and one Mediator between God and man. The Nestorians so divided and separated these natures, as to make them distinct and separate Persons; which they are not, but one. And the Eutychians, running rate the other extreme, mixed and confounded the natures together; interpreting the phrase, "the Word was made flesh", of the divine nature being changed into the human nature; and the human nature into the divine nature; and so blended together as to make a third; just as two sort of liquors, mixed together, make a third different from both. But this is to make Christ neither truly God, nor truly man; the one nature being confounded with and swallowed up in the other. But this union of natures is such, that though they are closely united, and not divided, yet they retain their distinct properties and operations; as the divine nature to be uncreated, infinite, omnipresent, impassible, &c. the human nature to be created, finite, in some certain place, passible, &c. at least the latter, before the resurrection of Christ. But of this union, and the nature of it, more hereafter.

2c. Thirdly, The causes of the incarnation, efficient and moving, or to whom and what it is to be ascribed; and the final cause, for the sake of whom, and what.

2c1. The efficient cause of it, God, Father, Son, and Spirit; all the three Persons have a concern in it, it being a work "ad extra," The Father prepared a body for the Son in his purpose, and proposed it to him in council and covenant to assume it; and he sent him forth in the fulness of time, made of a woman, in the likeness of sinful flesh (Hebrews 10:5; Galatians 4:4; Romans 8:3). The Son having agreed to it, being sent, came in the flesh, by the assumption of it; he took upon him the nature of the children, and partook of the same flesh and blood with them; he took upon him the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a man (Hebrews 2:14, Hebrews 2:16; Php 2:7, Php 2:8). The Holy Ghost had a very great concern in this affair; for that which was conceived in the Virgin was of "the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 1:20), not of his substance, nature, and essence; for then he would have been the Father of it, which he is never said to be; Christ, as man, was "without Father", and so a proper antitype of Melchizedec (Hebrews 7:3). Besides, the body of Christ would have been not human, but spiritual: but it was of him as the efficient cause of it; it was through his overshadowing power and influence that it was conceived and formed (Luke 1:35). Now, though all the three Persons in the Deity had an hand in the wondrous incarnation, yet only one of them became incarnate; only the Son assumed the human nature, and took it into union with his divine Person; it is the Word only that was made flesh. Some have illustrated this, by three virgins concerned in working a garment; when only one of them puts it on and wears it.

2c2. The moving cause of the incarnation of Christ, is the love of the Father, and of the Son, to mankind. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son to become man, obey, suffer, and die for sinners; herein is love, and this love manifested, that God sent his Son in human nature to be the propitiation for the sins of his people, and save them from death (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 1 John 4:10). And such was the love and condescending grace of the Son, that though he was in the form of God, of the same nature with him, and equal to him; yet he took upon him the form and nature of man in a servile condition, humbled himself, and died in it. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is well known; who, though rich in his divine Person, became poor in human nature, to make his people rich (Php 2:6-8; 2 Corinthians 8:9).

2c3. The final cause, or for whose sake, and for what the Son of God became incarnate. It was for the sake of the elect of God; "To us", or "for us", for our sakes, "a Child is born; a Son is given": it was "unto all people;" or rather, "unto all the people;" for the sake of the whole people of God among Jews and Gentiles, that Christ was born a Saviour, or to be a Saviour of them; for which reason, as soon as he was born, his name was called Jesus, because he was to save his people from their sins; for which end he was born and came into the world. But of this more hereafter; (see Isaiah 9:6; Luke 2:10, Luke 2:11; Matthew 1:21).

2d. Fourthly, The parts of the incarnation are next to be considered, conception and nativity.

2d1. First, Conception; this is a most wonderful, abstruse, and mysterious affair; and which to speak of is very difficult.

2d1a. This conception was by a virgin; it was a virgin that conceived the human body of Christ, as was foretold it should; which was very wonderful, and therefore introduced with a note of admiration; "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son!" This was a "new thing;" unheard of and astonishing; which God "created in the earth", in the lower parts of the earth, in the virgin's womb; "A woman compassed", or conceived, "a man", without the knowledge of man (Isaiah 7:14; Jeremiah 31:22). This was not natural, but supernatural; though Mela [6] the geographer, speaks

of some women in a certain island who conceived without copulation with men; but that is all romance; Plutarch [7] asserts, such a thing was never known. This conception was made "in" the virgin, and not without her; for so says the text; "That which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost;" this I observe to meet with, and confute the heretical illapse, as it is sometimes called; it was a notion of some of the ancient heretics, the Valentinians [8], and of late, the Mennonites [9], that the human nature of Christ was formed in heaven, and came down from thence into the virgin, and passed through her as water through a pipe, as their expression was; so that, according to them, he was not conceived in her, nor took flesh of her: to countenance this, it is observed, that the "second man" is said to be "the Lord from heaven" (1 Corinthians 15:47. But the words are not to be understood of the descent of the human nature of Christ from heaven; but of his divine Person from thence; not by change of place, but by assumption of the human nature into union with him; by virtue of which union the man Christ has the name of the "Lord from heaven;" and not because of the original and descent of the human nature from thence; and in this sense, and in this sense only, are we to understand the words of Christ, when he says, "I came down from heaven" (John 6:38), namely, that he descended in and by the human nature; not by bringing it down from thence, but by taking it into union with his divine Person.

2d1b. This conception was through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, overshadowing the virgin. His operations in this affair may be considered in this manner, and after this order; He first took a part and portion of the virgin, of her semen, or blood, and conveyed it to a proper place; and purified and sanctified it, or separated it, not from any moral impurity, which it was not capable of, being an unformed mass; but from a natural indisposition in it, which, had it not been removed, might hereafter have occasioned sin; to prevent which this was done; and then he impregnated it with a fructifying virtue, and formed the members of the human body, in order, at once, and in a fitness (being properly organized) to receive the human soul; for to consider its immediate formation in such a state, is much more agreeable to the formation of the first man, more becoming the workmanship of the Holy Ghost, and more suitable to the dignity of the Son of God to assume it into union with himself, than to suppose it an unformed and unshapen embryo. Yet this is to be understood, not as if it was in such a state as not to admit of a future increase, both before and after birth; nor to contradict its continuance in the womb of the virgin the usual time of every man. Now though this affair has been spoken of as in various processes, yet must be understood as all instantaneously done by the almighty power of the Holy Spirit: in the same instant the human body was thus conceived, formed, and organized, the human soul of Christ was created and united to it, by him who "forms the spirit of man within him;" and in that very instant the body was conceived and formed, and the soul united to it, did the Son of God assume the whole human nature at once, and take it into union with his divine Person, and gave it a subsistence in it; so that the human nature of Christ never had a subsistence of itself; but from the moment of its conception, formation, and creation, it subsisted in the Person of the Son of God: and hence the human nature of Christ is not a person; a person is that which subsists of itself: but that the human nature of Christ never did; therefore,

2d1c. It was a nature, and not a person, that Christ assumed so early as at its conception; it is called "the holy Thing", and not a person; "The seed of Abraham", or the nature of the seed of Abraham; the "form" and "fashion" of a man, that is, the nature of man; as "the form of God", in the same passage, signifies the nature of God; (see Luke 1:35; Hebrews 2:16; Php 2:6-8). The

Nestorians asserted the human nature of Christ to be a person; and so made two persons in Christ, one human and one divine; and of course four persons in the Deity, contrary to 1 John 5:7 but there is but one Person of the Son, one Son of God, one Lord of all, one Mediator between God and man: if the two natures in Christ were two distinct separate persons, the works and actions done in each nature could not be said of the same Person; the righteousness wrought out by Christ in the human nature, could not be called the righteousness of God: nor the blood shed in the human nature the blood of the Son of God; nor God be said to purchase the church with his blood; nor the Lord of life and glory to be crucified; nor the Son of man to be in heaven, when he was here on earth: all which phrases can only be accounted for, upon the footing of the personal union of the human nature to the Son of God, and his having but one Person; of which these various things are predicated. Besides, if the human nature of Christ was a person of itself, what it did and suffered could have been of no avail, nor of any benefit to any other but itself; the salvation wrought out in it, and by it, would not have been the common salvation, or common to elect men; but peculiar to that individual human person; and the righteousness he is the author of, he would only have had the benefit of it, being justified by it, and accepted with God in it; whereas, it being wrought out in the human nature, as in personal union with the Son of God, this gives it an enlarged virtue, and spread; and so it comes to be "unto all, and upon all them that believe," I treat of the union of the two natures, divine and human, in the person of the Son of God, under the article of conception, and before the birth of Christ, as it certainly was; hence when Mary paid a visit to her cousin Elizabeth, before the birth of Christ, and just upon the conception of him, she was saluted by her thus; "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?" (Luke 1:43). Wherefore, before I proceed to consider the second part of the incarnation, the nativity of Christ, I shall further observe some things concerning the union, which took place at the conception; and of the effects of it.

1. Of the union itself; concerning which let it be observed,

1a. That though Christ, by assuming the human nature, united it to his divine Person; yet there is a difference between assumption and union assumption is only of one nature; union is of both: Christ only assumed the human nature to his divine Person; but both natures, human and divine, are united in his Person: that he has two distinct natures is evident; in that, according to the flesh, or human nature, he is the Son of David; and according to the Spirit of holiness, or the divine nature, he is the Son of God: he was of the father's, according to the flesh, or human nature; but, according to the divine nature, God over all, blessed for ever: he was put to death in the flesh, in the human nature; but quickened in or by the Spirit, the divine nature (Romans 1:3, Romans 1:4; Romans 9:5; 1 Peter 1:18), yet but one Person.

1b. This union is hypostatical, or personal; but not an union of persons: the union of Father, Son, and Spirit in the Deity, is an union of three Persons in one God; but this is not an union of two persons; but of two natures in one person.

1c. This an union of natures; but not a communication of one nature to another; not of the divine nature, and the essential properties of it, to the human nature; for though "the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily" in Christ (Colossians 2:9), that is, substantially and really, not in shadow and type; yet the perfections of the Godhead are not communicated to the manhood, as to make that uncreated, infinite, immense, and to be everywhere, &c. the properties of each nature remain

distinct, notwithstanding this union.

1d. This union lies in a communication of, or rather in making the personality of the Word, common to the human nature; or giving it a subsistence in the Person of the Word or Son of God; hence because of this union and community of person, it has the same name with the Word; and is called, "the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). And hence it appears, that the human nature of Christ is no loser, but a gainer, and is not inferior, but superior to other individuals of human nature, by its not being a person, subsisting of itself; because it has a better subsistence in the Person of the Son of God, than it could have had of itself; or than any creature has, angel or man.

1e. This union is indissoluble: though death dissolved the union between the body and soul of Christ, it did not, and could not, dissolve the union between the human nature and person of Christ; wherefore, in consequence of this union, he raised up the temple of his body, when destroyed, the third day, and thereby declared himself to be the Son of God with power (John 2:19; Romans 1:4).

2. The effects of this union, both with respect to the human nature, and to the Person of Christ. With respect to the human nature;

2a. Preeminence to all other individuals of human nature; it is chosen and preferred to the grace of union with the Son of God, above them all; it has a better subsistence than they have, and has obtained a more excellent name than they, and even than the angels; and is possessed of glory, blessings, and privileges above all creatures; as will appear from what will be further observed. All which is not of any merit in it, but of the free grace of God.

2b. Perfect holiness and impeccability: it is called, "the holy Thing;" it is eminently and perfectly so; without original sin, or any actual transgression; it is not conscious of any sin, never committed any, nor is it possible it should.

2c. A communication of habitual grace to it in the greatest degree; it is, in this respect, fairer and more beautiful than any of the sons of men; grace being poured into it in great plenty; it is anointed with the oil of gladness above its fellows; that is, with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit; it has the Spirit given unto it, but not by measure; the Spirit of God rests upon it, in his several gifts and graces, in a most glorious and perfect manner (Psalms 45:2, Psalms 45:7; John 3:34; Isaiah 11:2). And should it be asked, if the same graces were in it, and exercised by it, as love, faith, and hope, in the saints? it may be answered, they were, and were exercised by it in its state of humiliation, as its circumstances required: Christ trusted and hoped in God, when upon his mother's breasts (Psalms 22:9, Psalms 22:10). When in suffering circumstances, he exercised faith on him, that he would justify, help, and deliver him (Isaiah 50:7-9). When the time of his death drew nigh, he expressed his love to God by a readiness to submit to his will, and obey his command (John 14:31). And when his body lay in the grave, he rested in hope of the resurrection of it (Psalms 16:10).

2d. A very high and glorious exaltation of it, after his death and resurrection from the dead: it was highly exalted by being united to the Person of the Son of God; and though it came into a state of humiliation in it, yet being raised from the dead, is highly exalted, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and above every name that is named in this world or in that to come; it is set down at the right hand of God, where angels are never bid to come; and where

angels, authorities, and powers, are made subject to it (Ephesians 1:20, Ephesians 1:21; Php 2:9, Php 2:10; Hebrews 1:13; 1 Peter 3:22).

3. With respect to the Person of Christ, the effects of this union are,

3a. A communication of idioms, or properties, as the ancients express it; that is, of the properties of each nature; which are, in common, predicated of the Person of Christ, by virtue of the union of natures in it; for though each nature retains its peculiar properties, and does not communicate them to each other; yet they may be predicated of the Person of Christ: yea, he may be denominated in one nature, from a property which belongs to another; thus in his divine nature he is God, the Son of God, the Lord of glory; and yet in this nature is described by a property which belongs to the human nature, which is to be passible, and suffer; hence we read of God purchasing the church with his blood; and of the blood of the Son of God cleansing from all sin; and of the Lord of glory being crucified (Acts 20:28; 1 John 1:7; 1 Corinthians 2:8). And on the other hand, in his human nature he is called the Son of man; and yet as such, is described by a property which belongs to the divine nature, which is to be omnipresent, to be everywhere. So it is said; "No man hath ascended to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven" (John 3:13), who was in heaven at the same time he was here on earth; which was true of his Person, though denominated from his human nature; and thus what cannot be said of Christ in the abstract, is true of him in the concrete, by virtue of this union; it cannot be said, that the Deity of Christ suffered; or that the humanity of Christ is everywhere: but it may be said, that God, the Son of God suffered; and that the Son of man was in heaven when on earth, or everywhere. It cannot be said, that the Deity is humanity; nor the humanity Deity, nor equal to God: but it may be said, that God the Word is man, and the man Christ is God, Jehovah's Fellow; because these names respect the Person of Christ, which includes both natures.

3b. A communion of office, and of power and authority to exercise it in both natures: thus by Virtue of this union Christ bears the office of a Mediator, and exercises it in both natures; there is "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5), but he is not Mediator only in his human nature, and only exercises it in that; he took upon him, and was invested with this office before his assumption of human nature; and could and did exercise some parts of it without it, as has been shown in its proper place; but there were others that required his human nature; and when, and not before it was requisite, he assumed it; and in it, as united to his divine Person, he is God-man, is Prophet, Priest, and King, Judge, Lawgiver, and Saviour; and has power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him; and upon his resurrection, had all power in heaven and earth given him, to appoint ordinances, and commission men to administer them; and had authority also to execute judgment, both in the world and in the church; because he is the Son of man (Matthew 28:18; John 17:2; John 5:27).

3c. A communion of operations in both natures, to the perfecting of the same work; which, therefore, may be called "theandric", or the work of the God-man; there being a concurrence of both natures in the performance of it; which, when done, is ascribed to his Person: thus, for instance, the sacrifice of himself, as the propitiation for the sins of men; as God-man and Mediator, he is the Priest that offers; his human nature, consisting of soul and body, is the Sacrifice; and his divine nature is the altar which sanctifies it, and gives it its atoning virtue, his blood was shed in the human nature, to cleanse from sin; but it is owing to its union with the Son of God that such an

effect is produced by it. The redemption of men is by the ransom price of the life and blood of Christ; but it is the divine nature, to which the human is united, in the Person of the Son of God, that makes it a sufficient one. The mission of the Spirit, by Christ, is owing both to his intercession in the human nature, and to his power and authority in the divine nature, according to the economy of things settled between the divine Persons.

3d. The adoration of the Person of Christ, having both natures united in him, is another effect of this union. The human nature of Christ is not the formal object of worship; it is a creature, and not to be worshipped as such; nor is worship given for the sake of it, or as singly considered; but then the divine Person of Christ having that nature in union with him, is the object of worship; the flesh of Christ is not worshipped, but the incarnate God is; a whole Christ is worshipped, but not the whole of Christ. "When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world", which was at the time of the incarnation, "he saith, let all the angels of God worship him" (Hebrews 1:6). And upon his resurrection from the dead, God has "given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus should bow;" that is, in a way of religious (Php 2:9, Php 2:10), and though Christ, as man, is not the object of such adoration; yet what he has done in the human nature, is a motive and argument why blessing and honour should be given to his Person, having both natures united in him; "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power", &c. (Revelation 5:12, Revelation 5:13).

2d2. Secondly, The birth, or nativity of Christ, the other part of the incarnation, is next to be considered.

2d2a. Of whom born; of a virgin, of the house of David, and of the tribe of Judah.

2d2a1. Of a virgin: this was hinted at in the first promise of "the seed of the woman;" and is fully expressed by Isaiah; "A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son;" to fulfil which prophecy, before Joseph and Mary cohabited as man and wife, and so, while she was a virgin, "she was found with child of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 1:18-23). And it was brought about in this manner, that the human nature of Christ might be clear of original sin, which it otherwise must have been infected with, had it been conceived and born in the ordinary and natural way of generation; for "whatsoever is born of the flesh, is flesh", carnal and corrupt; but being produced in this extraordinary and supernatural way, but the power of the Holy Ghost, that which was born of the virgin is "the holy Thing;" free from all spot and blemish of sin. This is most surprisingly accounted for, by the more modern philosophy respecting generation, that every man is born of an animalcule; which agrees with the sacred philosophy [10] in Job 25:6 and that all the animalcula from which millions of men spring in all ages, were originally formed by the great Creator in the first man; which, as it accounts for the guilt and pollution of all men in him; so for the purity of Christ's human nature, since that was not born of an animalcule, as other men are; nor was it of man, nor of the seed of man [11]; but was according to the first promise, the pure seed of the woman; nor was it ever in Adam, in the first man; no, not in "animalculo", as the rest of the individuals of human nature, according to this hypothesis, and so was not represented by him; nor did he stand related to it, as a covenant head; nor did it descend from him by ordinary generation; but was conceived in the virgin through the power of the Holy Ghost; and did not exist in any respect before; no, not in "animalculo;" which lies strongly against the preexistence of Christ's human nature in any sense whatever; and so, being free from sin, was fit to be a sacrifice for sin,

since it could be offered up to God without spot, by the eternal Spirit. Moreover, so it was, that as the ruin of men came by means of a virgin; for the fall of Adam was before he knew his wife; so the Saviour of men from that ruin, came into the world by a virgin: and so it was ordered by the wisdom of God, that Christ should appear to have but one Father, having none as man, and so be but one Person; whereas, had he had two fathers, there must have been two persons.

2d2a2. Christ was born of a virgin of the house of David; as in Luke 1:27 for the phrase of the house of David, is equally true of the virgin, as of Joseph, and may be connected with her. God promised to David, that the Messiah should be of his seed; and accordingly, of his seed he raised up unto Israel, a Saviour Jesus, who is therefore called the Son of David; and is both "the root and offspring of David;" the root of David, as God, and David's Lord; and the offspring of David, as man, descending from him (Acts 13:23; Revelation 22:16).

2d2a3. He was born of a virgin of the tribe of Judah; as she must be, since she was of the house of David, which was of that tribe; and it is manifest, as the apostle says, that our Lord sprung out of the tribe of Judah, as it was foretold he should (Genesis 49:10; Hebrews 7:14).

2d2b. The birth of Christ, or his coming into the world, was after the manner of other men; his generation and conception were extraordinary; but his birth was in the usual manner; he came into the world after he had lain the common time in his mother's womb; for it is said, "the days were accomplished that she should be delivered;" she went her full time with him, and brought forth him, her firstborn Son, as other women do; and no doubt with pains and sorrow, as every daughter of Eve does: and presented, him to the Lord when the days of her purification were ended, according to the law, as it is written, "Every male that openeth the womb, shall be called holy to the Lord" (Luke 2:6, Luke 2:22, Luke 2:23). So that in these respects Christ was made in all things like unto his brethren.

2d2c. The place of his birth was Bethlehem, according to the prophecy in Micah 5:2 here it was expected he would be born; and this was so well known to the Jews, that when Herod inquired of the chief priests and Scribes where Christ should be born; they, without any hesitation, immediately reply, in "Bethlehem of Judea", and quote the above prophecy in proof of it (Matthew 2:4-6), yea, this was known by the common people (John 7:42), and so it was wonderfully brought about in providence; that though Joseph and Mary lived in Galilee, yet through a decree of Caesar Augustus to tax the whole empire, they were both obliged to come to the city of Bethlehem, the city of David, to be taxed, being of the lineage and house of David; and while they were on that business there, the virgin was delivered of her Son (Luke 2:1-7). Bethlehem signifies the house of bread; a fit place for the Messiah to be born in, who is the bread that came down from heaven, and gives life unto the world.

2d2d. The time of his birth was as it was fixed in prophecy; before the sceptre, or civil government, departed from Judah: Herod was king in Judea when he was born; before the second temple was destroyed; for he often went into it, and taught in it: and it was at the time pointed at in Daniel's weeks; (see Genesis 49:10; Malachi 3:1; Haggai 2:6, Haggai 2:7, Haggai 2:9; Daniel 9:24), &c. The exact year of the world in which he was born, is not agreed on by chronologers; but it was about, or a little before or after the four thousandth year of the world; nor can the season of the year, the month and day in which he was born, be ascertained. However, the vulgar account seems not probable; the circumstance of the shepherds watching their flocks by night, agrees not

with the winter season. It is more likely it was in autumn, sometime in the month of September, at the feast of tabernacles, which was typical of Christ's incarnation; and there seems to be some reference to it in John 1:14. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt", or "tabernacled" among us; the temple of Solomon, a type of Christ's human nature, was dedicated at the feast of tabernacles: and as Christ, the passover, was sacrificed at the very time of the passover; and the Holy Ghost was given on the very day of Pentecost, typified by the firstfruits offered on that day; so it is most reasonable to suppose, that Christ was born at the very feast of tabernacles, a type of his incarnation; and which feast is put for the whole ministry of the word and ordinances, to be observed in gospel times (Zechariah 14:16). However, it was in the fulness of time, or when the time was fully up he was to come, that God sent him, and he came; and in due time, in the fittest and most proper time, infinite Wisdom saw meet he should come: God could have sent him sooner; but he did not think fit to do it; but he sent him at the most seasonable time; when the wickedness of men was at its height, both in Judea and in the Gentile world; and there appeared a necessity of a Saviour of men from it; and when the insufficiency of the light of nature, of the power of man's free will, which had been sufficiently tried among the philosophers; and of the law of Moses, and of the works and sacrifices of it, to take away sin, and save men from it, had been clearly evinced. To conclude, it was in time, and not before time, that Christ became man. To talk of the human nature of Christ, either in whole or in part, as from eternity, is contrary both to scripture and reason; nor can that man, or human nature, be of any avail or benefit to us; but he that is the Seed of the woman, the Son of Abraham, the Son of David, and the Son of Mary.

2e. Fifthly, The ends of Christ's incarnation are many; there is a cluster of them in the song of the angels at his birth; "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will towards men" (Luke 2:14).

2e1. One end of Christ's incarnation was, to show forth the glory of God in it; the glory of his grace, kindness, and goodness to men, in the mission of his Son in this way; the glory of his faithfulness in fulfilling his promise of it; the glory of his power in the miraculous production of Christ's human nature; and the glory of his wisdom in bringing it into the world in such a manner as to be free from sin, and so fit for the purpose for which it was designed: and all this that God might be glorified in these his perfections; as he was by the angels, by Mary, by the father of John the Baptist, and by Simeon, at, or about, the time of Christ's birth; and as he has been by saints in all ages since.

2e2. Another end of Christ's incarnation was, to make peace with God for men on earth; to make reconciliation for sin, was the work appointed him in covenant; and to do this, was the reason of his being made in all things like unto his brethren; and this end is answered; he has reconciled sinners to God by his death, and made peace for them by the blood of his cross.

2e3. Another end of Christ's incarnation was, not only to show the good will of God to men, but that they might receive the fruits of his good will and favour towards them; even all the blessings of grace, those spiritual blessings provided in covenant, and laid up in Christ; and which came by him our High Priest, and through his blood, called therefore, the blood of the everlasting covenant.

2e4. Particularly, Christ became man that he might be our God, our near kinsman, and might appear to have a right to redeem us; and he was, in the fulness of time, made of a woman, to redeem men from the law, its curse and condemnation; and that they might receive the adoption of children, and every other blessing included in or connected with redemption; as peace, pardon,

and justification; for he was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, that by the sacrifice of himself for sin, he might condemn it in the flesh; and that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, as represented by him, and so be completely justified in him; (see Galatians 4:4-5; Romans 8:3-4).

2e5. Christ became man, that he might be a Mediator between God and men; and the better to perform each of the parts of his office as such, he took upon him the nature of man; that he might have something to offer as a Priest to be a Sacrifice for sin, and that he might make satisfaction for it in that nature that sinned; and that he might be a prophet like unto Moses, raised up, as he was, among his brethren; and having the Spirit of the Lord God upon him, might preach glad tidings to the meek; and that he might appear to be a King taken from among his brethren, as the kings of Israel were; and to be the Ruler, Noble, and Governor that proceeded from the midst of them, as was predicted he should (Jeremiah 30:21), and so sit and reign upon the throne of his father David.

#### ENDNOTES:

[1] Huet. Quaest. Alnetan. l. 2. c. 13. p. 234. & c. 15. p. 241. See Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. v. part 2. p. 168.

[2] Martin. Sinic. Hist. l. 4. p. 131, 132. Vid. Huet. ut supra, p. 235.

[3] Hesiod. Theogon. v. 927. Apollodor. de Deor. Orig. l. 1. p. 8. Vid. Huet. ut supra, c. 15, p. 237, 238.

[4] Opera, tom. 1. Deut. Christi Natura Disput. p. 784.

[5] Ibid. Ep. 2. ad Balcerovicium, p. 425.

[6] Deut. Situ Orbis, l. 3. c. 9.

[7] Conjugial Praecept. p. 145.

[8] Irenaeus Adv. Haeres. l. 1. c. 1. p. 29.

[9] Socini Disput. Adv. Mennonitas in Oper. tom. 2. p. 461.

[10] "Omnia nimirum animalia, etiam perfecta similiter ex vermiculo gigni", Harveus de Generat. Animal, Exercit. 18. p. 144.

[11] The animalcula are only "in semine masculino;" see the Philosophical Transactions abridged, vol. 2. p. 912, 913.

## 05-02 Of Christ's State of Humiliation

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### A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 2 Of Christ's State of Humiliation

Christ's state of humiliation began at his incarnation, and was continued through the whole of his life unto death, which is fully and clearly expressed in a few words in Php 2:7, Php 2:8 "but made himself of no reputation," &c. and which the apostle illustrates and confirms by placing it in a contrast with his glorious estate previous to it; for by how much the higher he was in that state, the lower and meaner he appears in this; and higher it was not possible for him to be, than as described by the apostle, as "in the form of God," in his nature and essence; and as "equal with God" his Father; having the same perfections, names, works, and worship ascribed to him. Now in his state of humiliation he appeared the reverse of this; he, who was in the form of God, was not only made in the likeness of man, and in fashion as a man, but took on him the form of a servant, of one of the meanest of men; and he, who was equal to his divine Father, made himself of no account among men, and became obedient in all things to his Father, and that even to death itself, the accursed death of the cross.

1. The humiliation of Christ took place at his incarnation, and therefore in the above account of it, the phrases of being "made in the likeness of men," and of "being found in fashion as a man," are used as expressive of it; and which are to be understood of his being really and truly man, as has been observed in the preceding chapter; for though the assumption of the human nature into union with the person of the Son of God was an exaltation of it, and gave it a preeminence to all the other individuals of human nature, and even to angels themselves, as has been shown; (see Psalms 89:19) yet it was an humbling of the person of Christ to take a nature so inferior to his into union with him; for I see not why the phrase of "humbling" may not be used with respect to this matter of the person of the Son of God, since it is used of the divine Being (Psalms 113:6), and if it is an humbling of God, a stoop of Deity, to look upon things in heaven and earth; a condescension in him to dwell on earth, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain (1 Kings 8:27), it must be much more so for the Word and Son of God, who was in the beginning with God, and was God, and to whom the creation of all things is ascribed, to be made flesh and dwell among men (John 1:1-3, John 1:14).

1a. First, The humiliation of Christ appeared both in his conception and birth; though there were some things relating to his conception which were very illustrious and glorious; as a remarkable prophecy concerning it some hundreds of years before it was (Isaiah 7:14), the dispatch of an angel to the virgin to acquaint her with it, when near or at the instant of it, and that it itself was of the mighty power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:26, Luke 1:31, Luke 1:35), yet it was amazing humility that he who was the Son of God, lay in the bosom of his Father, should by assumption of human nature into union with his divine person, lie nine months in the womb of a virgin; and he that ascended on high, should first descend into these lower parts of the earth. And though there were many great and glorious things that attended his birth, which made it very illustrious; as an unusual star, which guided the wise men from the east to the place of his nativity, who worshipped him,

and presented gifts unto him; and an angel appeared in a glorious form to the shepherds, who acquainted them with his birth; and a multitude of the heavenly host descended and joined with him, singing "Glory to God in the highest" on account of it; yet, besides many things that followed it, very inglorious; as Herod's search after him to take away his life; the flight of his parents with him into Egypt, where they continued for a while in fear and obscurity; and the massacre of a great number of infants in and about Bethlehem: it may be observed,

1a1. That he was "born of a woman," which very phrase is expressive of meanness (Job 14:1), born of a sinful woman, though he himself without sin; "made of a woman," as the expression is in Galatians 4:4 made of one that was made by him, and to whom he stood in the character of Creator, Lord and Saviour, as she herself owned (Luke 1:46, Luke 1:47).

1a2. Born of a poor woman; for though his mother, the virgin, was of the house of David, of that illustrious family, yet when that family was become very low, like a tree cut down to its roots; for when in such a state was the Messiah to spring from it, as he did, according to the prophecy (Isaiah 11:1), that his mother was a poor woman, appears from the usage she met with at the time of her delivery in the inn, where there was no room for her to be received in, because of her poverty; and therefore was obliged to lay her newly born infant in a manger. Into what a low estate was our Lord brought! As also from her bringing the offering of the poorer sort at her purification. Persons of ability were obliged to offer a lamb on such an occasion, but if poor, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons, which she did (Luke 2:7, Luke 2:24), hence the Jews upbraided Christ with the meanness of his parentage, saying, "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary?" plain "Mary;" and "his brethren James and Joses," and "Simon and Judas?" and "his sisters, are they not all with us?" do not we know them, what a low life family they are?

1a3. He was born in a poor country village; for though it was the birth place of David, and called his city, and so famous on that account; yet in Christ's time was mean and obscure, and said to be "little among the thousands of Judah;" and he afterwards lived in a very despicable place, where he was brought up; despicable to a proverb; "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46).

1a4. The nature he was conceived and born in, and which he assumed, though without sin, yet had all the sinless infirmities of human nature: his soul was subject to sorrow, grief, anger, &c. and his body to hunger, thirst, weariness, &c. it was a nature inferior to angels; at least he was for a while, through the sufferings of death, made a little lower than they (Hebrews 2:9), and who at certain times, when in distress, ministered to him and relieved him (Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43), into such a low estate and condition did Christ come in our nature.

1b. Secondly, The humiliation of Christ appeared in all the stages of life into which he came; for he passed through the states of infancy, childhood, and youth, as other men do; he was wrapped in swaddling bands, as newly born infants are; hung upon his mother's breasts as soon as born, and received his nourishment from thence, as infants do; he endured the painful rite of circumcision when eight days old, and was presented in the temple according to usual custom; he continued in the infant state, both with respect to body and mind, the usual time, for ought appears: his case was not like the first Adam's; he was created as one in the prime of life, a grown man, and in the full exercise of his rational powers at once: but so it was not with the second Adam; he was an infant of days, he grew in body as children do; and his reasoning faculties were not opened at

once, but gradually, for it is said, he increased in wisdom as well as "in stature" (Luke 2:40, Luke 2:52), as he grew up in his childhood and youthful state, though we have but little account of it, it appears to be attended with much meanness and obscurity, even to his manhood; we have but one circumstance related of him in this time, which is that of his coming up to Jerusalem with his parents at the passover, when twelve years of age; and though there were some things then appeared in him very remarkable and uncommon, in taking his place among the doctors, hearing and asking them questions; yet he returned with his parents, and lived in subjection to them (Luke 2:42-51), and it seems as if he was brought up to a mechanic business; it was a commonly received tradition of the ancients, that he was brought up to the trade of a carpenter; and there are some things which make it probable; it is a question put by the Jews, "Is not this the carpenter?" (Mark 6:3), nor was it ever denied that he was; they suggest, that he had no liberal education, was not brought up in any of their public schools or academies: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" John 7:15), and it cannot be supposed that he should live an inactive life the greater part of his days; but besides the poverty of his parents, which would not admit of the maintenance of him without business, what greatly prevails upon me to give into this sentiment is, that the second Adam must bear the first Adam's curse, even that part of it which lay in getting his bread by the sweat of his brow (Genesis 3:19). O what a low estate was our Lord brought into on our account! Add to all this, that his whole life, until he was thirty years of age, was a life of obscurity; for from the time of his coming out of Egypt and being had to Nazareth in his infancy, we hear nothing of him, excepting that single instance of being at Jerusalem when twelve years of age, until he came from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him; and then he was about thirty years of age (Luke 3:23). Now what astonishing condescension and humility is this, and how great was the humiliation of Christ in this state! that the greatest personage that ever was in the world, the Son of God in human nature, and who came to do the greatest work that ever was done in the world, should be in the world thirty years running, and scarce be known at all by the inhabitants of it; at least not known who and what he was (John 1:10), at most but by very few.

1c. Thirdly, The public life of Christ began at his baptism, for by that he was made manifest in Israel; and for that purpose John came baptizing with water; and who had this signal given him, that on whomsoever he should see the Spirit of God descending, the same was he; which when he saw he bore testimony of him that he was the Son of God, and pointed him out as the Lamb of God, that, takes away the sin of the world; and though there were some things attending the baptism of Christ which made it illustrious, as not only John's testimony of him, but the descent of the Spirit on him as a dove, and a voice from his Father heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (John 1:29-36; Matthew 3:16, Matthew 3:17), yet his submission to the ordinance itself was an instance of his humiliation; his coming many miles on foot, from Galilee to Jordan, to John to be baptized of him, is a proof of it; he that had the power of baptizing with the Holy Ghost and with fire, was baptized in water; he that knew no sin, nor did any, was baptized with the baptism of repentance, as though he had been a sinner; and he that was John's Lord and Master, was before him, and preferred to him, and whose shoe latchet John was not worthy to unloose; and who could have ordered him to attend him at any place convenient for baptism, which for some reasons he thought fit to submit unto; yet took the pains and fatigue of a journey to go to him for that purpose; and though John modestly declined it at first, having some hint of him who he was, yet being pressed by him, he agreed to administer the ordinance to him, and did; and which was done to fulfil all righteousness, and in obedience to the will of God, and to set an

example to us, that we should tread in his steps; and in all which appear wonderful humility and condescension; (see Matthew 3:13-15).

1d. Fourthly, Immediately after his baptism Christ was harassed with the temptations of Satan, which was another branch of his humiliation and low estate he came into; for "he suffered being tempted;" and he "was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 2:18; Hebrews 4:15), that is, with all sorts of temptations, though not altogether in the same manner, nor had they the same effect on him as on us. Satan tempted him, not by stirring up any corruption, or provoking any lust in him, as he provoked David, stirred up the lust of pride and vanity in him to number the people; for in Christ was no sin, lust, or corruption to stir up; Satan could find nothing of this kind in him to work upon: nor did he tempt him by putting any evil into him, as he put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray his Lord, and into the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira to lie unto the Holy Ghost; nor could he get any advantage over Christ by any of his temptations; he was forced after all his temptations in the wilderness to leave him, and in the garden and on the cross, he was foiled by him; yea he, and his principalities and powers, were spoiled and triumphed over; but inasmuch as by these temptations Christ in his human nature was harassed and distressed, they are a part of his humiliation, and require a particular consideration; and those we have the clearest account of are they which began in the wilderness; for he was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (Matthew 4:1), that is, he was influenced and directed by the Spirit of God, who had lighted on him at his baptism, under an impulse of his, both inward and outward, to go up from the habitable parts of the wilderness, where John was preaching and baptizing, and where he himself had been baptized, to the mountainous and uninhabitable parts of it, which were quite desolate and uncultivated; where were no provisions, nor any man to converse with, none but wild beasts, to whom he was exposed, and with whom he was (Mark 1:13), another instance of his low estate. The time when he was here tempted was quickly after his baptism; Matthew says "then" he was led to be tempted, that is, when he had been baptized; and Mark says it was "immediately;" and thus as it was with Christ the head, so it often is with his members; that as he was tempted, after his baptism, after the Spirit of God had descended upon him, and filled him with his gifts and graces without measure; and after he had had such a testimony from heaven of his divine Sonship: so his people, after they have had communion with God in ordinances, and have had some sealing testimonies of his love, fall into temptations, and fall by them; as the disciples of Christ after the supper, who, when tempted, all forsook him and fled, and one denied him. Moreover, it was after Christ had fasted forty days, and when he was hungry, that the tempter came to him and attacked him; two of the evangelists say he tempted him forty days; so he might tempt him, more or less, all the forty days, at times; but when they were ended, and Christ was an hungry, then he set upon him with greater violence, as judging it a proper opportunity to try the utmost of his power and skill with him: so Satan suits his temptations to the constitutions, circumstances, and situation men are in.

1d1. The first temptation was by putting an if upon the Sonship of Christ; "If thou be the Son of God;" though there could be no doubt made of this, since a testimony of it from heaven had just been given; and the devils themselves have acknowledged, that Christ is the Son of God (Luke 4:41). And thus the children of God are sometimes tempted to call in question their sonship, because of inward corruptions and outward afflictions: or it may be, Satan argued from hence, "if," or "seeing," thou art the Son of God, as has been testified by a voice from heaven, and thou

thyself affirmest; as a proof of it, "command that these stones be made bread," or "this stone," as Luke expresses it; that is, one of the stones which lay near by, and were in sight: and Satan might hope to succeed in this temptation, since Christ was now hungry, and he might insinuate a concern for his welfare; and the rather as he succeeded with the first Adam, in tempting him to eat of the forbidden fruit; and as he might suggest, he would, by such an act of omnipotence, give proof of his divine Sonship: but though Christ could have done this, as well as God could raise up out of stones children unto Abraham; yet as it was needless to do it in proof of his Sonship, since that had been so well attested already, by a voice from heaven; nor for his sustenance, since he had been sustained by the power and providence of God forty days without food, he might be longer. Besides, he never wrought a miracle for his own support; nor would he do it now, at the instance of the devil, which was what he wanted him to do, in obedience to him, and at his motion; wherefore Christ's answer is; "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Deuteronomy 8:3), which signifies, that men may live by that which is not properly bread, as by manna, on which the Israelites lived in the wilderness, to which the passage quoted refers: nor does man live by bread, when he has it, abstracted from the blessing of the mouth of God with it, which gives it nourishment; and besides, without bread, in any sense, a man may be supported by the power and providence of God, as Moses and Elijah were, and as Christ now had been; and therefore, to take such a method as he was tempted to, would have seemed to have been a distrust of that power and providence by which he had been sustained; and thus, by quoting scripture, to repel Satan's temptations, Christ has taught us to make use of the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, to withstand the temptations of Satan also.

1d2. The second temptation was, after Satan had prevailed on Christ, or he condescended to go along with him, or he suffered him to take him to the city of Jerusalem, and place him on the pinnacle of the temple, or on the battlements of it, to cast himself down from thence; in order to give proof of his divine Sonship, in a public manner, before the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Priests, Scribes, and common people; by which he might suggest it would gain him great credit and esteem; and as for his preservation in it, he quotes, in imitation of him, a passage of scripture, where it is written, "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee," &c. which, however applicable to Christ, as well as to his members, is perverted, since a material clause is omitted, "to keep thee in all thy ways;" whereas Satan was endeavoring to lead him out of the right way, tempting him to the sin of suicide; which he did, either out of envy and malice, and the malignity of his nature; or to prevent, if he had any notion of it, Christ's dying in the room and stead of his people, in a judicial way, for their salvation: however, Christ resisted the temptation, by saying, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Deuteronomy 6:16), as Christ was; which was testified by a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God, and so Lord and heir of all things. In like manner the children of God are often tempted by Satan to destroy themselves; which shows the similarity between Christ's temptations and theirs.

1d3. The third temptation was, after the devil had taken Christ, by his permission, to an exceeding high mountain, one of those about Jerusalem, or not far from it, and had showed him, by a diabolical and false representation of things to the sight, "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;" alluring him with a promise of these to "fall down and worship him." To promise Christ these was impertinent; since the earth is his, and the fulness thereof, the world, and they

that dwell therein, as the maker of them; and all power in heaven and earth is given him as Mediator; to pretend that these were in his power to dispose of to whomsoever he pleased, as it is in Luke, was intolerable arrogance; when he had not the least thing in the world at his dispose; could not touch any of Job's substance without permission, and a grant from God; nor go into a herd of swine without leave: but to propose to Christ, that he should fall down and worship him, was the height of insolence and impudence! This shows what the original sin of the devil was, affectation of Deity, and to be worshipped as God; hence he has usurped the title of the God of this world; and has prevailed upon the ignorant part of it, in some places, to give him worship: and, indeed, to sacrifice to idols, is to sacrifice to devils: but, not content with this, he sought to be worshipped by the Son of God himself; than which nothing could be more audacious and impious; wherefore Christ rejected his temptation with indignation and abhorrence; saying, "Get thee hence, Satan;" or, as Luke has it, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Deuteronomy 6:13), upon which the devil left him, finding he could do nothing with him; and angels came and ministered to him. After which we hear no more of him, till the time of Christ's death drew nigh, when Christ observed to his disciples, that "the prince of this world cometh," to meet him in the garden, where he was in an agony, and had a combat with him; and his sweat was as drops of blood falling to the ground; and when were the hour and power of darkness, when all the posse of devils were let loose upon him, and cast their fiery darts at him; but he got the victory over them all; yet, notwithstanding that, these various assaults and temptations of Satan, to which he was subject, and by which he was harassed, must be considered as a part of his humiliation, and of that low estate he was brought into.

1e. Fifthly, Christ's humiliation appeared in the reproaches, indignities, and persecutions he endured from men, even contradiction of sinners against himself; the reproaches with which God and his people were reproached, fell on him; and these so thick and fast, and so heavily, that, in prophetic language, reproach is said to have broken his heart (Psalms 69:9, Psalms 69:20). Sometimes his enemies the Jews upbraided him with the meanness of his descent and pedigree, the low estate of his family, as has been observed; with his illiberal education, and the illiterateness of his followers: sometimes they attacked his moral character, affirmed they knew him to be a sinner: charged him with sabbath breaking, with being a glutton and a wine bibber, and an encourager of men in sinful practices; they traduced his miracles, which they could not deny as facts, as if done by the help of the devil; and said he had a devil, and was familiar with one, by whom he did his works; they called him a deceiver of the people, and charged him with preaching false doctrines, and delivering out hard sayings not to be borne with; nay, they endeavoured to fix the imputation of blasphemy on him, because, being a man, he made himself God, and equal to him; they represented him as a seditious person, that went about teaching men not to give tribute to Caesar; as well as having an intention to destroy their law; and as setting men to pull down their temple. In short, they not only rejected him as the Messiah, with the greatest contempt and abhorrence of him; but sought to take away his life in a violent manner; sometimes by having him to the brow of an hill to cast him down headlong; and at other times they took up stones to stone him; nor were they satisfied until they had brought him to the dust of death.

1f. Sixthly, There was a very great degree of meanness and poverty which appeared throughout the whole life of Christ, private and public; to which the apostle has respect, when he says; "Ye

know the grace of our Lord Jesus," &c. (2 Corinthians 8:9), where he puts Christ's riches and poverty in contrast, that by so much the greater his riches were in his former state, by so much the more does his poverty seem to be in his low estate; he was rich in the perfections of his nature, in the possession of heaven and earth, and all therein; and in the revenues of glory arising from the kingdom of nature and providence; and yet he who was Lord of all became poor to make us beggars rich. And this is to be understood of poverty in a literal sense; for Christ was not spiritually poor. Some instances of his meanness and poverty in private life have been observed before; as, that he was born of poor parents, had not a liberal education, and was brought up to a mechanic business. When he came into public life, it does not appear that he had any certain dwelling house to live in; so that "the foxes, and the birds of the air," enjoyed more than he did (Matthew 8:20). To what a low estate was our Lord brought! though he could have supported himself, and his twelve apostles, by working miracles for his and their sustenance; yet he never did, but lived upon the contributions and ministrations of some good women, and others, mentioned in Luke 8:2, Luke 8:3. When the collectors of tribute came to him for the tribute money, he had none to pay them, but ordered Peter to cast his hook into the sea, and take up a fish, and out of that a piece of money, and pay the tribute for him and for himself (Matthew 17:24-27). At his death he had nothing to leave to his mother for her support; but seeing her, and his disciple John, when on the cross, said to her, "Behold thy son;" and to him, "Behold thy mother;" signifying, that he should take care of her; and from that time that disciple took her to his own house (John 19:26, John 19:27). Nor had he any tomb of his own, or family vault to be interred in; but was laid in one belonging to another, even Joseph of Arimathea. And this poverty of his was signified by hints, types, and prophecies, that he should be thus poor and needy; and which were hereby fulfilled (Psalms 40:17; Ecclesiastes 9:14; Zechariah 9:9).

1g. Seventhly, Upon the whole, it clearly appears, that Christ indeed "humbled himself, and made himself of no reputation," as in Php 2:7, Php 2:8 or emptied himself; not of the fulness of grace it pleased the Father should dwell in him; this was with him, and seen, in him, when he became incarnate; and still continues with him; out of which saints receive grace for grace (John 1:14, John 1:16), much less of the perfections of his divine nature, the whole fulness of which dwells in him bodily (Colossians 2:9). Every perfection in Deity was asserted by him in his state of humiliation, as omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, &c. (John 2:24, John 2:25; John 3:13; Revelation 1:8). Christ did not lay aside the form of God, in which he was; or lay down his divine nature, which was impossible; nor deny his equality with God, which would be to deny himself; but he consented to have his divine glory covered and veiled, as to the ordinary manifestation of it, and in common; I say as to the ordinary manifestation of it; for it sometimes did break forth in an extraordinary way by miracles (John 2:11), and there, were some, though but few, which saw his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father; the greater part saw no form nor comeliness in him, wherefore he should be desired by them (John 1:14; Isaiah 53:3). He did not give up his equality with God the Father; but he was content that that for a time should be out of sight; and so behave, and be so treated, as if he was not his fellow; he was willing, in the human nature, and in his office capacity, to act in subordination to his Father; to say what he bid him say, and do what he bid him do; even to the laying down of his life; for which he had a commandment from his Father; yea, he owned that in that his present state and circumstances, his Father was greater than he (John 12:49, John 12:50; John 10:18; John 14:28). He was content to be had in the utmost disesteem by men, to be emptied of his good name, character, and reputation, to be reckoned a worm, and no man; to be a

Samaritan, and have a devil; and to be called and abused as if he was the worst of men; and to be made sin, and a curse for his people, to repair the loss of honour sustained by the sins of men; so that Christ's humiliation was his own voluntary act and deed.

## 05-03 Of the Active Obedience of Christ in His

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 3 Of the Active Obedience of Christ in His State of Humiliation The humiliation of Christ may be seen in his obedience to God, through the whole course of his life, even unto death; in order to which,

1. First, He took upon him the form of a servant (Php 2:7), and really became one; even the Servant of God: and this is an instance of his amazing humility and condescension; that he, who was the Son of God, of the same nature with God, and equal to him, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, should voluntarily become the Servant of him; which the apostle observes with astonishment; "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered!" (Hebrews 5:8). He was chosen of God, in his eternal purposes, to be his Servant; and therefore is called, his Servant elect (Isaiah 42:1). He called him to the work and office of a servant; and said unto him, in the everlasting council and covenant of grace and peace, "Thou art my Servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified" (Isaiah 49:3). And Christ, the Son of God, accepted of this office; agreed to be the Servant of God, to come into the world, and do his will and work (Psalms 40:7, Psalms 40:8). And accordingly, he was prophesied of as the Servant of the Lord, that should come (Zechariah 3:8; Isaiah 42:1). In the fulness of time he was sent, and came not to be ministered unto, as a monarch, but to minister as a servant; and he quickly appeared to be under a law, and was subject to the law of circumcision; and being had in his infancy to Egypt, the house of servants; to his ancestors, according to the flesh, was an emblem of that servile state he was come into: and very early did he declare, that he must be about his Father's business: as a servant, he had work to do, and much work, and that very laborious; which lay, not only in working miracles, which were works his Father gave him to finish, as demonstrations of his Deity, and prods of his Messiahship; nor only in going about from place to place, healing all manner of diseases, and so doing good to the bodies of men; nor only in preaching the gospel, for which he was qualified and sent, and thereby did good to the souls of men; but chiefly in fulfilling the law of God, both in the preceptive and penal part of it, in the room and stead of his people; and thereby wrought out the great work of all he came to do, the redemption and salvation of men; for this was the work assigned him by God his Father, as his servant; "to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel"; that is, to redeem and save the chosen people: this was the work his Father gave him to do; this was the work which was before him when he came; and this is the work which he has finished; for he has obtained eternal redemption; and is become the author of eternal salvation. Now throughout the whole of his work, as a servant, he appeared very diligent and constant; very early he discovered an inclination to be about it; very eager was he at it; when in it, it was his meat and drink; and he was continually, constantly employed in it (John 4:34; John 9:4). Nor did he leave working till he had completed the whole. In all which he was faithful to him that appointed him; and very justly did he obtain the character of God's "righteous Servant" (Isaiah 11:5; Isaiah 53:11).

2. Secondly, When Christ became incarnate, and took upon him the form of a servant, and really was one; he, as such, was subject to the law of God: hence these two things are joined together,

as having a close connection with each other; "Made of a woman; made under the law" (Galatians 4:4).

2a. First, Christ was made under the judicial, or civil law of the Jews; he was by birth a Jew, and is called one (Zechariah 8:23). It is manifest that he sprung from the tribe of Judah; which tribe, in process of time, gave the name of Jews to the whole people of Israel; and because our Lord was of that tribe, he is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Hebrews 7:14; Revelation 5:5). He was born at Bethlehem, in the tribe of Judah, and was of the seed of David, who was of that tribe; and is therefore said to be the root and offspring of David (Revelation 22:16). Wherefore, since he, the salvation of God, and Saviour of men, as to his human nature, was of the Jews; it was fit and proper he should be subject to their civil government, and to the laws of it, as he was: for though he was charged with sedition, yet falsely, for he was subject to their government, though it was then in the hands of the Romans; and not only paid tribute himself, but directed others to do the same, saying, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's (Matthew 17:24-27; Matthew 22:17-21). And to this law he submitted,

2a1. That it might appear he was of the nation of the Jews, as it was prophesied of, and promised he should; as, that he should be of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and of the Jewish fathers, according to the flesh; all which he was (Genesis 22:18; Genesis 49:10; Matthew 1:1; Romans 9:5).

2a2. That it might be manifest that he came before the Jewish polity was at an end; as it was foretold he should (Genesis 49:10). And Christ being under and subject to the civil law, showed that the sceptre and lawgiver had not departed, but civil government yet continued; though now, for many hundreds of years it has wholly departed, and is not, in any form or shape, among that people; which has fulfilled the prophecy in Hosea 3:4. "The children of Israel shall be many days without a king"; and therefore the Messiah must be come long ago, before they were without one, as he did; for Herod was king when he was born.

2a3. Christ became subject to the civil law, to teach his followers subjection to civil magistrates; and this is the doctrine of his apostles, frequently inculcated by them, to be subject to the higher powers, to obey magistrates, and submit to every ordinance of men (Romans 13:1; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13).

2b. Secondly, Christ was made under the ceremonial law, and became subject to that; he was circumcised when eight days old, according to that law; and was presented in the temple at the time of his mother's purification, as the law required: at twelve years of age he came with his parents to Jerusalem, to keep the passover; and when he had entered on his public office, it was his custom constantly to attend synagogue worship; and it was one of the last actions of his life, to keep the passover with his disciples. Now he became subject to this law,

2b1. Because it looked to him, and centered in him; it was a shadow of good things to come by him: the feasts of tabernacles, passover, and Pentecost; the sabbaths of the seventh day of the week, and of the seventh year, and of the seven times seventh year, were shadows, of which he is the substance: all the ablutions, washings, and purifications enjoined by it, were typical of cleansing by his blood: and all the sacrifices of it, daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly, all pointed to his sacrifice.

2b2. He was made under this law, in order to fulfil it; for it became him to fulfil all righteousness, ceremonial as well as moral righteousness; and all things in it were to have an end, and had an end, even a fulfilling end in him.

2b3. He was made under it, that by fulfilling it he might abolish it, and put an end to it; for when it was fulfilled, it was no longer useful; and there was a necessity of the disannulling of it, because of its weakness and unprofitableness; and accordingly, this law of commandments was abolished; this handwriting of ordinances was blotted out; this middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was broken down; and the rituals of it pronounced weak and beggarly elements; and believers in Christ were directed to take care they were not entangled with this yoke of bondage; nor should they judge and condemn one another for any neglect of it; Christ has answered to the whole, by being made under it.

2c. Thirdly, Christ was made under the moral law; under this he was as a man; being "made of a woman", in course he was made under the law; for every man, as a creature of God, is subject to him, its Creator and Lawgiver; and to his law: to fear God, and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man; and is the duty of every man; and was the duty of Christ, as man. But besides this, Christ was made under it, as the surety and substitute of his people; as he became their surety, he engaged to fulfil the law in their room and stead; this is a very principal part of that will of God, which he declared his readiness to come and do; saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God! thy law is within my heart" (Psalms 40:7, Psalms 40:8).

2c1. He was made under it, in order to fulfil the precepts of it; which to do is righteousness (Deuteronomy 6:25), and is that righteousness which he undertook to work out in perfect agreement with the commands of the law; and which he perfectly obeyed; for he always did the things which pleased the Father, and all that was pleasing to him; even every command of his righteous law; nor did he fail in anyone instance; he never committed one sin; and so did not transgress the law in anyone particular; but was holy and harmless throughout the whole of his life and conversation.

2c2. He submitted to the penal part of the law; the law pronounces a curse on all those that do not perfectly observe its precepts; Christ being the Surety of his people, was made a curse for them; or endured the curse of the law in their stead, that he might redeem them from it (Galatians 3:10, Galatians 3:13). The penal sanction of the law was death; it threatened with it, in case of sin or disobedience to it; the wages of sin is death; Christ therefore, as the substitute of his people became obedient to death, even the death of the cross, for them.

2c3. All this he became and did, to fulfil the law in their room; and that the righteousness of it might be fulfilled in them, and so deliver them from the bondage, curse, and condemnation of it; that being, through Christ, dead to them, and they to that, that they might live unto God in a spiritual and evangelic manner.

3. Thirdly, Christ taking upon him the form of a servant, in human nature, and being made under the law, he was obedient to it, throughout the whole course of his life, to the time of his death; which is meant by that phrase, "Became obedient unto death"; that is, until death, as well as in it, and by submission to it. And,

3a. There is the obedience of Christ to men; he was obedient to his earthly parents; he not only lived in a state of subjection to them in his childhood and youth, but continued his filial affection for them, and regard to them, particularly to his mother, when a grown man: his words to her in John 2:4 do not express irreverence towards her; nor did she so understand them, showing no resentment at them; but the contrary: nor do those in Matthew 12:48, Matthew 12:49 signify any disrespect to her, nor want of affection to her; but his great affection for his spiritual relations: and that he retained his filial duty and regard to her to the last, appears by his bequeathing her to the care of one of his disciples (John 19:27). Christ also yielded obedience to civil magistrates, as before observed, by paying the tribute money; hence in prophecy he is called, the Servant of rulers (Isaiah 49:7). But,

3b. There is the obedience of Christ to God; for his Servant he was; and it was his law he was made under; and to which he yielded obedience; and is that obedience by which his people are made righteous; though there are many things in which Christ was obedient to God, which do not come into the account of his obedience for the justification of men. As,

3b1. The miraculous actions which were performed by him: these were necessary to be done, for they were predicted of him, and were expected from him; hence the Jews said, "When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" (John 7:31; Isaiah 35:5, Isaiah 35:6). And these were done to prove his proper Deity, that he was truly God; that he was in the Father, and the Father in him; that is, that he was of the same nature with him, and equal to him; for the truth of which he appeals to those works of his (John 10:38; John 14:11). These were also proofs of his being the true Messiah; and were given by him as evidences of it to the two disciples John sent to him, to know whether he was the Messiah expected or not (Matthew 11:3-5). Now these were done in obedience to his Father; he gave him those works to finish, and because they were done by his direction, and in his name, and by his authority, they are called the works of his Father (John 5:36; John 10:25, John 10:37). And yet these are no part of that obedience by which men are made righteous; these were done to answer the above ends; and they are recorded, that we might believe in the Son of God, and in his righteousness; but, as Dr. Goodwin observes [Works, vol. 3. part 3. p. 336.], they are not ingredients in that righteousness in which we believe. Nor,

3b2. His obedience in the ministration of the gospel: he had from God his mission and commission to preach the gospel; he was qualified for it as man, through the unction of the Holy Spirit; he was sent of God to preach to this and the other city; to these and the other people: he became the minister of the circumcision, or a minister to the circumcised Jews; both for the truth and faithfulness of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers; and in obedience to the will of God, who gave him a commandment what he should say, and what he should speak; and accordingly he said and spoke what was delivered to him; not his own doctrine, but his Father's, in which he sought, not his own, but his glory; and so showed himself to be true, and no unrighteousness in him (Romans 15:8; John 8:28; John 12:49, John 12:50; John 7:16-18). But now it was not his faithful execution of this his prophetic office, nor of the whole of his office as Mediator, which is the obedience or righteousness by which a sinner is justified; for though it is the righteousness of the Mediator; yet not the fidelity and righteousness he exercised in the execution of his office, is that by which men are justified. Nor,

3b3. His obedience to the ceremonial law, which he was under, as has been shown; and to which he yielded obedience; of which many instances have been given; but this is no part of our justifying righteousness; for the greater number of those that are made righteous by Christ's obedience, were never under this law; and so under no obligation to yield obedience to it; nor their surety for them. But,

3b4. It is Christ's obedience to the moral law, which he was under, and to which he was obedient throughout his life, unto death; and is what all men are subject, and ought to be obedient to; and for lack of which obedience, Christ has yielded a perfect one, in the room and stead of his people; concerning which may be observed, his qualifications and capacity for it, his actual performance of it, and the excellency of his obedience, whereby it appears to have answered the end and design of it.

3b4a. First, The qualifications and capacity of Christ to yield perfect obedience to the law.

3b4a1. His assumption of human nature, which was necessary to his obedience: as God he could not obey; he therefore took upon him a nature in which he could be subject to God, and yield obedience to him; and which was fit and proper to be done in that nature in which disobedience had been committed.

3b4a2. He was made under the law, for this purpose; which has been particularly explained and enlarged on.

3b4a3. He had a pure and holy nature, quite conformable to the pure, holy, and righteous law of God; clear of all irregular affections, desires, motions, or lusts; is called, "the holy Thing", said to be "without spot or blemish", harmless and undefiled; entirely free from both original and actual transgression, and so fit for pure and perfect obedience to be performed in it.

3b4a4. Was possessed of a power of free will to that which is holy, just, and good, agreeable to the law of God. In the state of innocence the will of man was free to that which is good only: in man fallen, his will is only free to that which is evil: in a man regenerate, there being two principles in him, there is a will to that which is good, and a will to that which is evil; so that he cannot do oftentimes what he would: but the human will of Christ was entirely free to that which is good; and as he had a will and power to do, so he always did the things which pleased his Father.

3b4a5. He had a natural love to righteousness, and an hatred of sin (Psalms 45:7), and from this principle flowed an entire conformity to the law, throughout the whole of his life, and all the actions of it.

3b4b. Secondly, His actual performance of it; for as he came to fulfil it, he has fulfilled it; and is become the end of it, for righteousness, to everyone that believes. The moral law consists of two tables; and is reduced, by Christ, to two points, love to God, and love to our neighbour; and both have been exactly observed and obeyed by Christ.

3b4b1. The first table of the law; which includes,

3b4b1a. Love to God; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart", &c. (Matthew 22:37, Matthew 22:38) and which was never obeyed and fulfilled to such perfection and purity as by Christ; and which he has fully shown by his regard to the whole will of his Father, to all his

commands, even to the laying down of his life for men; and therefore voluntarily went forth to meet the prince of this world in the garden, and deliver up himself into the hands of his emissaries, in order to suffer and die, according to his Father's will; hence he said, "That the world may know that I love the Father---Arise, let us go hence" (John 14:31).

3b4b1b. Faith and trust in God; for to believe God, and to believe in him, is to have him before us, as the law requires: Christ very early exercised faith and hope on him as his God; even when he was upon his mother's breasts; and when in the midst of his enemies, and in suffering circumstances, he expressed the strongest degree of confidence in him; "The Lord God will help me, therefore I shall not be ashamed" (Psalms 22:9, Psalms 22:10; Isaiah 50:7-9).

3b4b1c. The whole worship of God; not only internal, which lies in the exercise of faith, hope, love, &c. just observed; but external, as prayer and praise; both which Christ was often in the exercise of (Luke 6:12; Luke 10:21), and who not only directed to the worship and service of God, and of him only; but set an example by his constant attendance on public worship on sabbath days; and he showed his regard to it, by inveighing against all innovations in it, the doctrines, traditions, and commandments of men, as vain and superstitious; and by resenting every degree of profanation, even of the place of public worship (Matthew 4:10; Matthew 13:54; Matthew 15:3, Matthew 15:6, Matthew 15:9; Matthew 21:12, Matthew 21:13).

3b4b1d. Honour and reverence of the name of God; and though Christ himself was dishonored by men, he was careful to honour his God and Father, and not take his name in vain; "I honour my Father", says he, "and ye dishonor me". With what reverence does he address him in his prayer; saying, "Holy Father, and righteous Father?" (see John 8:49; John 17:11, John 17:25).

3b4b1e. Sanctification of the sabbath; for though Christ was charged with breaking it, by doing acts of mercy on it; which he vindicated, and so cleared himself from the aspersion of his enemies; yet he was constant in the observation of it for religious service; it was his constant custom to go to the synagogue on sabbath days, and there either hear or read the scriptures, and expound them (Luke 4:16, Luke 4:31).

3b4b2. The second table of the law; which includes,

3b4b2a. Honoring of parents, and obedience to them; the first commandment with promise, and the first in this table; and which, how it was observed by Christ, both in youth and manhood, has been remarked already; (see Luke 2:51), and in which he was a pattern to others of filial obedience.

3b4b2b. Love to our neighbour as one's self, and which is the second commandment, and like to the first (Matthew 22:39). And this was never fulfilled by any as by Christ; who has shown the greatest love, pity, and compassion, both to the bodies and souls of men: greater love hath no man, than what he has expressed to men, by suffering and dying for them, and working out their salvation (John 15:13).

3b4b2c. Doing all good to men the law requires: and no injury to the persons and properties of men, which that forbids; and which Christ punctually observed: he went about continually from place to place, doing good to the bodies of men, by healing all manner of diseases; and to the souls of men, by preaching wholesome doctrine to them: nor did he ever, in one single instance,

do any injury to the person of any man, by striking, smiting, or killing; nor to the property any one; he did "no violence", committed no act of rapine or robbery, or took away any man's substance by fraud or force (Acts 10:38; Isaiah 53:9).

3b4b2d. As all malice, impurity, and evil concupiscence, are forbidden in this table of the law; none of these appeared in Christ; no, not the least shadow of them; no malice prepense, nor hatred of any man's person; no unchaste desires, looks, words, and actions; no evil covetousness, or lust after what is another's; nor after any worldly riches and grandeur: so that the law, in both its tables, was precisely obeyed by him.

3b4c. Thirdly, The obedience which Christ yielded to the law, has these peculiar excellencies in it.

3b4c1. It was voluntary; he freely offered himself to become man, to be made under the law, and yield obedience to it; or, in other words, to do the will of God; saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!" and when he was come, it was meat and drink; or, he took as much delight and pleasure in doing the will and work of God, and went about it as willingly and as cheerfully, as a man does in eating and drinking (Hebrews 10:7; John 4:34).

3b4c2. It is perfect and complete; there is no command but what Christ inviolably kept; no one, in anyone instance, was broken by him; "He did no sin": whatever was commanded, he did; and whatever was forbidden, he avoided: hence those that are justified by his obedience and righteousness, are all fair, without spot, perfectly comely through his comeliness put upon them.

3b4c3. It excels the obedience of men and angels; not only the obedience and righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, who pretended to a strict observance of the law, but of the most truly righteous persons; for "there is not a just man upon earth, that does good and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20). But Christ did all that was good, without sin: the obedience and holiness of angels is chargeable with folly, in comparison of the purity and holiness of God: but the obedience and righteousness of Christ is without any blemish, weakness, or imperfection.

3b4c4. It was wrought out in the room and stead of his people; he obeyed the law, and satisfied it in all its demands, that the righteousness of it might be fulfilled in them, or for them, in him, as their head and representative; hence he, being the end of the law for righteousness unto them, it is unto them, and comes upon them.

3b4c5. It is the measure and matter of the justification of them that believe in him; "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Romans 5:19), that is, by the imputation of this obedience, or righteousness, unto them; (see 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

3b4c6. It is an obedience well pleasing in the sight of God; because voluntary, perfect, superior excellency, performed in the room and stead of his people, and by which they are justified. God is well pleased with his Son, and with his people, considered in him; and with his righteousness and obedience imputed to them; because by it the law is magnified and made honorable; Christ always did the things which pleased his Father; his obedience, in all the parts of it, is acceptable to him; and so are his people on account of it, in whose room and stead it was performed; this is what is commonly called the active obedience of Christ, which he performed in life, agreeable to the precepts of the law.

## 05-04 Of the Passive Obedience of Christ,

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 4 Of the Passive Obedience of Christ, or of His Sufferings and Death

Another part of Christ's humiliation, lies in his sufferings and death; to which he readily submitted; he was "obedient unto death," and in it. He cheerfully endured all sufferings for the sake of his people, it was his Father's will and pleasure he should; he "was not rebellious, neither turned away his back from the smiters, nor his face from shame and spitting": and when the time was come to suffer death, in the room and stead of his people, according to the counsel of God, and his own agreement; he was like the innocent dumb sheep, "So he opened not his mouth;" said not one word against the sentence of death being executed on him; was not reluctant to become a sacrifice for the sins of men; but as he had "received a commandment" from his Father to lay down his life, as well as to take it up again; he readily and voluntarily obeyed that commandment; and this is what is sometimes called his passive obedience (Isaiah 50:5, Isaiah 50:6; Isaiah 53:7; John 10:18).

1. First, I shall observe what the sufferings of Christ were which he endured. They were foretold by the prophets, "who testified beforehand" of them; and the apostles said no other things than what "Moses and the prophets did say should come, that Christ should suffer," &c. (1 Peter 1:11; Acts 26:22, Acts 26:23). This was intimated in the first revelation made of the Messiah; "Thou shall bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). The twenty second Psalm, and fifty third of Isaiah, and ninth of Daniel, are illustrious prophecies of his sufferings; and which have had their exact accomplishment in him. Christ's whole life was a life of sufferings, from the cradle to the cross; he suffered very early from Herod, who sought to destroy him; and which obliged his parents to flee with him into Egypt; he suffered much from Satan's temptations; for his temptations were sufferings, "He suffered, being tempted;" and from the reproaches and persecutions of men; his life, throughout, was a life of meanness and poverty, which must be reckoned a branch of his sufferings: but what may more eminently and particularly be called his sufferings, are those which he endured as preparatory to his death, which led on to it, and issued in it: and death itself, and what attended it.

1a. The things preparatory to his death, and which led on to it, and issued in it.

1a1. The conspiracy of the chief priests and elders to take away his life; this they had often meditated, and had made some fruitless attempts upon him: but a few days before his death it became a more serious affair; and they met, together in a body, in the palace of the high priest, to consult the most crafty methods to take him and kill him (Matthew 26:3, Matthew 26:4), whereby was fulfilled what was foretold, "the rulers take counsel together;" the ecclesiastic rulers, as well as the civil ones (Psalms 2:2).

1a2. The offer of Judas Iscariot to them, to betray him into their hands. A little before the passover, Christ and his disciples supped at Bethany, when Satan put it into the heart of Judas to betray him; which Christ, being God omniscient, knew, and gave an hint of it at supper; and said to Judas,

"That thou doest, do quickly": upon which, he set out for Jerusalem that night, and went to the chief priests, where they were assembled, and covenanted with them to betray his Master into their hands for thirty pieces of silver. This was one part of Christ's sufferings, to be betrayed by one of his own disciples; and which, in prophecy, is observed as such; and the sum of money is foretold for which he agreed with them; and which also is observed as an instance of great disesteem of him (Psalms 41:9; Zechariah 11:12, Zechariah 11:13).

1a3. After Christ had eat his last passover with his disciples, and had instituted and celebrated the ordinance of the Supper; he went into a garden, where he used sometimes to go: here more manifestly his sufferings began; he saw what was coming upon him; the sins of his people he stood charged with as their surety, and the wrath of God for them; this caused him to be exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: at this his human nature shrunk; and he prayed that, if possible, the cup might pass from him; and the agony he was in was so great, and the pressure on his mind to heavy, and so much affected his body, that his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground; this was a foretaste of what he was after more fully to endure (Matthew 26:38, Matthew 26:39 Luke 22:44).

1a4. Judas knowing the place Christ resorted to, and where he now was, came with a band of soldiers he had from the chief priests, and with a multitude of others, armed with swords and clubs, as if they came out against a thief, to take him, as our Lord observed to them; when with a kiss he betrayed him to them; and, after he had given them proof of his almighty power, and how easily he could have made his escape from them, voluntarily surrendered himself unto them; who laid hold on him, and bound him as a malefactor, and had him to Caiaphas the high priest.

1a5. In whose palace he endured much from men, rude and inhumane; some "spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands;" one particularly struck him with the palm of his hand, as with a rod, saying, "Answerest thou the high priest so?" all which Christ took patiently, whereby the prophecies concerning him were fulfilled (Isaiah 50:6; Micah 5:1).

1a6. Still more he endured in the hall of Pilate the Roman governor, to whom the Jews delivered him bound. Here he was accused of sedition, and of stirring up the people against the Roman government; as he had been before in the high priest's palace of an evil design to destroy the temple; which were all forged and false; as is said in prophetic language (Psalms 35:11 and though he appeared to be innocent, and that to the judge himself, who would willingly have let him go; yet such were the enmity and malice of the chief priests and elders, and of the multitude of the people, that they were the more vehement and incessant in their cries, to have Barabbas, a robber, released, and Jesus crucified: which verified what David, in the person of the Messiah, said (Psalms 69:4). Upon which he was scourged by Pilate, or by his orders; to which he willingly submitted, according to Isaiah 50:6, and then was delivered to the Roman soldiers, who used him extremely ill; who platted a crown of thorns, and put it upon his head, which gave him pain, as well as disgrace, which is now crowned with glory and honour; and put a reed in his right hand, for a sceptre, whose proper sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness; and, in a mock way, bowed to him, to whom every knee shall bow in the most solemn manner; having before stripped him of his garments, and put on him a soldier's coat, as fit apparel for a king; and then having put on his clothes again, when they had sated themselves with sport, led him forth to be crucified, according to the sentence the governor had passed upon him, at the instance of the Jews; bearing his own

cross they laid upon him, as was the custom with the Romans. Plutarch [1] says, when malefactors were brought out to be punished, everyone carried his own cross: only Christ meeting with Simon, a Cyrenean, by the way, they obliged him to bear the cross after him; that is, one end of it, and so crucified him: which leads on to consider,

1b. Secondly, The death itself he died. He was obedient to "the death of the cross," the death he died on the cross; hence his blood shed on it is called, "the blood of the cross;" and the cross is put for the whole of his sufferings and death (Colossians 1:20; Ephesians 2:16). This was plainly foretold and pointed out in prophecy, particularly in the twenty second Psalm, described by the dislocation and starting out of his bones; by the fever upon him, which usually attended crucifixion; and especially by the piercing of his hands and feet; and was typified by the lifting up of the brazen serpent by Moses in the wilderness; and the phrase of lifting up from the earth, is used by Christ himself, to signify what death he should die (John 3:14; John 12:32, John 12:33). This kind of death was a shameful one; hence Christ is said to endure the cross, and despise the shame; that is, the shame that attended it (Hebrews 12:2), which lay not so much in his being crucified naked, and so exposed, was that truly the case, as in its being the punishment of strangers, of servants, and slaves, and such like mean persons; but not of freemen and citizens of Rome; hence it was called "servile supplicium," [2] a servile punishment: and it was also a painful and cruel one, as the thing itself speaks; to have the whole body stretched to the uttermost; the hands and feet, those sensible parts of it, pierced; and to have the weight of the body depending on them! it was so cruel, that the most humane [3] among the Romans, wished to have it disused, even to servants; and the more mild and gentle of the emperors [4] would order persons to be strangled before they were nailed to the cross: and it was reckoned an accursed death [5]. And though Christ was not accursed of God, but was his beloved Son, while he was suffering this death; yet it was a symbol of the curse; and he was hereby treated as if he was one accursed; and it became a clear case hereby, that he bore the curse of the law in the room and stead of sinners; yea, that he was made a curse for them; "for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree" (Galatians 3:13).

There were several circumstances which attended the death of Christ, which made it the more ignominious and distressing; as the place where he suffered, Golgotha, so called from the skulls of malefactors executed there; and was as infamous as our Tyburn; and it was as scandalous to be crucified in the one place, as to be hanged in the other. Here he was crucified between two thieves; as if he had been guilty of the same, or a like transgression, as theirs; and so fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah 53:12. He "was numbered among the transgressors;" and, instead of giving him a cup of wine with frankincense, which they used to give in kindness to a person about to be executed, to intoxicate him, that he might not be sensible of his misery; they gave to Christ vinegar mixed with gall, or sour wine with myrrh, and such like bitter ingredients, the more to distress him; of which he, in prophecy, complains (Psalms 69:21). Then they parted his garments, and cast lots upon his vesture; by which it seems that he was crucified naked, the more to expose him to shame and contempt; and which was predicted in Psalms 22:18 and while he was suffering, he endured the trial of cruel mocking, from all sorts of people; not only from travelers that passed by, and from the multitude of common people, assembled on the occasion; but from the chief priests, scribes, and elders; and even from the thieves, with whom he was crucified: to all which respect is had in prophecy (Psalms 22:7, Psalms 22:8, Psalms 22:12, Psalms 22:13, Psalms 22:16). And for three hours together, while he was on the cross, there was darkness over all the land, the sun, as it

were, blushing and hiding its face at the heinousness of the sin now committed by the Jews; or as refusing to yield any relief and comfort to Christ, now sustaining as a surety the wrath of God, for the sins of his people; and might be an emblem of that greater darkness upon his soul, being now forsaken by his Father; (see Amos 8:9). And when this was over, he quickly gave up the ghost.

Let it be observed, that Christ was "put to death in the flesh;" as the apostle expresses it (1 Peter 3:18), that is, in the body; that only suffered death; not his soul, that died not; but was commended into the hands of his divine Father: nor his Deity, or divine nature, which was impassible, and not capable of suffering death; and yet the body of Christ suffered death, in union with his divine person; hence the Lord of glory is said to be crucified and God is said to purchase the church with his blood (1 Corinthians 2:8; Acts 20:28). And the death of Christ, as the death of other men, lay in the disunion of, or in a dissolution of the union between soul and body; these two were parted for a while; the one was commended to God in heaven; the other was laid in the grave: but hereby he was not reduced to a state of non-existence, as say the Socinians; his soul was with God in paradise; and his body, when taken from the cross, was laid in a sepulchre, and where it saw no corruption. The death of Christ was "real," not in appearance only, as some of the ancient heretics affirmed; nor was he taken down from the cross alive; but was really dead, as appears by the testimony of the centurion that guarded the cross, to Pilate; by the soldiers not breaking his legs, with the others crucified with him, perceiving he was dead; and by one of them piercing his side, the "pericardium," from whence flowed blood and water; after which, had he not been dead before, he must have died then. And lastly, his death was "voluntary;" for though his life was taken from the earth, seemingly in a violent manner, with respect to men, being cut off in a judicial way; yet not without his full will and consent; he laid it down of himself, and gave himself freely and voluntarily to be a sacrifice, through his death, for the sins of his people.

Now, besides this corporal death which Christ endured, there was a death in his soul, though not of it, which answered to a spiritual and an eternal death; for as the transgression of the first Adam, involved him and all his posterity in, and exposed them to, not only a corporal death, but to a moral or spiritual, and an eternal one; so the second Adam, as the surety of his people, in order to make satisfaction for that transgression, and all others of theirs, must undergo death, in every sense of the threatening (Genesis 2:17). And though a moral or spiritual death, as it lies in a loss of the image of God; in a privation of original righteousness; in impotence to that which is good, and in an inclination, bias, and servitude of the mind to that which is evil; could not fall upon the pure and holy soul of Christ; which must have made him unfit for his mediatorial work; yet there was something similar to it, so as to be without sin and pollution; as darkness of soul, disquietude, distress, want of spiritual joy and comfort, amazement, agony, his soul being sorrowful even unto death, pressed with the weight of the sins of his people on him, and a sense of divine wrath on account of them; and what he endured both in the garden and on the cross, especially when he was made sin and a curse, and his soul was made an offering for sin, was tantamount to an eternal death, or the sufferings of the wicked in hell [6]; for though they differ as to circumstance of time and place; the persons being different, the one finite, the other infinite; yet, as to the essence of them, the same: eternal death consists in these two things, punishment of loss, and punishment of sense: the former lies in an eternal separation from God, or a deprivation of his presence for ever; "Depart from me, ye cursed": the latter is an everlasting sense of the wrath of God, expressed by "everlasting fire". Now Christ endured what was answerable to these; for a while he

suffered the loss of his Father's gracious presence, when he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" And he endured the punishment of sense, when God was wroth with him, his anointed; when his wrath was poured out like fire upon him; and his heart melted like wax within him, under it; and "the sorrows of hell" compassed him about (Psalms 89:38; Psalms 22:14; Psalms 18:5). Eternity is not of the essence of punishment; and only takes place when the person punished cannot bear the whole at once: and being finite, as sinful man is, cannot make satisfaction to the infinite Majesty of God, injured by sin, the demerit of which is infinite punishment: and as that cannot be bore at once by a finite creature, it is continued ad infinitum; but Christ being an infinite Person, was able to bear the whole at once; and the infinity of his Person, abundantly compensates for the eternity of the punishment [7].

2. Secondly, Let us next inquire into the cause, reason, and occasion of the sufferings and death of Christ; and how he came to undergo them.

2a. With respect to God, and his concern in them. To trace this, we must go back as far as the eternal decrees and purposes of God; which are the foundation, source, and spring of them; for it was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, that Christ was delivered into the hands of the Jews, and was taken, and by wicked hands was crucified and slain; Herod and Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of the Jews, did no other things against him than what the hand and counsel of God determined before should be done; and therefore it was necessary they should be done (Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27, Acts 4:28). Hence all things were overruled by the providence of God in time, to bring about what he had decreed should be; and without it nothing could have been done: Pilate had no power over him but what was given him from above: so great an hand had God in the sufferings of his Son, that he is said to bruise and put him to grief; to awake the sword of justice against him; to spare him not, but deliver him up for us all, into the hands of men, to justice and to death: and the moving cause of all this was, the great love he bore to his chosen ones in Christ; "God so loved the world," &c. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us," &c. (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 1 John 4:10; Romans 5:8).

2b. With respect to Christ, and his will, as to his sufferings and death; we must have recourse to the council and covenant of grace and peace; in which the plan of salvation was formed upon the obedience, and sufferings, and death of Christ; these were proposed to him, and he readily assented to them; and said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God! which was, to become incarnate; to obey, suffer, and die, in the room and stead of his people; and what moved him thereunto was, his free and unmerited love to them; and which is so fully and strongly expressed therein (John 15:13; 1 John 3:16; Ephesians 5:2, Ephesians 5:25).

2c. With respect to Satan; the concern he had therein, in putting it into the heart of Judas, to betray his Lord and Master; and in stirring up the chief priests and elders of the Jews to conspire to take away his life; and so strongly to move for it, and insist upon with the Roman Governor: this arose from that old enmity that was between him and the woman's seed; in which he betrayed great ignorance of the way of man's salvation, or else acted in great contradiction to himself, and to his own scheme.

2d. With respect to men; these acted from different motives, and with different views: Judas from a spirit of covetousness, to gain a small sum of money from the Jews; they, from envy and malice to the Person of Christ, delivered him to Pilate, and moved to have him crucified; and he, against his

own conscience, and the remonstrance of his wife, passed sentence of death on him, and delivered him to be crucified, to get and continue an interest in the affections of the Jews, and retain the good will and favour of his prince, the Roman emperor.

2e. But the true causes and reasons why it was the pleasure of God, and the will of Christ, from their great love to men, that he should suffer for them, were their sins and transgressions; to make satisfaction for them, and save them from them; it was not for any sin of his own, for he never committed any, but for the sins of others; he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our sins; he was stricken for the transgressions of his people; he died for their sins, according to the scriptures (Isaiah 53:5, Isaiah 53:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3).

3. Thirdly, The effects of the sufferings and death of Christ, or the things procured thereby, are many. As,

3a. The redemption of his people from sin, from Satan, from the curse and condemnation of the law, and from wrath to come; which is through his blood, his sufferings, and death: he gave his flesh for the life of the world of his elect; and gave his life a ransom for them; and being made perfect through sufferings, became the author of salvation to them (Ephesians 1:7; John 6:51; Matthew 20:28; Hebrews 2:10; Hebrews 5:9).

3b. Reconciliation, which is by the death of Christ; and peace, which is made by his blood; even a complete atonement for sin; which is obtained through Christ's being a propitiation for it, which he is, through his blood; that is, his sufferings and death (Romans 3:25; Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:20).

3c. Pardon of sin; which is a branch of redemption, through the blood of Christ, which was shed for the remission of sin; and without shedding of blood there is no remission (Ephesians 1:7; Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:22).

3d. Justification, which is sometimes ascribed to the blood of Christ; that is, to his sufferings and death; the consequence of which is, deliverance, and security from wrath to come (Romans 5:9).

3e. In short, the complete salvation of all God's elect: Christ came to gather together the children of God that were scattered abroad, by dying for them to seek and to save that which was lost; even to save all his people from their sins, by finishing transgression, making an end of sin, making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness; and by obtaining an entire conquest over all enemies, sin, Satan, and death, and hell (John 11:51, John 11:52; Matthew 1:21; Daniel 9:24).

3f. In all which the glory of God is great; the glory of his mercy, grace, and goodness; the glory of his wisdom, truth, and faithfulness; the glory of his power, and the glory of his justice and holiness.

4. Fourthly, The properties of Christ's death and sufferings.

4a. They were real; and not imaginary, or in appearance only: as he really became incarnate, so he really suffered and died; which was confirmed by the testimony of the centurion, and the soldiers that guarded him; by his hands, feet, and side being pierced, and the prints of these being seen after his resurrection.

4b. They were voluntary; he willingly agreed in council and covenant to undergo them; he came readily into the world, in the time appointed for that purpose; and was earnestly desirous of, and even straitened until they were accomplished; he freely surrendered himself into the hands of his enemies; and cheerfully laid down his life, and resigned his breath.

4c. They were necessary: he ought to suffer; he could not be excused from suffering; because of the decrees of God; the covenant and agreement he entered into with his Father; the prophecies concerning them; and the types and figures on them. Besides, the redemption and salvation of his people could not be procured in any other way.

4d. They were efficacious, or effectual to the purposes for which they were endured; as redemption, reconciliation, &c. which efficacy they had from the dignity of his Person, as the Son of God; hence his blood cleansed from all sin; and his righteousness justified from all; and it is unto all, and upon all them that believe, to the justification of them; and his sacrifice is of a sweet smelling savor with God; and a full and proper atonement for the sins of men. For,

4e. They are expiatory and satisfactory. The sufferings of saints are by way of fatherly chastisement; but they have no efficacy to expiate sin, or make atonement for it. But Christ's sufferings, through the infiniteness of his Person, are a complete atonement for all the sins of his people; by his sacrifice and death he has put away sin for ever, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

#### ENDNOTES:

[1] De sear Num. Vindict. p. 554.

[2] Valer. Maxim. l. 2, s. 7. s. 12. it is called the grave of servants, Plaut. Miles, 2, 4, 19. "Pone crucem servo," Juvenal. Satyr. 6. v. 248.

[3] As Cicero in Orat. pro Rabirio.

[4] Sueton. Vit. Jul. Caesar. c. 74.

[5] It is called "arbor infelix," in Cicero ibid. "abire in malam crucem," is often used as a curse by Plautus, vide Parei Lexic. Plant. in voce crux.

[6] "Ita quidem ut brevis passio Christi aeternae damnandorum aequipolleat," Witsius in Symbol. Exercit. 15. s. 16.

[7] Of Christ's enduring the same sufferings his people should, and undergoing the same punishment threatened in the law, see Dr. Owen, Exercit. 5. on Heb. vol. 2. p. 80, &c. and his Vindiciae Evangel. c. 26. s. 28. p. 564, &c.

## 05-05 Of the Burial of Christ

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 5 Of the Burial of Christ The last degree of Christ's humiliation, and which it ended in, is his burial, or his being laid in the grave; where he continued under the dominion of death for a time. This is one of the articles of the Christian faith, "that he was buried—according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:4). Therefore it will be proper to observe, 1. First, That Christ was to be buried, according to scripture prophecies and types of it; and what they were.

1a. First, Scripture prophecies; which are the following.

1a1. Psalms 16:10. "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," or body in the grave. The whole Psalm is concerning Christ, and this verse particularly is applied to him, and strongly argued to belong to him, and not to David, by two apostles, Peter and Paul (Acts 2:25-31; Acts 13:34-37). Indeed, they produce it in proof of Christ's resurrection; but it is, at the same time, a proof of his burial in the grave, from whence he was raised. Some understand it, of his "descent into hell;" as it is expressed in some creeds, that of the Apostles, the Nicene, and the Athanasian creeds, though foisted into them in later times; and which the papists interpret of the local descent of the soul of Christ into hell, as it signifies the place of the damned, at least into an apartment of it, they call "limbus patrum;" whither they say he went, to complete his sufferings; to preach the gospel to the Old Testament saints; to fetch their souls from thence, and to triumph over Satan. But it is certain, that the soul of Christ, upon its separation from his body, went not to hell, but to heaven, being committed by him into the hands of his Father: nor needed he to go thither to complete his sufferings, which ended on the cross, when he said, "It is finished": nor to preach the gospel, which belongs to the present life, and not to the state of the dead; and which had been preached to the old testament saints in their lifetime: nor to fetch their souls from thence, which were in heaven; as not only Enoch and Elijah, both in soul and body; but the souls of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and all the rest of the saints: nor to triumph over the devil and his angels, that he did when on the cross (Colossians 2:15). The passages of scripture which all this is chiefly grounded upon, and brought for the confirmation of, are in 1 Peter 3:19, 1 Peter 3:20 and 4:6 which are misunderstood, and wrongly applied; for the words are to be understood, not of Christ's going down into the prison of hell, after his death, and preaching to the spirits there; but of his preaching by his Spirit, to the disobedient ones, who lived in the times of Noah; whose spirits, for their disobedience to it, were, in the apostle's time, in the prison of hell. In like manner the dead, to whom the gospel is said to be preached, in 1 Peter 3: 4:6 are those that were then dead when the apostle wrote, but were alive when the gospel was preached unto them. Nor are the words in the sixteenth Psalm, and with which the article in the creed is allowed by some to agree, to be understood of the soul sufferings of Christ; the anguish and distress of his mind, under a sense of wrath, and under divine desertion; which have been spoken of in the preceding chapter: though Calvin, and many that follow him, so interpret the phrases, both in the Psalm and in the Creed: but these were what he endured in the garden and on the cross, before his death, and not after it. By "hell," is meant the grave; and so the word is used in many places (Genesis 42:38; 1 Samuel 2:6;

Isaiah 38:18). And by "soul," is meant the dead body of Christ; as the word "nephesh" sometimes signifies; (see Leviticus 21:1) and then the sense is, that God would not leave his dead body in the grave, at least not so long as to see corruption, to purify and corrupt, as bodies begin to do, usually, on the fourth day of their being laid in the grave (John 11:39), but Christ was to be, and was raised, on the third day, which prevented that. Now this prophecy manifestly implies that Christ's dead body should be laid in the grave, though it should not be left there; and though it should not lie there so long as to be corrupted, or that any worm or maggot should have power over him, as the Jews [1] express it.

1a2. Another passage is in Psalms 22:15. "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death;" not only to death, but to dust after death; to lie in the dusty grave, according to the threatening; "To dust thou shalt return" (Genesis 3:19), and to which the body does return when laid in the grave; and the soul to God that gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7). So Kimchi interprets the passage; "I am ready to be put into the grave, which is the dust of death. "

1a3. Some take the words in Isaiah 11:10 to be a prophecy of Christ's burial; "And his rest shall be glorious;" that the passage belongs to the Messiah, is clear from Isaiah 11:1, Isaiah 11:2 and following; and from the quotation and application of it to the times of Christ (Romans 15:12). And the Vulgate Latin version of the words is, "His grave shall be glorious": and the grave, as it is a resting place to the saints, so it was to Christ; where his "flesh rested in hope" of the resurrection from the dead (Psalms 16:9). And though his being buried was an instance of his humiliation, and a proof of the low estate into which he was brought; yet it was, in some sense, glorious, inasmuch as he was honorably interred in the grave of a rich man; as the next prophecy suggests.

1a4. In the passage in Isaiah 53:9 "and he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death;" in which words there is some difficulty: could they be transposed thus, "he made his grave with the rich, and he was with the wicked in his death," facts would exactly answer to it; for he died between two thieves, and so was with the wicked in his death; and he was buried in the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, and so had his grave with the rich; but it might be using too much freedom with the text to transpose it at pleasure. The general sense of the words may be this, that after his death both rich men and wicked men were concerned in his burial, and were about his grave; Joseph and Nicodemus, two rich men, in taking down from the cross his body, and laying it in the tomb, enwrapped by them in linen with spices; and wicked soldiers were employed in guarding the sepulchre: or the first clause may respect the intention of the Jews, "he" or "it," the Jewish people and nation, "gave," appointed and intended that his grave should be with "the wicked," that he should be interred in the common burying place for malefactors; and the latter clause may respect the will of God, but "he made it," that is, God in his providence ordered it, that it should be "with the rich in his death;" that he should be buried in a rich man's grave when dead. Aben Ezra says the word twmb translated "in his death," signifies a structure over a grave, a sepulchral monument; and so the sense may be, that though his grave was put under the care and watch of the wicked soldiers, yet he had a famous monument erected at the charge of a rich man, where he was laid [2].

1b. Secondly, There was a scripture type of his burial, and which our Lord himself takes notice of; "for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:40), that is, as Jonah was as it

were buried so long in the belly of the whale, so Christ should lie a like time under the earth, called "the heart of it," as elsewhere "the lower parts" of it, into which Christ "descended," that is, the grave (Ephesians 4:9).

2. Secondly, As Christ should be buried according to prophecy and type, so in fact he was buried, as all the evangelists relate (Matthew 27:59, Matthew 27:60; Mark 15:46, Mark 15:47; Luke 23:53, Luke 23:55; John 19:39-42), though with different circumstances, yet not contradictory; what is omitted by one is supplied by another; and from the whole we learn,

2a. That the body being begged of Pilate by Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, it was taken down from the cross, and was wrapped or wound about in fine clean linen, as was the manner of the Jews; (see John 11:44), when he was bound hand and foot like a prisoner; and which may denote the dominion death had over him; for when the apostle says, "death hath no more dominion over him" (Romans 6:9), it supposes that it once had; as it had when he was bound with grave clothes and was laid in the grave, until he was loosed from the pains or cords of death, and declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead: the fine clean linen, in which he was wrapped, may be an emblem of his innocence, purity, and holiness; who notwithstanding all appearances and charges, was holy, harmless, and as a lamb without spot and blemish; and likewise of his pure and spotless righteousness, now wrought out, and brought in by his active and passive obedience completely finished, called fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints (Revelation 19:8), and in which his dead members, his people, who are in themselves dead in law, and dead in sin, being enwrapped, or having his righteousness imputed to them, it is unto justification to life.

2b. Nicodemus, another rich man, brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight; which spices, along with the linen clothes, were wound about the body of Christ; which may denote the savoriness and acceptableness of the righteousness of Christ to God, and to sensible sinners; all whose garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, as those his sepulchral garments did (Psalms 45:8), so the smell of the church's garments, which she has from Christ, is like the smell of Lebanon, or like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed; as the smell of Jacob in his brother's garments was to Isaac (Song of Solomon 4:11; Genesis 27:27), also the savoriness of Christ's death and sacrifice, how agreeable to God, being satisfactory to his justice, and so of a sweet smelling savor to him (Ephesians 5:2), and the savor of a crucified Christ diffused through the preaching of the gospel, which is like a box of ointment poured forth, and emits such a sweet savor as attracts the love and affections of souls unto him; and whereby the ministers of it become a sweet savor to God and men (2 Corinthians 2:14, 2 Corinthians 2:15; Song of Solomon 1:3).

2c. The body being thus enwrapped was laid in Joseph's own tomb, a new one, in which no man had been laid; and this was cut out of a rock. As Jacob, the patriarch and type of Christ, was honorably buried by his son Joseph, so Christ, the antitype of him, and who is sometimes called Israel, was honorably buried by another Joseph, and he a "rich" man, which fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah 53:9. Christ was laid, not in his own, but in "another's" tomb; which, as it is expressive of his meanness and low estate, who in his lifetime had not where to lay down his head to sleep in, and at his death had no tomb of his own to lay his dead body in; so it denotes, that what he did and suffered, and was done to him, were not for himself but for others; he died not for his own

sins, but for the sins of others; and he was buried, not so much for his own sake, but for others, that they and their sins might be buried with him; and so he rose again for their justification: it was a "new" tomb in which Christ was laid, who wherever he comes makes all things new; he made the grave for his people quite a new and another thing to what it was; as, when he is formed, and lies, and dwells in the hearts of men, old things pass away, and all become new: and in this tomb "was never man yet laid;" and which, as the former circumstance, was so ordered in providence that it might not be said that not he but another man rose from the dead; or that he rose not by his own power, but by the touch of another body, as a man once rose by the touch of the body of Elisha (2 Kings 13:20), moreover this tomb was "hewn out in the rock," as was sometimes the manner of rich men to do, to prepare such sepulchres while living for the greater security of their bodies when dead (Isaiah 22:16), and this prevented any such objection to be made to the resurrection of Christ, that the apostles through some subterraneous passages got to the body of Christ and took it away; and to all this may be added, that at the door of this new tomb hewn out of a rock a great stone was rolled, and this stone sealed by the Jews themselves; so that no pretence could be made for a fraud or imposture in this affair.

2d. The tomb in which Christ's body was laid was "in a garden;" nor was it unusual for great personages to have their sepulchres in a garden, and there to be buried. Manasseh and Amon his son, kings of Judah, were buried in a garden (2 Kings 21:18, 2 Kings 21:26). Christ's sufferings began in a garden, and the last act of his humiliation was in one; this may put us in mind of the garden of Eden, into which the first Adam was put, and out of which he was cast for his sin; and may lead us to observe, that as sin was first committed in a garden, whereby Adam and his posterity came short of the glory of God, so sin was finished in a garden; there it was buried, there the last act Christ's humiliation for it was performed; and hereby way was made for our entrance into the garden of God, the heavenly paradise above. A garden is a place where fruit trees grow, and fruit is in plenty; and may direct us to think of the fruits of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection; who compares himself to a grain of wheat, which unless it falls into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit (John 12:24), such as redemption, reconciliation, pardon of sin, &c. as also that as Christ's remove from the cross was to a garden, so the remove of saints at death will be from the cross of afflictions and tribulations, to the garden of Eden, the paradise of God, where there are pleasures for evermore.

2e. The persons concerned in the burial of Christ, and attended his grave, were many and of various kinds, and on different accounts: the persons principally concerned in the interment of him were Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, both rich men; and though before they did not openly profess Christ, yet now being wonderfully animated, influenced, and strengthened by the power and grace of God, boldly appear in his cause, and are not ashamed to own him, and act on his behalf, though crucified and slain, and lay under so much ignominy and contempt. And this was so ordered by the wise providence of God, that it might appear, that though Christ was loaded with the reproaches of the multitude of the people of all sorts, yet he had some friends among the rich and honorable, who had courage enough to espouse his cause; and such faith in him, and love to him, as publicly to do the kind offices they did to him, in his greatest debasement and lowest state of humiliation. There were some women also who attended his cross, and followed him to his grave; and continued sitting over against the sepulchre, saw where he was and how his body was laid there; and who went and prepared spices to anoint it, and with which they came early on the

first day of the week; but were prevented doing it by his resurrection from the dead; here the power and grace of God were seen in spiriting and strengthening the weaker vessels to act for Christ, and show their respect to him, when all his disciples forsook him and fled; and this conduct of the women was a rebuke of theirs. Besides these, there were the Roman soldiers, who were placed as a guard about the sepulchre; and which, not only gave proof of the truth of his death, and of the reality of his burial; but also of his resurrection; though they were tampered with to be an evidence against it. The continuance of Christ in the grave, was three days and three nights; that is, three natural days, or parts of them; which answered the type of Christ's burial, Jonah; who lay so long in the belly of the whale (Matthew 12:40). Christ was buried on the sixth day, and so lay in the grave part of that natural day, and the whole seventh day, another natural day, and rose again on the first day, and so must lie a part of that day in it; and in like manner, and no longer, it may reasonably be supposed, Jonah lay in the whale's belly.

3. Thirdly, The ends, uses, and effects of Christ's burial, require some notice.

3a. To fulfil the prophecies and type before mentioned; for as this was predicted of him, it was necessary it should be fulfilled in him.

3b. To show the truth and reality of his death; for though there were other proofs and evidences of it; yet this must be a very convincing one, since he was taken down from the cross, and buried, not by his enemies, but by his friends, who would never bury him alive; nor, indeed, did Pilate, nor would he deliver the body to them until he was certified by the centurion that he was really dead; and if any doubt could remain after that, it must be removed by the burial of him.

3c. That it might appear, that by his death and sacrifice, he had made full satisfaction for sin, and a complete atonement for it; that as by his hanging on the tree, it was manifest that he bore the curse, and was made a curse for his people; so by his body being taken down from the cross, and laid in the grave, it was a token that the curse was at an end, and entirely abolished, agreeable to the law in Deuteronomy 21:23.

3d. To sanctify the grave, and make that easy and familiar to saints, and take off the dread and reproach of it: Christ pursued death, the last enemy, to his last quarters and strong hold, the grave; drove him out from thence, and snatched the victory out of the hand of the grave; so that believers may, with pleasure, go and see the place where their "Lord lay;" which is now sanctified, and become a sleeping and resting place for them until the resurrection morn; and may say and sing, in the view of death and the grave; "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" For,

3e. In Christ's burial, all the sins of his people are buried with him; as the "old man was crucified with him; that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Romans 6:6). So being dead, that, and its deeds, are buried with him; these may be signified by the grave clothes with which he was bound, and from which being loosed, he left them in the grave; signifying that the sins of his people, with which he was held, but now freed from, having atoned for them, would never rise up against them; being left in his grave, and cast into the depths of the sea, and, by the Lord, behind his back, so as never to be seen and remembered more; and which is emblematically represented in the ordinance of baptism, designed to exhibit to view the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and of believers in him (Romans 6:4-6; Colossians 2:12).

3f. This is an instance of the great humiliation of Christ; not only to be brought to death, but to the dust of death. The man, when laid in the grave, is a "vile" body, mean, abject, and contemptible; it is sown in dishonor and weakness; and so was the body of Christ; he descended into, and lay in the lower parts of the earth, where death and the grave had dominion, and triumphed over him for a while; and so did the enemies of Christ, as the enemies of the two witnesses will, over their dead bodies, saying, as in prophetic language, "And now that he lieth," that is, in the grave, "he shall rise up no more" (Psalms 41:8). But they were mistaken; though he died once, he will die no more; death shall have no more dominion over him; though while he was in the grave it had dominion over him; but now he is loosed from the cords and pains of death, and lives for evermore, having the keys of hell and death; and he is quickened and justified in the Spirit; and is risen again for the justification of his people: which is the next thing to be considered.

ENDNOTES:

[1] Midrash apud Kimchium, in v. 9.

[2] See my Book of the Prophecies of the Old Testament fulfilled in Jesus, p. 166.

## 05-06 Of the Resurrection of Christ

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### A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 6 OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST FROM THE DEAD

Having gone through Christ's state of humiliation, I pass on to his state of exaltation; which immediately took place on the ending of the former: these two are closely connected by the apostle (Php 2:6-10) for having fully described the humiliation of Christ; he adds, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him", &c. (see Acts 2:33; Acts 5:31). The several steps and instances of his exaltation are, his resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, session at the right hand of God, and his second coming to judge the world at the last day. I shall begin with the first of these; for the first step of Christ's exaltation is, his resurrection from the dead; "God raised him from the dead and gave him glory" (1 Peter 1:21). This is one of the principal articles of the Christian faith; a very important one, and on which the truth of the whole gospel depends (1 Corinthians 15:4, 1 Corinthians 15:14).

1. First, I shall consider the prophecies and types of Christ's resurrection from the dead, and how they have been fulfilled.

1a. First. Scripture prophecies; and the apostle Paul takes notice of several of them in one discourse of his, in Acts 13:33-35.

1a1. A passage in Psalms 2:7. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee"; which was not said to David; nor could it be said to any other man, since it never was said to any of the angels (Hebrews 1:5), yet not so to be understood of Christ, as if his resurrection was the cause of his being, or of his being called the Son of God; since, before that, his divine Sonship was witnessed to by his Father, by angels, by men, good and bad, yea, owned by devils; and was the charge brought against him, for which the Jews said he ought to die (John 19:7). But the sense is, that by his resurrection from the dead, he would be declared, as he was, to be the Son of God with power; and the truth of his divine Sonship confirmed thereby; and so this prophecy fulfilled; (see Romans 1:4).

1a2. Another prophecy of Christ's resurrection is in Psalms 16:10 which is produced both by the apostle Peter, and by the apostle Paul, as foretelling the resurrection of Christ Acts 2:31; Acts 13:35-37 for as it is a proof that his dead body would be laid in a grave, and lie buried there for a time, as has been observed in the preceding chapter, so that it would not be left there, not so long as to be corrupted, but would be raised from thence.

1a3. Another scripture quoted by the apostle Paul (Acts 13:34), as referring to the resurrection of Christ, and as a proof of it, is in Isaiah 55:3 "I will give you the sure mercies of David"; by David is meant Christ, as he often is in prophecy (Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23, Ezekiel 34:24; Ezekiel 37:24, Ezekiel 37:25; Hosea 3:5), and by his mercies, the blessings of the covenant of grace, which are with him; so called, because they flow from the grace and mercy of God; and which being put into his hands, are sure to all the elect through him; and particularly through his

resurrection from the dead; for had he died, and not rose again from the dead, the blessings of the covenant would not have been ratified and confirmed; the impetration of them is owing to his death; but the application of them to his resurrection from the dead; which, therefore, was necessary to make them sure. Besides these,

1a4. There is another passage, foretelling the resurrection of Christ, in Isaiah 26:19. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise"; which is an answer to the complaint of the prophet, concerning the sad estate of his people (Isaiah 26:14), &c. and are not spoken by him, but by the Messiah to him, the Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength, the desire of his people, the ordainer of peace for them, and the worker of their works in them; and who is acknowledged by them as being Lord of them (Isaiah 26:4, Isaiah 26:8, Isaiah 26:9, Isaiah 26:12, Isaiah 26:13) and who assures the prophet, that whereas he should arise from the dead, others should rise with him, as a pledge of the resurrection of his people at the last day; and which was fulfilled at the resurrection of Christ, when the graves were opened, and many of the saints arose from the dead Matthew 27:52, Matthew 27:53 or if the words are to be rendered, "As my dead body"; or, "as sure as my dead body shall they arise": either way they predict the resurrection of Christ, of Christ's dead body; which is both the exemplar, earnest, and pledge of the resurrection of the saints. Once more.

1a5. Another prophecy of the resurrection of Christ, and of its being on the third day, is, as is generally understood, in Hosea 6:2 "after two days will he revive us", &c. which words are thought to be spoken of the Messiah, whose coming is prophesied of in the following verse; and though they are expressed in the plural number, this may be no objection to the application of them to Christ, and his resurrection; since he rose again, not as a single Person, but as a public Head, representing all his people, who are therefore said to be raised up together with him (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1).

1b. Secondly, Scripture types; some of which are,

1b1. Types of the thing itself in general; or at least thought to be so; as the first Adam's awaking out of a deep sleep, when the woman was presented to him, formed of one of his ribs; the deliverance of Isaac, when his father received him in a figure as from the dead; the bush Moses saw burning with fire, and not consumed; the budding and blossoming of Aaron's dry rod; the living bird let fly, after it had been dipped in the blood of the slain bird, used in the purification of the leper; and the scapegoat, let go into the wilderness, when the other taken with it was slain.

1b2. Others are types of the time of it in particular; as well as of the thing itself; as the rescue of Isaac from the jaws of death, on the third day, from the time Abraham had the order to sacrifice him, and from which time he was looked upon by him as a dead man; to which others add the preferment of Joseph in Pharaoh's court, on the third year from his being cast into prison by Potiphar; putting a year for a day, as sometimes a day is for a year; but the principal type of all, respecting this matter, is that of the deliverance of Jonah from the whale's belly when he had been three days in it, at least part of three natural days, and which our Lord himself makes mention of as such (Matthew 12:40).

2. Secondly, As it was foretold that Christ should rise from it, and that on the third day; accordingly he did; of which there were many witnesses and full evidence. As,

2a. The testimony of angels. Matthew speaks of but one angel, that descended and rolled away the stone from the sepulchre; but Luke makes mention of two men in shining garments, that is, angels, who appeared in such a form; and John calls them angels, and represents them as sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain; and who told the women that came to the sepulchre, that Christ was not there, but risen; and so as angels were the first that brought the tidings of Christ's incarnation and birth to the shepherds, they were the first that made the report of his resurrection to the women (Matthew 28:2, Matthew 28:5, Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:5, Luke 24:6; John 20:12). Who,

2b. Were good and sufficient witnesses of what they saw and heard; they were present when the body of Christ was laid in the sepulchre; they saw where it was laid, and how it was laid; they went home to prepare spices, and when the sabbath was over, came with them to the sepulchre, to anoint the body with them; where, to their great surprise, they saw the stone was rolled away from it; they entered into it, and found the body was gone; they saw the angels, who assured them that Christ was risen; and as they were returning to the disciples with the news, Christ himself met them, whom they knew and worshipped, and held by the feet: so that they had all the evidence of his being risen they could well have, and of his being risen in a real body; which was not only visible to them, but palpable by them (Mark 16:4; Luke 24:2, Luke 24:3; Matthew 28:9).

2c. Even the soldiers that guarded the sepulchre were witnesses of Christ's resurrection; they saw the angel roll away the stone, they were terrified with the sight, and with the earthquake they felt; they left their station, and went to the chief priests, and reported what was done, that Christ was risen from the dead; as appears by the method the priests took to stifle the matter, by bribing them with money, to contradict what they had said, and give out that the disciples came by night, and took the body away, while they slept; which is so far from invalidating their first report, that it serves but to corroborate it, that they spoke the truth at first, but a lie at last; since, if asleep, how could they know and attest the coming of the disciples to the grave, and taking the body from thence? (Matthew 28:4, Matthew 28:11-15).

2d. After this, Christ was seen of many men, even of many hundreds; first he was seen of Cephas, or Peter; then of the twelve disciples; after that of above five hundred brethren at once; next of James, then again of all the apostles; and, last of all, he was seen of the apostle Paul, both at his conversion, and afterwards in the temple; (see 1 Corinthians 15:5-8; Acts 26:16, Acts 26:19; Acts 22:17, Acts 22:18). Now the apostles were witnesses chosen before of God for this purpose Acts 10:41 and are to be credited; for—

2d1. They were such who knew Christ full well, who had been some years his disciples and followers, had attended his ministry, had seen his miracles, and had been his constant companions in his lifetime; and after he was risen from the dead, had eat and drank with him; and had not only a glance or two of him; but he was seen by them at certain times for the space of forty days; and showed himself alive to them by infallible proofs (Acts 1:3; Acts 10:41).

2d2. They were men not over credulous, nay, slow of heart to believe, as our Lord upbraids them; and even with respect to this matter; though the women that had been at the sepulchre gave such a plain account of things, with such striking circumstances; yet "their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not"; nay, when Christ had appeared to all the disciples but one; and they were fully convinced of the truth and reality of his resurrection, and reported this to Thomas,

who was not with them; yet so incredulous was he, and would not receive their united report, that he declared he would not believe that Christ was risen, unless he saw the print of the nails in his hands, and put his finger into it, and thrust his hand into his side; all which he was indulged with by Christ and then, and not before, declared his faith in it. Now had they been a credulous sort of men, easy of belief, ready to receive anything that was told, their testimony might have been objected to; but they were all the reverse; (see Luke 24:11; John 20:25, John 20:27).

2d3. The disciples were men of holy lives and conversation, of strict probity, honesty, and integrity; never charged with any vice or immorality: it may be said of them what the apostle Paul says of himself, that "in simplicity and godly sincerity they had their conversation in the world": and the testimony of such persons merits regard in any affair.

2d4. They could have no sinister end, or any worldly advantage in view, in contriving and telling such a story; they could expect no other but to be mocked and hated, reproached and persecuted, by all sorts of men, by Jews and Gentiles; as in fact they were (Acts 4:1-3; Acts 17:18) nay, not only they risked their credit and reputation, but life itself; and exposed themselves to the severest sufferings, and most cruel death; (see 1 Corinthians 15:30, 1 Corinthians 15:32), nay, even risked the salvation of their immortal souls; for how could such men but expect the wrath of God, eternal damnation, that could frame and propagate such a falsehood, if it was one?

2e. The resurrection of Christ is not only confirmed by the above witnesses, but the Holy Ghost himself is a witness of it, by the miracles which were wrought under his influence, in confirmation of it; the apostles, with great power, that is, with miracles, signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds, "gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ"; (see Acts 4:32; Acts 5:30-32).

2f. It is as certain, and of it there is full evidence, that Christ rose again from the dead on the third day, according to scripture prophecies and types. It was on the first day of the week Christ rose from the dead. All the evangelists agree that it was on that day the women came to the sepulchre with their spices, and found things as they were; which showed that Christ was risen (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1, Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1), which laid the foundation for the observation of that day to be kept by Christians in a religious manner (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1, 1 Corinthians 16:2) and it was early in the morning on that day, about the break of it, towards sunrising; a fit time, very suitable to the Sun of righteousness, who arises on his people with healing in his wings; and this day was the third day from his death. On the evening of the sixth day, on which he died, he was buried, and he rested in the grave on the seventh day, the Jewish sabbath; and fulfilled thereby that type of him, and put an end to it; which made way for the first day, as a day of religious worship, which immediately succeeded it, as none so proper as the next day: so that a time, or day of worship, was not in the least intermitted, nor ever since was one wanted; and on the first day, which was the third from his death, he rose from the dead, and so fulfilled the type of Jonah; who, it is reasonable to suppose, lay no longer in the belly of the whale than our Lord did in the earth; namely, one whole natural day, and parts of others; the Jews having no other name for a natural day than a night and a day; which the Greeks call a night day; and a part being put for the whole, both might be said to lie three days and three nights; that is, three natural days; the one in the whale's belly; the other in the heart of the earth: they lying there some part of two natural days, whether the night or day part of them, and one whole natural day (Matthew 12:40).

3. Thirdly, The manner of Christ's rising from the dead comes next to be considered.

3a. It was in his body; not in his divine nature; which, as it was not capable of suffering and dying, so not the subject of the resurrection; nor his human soul; for that died not with the body; but went to heaven, to paradise, on its separation from it; but in his body: as he was put to death in the flesh, so he was raised from the dead in it; it was the body only that died, and that only was raised again: when Christ said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up", the evangelist observes, that "he spoke of the temple of his body" (John 2:19, John 2:21).

3b. It was the same body that was raised that died, and was laid in the grave; it was a real body, consisting of flesh, blood, and bones; and was not only to be seen, but to be handled; and it was the same identical body, as appears from the print of the nails in his hands, and the mark in his side made by the spear (Luke 24:39, Luke 24:40; John 20:25, John 20:27).

3c. It was raised immortal, clear of all former infirmities, as weariness, hunger, thirst, &c. it was, before, mortal, as the event showed; Christ was crucified through weakness: but was raised powerful, immortal, and incorruptible, never to die more; nor shall death have any more dominion over him; he lives for evermore, and has the keys of hell and death, the government of the grave, and can open it at his pleasure, and let out the inhabitants of it free (Romans 6:9; Revelation 1:18).

3d. It was raised very glorious; of which his transfiguration upon the mountain, before his decease, was an emblem and pledge: and though he might not appear in so much glory immediately after his resurrection, and during his stay with his disciples, before his ascension, they not being able to bear the luster of his countenance, it really had; yet now, being crowned with glory and honour, his body is a "glorious" one, according to which the bodies of the saints will be fashioned, at the resurrection of the just (Php 3:21).

3e. Yet it has the same essential parts and properties of a body it ever had; not only being flesh and blood, which a spirit has not, but circumscribed by space; not everywhere, but limited to some certain place; it is received up into heaven, and there it is retained, and will be retained, until the restitution of all things.

3f. And lastly, The resurrection of Christ was attended with wonderful events; as with an earthquake, which made it grand and solemn, and alarmed the watch to be attentive to it, and be witnesses of it; and was expressive of the mighty power of God, by which it was performed; and it was followed with a resurrection of many of the saints, showing the efficacy of it; and as a pledge, earnest, and confirmation of the future resurrection of all the righteous at the last day (Matthew 28:2; Matthew 27:52, Matthew 27:53).

4. Fourthly, The causes of the resurrection of Christ from the dead deserve notice; it is frequently ascribed to God, without any distinction of persons; it being a divine work, which none but God could do, and is a work of the exceeding greatness of his power (Ephesians 1:19; Acts 2:24, Acts 2:32; Acts 3:13, Acts 3:15; Acts 4:10; Acts 5:30), yet being a work "ad extra", all the three divine persons were concerned in it. It is sometimes ascribed to God the Father, as in Ephesians 1:17-20 again in Acts 13:30, Acts 13:33 which words are said to the Son by God the Father, who raised him from the dead; (see also 1 Peter 1:3). At other times it is ascribed to the Son himself: he declared beforehand, that when the temple of his body was destroyed, he would raise it up again; and that, as he had power to lay down his life, he had power to take it up again, which he did; and

was thereby declared to be the Son of God with power (John 2:19, John 2:21; 10:18; Romans 1:4; see also 1 Peter 3:18). The Spirit, the third Person, had also a concern in it; for the declaration of Christ's Sonship with power was "according to the Spirit of holiness", or the Holy Spirit, "by the resurrection from the dead"; that is, by raising Christ from the dead; and as God, by his Spirit, will raise the members of Christ at the last day, so by the same Spirit, he raised Christ, their, Head, on whose resurrection theirs depends, which is intimated by the apostle (Romans 8:11).

5. Fifthly, The effects of Christ's resurrection from the dead, or the ends which were to be, and have been, or will be, answered by it.

5a. First, With respect to God, the chief end of all, was his glory; for "Christ was raised from the dead by", some read it, to "the glory of the Father" (Romans 6:4), that is, "to the glory of God the Father", as in Php 2:11 to the glory of his perfections; as particularly, his "truth" and "faithfulness", in fulfilling types, promises, and prophecies concerning this matter; for what the apostles and ministers of the New Testament say of it, is no other than what Moses and the prophets did say should come to pass; namely, "that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead" (Acts 26:22, Acts 26:23), and since God spoke of it by them, the veracity of God required it should be done, and that is glorified by it. Also the "power" of God; to raise one from the dead, is the work of almighty power; as is both the resurrection of Christ, and of the saints; "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power": and the exceeding greatness of his power was exerted in a most glorious manner in the resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 1:19,20). Moreover, the "justice" of God is glorified in it; when Christ had done his work as a Surety, it was but just and equitable that he should be discharged, be loosed from the cords of death, and be detained no longer a prisoner in the grave; and that he should be honorably and legally acquitted; as he was when a messenger was dispatched from heaven to roll away the stone of the sepulchre, and set him free; and being thus raised from the dead, he was justified in the Spirit; and hereby the justice of God was glorified, as also his wisdom, grace, and goodness; which appeared in forming the scheme of salvation, and in the kind designs of God to his people; all which would have been defeated, if Christ had not been raised from the dead.

5b. Secondly, With respect to Christ.

5b1. Hereby is given further proof of his proper Deity, and divine Sonship; by this it appears, that he is the Lord God Almighty, who could and did raise himself from the dead! this declares him to be the Son of God with power: shows that he is the Lord of all, both of the dead and of the living; that he has the keys of hell and death, and can and will unlock the graves of his people, and set them free, as he has himself (Romans 1:4; Romans 14:9; Revelation 1:18).

5b2. By this it is a clear case, that Christ has done his work as the Surety of his people; that he has paid all their debts, finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness; that he has fulfilled the law, satisfied justice, and obtained eternal redemption, having given a sufficient price for it; and, in short, has done everything he agreed to do, to the full satisfaction of his divine Father; and therefore he is raised from the dead, received into glory, and set down at the right hand of God, having answered all his suretyship engagements.

5b3. This shows that he has got the victory over death and the grave; that he has not only destroyed him that had the power of death, the devil, but has abolished death itself, the last enemy, and has brought life and immortality to light; that he has done what he resolved to do; "O death, I will be thy plague! O grave, I will be thy destruction!" so that the believer, in a view of interest in a risen Saviour, who has conquered death and the grave, may triumph, and say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (2 Timothy 1:10; Hosea 13:14; 1 Corinthians 15:55).

5b4. It was necessary that Christ should rise from the dead, in order to enter into the glory promised him, and he prayed for: the prophets not only spoke of the sufferings of Christ, but of the glory that should follow; which could not be enjoyed by him, unless after he had suffered death, he was raised again; wherefore God raised him from the dead, and gave him the promised glory (1 Peter 1:11, 1 Peter 1:21).

5c. Thirdly, With respect to his people; the power of Christ's resurrection is great; the effects of it are many (Php 3:10).

5c1. The blessings of the covenant of grace in general are enjoyed by the saints in virtue of it; for though reconciliation, and other blessings of grace, are by the death of Christ; yet the application and enjoyment of them are through his interceding life, in consequence of his resurrection from the dead; to which life the whole of salvation is ascribed (Romans 5:10; Hebrews 7:25).

5c2. Justification, in particular, is observed as one special end and effect of Christ's resurrection; "he was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification"; and the triumph of faith, in the view of that blessing of grace, is rather, and more principally founded on Christ's resurrection, than on his sufferings and death (Romans 4:25; Romans 8:33, Romans 8:34).

5c3. Regeneration is another effect of Christ's resurrection; as the elect of God were "quickened with him", and in him, as their head and representative, when he was quickened and raised from the dead; hence said to be "raised up together" (Ephesians 2:5, Ephesians 2:6), so they are quickened in regeneration, in consequence and virtue of his resurrection, to which it is ascribed (1 Peter 1:3).

5c4. The resurrection of the saints at the last day is the fruit and effect of Christ's resurrection, and which is ensured by it. Christ's glorious body is the exemplar, according to which the bodies of the saints will then be formed; and his resurrection is the earnest and pledge of theirs; he is "the firstfruits of them that slept", that is, of the dead: the firstfruits are the sample, and what ensure a following harvest; so the resurrection of Christ is the sample, and gives assurance of the resurrection of the saints in time to come: so that Christ's resurrection being certain, the resurrection of the saints is also (1 Corinthians 15:20, 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:14).

## 05-07 Of the Ascension of Christ to Heaven

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 7 Of the Ascension of Christ to Heaven The ascension of Christ to heaven was, at his death, burial, and resurrection, according to the scriptures; he himself gave hints of it to his disciples, even before his death, as well as after his resurrection; "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" (John 6:62; John 16:28; John 20:17). It was pre-signified both by scripture prophecies, and by scripture types.

1. First by scripture prophecies; of which there are many; some more obscurely, others more clearly point unto it. As,

1a. First, A passage in Psalms 47:5 "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." The whole Psalm is applied, by some Jewish writers, to the times of the Messiah, and this verse particularly, who is the great King over all the earth (Psalms 47:2, Psalms 47:7), and more manifestly appeared so at his ascension, when he was made and declared Lord and Christ; and who subdued the Gentile world (Psalms 47:3), through the ministration of his gospel; by which, after his ascension, he went into it, conquering and to conquer; and caused his ministers to triumph in it. And though it was in his human nature that he went up from earth to heaven; yet it was in that, as in union with his divine Person; so that it may be truly said, that God went up to heaven; in like sense as God is said to purchase the church with his blood; even God in our nature; God manifest in the flesh; Immanuel, God with us: and though the circumstance of his ascension, being attended with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet, is not mentioned in the New Testament, in the account of it; yet there is no doubt to be made of it, since the angels present at it, told the disciples on the spot, that this same Jesus should so come, in like manner as they saw him go into heaven: now it is certain, that Christ will descend from heaven with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God: and also, since he was attended in his ascension with the angels of God, and with some men who rose after his resurrection; there is scarce any question to be made of it, that he ascended amidst their shouts and acclamations; and the rather, since he went up as a triumphant conqueror, over all his and our enemies, leading captivity captive.

1b. Secondly, The words of the Psalmist, in Psalms 110:1. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand;" though they do not express, yet they plainly imply, the ascension of Christ to heaven; for unless he ascended to heaven, how could he sit down at the right hand of God there? and hence the apostle Peter thus argues and reasons upon them; "For David is not ascended into the heavens;" not in his body, and therefore the words are not spoken of him, but of one that is ascended; "But he himself saith," not of himself, but another, even of his Lord the Messiah; "The Lord said unto my Lord," &c. (Acts 2:34, Acts 2:35).

1c. Thirdly, The vision Daniel had of the Son of man, in Daniel 7:13, Daniel 7:14 is thought by some to have respect to the ascension of Christ to heaven; he is undoubtedly meant by "one like unto the Son of man;" that is, really and truly man; as he is said to be "in the likeness of men," and

to be "found in fashion as a man;" the same "came in the clouds of heaven;" so a cloud received Christ, and conveyed him to heaven, at his ascension; and he was "brought near to the Ancient of days," to God, who is from everlasting to everlasting; and was received with a welcome by him; and there were given him "dominion, glory, and a kingdom;" as Christ, at his ascension, was made, or made manifest, openly declared Lord and Christ, Head and King of his church. Though this vision will have a farther accomplishment at the second coming of Christ, when his glorious kingdom will commence in the personal reign; who will deliver up the kingdom until that reign is ended. Once more,

1d. Fourthly, The prophecy in Micah 2:13 may be understood as referring to this matter; "The breaker up is come up before them;" which, in the latter part of the verse, is thus explained; "And their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them;" so that a divine Person is meant, who is head and king of the church, and plainly points to Christ, who may be called Phorez, "the breaker;" as Pharez had his name from the same word, because he broke forth before his brother; as Christ, at his birth, broke forth into the world in an uncommon way, being born of a virgin; and at his death, broke through the troops of hell, and spoiled principalities and powers; broke down the middle wall of partition, that stood between Jews and Gentiles; and at his resurrection, broke the cords of death, as Samson did his withs, with which he could be no more nor longer held by them, than he with them; and at his ascension he broke up, and broke his way through the region of the air, and through legions of devils; at the head of those that were raised with him when he rose, angels and men shouting as he passed along. But,

1e. Fifthly, What most clearly foretold the ascension of Christ to heaven, is in Psalms 68:18 which is, by the apostle Paul, quoted and applied to the ascension of Christ (Ephesians 4:8-10) and all the parts of it agree with him: he is spoken of in the context, in the words both before and after. He is the Lord that was among the angels in Sinai, who spoke to Moses there; and from whom he received the oracles of God, to give to Israel: and he is the God of salvation, the author of it to his people. And of him it may be truly said, that he "ascended on high," far above all heavens, the visible heavens, the airy and starry heavens, and into the third heaven, the more glorious seat of the divine Majesty: he has led "captivity captive;" either such as had been prisoners in the grave, but freed by him, and who went with him to heaven; or the enemies of his people, who have led them captive, as Satan and his principalities; the allusion is to leading captives in triumph for victories obtained. Christ "received," upon his ascension, "gifts for men;" and, as the apostle expresses it, "gave" them to men; he received them in order to give them; and he gave them, in consequence of receiving them: and even he received them for, and gave them to, "rebellious" men, as all by nature are "foolish and disobedient;" and even those be to whom he gives gifts fitting for public usefulness; and such an one was the apostle Paul, as the account of him and his own confessions show, who received a large measure of those gifts of grace; the end of bestowing which gifts was, "That the Lord God might dwell among men," gathered out of the world, through the ministry of the word, into gospel churches, which are built up for an habitation for God, through the Spirit.

2. Secondly, The ascension of Christ was pre-signified by scripture types; personal ones, as those of Enoch and Elijah. The one in the times of the patriarchs, before the flood, and before the law; the other in the times of the prophets, after the flood, and after the law was given. Enoch, a man that walked with God, and had communion with him, "was not;" he was not on earth, after he had

been some time on it; "God took him" from thence up to heaven, soul and body (Genesis 5:24). Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind, in a chariot, and horses of fire; was carried up by angels, who appeared in such a form; when he and Elisha had been conversing together (2 Kings 2:11). So Christ was carried up to heaven, received by a cloud, attended by angels, while he was blessing his disciples: more especially, the high priest was a type of Christ in this respect, when he entered into the holiest of all once a year, with blood and incense; which were figures of Christ's entering into heaven with his blood, and to make intercession for men (Hebrews 9:23, Hebrews 9:24). The ark in which the two tables were, was a type of Christ, who is the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness; and the bringing up of the ark from the place where it was to mount Zion, which some think was the occasion of penning the twenty fourth Psalm, in which are these words, "Be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in;" and of the forty seventh Psalm, where are the above words, "God is gone up with a shout," &c. the bringing up of which ark to Zion, may be considered as an emblem of Christ's ascension to heaven, sometimes signified by mount Zion. Now as it was foretold by prophecies and types, that Christ should ascend to heaven, so it is matter of fact, that he has ascended thither; concerning which may be observed,

2a. First, The evidence of it; as the angels of God, who were witnesses of it; for as Christ went up to heaven in the sight of his apostles, "two men stood by them in white apparel," who were angels, that appeared in an human form, and thus arrayed, to denote their innocence and purity; and other angels attended him in his ascent, when it was that he was seen "of angels," who were eyewitnesses of his ascension; (see Acts 1:10; 1 Timothy 3:16). The eleven apostles were together, and others with them, when this great event was; and while he was pronouncing a blessing on them, he was parted from them, and carried up to heaven; they beheld him, and looked stedfastly towards heaven, as he went up, until a cloud received him out of their sight (Luke 24:33, Luke 24:50, Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9, Acts 1:10). Yea, after this, when he had ascended to heaven, and had entered into it, and was set down on the right hand of God, he was seen by Stephen the proto-martyr, and by the apostle Paul: while Stephen was suffering, looking stedfastly to heaven, he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and at the same time declared it to the Jews, that he saw the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God (Acts 7:55, Acts 7:56). Christ "appeared" to the apostle Paul at his conversion, when he was caught up into the third heaven, and heard and saw things not to be uttered; and afterwards, when in a trance in the temple, he says, "I saw him" (Acts 26:16; Acts 22:18 see also 1 Corinthians 15:8). Moreover, the extraordinary effusion of the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, is a proof of Christ's ascension to heaven (Acts 2:33), for before this time, the Spirit was not given in an extraordinary manner; "Because Jesus was not yet glorified;" but when he was glorified, and having ascended to heaven, and being at the right hand of God, then the Spirit was given; and the gift of him was a proof of his ascension and glorification (John 7:39).

2b. Secondly, The time of Christ's ascension, which was forty days from his resurrection; which time he continued on earth that his disciples might have full proof, and be at a certainty of the truth of his resurrection; "to whom he showed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days;" not that he was with them all that forty days, but at several times in that interval: on the first day he appeared to many, and on that day week again to his disciples; at another time at the sea of Tiberias; and again on a mountain in Galilee. Now by these various interviews the apostles had opportunities of making strict and close observation, of looking wisely

at him, of handling him, of conversing with him, of eating and drinking with him, of reasoning upon things in their own minds, and of having their doubts resolved, if they entertained any; and had upon the whole infallible proofs of the truth of his resurrection: in this space of time also he renewed their commission and enlarged it, and sent them into the whole world to preach and baptize, and further to instruct those that were taught and baptized by them; now it was he opened the understandings of his apostles, that they might more clearly understand the scriptures concerning himself, which he explained unto them, that so they might be the more fitted for their ministerial work; he also spoke to them "of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God," the gospel church state; of the nature of a gospel church, of the officers of it, of ordinances in it, and discipline to be observed therein; wherefore all that they afterwards delivered out and practiced, were according to the directions and prescriptions given by him: and as all this required time, such a length of time was taken as that of forty days; yet longer it was not proper he should continue with them in this state, lest his apostles should think he was about to set up a temporal kingdom on earth, which their minds were running upon, and inquiring after and expecting (Acts 1:5, Acts 1:6), and besides, it was proper that they should be endued with the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary manner, to qualify them for the important work Christ gave them a commission to do; and which they could not receive until Christ was ascended and glorified.

2c. Thirdly, The place from whence, and the place whither Christ ascended, may next be considered.

2c1. The earth on which he was when he became incarnate, the world into which he came to save men, out of which he went when he had done his work (John 16:28), the particular spot of ground from whence he ascended was mount Olivet, as appears from Acts 1:12 a place he frequented much in the latter part of his life; and it was in a garden at the bottom of the mount where his sufferings began, where his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; and where he put up that prayer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" and where he was in such an agony, that his sweat was as drops of blood falling to the ground; and from this very spot he ascended to his God and Father, to enjoy his presence, and all the pleasures of it, and partake of the glory promised him (Luke 21:37; Luke 22:39, Luke 22:44). One of the evangelists tells us, that he led his disciples as far as Bethany, and there blessed them, and was parted from them; which must not be understood of the town of Bethany, but of a part of mount Olivet near to Bethany, and which bore that name, and which signifies the house of affliction, from whence Christ went to heaven; and as it was necessary he should suffer the things he did, and enter into his glory, so his people must through many tribulations enter the kingdom (Luke 24:50, Luke 24:51; Luke 21:26; Acts 14:22).

2c2. The place whither he ascended, heaven, even the third heaven; hence Christ is often said to be carried up into heaven, taken up into heaven, towards which the disciples were gazing as he went up; passed into heaven, and was received into heaven, where he remains; and which is to be understood, not merely of a glorious state, into which he passed, exchanging a mean, uncomfortable, and suffering one, for a glorious, happy, and comfortable one; which is meant by the two witnesses ascending to heaven, even a more glorious state of the church (Revelation 11:12), but a place in which he is circumscribed in his human nature, where he is, and not elsewhere, nor everywhere; which has received him, and where he is, and will be retained until the times of the restitution of all things; from whence he is expected, and from whence he will descend

at the last day; he is gone to his Father there, and has taken his place at his right hand; who, though everywhere, being omnipresent, yet heaven is more especially the place where he displays his glory; and who is called "Our Father," and Christ's Father, who is "in heaven;" and of going to him at his ascension he often spoke (John 16:10, John 16:16, John 16:17, John 16:28; John 20:17).

2d. Fourthly, The manner of Christ's ascension, or in what sense he might be said to ascend; not "figuratively," as God is sometimes said to go down and to go up (Genesis 11:6; Genesis 17:22) which must be understood consistent with the omnipresence of God; not of any motion from place to place, but of some exertion of his power, or display of himself; nor in appearance only, as it might seem to beholders, but in reality and truth; nor was it a "disappearance" of him merely, as in Luke 24:31 for he was seen going up, and was gazed at till a cloud received him out of sight; nor was it in a "visionary" way, as the apostle Paul was caught up into the third heaven, not knowing whether in the body or out of the body; nor in a "spiritual" manner, in mind and affections, in which sense saints ascend to heaven, when in spiritual frames of soul; but "really, visibly," and "locally": this ascension of Christ was a real motion of his human nature, which was visible to the apostles, and was by change of place, even from earth to heaven; and was sudden, swift, and glorious, in a triumphant manner: and he went up as he will come again, in a cloud, in a bright cloud, a symbol of his divine majesty, either literally taken; or if understood of the appearance of angels in the form of a bright cloud, as by Dr. Hammond, it is expressive of the same; nor does it at all affect the reality, locality, and visibility of Christ's ascension, so to understand it: nor can Luke, as an historian, be chargeable with an impropriety in his relation of it in such sense, any more than in the same account by representing angels as appearing in an human form, and in white apparel; nor than that the author of the book of Kings is, in relating the ascent of Elijah to heaven in a chariot and horses of fire, generally understood of angels in such a form (2 Kings 2:11), as the horses and chariots of fire also are in 2 Kings 6:17 which yet were really and visibly seen; and the rather it may be thought that the angels are intended in the account of Christ's ascension, since as the Lord makes the clouds his chariots (Psalms 104:3) so certain it is, the angels are the twenty thousand chariots of God among whom Christ was, and enclosed, as in a bright cloud when he ascended on high (Psalms 68:17, Psalms 68:18), all which serve to set forth the grandeur and majesty in which Christ ascended.

2e. Fifthly, The cause or causes of Christ's ascension; it was a work of almighty power to cause a body to move upwards with such swiftness, and to such a distance; it is ascribed to the right hand of God, that is, of God the Father; to the power of God, by which he is said to be lifted up and exalted (Acts 2:33; 5:31), and therefore it is sometimes passively expressed, that he was "carried up, taken up," and "received up" into heaven; and sometimes actively, as done by himself, by his own power; so it is said, "he went up," he lifted up his own body through the union of it to his divine person, and carried it up to heaven; so "God went up with a shout;" (see Acts 1:10), and often he speaks of it as his own act, "What if the son of man ascend," &c. "I ascend to my God," &c. the "efficient" cause of it is God; and being a work "ad extra," Father, Son, and Spirit were concerned in it. The "procurring" or "meritorious" cause of it was the "blood" of Christ; by which he made full satisfaction to divine justice, and obtained eternal redemption for his people: and therefore having done the work he engaged to do, it was but fit and just that he should be, not only raised from the dead, but ascend to heaven, and be received there; hence it is said, "by his own blood," through

the virtue of it, and in consequence of what he had done by it, "he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12). The "instrumental" or ministering causes, were the "cloud" and the attending angels.

2f. Sixthly, The effects of Christ's Ascension, or the ends to be answered, and which have been answered, are,

2f1. To fulfil the prophecies and types concerning it, and particularly that of the high priest's entering into the holiest of all once a year, to officiate for the people; and so Christ has entered into heaven itself, figured by the most holy place, there to make, and where he ever lives to make, intercession for the saints.

2f2. To take upon him more openly the exercise of his kingly office; to this purpose is the parable of the nobleman (Luke 19:12) by the "nobleman" is meant Christ himself; (see Jeremiah 33:21), by the "far country" he went into, heaven, even the third heaven, which is far above the visible ones; his end in going there, was "to receive a kingdom for himself," to take possession of it, and exercise kingly power; to be made and declared Lord and Christ, as he was upon his ascension (Acts 2:36), which kingdom will be delivered up at the close of his personal reign, and not before.

2f3. To receive gifts for men, both extraordinary and ordinary; and this end has been answered, he has received them, and he has given them; extraordinary gifts he received for, and bestowed upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost; and ordinary ones, which he has given since, and still continues to give, to fit men for the work of the ministry, and for the good of his churches and interest in all succeeding ages (Ephesians 4:8-13).

2f4. To open the way into heaven for his people, and to prepare a place for them there; he has by his blood entered into heaven himself, and made the way into the holiest of all manifest; and given boldness and liberty to his people through it to enter thither also, even by a new and living way, consecrated through the vail of his flesh (Hebrews 9:8, Hebrews 9:12; Hebrews 10:19, Hebrews 10:20), he is the forerunner for them entered, and is gone beforehand to prepare by his presence and intercession mansions of glory for them in his Father's house (Hebrews 6:20; John 14:2, John 14:3).

2f5. To assure the saints of their ascension also; for it is to his God and their God, to his Father and their Father, that he is ascended; and therefore they shall ascend also, and be where he is, and be glorified together with him; and all this is to draw up their minds to heaven, to seek things above, where Jesus is; and to set their affections, not on things on earth, but on things in heaven; and to have their conversation there; and to expect and believe that they shall be with Christ for evermore.

## 05-08 Of the Session of Christ at the Right Hand

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 8 Of the Session of Christ at the Right Hand of God  
This follows upon the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ to heaven; it is in this order things stand according to the scriptures; Christ was first raised from the dead; then he went to heaven, and was received up into it; and then sat down at the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:20; 1 Peter 3:22; Mark 16:19). I shall treat this article much in the same manner as the former.

1. First, Show that it was foretold in prophecy that Christ should sit at the right hand of God; hence it may be thought, that in prophetic language, and by anticipation, he is called "the man of God's right hand" (Psalms 80:17), not only because beloved of God, and dear to him as a man's right hand is to him; so Jacob called his youngest son Benjamin, the son of the right hand, because of his great affection to him; nor because Christ would be held and sustained by the right hand of God in the discharge of his mediatorial office (Isaiah 42:1) but because when he had done his work on earth, he should be received to heaven, and placed at the right hand of God; of which there is a plain promise and prophecy in Psalms 110:1. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand"; which words are spoken, not of Abraham by Melchizedek, nor by Eliezer the servant of Abraham; not by Melchizedek, for he was greater than Abraham (Hebrews 7:6, Hebrews 7:7), and therefore would not call him his Lord; and though he might be so called by Eliezer, yet he could not say of him, that he was a priest after Melchizedek's order (Hebrews 7:4), nor are they said of David; for, as the apostle Peter argues, "David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand", &c. nor indeed could they be said to, or of any man; not of the saints, for though they sit down together with Christ, their head and representative; and will sit on the same throne with him, and be glorified with him; yet are never said to sit at the right hand of God; nor indeed are they spoken to or of angels, for "to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand?" &c. (Hebrews 1:13), but on the contrary, angels, authorities, and powers, are subject to him who sits at the right hand of God (1 Peter 3:22), and who is the Messiah, Christ, the Son of God, of whom the text in the Psalms is spoken, and was so understood by the ancient Jews, and even by the Jews in Christ's time, as is clear from Matthew 22:42-45 where Christ puts a question to which they could give no answer, but were nonplussed and confounded; but could they have given, or had they known any other sense of the words, they could easily have made answer by denying they belonged to the Messiah, but to some other person, and so have freed themselves from the embarrassment they were in; but they knew that this was the universal and acknowledged sense of their nation. The words were spoken by Jehovah the Father, to his Son, in the everlasting council and covenant of grace; even to him who was David's Adon, or Lord: Christ himself also foretold, that he should sit down at the right hand of God; "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of Power" (Matthew 26:64).

2. Secondly, It is fact; Christ is set down at the right hand of God, and the above prophecies are fulfilled; the evidences of this fact are,

2a. The effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, after Christ had ascended and took his place at the right hand of God. The Spirit was not given until he was glorified in heaven, by his session there at God's right hand; upon which, "having received of the Father, the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear", says the apostle (Acts 2:33). And again, "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him", on his exaltation at the right hand of God (Acts 5:31, Acts 5:32).

2b. Stephen, the proto-martyr, while he was suffering, was an eyewitness of this; he saw Christ at the right hand of God; and declared to the Jews that stoned him, that he did see him; only with this difference, in all other places Christ is spoken of as sitting; but Stephen saw him standing, at the right hand of God; having risen up, as it were, from his seat, to show his resentment at the usage of his servant; but this circumstance makes no difference, nor creates any objection to the thing itself, which is, Christ's being exalted in human nature, at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55, Acts 7:56). I shall next,

3. Thirdly, Endeavour to explain this article, and show what is meant by it; what by the right hand of God; and what by sitting at it; how long Christ will sit there; and what the use and benefits of his session there are to his people.

3a. First, What is meant by the right hand of God, at which Christ is said to sit. This is variously expressed; sometimes by the right hand of the throne of God; sometimes by the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; and elsewhere, by the right hand of the Majesty on high (Hebrews 12:2; Hebrews 8:1; Hebrews 1:3). By "Majesty", as it is in some of these places, is meant God himself; as is clear from others, to whom majesty, grandeur, and glory belong; with whom is terrible majesty; it is not only before him, but he is clothed with it. By his throne, heaven is sometimes meant, where he more especially displays his majesty and glory; and may be put for him that sits upon it; and he, and that, are said to be on high, in the heavens, in heavenly places; for though God is everywhere, yet, as now observed, his majesty and glory are most conspicuous in heaven; and here the human nature of Christ is; who in it, is at God's right hand, being in a certain place, where he is, and will continue till his second coming, and from whence he is expected: and the right hand of God is not to be taken in a literal sense, but figuratively, and signifies the power of God, and the exertion of that (Psalms 89:13; Psalms 118:16), and is such a glorious perfection of God, that it is sometimes put for God himself; and even when this article of Christ's session at his right hand is expressed (Matthew 26:64).

3b. Secondly, What is meant by Christ's sitting at God's right hand.

3b1. It is expressive of great honour and dignity; the allusion is to kings and great personages, who, to their favorites, and to whom they would do an honour, when they come into their presence, place them at their right hand; so Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon, when she came with a petition to him, he caused her to sit on a seat on his right hand (1 Kings 2:19), in allusion to which, the queen, the church, is said to stand on the right hand of Christ (Psalms 45:9 see also Matthew 20:21). This supposes such a person, next in honour and dignity to the king; as Christ, under this consideration, is to the Majesty on high, on whose right hand he sits; and therefore is not to be understood with respect to his divine nature, abstractly considered, or as a divine Person; for as such he is Jehovah's fellow, who thought it no robbery to be equal with God: nor with respect to his human nature merely, and of any communication of the divine perfections to it; for though the

fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him, yet this is not communicated to, or transfused into his human nature, as to make that omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, or equal to God, or give it a right to sit on his right hand; but this is to be understood of him as Mediator, with respect to both natures; who, in that office capacity, is inferior to his Father, and his Father greater than he; since the power in heaven and in earth he has, is given to him by him, and received from him; and he is made subject to him, that put all things under him, by placing him at his right hand; where he is next unto him, in his office as Mediator.

3b2. It is expressive of his government and dominion over all; for this phrase of sitting at the right hand of God is explained by reigning or ruling; for it follows, in the original text, as explanative of it; "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies" (Psalms 110:2), and so the apostle interprets it, in (1 Corinthians 15:25). Now this government and dominion is not to be understood of what is natural to Christ, and common to him, with the other two divine Persons; the kingdom of nature and providence equally belongs to him, as to his divine Father, of whom he says, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work"; jointly with him, having the same power, operation, and influence in all things, he has (John 5:17; Psalms 22:28), but of his mediatorial kingdom and government; which dominion, glory, and kingdom, were given to him, and received from the Ancient of days; a delegated kingdom, for the administration of which he is accountable to his Father, and will deliver it up to him, when completed; in respect of which he may be said to sit at the right hand of God, and to be next unto him in power and authority (Daniel 7:14; Luke 19:12; 1 Corinthians 15:28), and yet superior to all created beings, of the highest form, and of the greatest name, which are all subject to him (Ephesians 1:20,21; Php 2:9, Php 2:10; 1 Peter 3:22).

3b3. Sitting at the right hand of God, supposes Christ has done his work, and that to satisfaction, and with acceptance: as the work of redemption, which was given him, and he undertook, and came to work out, and has finished; upon which he "entered in once into the holy place"; that is, into heaven (Hebrews 9:12), and the work of making atonement for sin, reconciliation for iniquity, and full satisfaction for it; which was cut out in council and covenant for him, and he agreed to do; and having done it, "sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 10:12). And also the work of bringing in an everlasting righteousness, for the justification of his people: this he engaged to do, and for this end came into the world, and is become the end of the law for righteousness, to everyone that believes; and being raised from the dead for our justification, and gone to heaven, "is at the right hand of God"; which the apostle observes for the strengthening of his own faith, and the faith of others, with respect to their full acquittance, and complete justification before God (Romans 4:25; Romans 8:33, Romans 8:34). All which, and more, he has done with acceptance: God is well pleased with his righteousness, because the law is by it magnified, and made honorable: his sacrifice is of a sweet smelling savour to God: and all being done he agreed to do, to entire satisfaction, he was received up into heaven with a welcome; and, as a token of it, placed at God's right hand.

3b4. Sitting at God's right hand, supposes ease and rest from labour; for Christ, upon his resurrection, and ascension to heaven, came into the presence of God; in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore; and when he was made glad with the light of his countenance; and when having entered into his rest, he ceased from his own works, as God did from his at creation, (Psalms 16:11; Hebrews 4:10). Not that Christ ceased to act for his people in heaven, when set down at the right hand of God; for he passed into the

heavens for them, for their service and good; he entered as the forerunner for them, and appears in the presence of God for them; and, as their high priest, transacts all affairs for them, and ever lives to make intercession for them: but he ceases now from his toilsome and laborious work; for though it was his Father's business, and which he voluntarily engaged in, and it was his meat and drink to do; yet it was very fatiguing, not merely in going about continually to do good to the bodies and souls of men; but in the labour and travail of his soul, when he bore the wrath of God, and endured the curse of the law, in his sufferings and death: and now, being freed and eased from all this, he sits down, and looks with pleasure on all that he has done; as God, when he had finished the works of creation, took a survey of them, and saw they were all very good, and then rested from his works; so Christ, with pleasure, sits and sees the travail of his soul, the blessings of grace, through his blood, applied to his people; and a continued succession of a seed to serve him, who, ere long, will be all with him where he is, and behold his glory; which is the joy that was set before him when he suffered for them.

3b5. Sitting denotes continuance; Christ sits as a priest upon his throne, and abides continually: the priests under the law did not abide continually, by reason of death; but Christ lives for ever, and has an unchangeable priesthood; they stood daily offering the same sacrifices, because sin was not effectually put away by them; but Christ, by one offering, has made full and perfect expiation for sin; and therefore is set down, and continues to do the other part of his priestly office as an intercessor; and to see the efficacy of his sacrifice take place: he also sits King for ever; his throne is for ever and ever; and his kingdom an everlasting kingdom, of which, and the peace thereof, there shall be no end. Which leads,

3c. Thirdly, To observe how long Christ will sit at the right hand of God; namely, "until all enemies are put under his feet, and made his footstool". It began at his ascension to heaven, and not before; the Word and Son of God was with God in the beginning from all eternity; and was co-eternal with him, and hid a glory with him before the world was; but he is never said to sit at the right hand of God till after his incarnation, death, resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven; then, and not before, he took his place at the right hand of God, where he will continue till his second coming, when all enemies shall be subdued under him. Some are subdued already; as sin, which is made an end of; the devil, who is destroyed; and the world, which is overcome by him: others remain to be destroyed; all, as yet, are not put under him, as the man of sin, and son of perdition, who will be destroyed with the breath of his mouth; the antichristian kings, who will be gathered to the battle at Armageddon and slain; the beast, and the false prophet, who will be cast into the burning lake: now Christ sits and reigns till all these are vanquished, and the last enemy destroyed, which is death.

3d. Fourthly, The use of Christ's session at the right hand of God to his people, and the benefits and blessings arising from thence to them, are,

3d1. Protection from all their enemies. Being raised, and set down at the right hand of God, he has a name, power, and authority, over all principalities and powers, might and dominion in this world and that to come; all things are put under his feet, and he is given to be a head over all things to the church; all are put into his hands, to subserve his own interest, and the interest of his people; he has all power in heaven and in earth given him, and which he uses for their good, and for the protection of them from all evil, (Ephesians 1:20, Ephesians 1:21, Ephesians 1:22: Matthew

28:18).

3d2. In consequence of this is, freedom from fear of all enemies; some are destroyed already; those that remain will be; so that there is nothing to be feared from them by those that believe in Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:25-27).

3d3. The perpetual and prevalent intercession of Christ, on the behalf of his chosen ones, is another benefit arising from his session at the right hand of God; there he sits as their high priest; and being made higher than the heavens, ever lives to make intercession for them, by representing their persons, presenting their petitions, and pleading their cause; though Satan sometimes stands at their right hand to resist and accuse them; Christ sits at the right hand of God as their advocate with the Father, to rebuke him, and answer to, and remove his charges; in a view of which, every saint may say with the apostle; "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" (Romans 8:33, Romans 8:34).

3d4. Hence great encouragement to come with boldness and freedom to the throne of grace; since we have such an high priest who is passed into the heavens for us, is our forerunner for us entered, appears in the presence of God for us, is on the throne of glory, and at the right hand of God, to speak a good word for us; and this serves to draw up our hearts heavenwards, to seek things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; and to set our affections on things in heaven, and not on things on earth, (Hebrews 4:14, Hebrews 4:16; Colossians 3:1, Colossians 3:2).

3d5. This raises the expectation of the saints, with respect to Christ's second coming, and gives them assurance of it; Christ sits at the right hand of God, expecting till his enemies be made his footstool; and they look for and expect him from heaven, who is gone thither to prepare a place for them; and has assured them, that he will come again, and take them to himself, that where he is they may be also, and sit upon the same throne, and be for ever with him, (Hebrews 10:12, Hebrews 10:13; Php 3:20; John 14:2, John 14:3; Revelation 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 1 Thessalonians 4:18). Another branch of Christ's exaltation lies in his second coming to judgment, when he will come in great glory. But that I shall reserve to treat of in a more proper place.

## 05-09 Of the Prophetic Office of Christ

A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 9 Of the Prophetic Office of Christ

Having gone through Christ's estates of humiliation and exaltation, I shall next consider the offices sustained and executed by him in those estates. His office in general is that of Mediator, which is but one; the branches of it are threefold, his prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices; all which are included in his name, Messiah, or Christ, the anointed; prophets, priests, and kings, being anointed, when invested with their several offices; as Elisha the prophet, by Elijah; Aaron the priest, and his sons, by Moses; Saul, David, and Solomon, kings of Israel: these offices seldom, if ever, met in one person; Melchizedek was king and priest, but not a prophet; Aaron was prophet and priest, but not a king; David and Solomon were kings and prophets, but not priests: the greatest appearance of them was in Moses, but whether all together is not so clear; he was a prophet, none like him arose in Israel till the Messiah came; he was king in Jeshurun; and officiated as a priest, before his brother Aaron was invested with that office, but not afterwards: but in Christ they all meet; he is a Prophet mighty in deed and word, a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, and is King of kings and Lord of lords. The case and condition of his people required him to take upon him and execute these offices. They are dark, blind, and ignorant, and need a prophet to enlighten, teach, and instruct them, and make known the mind and will of God unto them; they are sinful, guilty creatures, as all the world are before God, and need a Priest to make atonement for them; in their unconverted state they are enemies to God, and disobedient to him, and need a powerful Prince to subdue them; to cause his arrows to be sharp in their hearts, whereby they fall under him, and become willing to serve him, in the day of his power: and in their converted state are weak and helpless, and need a King to rule over them, protect and defend them. And though there are many other names and titles of Christ, yet they are all reducible to these offices of Prophet, Priest, and King: and it may be observed, that these are executed by Christ in the order in which they are here put: he first exercised the prophetic office, which he entered into upon his baptism, and continued it throughout his life: at his death, as a Priest, he offered himself a sacrifice to God for the sins of his people, and now ever lives to make intercession for them; and upon his ascension to heaven, was made and declared Lord and Christ, and sits as a King on his throne, and has been ever since exercising his kingly office; and will do so more apparently hereafter. I shall begin, With his prophetic office; which was foretold in the writings of Moses and the prophets; the proof and evidence of which, as belonging to Jesus, lies in his miracles; each of the parts of his office will be inquired into; and the time of his execution of it.

1. First, It was foretold that Christ should appear in the character of a Prophet, and therefore was expected by the Jews as such; hence when they saw the miracles he wrought, they said; "This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world" (John 6:14), meaning, that was prophesied of by Moses, to whom the Lord said, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee" (Deuteronomy 18:18, Deuteronomy 18:15), which cannot be understood of a succession of prophets, as say the Jews [1]; for a single Person is only spoken of: and this not Joshua, nor David, nor Jeremiah; only Jesus of Nazareth, to whom they are applied (Acts 3:22;

Acts 7:37), and with whom all the characters agree: he was "raised" up of God as a Prophet; this the people of the Jews were sensible of; and therefore glorified God on that account, and considered it as a kind and gracious visitation of his (Luke 7:16). He was raised up "from among his brethren", being the Son of Abraham, the Son of David; of the tribe of Judah; born in Bethlehem; and so was of the Israelites, according to the flesh: he was "like unto Moses"; a prophet, like unto him, and greater than he; as the law came by Moses, grace and truth came by Christ: as Moses was raised up, and sent to be a redeemer of Israel out of Egypt; Christ was raised up, and sent to be a Saviour and Redeemer of his people, from a worse than Egyptian bondage: as Moses was faithful in the house of God, so Jesus; they are compared together, but the preference is given to Christ (Hebrews 3:2-6). The words of God were "put into the mouth" of Christ; the doctrine, he preached was not his own, but his Father's; he spoke not of himself; what he spoke, as the Father said unto him, so he spoke; and he spoke "all" that he received from him, and that he commanded him; and so was faithful to him that appointed him (John 7:16; John 8:29; John 12:49, John 15:15; John 17:6, John 17:8), and therefore to be hearkened to; as his Father directed his apostles to do; saying, "This is my beloved Son; hear ye him": plainly referring to the above prophecy (Matthew 17:5). The qualifications of Christ for this prophetic office were also foretold; which lie in the gifts and graces of the Spirit, which he received without measure: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek" (Isaiah 61:1), from which passage of scripture Christ preached his first sermon, at Nazareth; and having read the text, said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:16-21 see also Isaiah 11:1, Isaiah 11:2). There are also several names of Christ, by which he is called in the Old Testament, which refer to his prophetic office; as a Messenger, the messenger of the covenant, whose work it was to explain it, and declare the sense of it; the same with the apostle of our profession, "an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness"; an interpreter of the mind and will of God, who lay in his bosom, and has revealed it, and whose business it was to preach righteousness, even his own, in the great congregation, and has done it (Job 33:23; Psalms 40:9). He goes by the name of "Wisdom", who cries and calls to the sons of men, and gives instructions to them (Proverbs 1:20; Proverbs 8:1-2). He is called a "Counselor"; not only because he was concerned in the council of peace; but because he gives counsel and advice in the Gospel, and by ministering of it, both to saints and sinners (Isaiah 9:6; Revelation 3:18). He is represented as a "Teacher" of the ways of God, and of the truths of the Gospel, called his law, or doctrine (Isaiah 2:2, Isaiah 2:3; Isaiah 42:4; Joel 2:23). Likewise, as a "Speaker", who has the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season (Isaiah 50:4; Isaiah 52:6; Hebrews 2:3). Moreover, he is called a "Light" to lighten the Gentiles, as well as the Jews; and to give a clear knowledge of the truth as it is in himself (Isaiah 9:2; Isaiah 42:6). And likewise, "a Witness of the people" (Isaiah 55:4), and to bear witness to the truth he came into the world; and a faithful witness he is (John 18:37; Revelation 3:14). All which belonged to, and pointed at the prophetic office of Christ, and have all appeared and met in our Jesus; yea, the very place, and more particular parts of Judea, where he was chiefly to exercise as a prophet were foretold; see (Isaiah 9:1 compared with Matthew 4:12-15).

2. Secondly, The evidence and proof of Jesus being that prophet that was to come, are the miracles which were wrought by him: upon Christ's working the miracle of feeding five thousand persons with five loaves and two small fishes; some of the Jews, that saw the miracle, were convinced, and said, "This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world" (John 6:14).

And upon his raising from the dead the widow's son of Naim, as he was carrying to the grave, they said, "A great Prophet is risen up among us" (Luke 7:16). So Nicodemus was convinced that Christ was "a Teacher come from God", from his miracles (John 3:2). The Jews expected, that when the Messiah came he would do many and great miracles; as they had just reason for it; for it was foretold he should (Isaiah 35:4-6), therefore, when they saw what kind of miracles, and what numerous ones were wrought by Christ, some of the Jews were convinced by them that he was the Christ (John 7:31). When John sent two of his disciples to Christ, to inquire of him, whether he was "he that should come", the prophet that was to come; or whether they were to "look for another"; he bids them go and tell John what they had seen and heard, meaning the miracles wrought by him, which he particularly mentions, and closes the account with saying, "the poor have the gospel preached to them"; plainly intimating, that he was that prophet that should preach glad tidings to the poor; and his miracles were a confirmation of it (Matthew 11:2-5). And he frequently appeals to his miracles, not only as proofs of his Deity, but of his Messiahship (John 5:36; John 10:37, John 10:38), which miracles were true and undoubted ones; they were such as exceed the laws and power of nature; what a mere creature could never perform: nor could they be attributed to diabolical influence; for Satan, had he a power to work miracles, Would never assist in them, to confirm doctrines subversive of his kingdom and interest, as our Lord argues (Matthew 12:24-26). Nor did Christ ever work any miracles to serve any temporal interest of his own, but purely for the good of men, and the glory of God; and these were openly and publicly done, and liable to the strictest examination; so that there could be no fraud nor deceit in them. The next thing to be considered is, 3. Thirdly, The parts of the prophetic office executed by Christ; and which lay,

3a. First, In foretelling future events; as he is God omniscient, he knew all things future, even the more contingent, and did foretell them; as of a colt tied at a certain place, which he bid his disciples go and loose; and intimated to them what would be said by the owners of it, and what they should say to them; and of a man's carrying of a pitcher of water, whom his disciples were to follow, which would lead them to the master of a house, where the passover was to be provided for him and them (Mark 11:2-6; Mark 14:13, Mark 14:16). But more particularly and especially, Christ foretold his sufferings and death; and the kind and manner of it, crucifixion (Matthew 16:21; Matthew 20:18, Matthew 20:19; John 12:31, John 12:32), the means by which his death should be brought about, by one of his disciples betraying him into the hands of his enemies: he knew from the beginning who would betray him; and declared to his disciples in general, that one of them would do it; and to Judas in particular he directed his discourse, and bid him do what he did quickly: and when the time drew nigh for the execution of the scheme Judas had formed, Christ said to his disciples with him, "He is at hand that doth betray me"; and immediately Judas appeared with a great multitude, and a band of soldiers, to seize on Jesus, upon a signal given them (John 6:64; John 13:18, John 13:21; Matthew 26:46, Matthew 26:47). Christ foretold the behavior of his disciples towards him, upon his being apprehended, that they would all be offended with him and forsake him; and that, particularly, Peter would deny him thrice before the cock crew: all which exactly came to pass (Matthew 26:31; Matthew 26:34, Matthew 26:56, Matthew 26:74, Matthew 26:75). Likewise, his resurrection from the dead, on the third day; which he gave out, both in more obscure and figurative expressions, and in more plain and easy ones, and directed to the sign of the prophet Jonah, as a token of it; and notwithstanding all the precautions of the Jews, so it came about, who owned, that in his lifetime he predicted it (John 2:19; Matthew 16:21;

Matthew 12:39, Matthew 12:40; Matthew 27:63-66). He spoke beforehand of the treatment and usage his disciples should meet with from men after he was gone; that they should be delivered up to councils, and scourged in synagogues, and be brought before kings and governors for his sake; and that they should be put to death, and those that killed them think they did God good service: all which came to pass, and was fulfilled in all his disciples (Matthew 10:17, Matthew 10:18; John 16:2). He predicted the destruction of Jerusalem; the signs going before of it, its distresses, and what followed upon it (Matthew 24:1-51), which, in every particular, was accomplished, as the History of Josephus abundantly shows. To observe no more, the Book of the Revelation is a prophecy delivered by Christ to John, concerning all that were to befall the church and world, so far as the church was concerned with it, from the resurrection of Christ to his second coming; the greater part of which has been most amazingly fulfilled; and there is the utmost reason to believe the rest will be fulfilled in due time.

3b. Secondly, Another part of the prophetic office of Christ lay in the ministration of the word; which is sometimes in scripture called prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:3), and this was not only exercised by Christ, in interpreting the law, giving the true sense of it, and pointing out its spirituality and extensiveness, and vindicating it from the false glosses of the Pharisees (Matthew 5:1-48), but chiefly in preaching the gospel; for which he was in the highest degree qualified; and was most assiduous in it, preaching it in one city, and then in another, whereunto he was sent, and that throughout all Galilee, and other parts (Luke 4:43; Matthew 4:23), and which he delivered with such authority as the Scribes and Pharisees did not (Matthew 7:29), even the whole of it; declaring all that he had heard of the Father, and who spoke his whole mind and will by him; and so sealed up prophecy: hence no regard is now to be had to the pretended prophecy and revelations of men, inconsistent with the word of God (John 1:17; John 15:15; Hebrews 1:1, Hebrews 1:2; Daniel 9:24), and which he taught freely, boldly, and without fear or respect of persons, as the Jews themselves acknowledged (Matthew 22:16 and with such wisdom, prudence, and eloquence, as never man spake (John 7:46), and with such gracefulness, and such gracious words, grace being poured into his lips, as was astonishing to those that heard him (Psalms 45:2; Luke 4:22), and this part of his prophetic office lay not only in the external ministry of the word, but in a powerful and internal illumination of the mind, in opening the heart, as Lydia's was, to attend to the things spoken; and in opening the understanding to understand the Scriptures, and to receive and embrace the truths thereof; the word coming not in word only, but with power, and in the Holy Ghost, and much assurance.

4. Fourthly, The time when this office was executed by Christ; and it may be observed, that this office may be considered as executed either "immediately" or "mediately".

4a. Immediately, by Christ, in his own Person, by himself; and this was here on earth, in his state of humiliation; for he came a Teacher from God; being sent and anointed by him to preach the gospel; and on which office he entered quickly after his baptism, and continued in the exercise of it until his death; but only to the lost sheep of Israel, to whom he was sent, and to them only did he give his apostles a commission to preach the gospel during that time; for he was "a Minister of the circumcision"; that is, a Minister to the circumcised Jews, and to them only (Romans 15:8).

4b. Mediate, by his Spirit, and by the prophets of the Old Testament, and by the apostles and ministers of the New; and in this sense he exercised the office of a Prophet both before and after

his state of humiliation.

4b1. Before his incarnation: he did indeed sometimes personally appear in an human form, and preached the gospel to men, as to our first parents in the garden of Eden, immediately after their fall; declaring, that "the Seed of the woman", meaning himself, would "break the serpent's head": and thus the gospel, strictly speaking, "began to be first spoken by the Lord" (Genesis 3:15; Hebrews 2:3). And so, under the name of the Angel of the Lord, and very probably in an human form, he appeared to Abraham, and preached the gospel to him; saying, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 22:15-18; Galatians 3:8). He was with the thousands of angels at mount Sinai, even he who ascended on high, and led captivity captive: he was with Moses in the wilderness, to whom he spoke at Sinai; and gave unto him the lively oracles of God (Psalms 68:17, Psalms 68:18; Acts 7:38). But at other times we read of his preaching by his Spirit unto men; Noah was a preacher of righteousness, even of the righteousness of faith; and Christ preached in him, and by him: he, by his Spirit, went and preached to the ungodly world, to those who were disobedient in the times of Noah; the same who in the times of the apostle were spirits in prison: and as Christ was spoken of by all the holy prophets that were from the beginning of the world; so he, by his Spirit, spoke in them, and testified of his own sufferings, and the glory that should follow (1 Peter 3:18-20; 1 Peter 1:11).

4b2. Christ continued to exercise his prophetic office, after his state of humiliation was over, and he was raised from the dead, and had glory given him; for he appeared to his disciples after that, and expounded to them the scriptures concerning himself, and opened their understanding, that they might understand them; and spoke unto them of the things concerning the kingdom of God, and instructed them in them, and renewed their commission to preach and baptize, and enlarged it; promised his presence with them, and with their successors to the end of the world; and by them, and not in his own person, after his ascension to heaven, he went and preached peace to them that were nigh, and to them that were afar off, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ speaking in and by his ministers; so that they that hear them, hear him; and they that despise them, despise him: and so he continues, and will continue, to exercise his prophetic office in and by his ministers, and by his Spirit attending their ministrations, throughout all ages, to the end of time, until he has gathered in all his chosen ones.

ENDNOTES:

[1] See my Book of Prophecies literally fulfilled in Jesus, p. 134, &c.

## 05-10 Of the Priestly Office of Christ

A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 10 Of the Priestly Office of Christ

1. Christ was to be a Priest; this was determined on in the purposes and decrees of God: God set him "forth" proegeto, foreordained him, "to be a propitiation" (Romans 3:25), that is, to be a propitiatory sacrifice, to make atonement and satisfaction for sin; which is one part of Christ's priestly office; on which, redemption by his blood is founded; to which he was "verily foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter 1:18-20). The sufferings and death of Christ, whatever he endured from Jews and Gentiles, were all according to the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God"; and were no other than what his "hand and counsel determined before to be done" (Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-28), and which he endured in the execution of his priestly office; of which, the decrees of God are the spring and rise. To this office Christ was called of God; he did not glorify himself to be called an High Priest, but his divine Father, whose only begotten Son he is, called him to take upon him this office, invested him with it, and swore him into it, in the council and covenant of peace; for he was made a Priest with an oath (Psalms 110:4), to show the importance, dignity, validity, and perpetuity of his priesthood: to all which Christ agreed; saying, "Sacrifice and offering that wouldst not"; "I foresee that sacrifices of slain beasts, offered by sinful men, will not be, in the issue, acceptable to thee; nor be sufficient to atone for sin; "But a body hast thou prepared me", in purpose, council, and covenant; which I am ready, in proper time, to assume, and offer up a sacrifice to divine justice" (Hebrews 10:5). And these eternal decrees, and mutual transactions, are the basis and foundation of Christ's priesthood; and made it sure and certain. In the prophecies of the Old Testament Christ is spoken of as a Priest. Some think he is meant in (1 Samuel 2:35), the characters agree with him; however it is certain, David, under divine inspiration, had knowledge of the above divine transactions, in which the Son of God was constituted a priest, and spoke of him as such (Psalms 40:6, Psalms 40:7; Psalms 110:4), he is the priest, the Tirshatha, as Nehemiah the governor said should arise with Urim and Thummim, or what were signified thereby, even all light and perfection (Nehemiah 7:65), but still more plainly in Zechariah 6:12, Zechariah 6:13 where the Messiah, called the Man the Branch, who was to spring up and build the temple, and bear the glory, is said to be "a priest upon his throne". Moreover, each of the parts of Christ's priestly office are particularly prophesied of, as that he should "make his soul an offering for sin", and should make "intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:10, Isaiah 53:12) to which may be added, that he sometimes appeared in the habit of a priest, clothed in linen; (see Ezekiel 9:2; Daniel 10:5).

There were several types of Christ as a priest; among these the first and principal was "Melchizedek, king of Salem, and priest of the most high God" (Genesis 14:18), according to whose order Christ was to be, and is a priest (Hebrews 5:10; Hebrews 7:17), who this illustrious person was, is not easy to say, and it looks as if it was the will of God that he should not be known with certainty and precision; the Jews generally suppose that he was Shem, the son of Noah; and it is certain that Shem was living at the time that Abraham was met by this person; and he was also a very pious person, and in whose posterity the church of God continued till the Messiah

came, and who sprung from them; but this is to be objected to him, that it was well known who was his father, when born, how long he lived, and when he died: it is not worth while to take notice of the various opinions of those that have bore the Christian name; they are so fanciful, and without any foundation, as that he was an angel, or a man created at once perfect and sinless, or the Holy Ghost; that which may seem at first sight more probable is, that he was the Son of God himself; and to this interview with him it is thought Christ had respect in John 8:56. "Abraham saw my day and was glad"; and since of Melchizedek it is said, "That he liveth and abideth a priest continually" (Hebrews 7:3, Hebrews 7:8), but then this may be understood of him in his antitype; besides, he is said to be "made like unto the Son of God", and therefore not he himself; and this would destroy his being a type of Christ, and Christ's being after his order. It seems best to suppose that he was some Canaanitish king, famous for his extraordinary piety, princely dignity, and divine priesthood; whose genealogy and descent were purposely concealed that he might be a fit type of Christ, who was to be of his order; that is, after the similitude of him, as it is explained (Hebrews 7:15), and a very great similarity and likeness there is between them: Melchidezek was a type of Christ in his person, and the eternity of it, he being "without father" as man, and "without mother" as God; who as such had no genealogy or descent, but is from everlasting to everlasting; and in his offices, kingly and priestly; his name was Melchizedek, king of righteousness; as Christ, the church's king, is said to be, just and having salvation, to reign in righteousness, and to be the Lord our righteousness; and his title, king of Salem, that is, peace, agrees with Christ, who is the prince of peace, and who is both king and priest on his throne, as this person was; and Christ's perpetual never changing priesthood is shadowed out by his being a priest, "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:16).

Aaron the high priest was an eminent type of Christ, though Christ was not of the same tribe with him, nor made a priest after the same law, nor of the same order, but of one more ancient than his, and which continued in Christ when his was abolished. Yet there are many things in which Aaron typified Christ; in his priesthood, as in the separation of him from his brethren; in the unction of him when installed into his office; in his habit and several vestments with which he was clothed, his mitre, robe and brodered coat, ephod and the girdle of it, with the breastplate of judgment; but especially in the sacrifices which he offered, which were all typical of the sacrifice of Christ; and in his entrance into the most holy place, bearing the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment on his heart; in carrying in the burning coals and incense, with the blood of slain beasts, all typical of the intercession of Christ, as founded on his sacrifice; as well as he was a good spokesman, one that could speak well; as Christ has the tongue of the learned to speak on the behalf of his people: and even all the common priests were types of Christ, in their ordination from among men, and for men, and to offer gifts and sacrifices for them, though they were many, and he but one; and their sacrifices many, and were daily offering, and his but one, and once offered, and which was sufficient. Indeed all the sacrifices offered up from the beginning of the world, were all typical of the sacrifice of Christ our great high priest. The sacrifice of Abel, which was offered up in the faith of the sacrifice of Christ; and those of Noah, which for the same reason were of a sweet smelling savour to God; the passover lamb was a type of Christ, our passover, sacrificed for us; and so were the lambs of the daily sacrifice morning and evening, and all other sacrifices offered up to the times of Christ's coming, sufferings, and death, which put an end to them all.

2. Christ is come in the flesh, and is come as an high priest; he came to give his life a ransom for many, and he has given himself a ransom price for all his people, which has been testified in due time; and which is a considerable branch of his priestly office; for the whole of which he was abundantly qualified, being both God and man.

2a. As man; he is mediator according to both natures, but the mediator is particularly said to be "the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5), he became man, and was made in all things like unto his brethren, persons of that nature elect; that he might be fit to be a priest, and officiate in that office, and "that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God", the glory of the divine perfections, and particularly his justice; to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, atonement for them, whereby the justice of God and all his perfections would be glorified (Hebrews 2:17). Christ being man, is taken from among men, and ordained for men, for their use and service, as the priests of old were: not for angels; the good angels needed none, and those that sinned were not spared; no priest, no savior, nor salvation were provided for them, and therefore Christ took not on him their nature; but that of men, that they and they only might reap the benefit of his priestly office; and being man he had something to offer for them, an human body and an human soul, which as God he had not; as such he was impassible, not capable of sufferings and death; and had he assumed an angelic nature, that is not capable of dying, for angels die not; which it was necessary our high priest should, that by means of death he might obtain redemption from transgressions, both under the Old and under the New Testament; and it was proper that satisfaction should be made in that nature that sinned, and that those of that nature, and not others, should enjoy the advantages of it: also by being man he has another qualification of a priest, which is to be compassionate to persons in ignorance, difficulties, and distress; and hereby Christ becomes a merciful high priest, one that has a fellow feeling with his people in all their infirmities, afflictions, and temptations; to which may be added, that Christ's human nature is holy, harmless, and undefiled; clear of original and actual transgression; and such an high priest became us, is suitable for us, since he could, as he did, offer himself without spot to God; and being Jesus Christ the righteous, he is a very proper person to be an advocate or intercessor for transgressors.

2b. As God, or a divine person; being the great God, he was able to be a Saviour, and to work out a great salvation; being the mighty God, he was mighty to save to the uttermost; and being an infinite person, could make infinite satisfaction for the sins of men, and render his sacrifice acceptable to God, and sufficient to put away, and to put an end unto the sins of his people; and could put a virtue and efficacy into his blood, to cleanse from all sin, and bring in a righteousness that could justify from all, and could make his intercession and mediation for his people always prevalent with God.

3. Christ has executed, and is executing, and will continue to execute, his priestly office; the parts of which are more principally these two, offering sacrifice, and making intercession; to which may be added, a third, blessing his people; for it was the work of the high priest, as to do the two former, so the latter.

3a. First, Offering a sacrifice. The work of the priests was to offer sacrifice for sin; Christ was once offered up to bear the sins of many, and the punishment of them, and to make atonement for them; he has offered himself a sacrifice to God, of a sweet smelling savour (Hebrews 5:3;

Hebrews 9:28; Ephesians 5:2). It may be inquired,

3a1. Who is the sacrificer? Christ is altar, sacrifice, and priest: as he had something to offer as man, he has offered it; and as it became him as a priest to do it, he has done it; it is his own act and deed, and is frequently ascribed unto him; "He offered up himself unto God", &c. "He gave himself an offering and sacrifice" &c. (Hebrews 9:14; Ephesians 5:2).

3a2. What it was he offered; or what was the sacrifice? Not slain beasts; their blood could not take away sin; it was not their blood he shed; but it was his own, with which he entered into the holy place; it was his flesh he gave for the life of the world, of his chosen ones; it was his body which was offered up once for all; and it was his soul that was made an offering for sin; and all as in union with his divine Person; and therefore said to be himself which was the sacrifice: strictly speaking, it was his human nature which was the sacrifice; the divine nature was the altar on which it was offered, which sanctified the gift or offering, and gave it a virtue and efficacy to atone for sin; it was through the "eternal Spirit" he offered up himself (Hebrews 9:14).

3a3. To whom was the sacrifice offered? It was offered to God; as it is often said to be (Ephesians 5:2; Hebrews 9:14), to God, against whom sin is committed; and therefore to him was the sacrifice for it offered; whose justice must be satisfied; without which, God will by no means clear the guilty: and therefore Christ was set forth and appointed to be the propitiation for sin, to declare the righteousness of God, to show forth his justice, the strictness of it, and give it satisfaction (Romans 3:25,26), and being satisfied, the sacrifice of Christ became acceptable, and of a sweet smelling savour to God (Ephesians 5:2).

3a4. For whom was the sacrifice offered? Not for himself; he needed none, as did the priests under the law; he was cut off, but not for himself, being without sin: nor for angels; the elect angels needing no sacrifice, having not sinned; and evil angels were not spared, and so their nature was not taken by him, nor a sacrifice offered for them: but for elect men, called his church, his sheep, his children; for whom he laid down his life, and gave himself an offering to God. His sacrifice was a vicarious one; as were those under the law, which were typical of his; Christ our passover, was sacrificed for us, in our room and stead; Christ suffered, the just for the unjust, in the room and stead of them; he died for the ungodly, or they must have died; and became the ransom price for them.

3a5. What the nature, excellency, and properties of this sacrifice of Christ? It is a full and sufficient sacrifice, "adequate" to the purposes for which it was offered: such were not the legal sacrifices; they could not make those perfect for whom they were offered; nor purge their consciences from sin; nor take it away from them: but Christ has, by his sacrifice, perform ever all those for whom it is offered (Hebrews 10:1-4, Hebrews 10:14). It is an "unblemished" sacrifice, as all under the law were to be, which was typical of this; as the passover lamb, the lambs for the daily sacrifice; Christ the sacrifice is a Lamb without spot and blemish, free from original and actual sin; in him was no sin, and so fit to be a sin offering for the sins of others; and was offered up, "without spot", to God. This sacrifice was free and "voluntary"; Christ gave himself an offering; he laid down his life "freely"; he showed no reluctance, but was "brought as a lamb to the slaughter", &c. (Isaiah 53:7). It was but "one" offering, and but "once" offered up. The priests under the law stood daily offering the same sacrifices, because insufficient; but Christ having offered one sacrifice for sin, offered no more, that being sufficient and effectual to answer the designs of it; wherefore in the Lord's

Supper, which is only a commemoration of this sacrifice, there is no reiteration of it; it is not an offering up again the body and blood of Christ, as the papists in their mass pretend; that has been done once, and it is needed no more.

3a6. What are the ends and uses of this sacrifice, and the blessings which come by it? Christ "is come an High Priest of good things to come" (Hebrews 9:11), or there are many good things which come through Christ's priesthood; particularly through his sacrifice is a full "expiation" of sin, and "atonement" for it; Christ has, by the sacrifice of himself, put away sin for ever; finished it, made an end of it, and reconciliation for it. And the "perfection" of his sanctified ones, that were set apart for himself in eternal election; those he has "perfected for ever", by his one sacrifice (Hebrews 10:14), they are perfectly redeemed, justified, pardoned, and saved by it: by giving himself for them a sacrifice, in their room and stead, he has obtained "eternal redemption" for them; through it he has redeemed them from all iniquity (Titus 2:14), "peace" is made for them by the blood of his cross; and through his sufferings and death they are reconciled unto God (Romans 5:10), full "pardon" of sin is procured, which was not to be had without shedding of blood; and a full satisfaction is made for sin; which is made through the sacrifice of Christ; and so there is redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, free and full forgiveness of them (Ephesians 1:7). In a word "eternal salvation" is the fruit and effect of this sacrifice; Christ being "made perfect" through sufferings; and thereby made perfect satisfaction for sin, he is "become the author of eternal salvation" to his people; and which is owing to his being "called", and officiating, as "an High Priest after the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 5:9, Hebrews 5:10).

## 05-11 Of the Intercession of Christ

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 11 Of the Intercession of Christ

Secondly, another branch of Christ's priestly office is his intercession; and this may be considered much in the same method as the former, by showing,

1. That Christ was to be an Intercessor, or was to make intercession for his people: when Christ was called to the office of a priest, and invested with it, which was done in the council and covenant of grace; he was put upon making request on their behalf; he is bid to ask them of his Father, as his portion and inheritance, to be possessed and enjoyed by him; which is promised him on making such a request as he did, and they were given him (Psalms 2:8; John 17:6), and he not only asked them, but life for them, spiritual and eternal life, with all the blessings and comforts of life; which, upon asking, were given; God gave him the desires of his heart, and did not withhold the request of his lips: all blessings were bestowed upon his chosen in him; and grace, which is comprehensive of all blessings, was given them in him before the world began (Psalms 21:2, Psalms 21:4; Ephesians 1:3; 2 Timothy 1:9), and this asking, or requesting, is a species of Christ's intercession, and an early instance of it, and of his success in it; and a specimen of what was to be done by him hereafter. The intercession of Christ was spoken of in prophecy in the books of the Old Testament; Elihu, in Job 33:23 not only speaks of him in his prophetic office, as an interpreter of his Father's mind and will; but as an advocate, pleading on the behalf of the man to whom he shows and applies his righteousness; that he be delivered from the evil of destruction, from wrath and ruin; since he had found a ransom, a ransom price, and redemption by it; as in Hebrews 9:1-28 and Hebrews 12:1-29 and therefore insists, in point of right and justice, that he be secure from condemnation and death: again, in Psalms 16:4 which is a Psalm concerning Christ, whose dead body would not be left in the grave so long as to see corruption; but be raised and shown the path of life (Psalms 16:10, Psalms 16:11), now two sorts of persons are spoken of in it; one who are called saints, excellent ones, in whom was all Christ's delight (Psalms 16:3), and another sort, that "hastened after another god", another savior, and not Christ; concerning whom he says, "I will not take up their names into my lips"; that is, he would not pray or make intercession for them; and has the same sense as the words in John 17:9. "I pray for them; I pray not for the world": and saying that he would not take the names of some into his lips, supposes that he would take the names of others; that is, pray and intercede for them: but what most clearly foretells the intercession of Christ, and is a prophecy of it, is a passage in Isaiah 53:12 "and made intercession for the transgressors"; that is, would make intercession for them, according to the prophetic style used in that chapter; and which was particularly fulfilled, when Christ upon the cross prayed for his enemies (Luke 23:34). The types of Christ's intercession are many. As Abel's sacrifice was a type of Christ's, so his speaking after his death was a type of Christ's speaking since his death: it is said of Abel, that he, "being dead, yet speaketh" (Hebrews 11:4), so Christ, though dead, is alive, and lives for ever, and makes intercession, and speaks for his people; as Abel's blood had a voice in it, so has the blood of Christ; but with this difference, the blood of Abel cried against his brother; Christ's blood cries for his brethren, on their behalf: Abel's blood cried for vengeance on the

murderer; Christ's blood calls for, and speaks peace and pardon to guilty men (Hebrews 12:24). Melchizedek, as he was a type of Christ, in his kingly and priestly offices, so in that part of the latter which respects intercession; he prayed for Abraham, that he might be blessed both with temporal and spiritual blessings, with blessings both in heaven and on earth (Genesis 14:19), so Christ prays and intercedes for his people, that they may have all the blessings of goodness here and hereafter bestowed upon them. Abraham likewise was a type of Christ in his intercession, when he so warmly interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah, at least for the righteous in those cities; in which he so far succeeded, that righteous Lot and his, were delivered from destruction in them. Aaron being a good spokesman, one that could speak well, was a type of Christ, who has the tongue of the learned, and can speak well on the behalf of his distressed ones; and who can plead their cause thoroughly, effectually, and infallibly: so was Moses, when the children of Israel had sinned in making the golden calf, and were threatened with destruction, he interposed in their behalf, and pleaded they might be spared; or otherwise, that he might be blotted out of the book of life, or die: and such is the love of Christ to the spiritual Israel of God, that he has died for them; and pleads his death that they might live. Particularly the entrance of the high priest once a year, with the blood of beasts, with a censer of burning coals, and an handful of incense, was an eminent type of Christ's entrance into heaven, and his intercession there; who went in thither, not with the blood of beasts, but with his own blood; and so to a better purpose: the burning coals were emblems of his painful sufferings; and the incense put upon them represented his powerful mediation and intercession, founded upon his sufferings and death, and satisfaction for sin made thereby. Likewise the high priest going into the most holy place, with the names of the children of Israel on his breastplate, and bearing their judgment before the Lord, and taking away the sin of their holy things, typified Christ as the representative of his people in heaven; appearing in the presence of God for them, presenting his sacrifice for the taking away of their sins, even those of their most solemn services; (see Leviticus 16:2, Leviticus 16:12-14; Exodus 28:29, Exodus 28:30).

2. Christ is an intercessor; he has executed, he is executing, and will continue to execute this office; and the inquiries to be made concerning it are: where, when, and in what manner, he has made, or does make intercession? for what he intercedes, and for whom; and the excellency and usefulness of his intercession?

2a. First, Where, when, and in what manner his intercession has been and is performed? And it may be considered as,

2a1. Before his incarnation: that he then interceded, and was a Mediator between God and man, is evident from that access to God which was then had: upon the sin and fall of our first parents they were driven from the presence of God, and no access could be had unto him, nor communion with him, on the foot of works; none, but through Christ, the Mediator, who is the only Mediator between God and men; there never was, nor never will be any other; through him both Jews and Gentiles, Old and New testament saints, have access to God; those under the former dispensation put up their prayers to God through Christ, and for his sake; and through his mediation and intercession they were heard and accepted. So Daniel prayed to be "heard for the Lord's sake"; that is for Christ's sake (Daniel 9:17). Christ was then "the Angel of God's presence"; who was not only in the presence of God, but appeared there for his people, and by whom they were introduced and admitted into the presence of God, had audience of him, and acceptance with him (Isaiah 63:9). We have an instance of Christ's intercession for the people of the Jews, when in distress,

who is represented as an angel among the myrtle trees in the bottom; signifying the low estate the Jews were in; and as interceding and pleading with God for them; "and the Lord answered the angel that talked with me, with good and comfortable words": his intercession was acceptable, prevalent, and succeeded (Zechariah 1:11, Zechariah 1:12, Zechariah 1:13). But a more clear and full instance of Christ's intercession for his people in distress, through sin, is in Zechariah 3:1-4 where Joshua, a fallen saint, is represented as greatly defiled with sin; and Satan standing at his right hand, to accuse and charge him, and get judgment to pass against him; when Christ, the angel of the covenant, appears on his behalf, rebukes Satan, and pleads electing and calling grace in favour of the criminal; and, on the foot of his own sacrifice to be offered, satisfaction to be made, orders his filthy garments to be taken away, and him to be clothed with change of raiment, his own righteousness, and dismissed.

2a2. Christ acted as an intercessor in his state of humiliation. We often read of his praying to God, and sometimes a whole night together, and of his offering up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, especially in the garden and on the cross; which might be chiefly on his own account, though not without regard to his people: at other times we find him praying for particular persons; as at the grave of Lazarus, where he wept and groaned in Spirit, and inwardly put up supplications, which were heard; for he thanks his Father for hearing him; and declared he always heard him (John 11:41, John 11:42). And he prayed for Peter particularly, when tempted, that his "faith" might "not fail", and was heard; for though he fell by the temptation, he was at once recovered (Luke 22:32). He prayed for all his disciples, in John 17:1-26 which is a specimen of his intercession in heaven for all his elect: yea, he prayed for his enemies, and such of his elect who were then in a state of enmity; and who, in consequence of his intercession, were converted and comforted; though they had been concerned in taking away his life (Luke 23:34; Acts 2:36-41). Such virtue is there in his blood, and in his intercession founded upon it!

2a3. Christ is now interceding in heaven for his people; he is gone to heaven, entered there, and is set down at the right hand of God; where he ever lives to make intercession (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25), for so his intercession is sometimes represented, as after his death and resurrection from the dead, and session at God's right hand; and which is performed, perhaps not vocally, as on earth; for as he could request and intercede before he assumed a human nature, even in the council and covenant of peace, without a voice, so he can now in heaven; though it is not improbable but that he may make use of his human voice at his pleasure; though it cannot with certainty be affirmed, yet it is not to be denied: however, it is certain that he does not intercede in like manner as when on earth, with prostration of body, cries, and tears; which would be quite inconsistent with his state of exaltation and glory, being set down at the right hand of God, and crowned with glory and honour; nor as supplicating an angry Judge, and entreating him to be pacified, and show favour; for peace is made by the blood of Christ's cross; and God is pacified towards his people for all that they have done: nor as litigating a point in a court of judicature; for though Christ has names and titles taken from such like procedures, as counselor, pleader, and advocate; yet not as engaged in a cause dependant and precarious: but the intercession of Christ is carried on in heaven, by appearing in the presence of God there for his people; it is enough that he shows himself, as having done, as their Surety, all that law and justice could require; by presenting his blood, his sacrifice, and righteousness: Christ is gone with his blood into the holiest of all, and sprinkled it on the throne of mercy, before God; and where he is in the midst of the

throne, as a Lamb that had been slain; his sacrifice being always in view of his divine Father, and his righteousness always in sight; with which God is well pleased, because by it his law is magnified and made honorable, and his justice satisfied: all which, of themselves, speak on the behalf of his people. Moreover, Christ intercedes, not as asking a favour, but as an advocate in open court, who pleads, demands, and requires, according to law, in point of right and justice, such and such blessings to be bestowed upon, and applied unto such persons he has shed his blood for; he speaks, not in a charitative, but in an authoritative way, declaring it as his will, on the ground of what he has done and suffered, that so it should be; a specimen of this we have in the finishing blessing of all, glorification (John 17:24). Christ performs this his office also by offering up the prayers and praises of his people; which become acceptable to God through the sweet incense of his mediation and intercession (Revelation 8:3, Revelation 8:4; Hebrews 13:15; 1 Peter 2:5). Once more, Christ executes this office by seeing to it, that all the blessings of grace promised in covenant, and ratified by his blood, are applied by his Spirit to the covenant ones; and so he sits as a Priest on his throne, and sees the travail of his soul with satisfaction; when, as those he engaged for are reconcile by his death, so they are saved by his interceding life; are effectually called by grace, and put into the possession of what was stipulated and procured for them.

2b. Secondly, The next thing to be considered is, what Christ makes intercession for more particularly? For the "conversion" of his unconverted ones: "Neither pray I for those alone", says he, meaning his disciples that were called; "but for them also which shall believe on me through their word" (John 17:20). And for the comfort of those that are convinced of sin, distressed with a sense of it, and need comfort; in consequence of his intercession, he sends the Comforter to them, to take of his things, and show them to them, and shed abroad his love in them, and so fill them with joy and peace in believing; insomuch that they have peace in him while they have tribulation in the world. And particularly for discoveries and applications of pardoning grace and mercy; "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father"; not that he pleads for sinning, nor that any may be connived at in it; but that he may have a manifestation and application of the pardon of it, in consequence of his blood shed for it. And as Christ has a fellow feeling with his people under temptations, and helps them that are tempted; this is one way of doing it, interceding for "strength" for them to bear up under temptations, to be carried through them, and delivered out of them; and so that they might have "persevering grace" to hold on, and out, unto the end; he prays not that they be taken out of the world, but that they may be kept from the evil of it (John 17:11, John 17:15). Lastly, he intercedes for their "glorification"; one principal branch of which will lie in beholding his glory (John 17:24). This was the joy set before him, and which he kept in view in all his sufferings; and for the sake of which he endured them so cheerfully; and it is that which is uppermost in his heart, in his intercession for them; nor will he cease pleading till he has all his people in heaven with him.

2c. Thirdly, The persons Christ makes intercession for are not the world, the men of it, and all that are in it; for Christ himself says, "I pray not for the world"; but for those that were chosen and given him out of the world; and who, in due time, are effectually called out of it by his grace: the objects of Christ's intercession are the same with those of election, redemption, and effectual calling; to whom Christ is a propitiation, for them he is an advocate (John 17:9; 1 John 2:1, 1 John 2:2). The high priest bore upon his heart, in the breastplate of judgment, only the names of the children of Israel; and they are only the spiritual Israel of God whom Christ bears upon his heart, whom he

represents and intercedes for in the holiest of all; and not for those only who actually believe, but for those who shall hereafter; even who are, for the present, enemies to him, and averse to his rule over them; as his prayers in the garden, and on the cross, show (John 17:20; Luke 23:34). It is for all the elect Christ intercedes, that have been, are, or shall be, scattered up and down in each of the parts of the world, and in all ages and periods of time, that they be partakers of his grace here, and be glorified with him hereafter; hence says the apostle, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" since not only God justifies them, Christ died for them, is risen again, and is at the right hand of God; but makes intercession for them, and answers to, and removes all charges brought against them (Romans 8:33, Romans 8:34), and for those even though and while they are sinners and transgressors; for so it is said of him in prophecy; "and hath made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12), and as he died for such, yea, the chief of sinners, and calls them by his grace, and receives them into fellowship with himself, it is no wonder that he should pray and intercede for them.

2d. Fourthly, The excellent properties and use of Christ's intercession. Christ is an only intercessor; "there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5), though the Spirit of God makes intercession for the saints, it is within them, not without them, at the right hand of God; and it is with groans unutterable; not so Christ in heaven, saints in heaven are no intercessors for saints on earth; they are ignorant of their persons and cases, and therefore cannot intercede for them; nor angels, as say the papists, who distinguish between mediators of redemption and mediators of intercession; the latter they say angels are, and Christ the former: but the Scripture knows no such distinction; he that is the Redeemer is the only Intercessor; he that is the Propitiation is the sole Advocate; and he is every way fit for it: being the Son of God, he has interest in his Father's heart; being the mighty God, he is mighty to plead, thoroughly to plead the cause of his people; and having offered up himself as man, to be a sacrifice for them, he has a sufficient plea to make on their behalf; and having the tongue of the learned, can speak well for them; and being Jesus Christ the righteous, the holy and harmless High Priest, is a proper person to be the "advocate" for those that sin; as such he is with the Father, at hand, and to be called unto; is ready to defend [1] the cause of his people, and deliver them from their adversary: and he is a "prevalent" advocate and intercessor; he is always heard; he was when on earth, and now in heaven; his mediation is always acceptable, and ever succeeds (John 11:41, John 11:42). And he performs this his office "freely", willingly, and cheerfully; he never rejects any case put into his hands, nor refuses to present the petitions of his people to his divine Father; but is always ready to offer up the prayers of all saints with the much incense of his mediation (Revelation 8:3, Revelation 8:4). And his intercession is "perpetual"; though he was dead he is alive, and lives for evermore; and "he ever lives to make intercession for them" that come unto God by him (Hebrews 7:25). Many are the benefits and blessings of grace derived to saints from Christ's intercession for them; such as access to God through him, acceptance with God in him, both of persons and services, communications of grace from him, the application of every blessing of the covenant to them; for though the impetration of them is by the death of Christ, the application of them is owing to his life (Romans 5:10).

#### ENDNOTES:

[1] "Advocatus appellatur, etiamsi nihil dicat, neque agat, sed qui tantum paratus sit defendere", Vallae Elegantiar. I. 4. c. 12.

## 05-12 Of Christ's Blessing His People as a Priest

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 12 Of Christ's Blessing His People as a Priest

Thirdly, I proceed in this chapter to consider another part of Christ's priestly office; which lies in blessing his people; for this was what belonged to the priests. Aaron and his sons were appointed to bless the people of Israel in the name of the Lord; and had a form of blessing prescribed them; which they were to use, and did use on that occasion (Deuteronomy 21:5; Numbers 6:23-26). Indeed, the blessing of the priests was only prayer-wise; they could not confer a blessing, only prayed for one; yet when they did, the Lord promised to give one (Numbers 6:27), and some think Christ's blessing his people is only a species or branch of his intercession; though Christ does not only intercede for blessings for his people, but he actually confers them; and whether this is to be considered as a branch of Christ's intercession; which is made, not in a supplicant, but in an authoritative manner, as has been shown; or whether as a distinct part of Christ's priestly office; I shall treat of it particularly and separately, and much in the same method as the other parts have been treated of; by showing,

1. That Christ was to bless his people; this was promised and prophesied concerning him, and was prefigured in types of him.

1a. First, It was promised to Abraham, that in his "seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed" (Genesis 22:1-24, Genesis 28:1-22) and which was renewed to Isaac (Genesis 26:4), and also again to Jacob (Genesis 28:14), and which contains the sum of the gospel preached unto Abraham; for by "seed" is meant, not his numerous natural seed, descending from him by ordinary generation, in successive periods of time; but his single, special, and principal seed, the Messiah, who was to spring from him (Galatians 3:8, Galatians 3:16), and by "all nations" are meant some of all nations, the chosen vessels, who consist both of Jews and Gentiles, the redeemed of the Lamb, who are by him redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; and are effectually called, by the Spirit and grace of God, out of the world, and the nations of it, in each of the periods of time, and so are all blessed, both in time and to eternity; and on this account Christ is truly called, "the desire of all nations" (Haggai 2:7), whose coming as an High Priest with good things being promised, might be expected and desired by them; and those may be said not only to be blessed in him as their representative, as they are, both in eternity and in time (Ephesians 1:3, Ephesians 1:4; Ephesians 2:5, Ephesians 2:6) and not only "through" him, all the blessings of goodness being put into his hands for them; and so they come to them, through his hands, and through the efficacy of his blood, as redemption, pardon, grace, and eternal life (Ephesians 1:7; Acts 13:38; Titus 3:6; Romans 6:23), but they are blessed by him as it is his own act and deed; and so the apostle interprets and explains the phrase; "In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed; unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away everyone of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:25, Acts 3:26).

1b. Secondly, Christ's blessing his people was prefigured in Melchizedek, the type of him, and of whose order he was. This illustrious person met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the

kings, "and blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abraham of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth" (Genesis 14:19), that is, May Abraham be blessed of God with both temporal and spiritual blessings, which he who is Lord of both worlds is able to bestow upon him: and on this benediction the apostle observes that Melchizedek, who "received tithes from Abraham, blessed him who had the promises"; not only of a Son to be his heir, and of the land of Canaan for his seed, but of the Messiah, and of the heavenly inheritance; from whence he infers the greatness, the excellency, and the superiority of Melchizedek, as a type of Christ (Hebrews 7:6, Hebrews 7:7). The priests under the law, one part of whose work and office it was to bless the people, and who did bless them, were types and figures of Christ in that action, and foreshowed what he was to do when he came (Leviticus 9:22; Psalms 118:26).

2. Christ has blessed his people, does bless them, and will continue to bless them: he blessed them under the Old Testament; he appeared in an human form to Jacob, and wrestled with him; nor would Jacob let him go except he blessed him; and he had power with him, and prevailed, and got the blessing; as appears by the name of Israel he gave him; and having such an experience of his ability to bless, he addressed him for a blessing on his grandchildren, saying, "The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads"; meaning Christ the uncreated Angel, the Angel of God's presence, the Angel of the covenant, who had protected him from all evil throughout his life, and particularly from the evil he feared from his brother Esau; when he appeared to him, and for him, and blessed him, as before observed (Genesis 32:24-29; Genesis 48:16), and as Christ came in the fulness of time, an High Priest of good things; he blesses his people with them, of which his blessing his disciples is a specimen; and which was done by him after he had offered himself a sacrifice, and was risen from the dead, and before his ascension to heaven; "he lift up his hands and blessed them: and it came to pass while he blessed them he was parted from them" (Luke 24:50, Luke 24:51).

2a. First, Observe the qualifications of Christ to bless his people, his fitness, ability, and sufficiency for such a work.

2a1. As he is God, or a divine person, he must be able to bless; God is blessed; this is an epithet of his; blessedness is a perfection of Deity; it is a principal one; yea, all his perfections are comprehended in it, and serve to complete it; and hence he is the fountain of all blessedness to his creatures. Now Christ is "over all, God blessed for ever" (Romans 9:5), all the fulness of the Godhead is in him; all that the Father hath are his, he is the Lord God omnipotent, "and able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20), he is El-Shaddai, God all sufficient; as such he is the Creator of all things; nothing is made without him, but all by him and for him; and he has all the blessings of nature in his hands to dispose of; the earth is his, and the fulness thereof; and he can give it to whom and when he pleases: as such he is the God of providence; and as such jointly works in providence with his divine Father; and has all providential goodness to bless men with: as such he is the God of all grace, the God of his people, their sun and shield, who gives grace and glory; and his grace is sufficient for them; every good and perfect gift of grace comes from him; and grace and peace are equally prayed and wished for from him as from the Father; as in all the epistles.

2a2. Christ, as Mediator, has a fitness, ability, and sufficiency to bless his people; as such, God has "made him most blessed for evermore", and "prevented him with the blessings of goodness"

(Psalms 21:3, Psalms 21:6), by laying up in him the blessings of the covenant of grace, to communicate to his people; by first giving all the blessings of grace to him, and then to them in him. As God, he has a natural claim and right to all blessedness; he has it to the full, infinitely, in right of nature; it is independent of, and underived from another: but as Mediator, he is made blessed by the will and pleasure of his Father; the blessings of grace and goodness are given unto him; it is his Father's good pleasure, that all the fulness of grace should dwell in him; out of which, his people, in all ages, receive grace for grace; and all their spiritual wants are supplied from thence; nor can they want any good thing; his grace is sufficient for them, and he has enough to dispense unto them. Besides, as Mediator, he has obtained all blessings for them, in a way consistent with all the perfections of God, to bestow them on them. Who can doubt of his abilities to bless his people with deliverance from sin, Satan, the law, its curses and condemnation, and from ruin and destruction; since he has obtained eternal redemption for them? or with a justifying righteousness; since, as he came to bring in everlasting righteousness, he is become the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes? or with spiritual peace, he has promised to give, since he has made peace by the blood of his cross? or with salvation, and all things appertaining to it; since he is become the author of eternal salvation, and is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him?

2b. Secondly, The persons who are blessed by Christ: though "all nations" of the earth are said to be blessed in him, and by him; yet not every individual of all nations; for at the same time that this was promised to Abraham, God declared that he would curse them that cursed him; and so all such that curse his people, and blaspheme his name; yea, there are some whose very blessings are cursed, as well as their persons; and, indeed, all that are of the works of the law, or seek for justification by them, are cursed, "that continue not in all things written in the book of the law to do them" (Galatians 3:10), which no man does; and therefore is cursed by that very law by which he seeks for justification. To which may be added, that all graceless and Christless sinners, instead of being blessed by Christ, will, at the last day, be bid to depart from him, saying, "Depart from me, ye cursed" (Matthew 25:41). But,

2b1. All that are blessed of the Father are blessed by Christ; God, as the God and Father of Christ, blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in him; and those that are blessed in him are blessed by him; the same the Father blesses, the Son does also; to whom he will say at the great day, "Come, ye blessed of my Father" (Ephesians 1:3; Matthew 25:34).

2b2. All that are chosen of God in Christ are blessed by him; for they are blessed with all spiritual blessings according as they are chosen in him; their election of God is the standard, rule, and measure of all after blessings; that stands at the front of them and secures all the rest; "whom he did predestinate, them he also called", &c. (Romans 8:30). The elect of God are the objects of all the blessings of grace which arise from Christ's death, resurrection, session at the right hand of God, and his intercession there; or otherwise there would be no strength nor force in the triumphant challenge of the apostle (Romans 8:33, Romans 8:34).

2b3. All that are given to Christ by the Father are blessed by him; for these he prays for blessings, on these he bestows them; he manifests the name of God unto them, his favour and grace, and the blessings of it; his gospel, and the privileges belonging to it; he confers grace on them, keeps them by his power, and gives unto them eternal life (John 17:2, John 17:6, John 17:8, John 17:9,

John 17:11, John 17:12, John 17:24).

2b4. All the covenant ones are blessed by Christ; all that are in covenant have a right to the blessings of it, and they are blessed with it; God is their covenant God, and happy are they whose God he is; God, even their own God, will bless them. The covenant of grace is ordered in all things and sure; and Christ, the mediator of it, in whose hands they are, gives them the sure mercies of David.

2b5. All the spiritual Israel of God, the whole Israel of God, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, are blessed by Christ; what is said of literal Israel, "Happy art thou, O Israel, —O people saved by the Lord" (Deuteronomy 33:29), is true of mystic Israel, or the elect of God among all nations; that Israel whom God has chosen, and Christ has redeemed and called by name; these are the seed of Israel that are justified in Christ, and saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation (Psalms 135:4; Isaiah 43:1; Isaiah 45:17, Isaiah 45:25).

2c. Thirdly, The blessings Christ blesses his people with, some of which are as follow.

2c1. With a justifying righteousness; this is a great blessing: David describes "The blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (Romans 4:6), and that is the righteousness of Christ; and this Christ has not only wrought out, and brought in, but he brings it near to his people; he puts it upon them, he clothes and covers them with it; so that they are justified from all their sins, and secured from condemnation and death, and are saved from wrath to come; their persons and services are acceptable unto God; and it is well with them at all times, in life, in death, and at the last judgment.

2c2. With the pardon of their sins, which is another great blessing; "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven" (Psalms 32:1), and Christ has not only shed his blood to obtain remission of sins for his people, but through the ministry of his gospel, and by his Spirit and grace he applies it to them (Matthew 9:2), and which fills their hearts with joy and gladness.

2c3. Christ blesses his people with the adoption of children; they are not only predestinated of God unto it by him, and he has redeemed them that they might receive it, but he himself bestows it on them; (John 1:12).

2c4. Those are blessed by Christ with regeneration and conversion by his Spirit and grace through the ministration of his gospel; this is the instance mentioned by the apostle, of Christ's blessing his people, for whose sake he was raised up, and to whom sent (Acts 3:26). His blessing them lay in this, in turning them from sin and self; and in turning them to himself, to his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, for peace, pardon, justification, and eternal salvation.

2c5. The same persons are blessed by Christ with the Spirit, which he has received without measure; and with the graces thereof in an abundant manner, at first conversion, which are richly shed on them, through Christ, their Saviour; and by whom they are blessed with all after supplies of grace, till he brings them to glory.

2c6. The Lord blesses his people with peace (Psalms 29:11), which flows from his peace speaking blood, his perfect righteousness, and atoning sacrifice; with peace which passeth all understanding; and is what the world can neither give nor take away.

2c7. He blesses them with the gospel, the ordinances of it, and the privileges of his house. He favors them with the joyful sound, with the good news and glad tidings of his gospel: he satisfies them with the goodness and fatness of his house; he gives them a place, and a name in it, better than that of sons and daughters; he makes them fellow citizens with the saints, and makes them into the household of God, and causes them to partake of every blessing and privilege of the children of God.

2c8. And lastly, Christ blesses his people with eternal life and happiness; he not only intercedes for them that they may be with him where he is, and behold his glory; and not only is gone beforehand, to prepare mansions of glory for them; but, according to his promise, will come and take them to himself, and introduce them into his kingdom and glory, where they shall be for ever with him.

2d. Fourthly, The nature and excellencies of these blessings.

2d1. They are covenant blessings; which are laid up and secured in the covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure; and which are very comprehensive, and include both grace and glory.

2d2. They are spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3), such as are of a spiritual nature, relating to the spiritual welfare of men, and suited to spiritual men; and for the good of their souls or spirits; and are what the Spirit of God takes, shows, and applies unto them.

2d3. They are solid and substantial ones; blessings indeed, such as Jabez prayed for; saying, "O that thou wouldst bless me indeed!" (1 Chronicles 4:10). Earthly and temporal blessings, as riches and honours, are things that are not, non-entities, comparatively speaking, have no solidity and substance in them; but the blessings of Christ, both of grace and glory, have substance in them; faith is the "substance" of things hoped for; and heaven is a more "enduring substance"; which wisdom, or Christ, causes his people to inherit (Hebrews 11:1; Hebrews 10:34; Proverbs 8:21; Proverbs 23:5).

2d4. They are irreversible blessings; the blessing with which Isaac blessed Jacob was confirmed by him with a resolution not to alter it: and the blessing Balaam was commanded to bless Israel with, was what he could not reverse, whatever good will he had to it: but the blessings of grace by Christ, are such as God never repents of, revokes, or reverses; these are "the gifts and calling of God" to grace and glory, which "are without repentance" (Romans 11:29).

2d5. These blessings are eternal; whatever is done in this way of Christ's blessing his people "is for ever" (Ecclesiastes 3:14). Christ's righteousness is an everlasting righteousness; pardon of sin ever remains; once a child of God, always so; no more a servant, but a son, an heir of God, and a joint heir of Christ; so every blessing of grace, with glory and happiness, in the world to come.

## 05-13 Of the Kingly Office of Christ

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 13 Of the Kingly Office of Christ The prophetic and priestly offices of Christ having been considered; the kingly office of Christ is next to be treated of. Christ is king in a twofold sense: he is a king by nature; as he is God, he, is God over all; as the Son of God, he is heir of all things; as he is God the Creator, he has a right of dominion over all his creatures: and he is king by office, as he is mediator; and accordingly he has a two-fold kingdom, the one natural, essential, universal, and common to him with the other divine persons; the kingdom of nature and providence is his, what he has a natural right unto, and claim upon; it is essential to him as God; dominion and fear are with him; it is universal, it reaches to all creatures visible or invisible, to all in heaven, earth, and hell; it is common to the three divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, who are joint creators of all the creatures, and have a joint rule, government, and dominion over them; and as Christ is the creator of all, nothing that is made being made without him, but all things by him, he has a right to rule over them. This kingdom of his extends to angels, good and bad; he is the head of all principality and power; of the good angels, he is their creator, lord, and king, from whom all worship, homage, and obedience are due unto him; and who are at his command to do his will and pleasure; and whom he employs as ministering spirits in nature, providence, and grace, as he pleases: and the evil angels, though they have left their first estate, cast off their allegiance to him, and rebelled against him, yet whether they will or no they are obliged to be subject to him; and even when he was manifest in the flesh, they trembled at him, and were obliged to quit the possession of the bodies of men at his command, and could do nothing without his leave. Men also good and bad, are under the government of Christ as God, who is Lord of all; he not only is king of saints, who willingly become subject to him; but even those who are sons of Belial, without a yoke, who have cast off the yoke, and will not have him to reign over them; whether they will or not, they are obliged to yield unto him; over whom he rules with a rod of iron, and will break them in pieces as a potter's vessel; so easy, so inevitable, and so irreparable is their ruin and everlasting destruction by him. This his kingdom rules over all men, of all ranks and degrees, the highest and the greatest; he is King of kings, and Lord of lords; he sets them up and puts them down at his pleasure; by him they reign, and to him they are accountable. But besides this, there is another kingdom that belongs to Christ as God-man and Mediator; this is a special, limited kingdom; this concerns only the elect of God, and others only as they may have to do with them, even their enemies; the subjects of this kingdom are those who are chosen, redeemed, and called from among men by the grace of God, and bear the name of saints; hence the title and character of Christ with respect to them is "king of saints"; this kingdom and government of his is what is put into his hands to dispense and administer, and may be called a dispensatory, delegated government; what is given him by his Father, and he has received authority from him to exercise, and for which he is accountable to him; and when the number of his elect are completed in the effectual calling, he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, perfect and entire, that God may be all in all. And this is the kingly office of Christ, now to be treated of; and which will be done much in the same manner the other offices have been treated of.

1. I shall show that Christ was to be a king; as appears by the designation of his Father, in his purposes, council, and covenant; by the types and figures of him; and by the prophecies concerning him.

1a. That he was to be a king, appears by the designation and appointment of him by his Father to this office; "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion", says Jehovah (Psalms 2:6), that is, he had set up Christ his Son, in his eternal purposes, to be king over his church and people; and therefore calls him his king, because of his choosing, appointing, and setting up. And as he appointed him to be a king, he appointed a kingdom to him; which is observed by Christ; "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath, appointed unto me" (Luke 22:29). In the council and covenant of grace, Christ was called to take upon him this office, "feed the flock of slaughter", the church, subject to the persecutions of men; and the act of feeding them, designs the rule and government, care and protection of the people of God; in allusion to shepherds, by which name kings and rulers are sometimes called: to which Christ assented and agreed; saying, "I will feed the flock of slaughter", take the care and government of them (Zechariah 11:4), upon which he was invested with the office of a king, and was considered as such; "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Hebrews 1:8).

1b. It appears from the types and figures of Christ, in his kingly office. Melchizedek was a type of him; not only in his priestly office, of whose order Christ was; but in his kingly office; both offices meeting in him, as they do in Christ, who is a priest upon his throne; from his quality as a king he had his name Melchizedek, king of righteousness, or righteous king; and such an one is Christ, a king that reigns in righteousness; and from the place and seat of his government, king of Salem; that is, king of peace; agreeable to which, one of Christ's titles belonging to him, in his kingly office, is, prince of peace; (see Hebrews 7:1; Isaiah 9:6). David was an eminent type of Christ in his kingly office; for his wisdom and military skill, his courage and valor, his wars and victories, and the equity and justice of his government; hence Christ, his antitype, is often, with respect to the Jews, in the latter days, called David their king, whom they shall seek and serve; and who shall be king over them (Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 33:23; Ezekiel 37:24; Hosea 3:5). Solomon also was a type of Christ as king; hence Christ, in "the Song of Songs", is frequently called Solomon, and king Solomon (Song of Solomon 3:7, Song of Solomon 3:9, Song of Solomon 3:11; Song of Solomon 8:11, Song of Solomon 8:12), because of his great wisdom, his immense riches, the largeness of his kingdom, and the peaceableness of it; in all which he is exceeded by Christ; and who, speaking of himself, says, "a Greater than Solomon is here" (Matthew 12:42).

1c. This still more fully appears, that Christ was to be a King, by the prophecies concerning him, in this respect; as in the very first promise or prophecy of him (Genesis 3:15), that "the Seed of the woman", meaning Christ, should break the "serpent's head"; that is, destroy the devil, and all his works; which is an act of Christ's kingly power, and is expressive of him as a victorious prince, and triumphant conqueror over all his and his peoples enemies. Balaam foretold, that "there should come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre", that is, a Sceptre bearer, a King, should "rise out of Israel" (Numbers 24:17 which prophecy, some way or other, coming to the knowledge of the magi, or wise men in the East, upon the appearance of a new star, led them to take a journey into Judea, to inquire after the birth of the King of the Jews, where he was born. In the famous prophecy of Isaiah, concerning Christ (Numbers 9:6, Numbers 9:7 it is said, that "the government should be upon his shoulders"; one of his titles be, "the Prince of peace"; and that of his government, and the

peace of it, there should be no end; as well as it should be ordered and established with justice and judgment: and to the same purpose is another prophecy in Jeremiah (Jeremiah 23:5, Jeremiah 23:6) of the Messiah, the Man the Branch, it is said, "And a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness": and there can be no doubt but Christ is here meant; as well as in that known prophecy of the place of his birth, Bethlehem Ephratah; of which it is said, "Out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel", the King of Israel, as Christ is sometimes called (Micah 5:2). To which may be added, another prophecy of Christ, as King, and which was fulfilled in him; "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion—behold thy King cometh unto thee" (Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:4, Matthew 21:5), yea, the angel that brought the news to the Virgin Mary, of Christ's conception and incarnation, foretold unto her, that this her Son should be "great, and be called the Son of the Highest"; and that "the Lord God would give unto him the throne of his father David"; and that he should "reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there should be no end" (Luke 1:32, Luke 1:33).

2. I proceed to show, that Christ is a King; as it was decreed and determined he should be, and according to the types of him, and prophecies concerning him. And,

2a. Christ was a King before his incarnation, during the Old Testament dispensation. He was King over the people of Israel; not as a body politic; though their civil government was a theocracy; but as a church, a kingdom of priests, or a royal priesthood; and he is the Angel that was with them, the church in the wilderness, which spoke to Moses on mount Sinai; from whose right hand went the fiery law, the oracles of God; for the rule, government, and instruction of that people: he is the Angel that went before them, to guide and direct them, and to rule and govern them, whose voice they were to obey: he appeared to Joshua, with a drawn sword in his hand, and declared himself to be the Captain of the Lord's hosts, to fight their battles for them, and settle them in the land of Canaan. David speaks of him as a King in (Psalms 45:1-17), and represents him as a very amiable Person, grace being poured into his lips, and he fairer than the children of men; as a majestic and victorious Prince, whose queen stands at his right hand, in gold of Ophir, his church, who is called upon to worship him, to yield homage and subjection to him; because he is her Lord and King; and as such he is acknowledged by the church in the times of Isaiah; "The Lord is our Judge; the Lord is our Lawgiver; the Lord is our King" (Isaiah 33:22; Isaiah 26:13).

2b. Christ was King in his state of incarnation; he was born a King, as the wise men understood it he was, by the prophecy of him, and by the star that appeared, that guided them to come and worship him as such. The angel that brought the news of his birth to the shepherds, declared, that that day was born a Saviour, Christ the Lord, Head and King of his church; agreeable to the prophecy of him by Isaiah, that the child born, and Son given, would have the government on his shoulders, and be the Prince of peace; and Christ himself acknowledges as much, when he was asked by Pilate, whether he was a King? he answered in a manner which implied it, and gave assent unto it; though at the same time, he declared his kingdom was not of this world, but of a spiritual nature (John 18:36, John 18:37). He began his ministry with giving notice, that the "kingdom of heaven was at hand"; that is, his own kingdom, which was going to take place, with some evidence of it; and he assures the Jews, that the kingdom of God was then within them, or among them; though it came not with the observation of the vulgar: nor with outward show, pomp, and splendor, like that of an earthly king (Matthew 4:17; Luke 17:20, Luke 17:21), and Christ was

known, and owned by some, as a King, though not by many: Nathaniel made the following noble confession of faith in him, respecting his person and office, upon a conviction of his being the omniscient God; "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God! thou art the King of Israel!" (John 1:49). When Christ entered into Jerusalem, in a very public manner, whereby was fulfilled the prophecy of him as a King (Zechariah 9:9), not only the children cried, Hosanna to the Son of David! expressive of his royal character and dignity; but the disciples, in so many words, said, "Blessed be the King, that cometh in the name of the Lord!" (Matthew 21:4, Matthew 21:5,9 Luke 19:38). Moreover, Christ, in the days of his flesh on earth, received authority from his divine Father, to execute judgment; that is, to exercise his kingly office in equity and justice; and this before his sufferings and death; and had all things requisite to it, delivered unto him by his Father (John 5:22, John 5:27; Matthew 11:27), and after his resurrection from the dead, and before his ascension to heaven, he declared, that "all power was given him in heaven and in earth"; in virtue of which, he appointed ordinances, renewed the commission of his disciples to administer them, promising his presence with them, and their successors, to the end of the world (Matthew 28:18-20). All which shows how false the notion of the Socinians is, that Christ was no King, nor did he exercise his kingly office before his ascension to heaven. It is true, indeed,

2c. That upon his ascension to heaven, he "was made both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36), not but that he was both Lord and Christ before, of which there was evidence; but then he was declared to be so, and made more manifest as such; then he was exalted as a Prince, as well as a Saviour, and highly exalted, and had a name given him above every name; and angels, authorities, and powers, were made subject to him. He then received the promise of the Spirit, and his gifts from the Father, which he plentifully bestowed upon his apostles; whom he sent forth into all the world, preaching his gospel with great success, and causing them to triumph in him in every place where they came; and so increased and enlarged his kingdom: he went forth by them with his bow and arrows, conquering and to conquer, making the arrows of his word sharp in the hearts of his enemies, whereby they were made to submit unto him; sending forth the rod of his strength out of Zion, the gospel, the power of God unto salvation; he made multitudes willing in the day of his power on them, to be subject to him; whereby his kingdom and interest were greatly strengthened in the world; and from small beginnings, his kingdom being at first but like a grain of mustard seed, became very flourishing and populous: and in this way, more or less, Christ has been exercising his kingly office in the world; which, though sometimes it has been in great obscurity, yet will more gloriously appear in the latter day, in that remarkable period of time which may be properly called, "the spiritual reign of Christ"; when he shall take to himself his great power and reign; not begin to take it, nor begin to reign; but shall take it and exert it in a more conspicuous manner; and will reign before his ancients gloriously; when the kingdoms of this world shall become his, and he shall be King over all the earth; and there shall be one Lord, and his name one; and more especially, when the kingly office of Christ shall appear in its full glory, in his personal reign on earth a thousand years; of which two types of his kingly office, I shall treat separately and distinctly, in their proper place; and at present shall only observe,

2d. That all the rites and ceremonies used at the inauguration of kings, and their "regalia", are to be found with Christ. Were kings anointed? as Saul, David, and Solomon were, so was Christ; from whence he has his name, Messiah; he whose throne is for ever and ever, is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows; that is, with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit without

measure; as he more eminently was, upon his ascension to heaven, when he was made, or declared, Lord and Christ; and, indeed, because of this ceremony used at the instrument of kings into their office, the original investiture of Christ with the kingly office is expressed by it; "I have set", or as in the Hebrew text, "I have anointed my King upon my holy hill of Zion" (Psalms 2:6; Psalms 45:6-7). Were kings crowned at the time of their inauguration? so was Christ at his ascension to heaven; he was then "crowned with glory and honour"; his Father set "a crown of pure gold on his head"; not a material one; the phrase is only expressive of the royal grandeur and dignity conferred upon him: his mother, the church, is also said to crown him; and so does every believer set the crown on his head, when, rejecting all self-confidence, and subjection to others, they ascribe their whole salvation to him, and submit to him, as King of saints; and he, as a mighty Warrior, and triumphant Conqueror, is represented as having many crowns on his head, as emblematical of the many great and glorious victories he has obtained over all his, and the enemies of his people (Hebrews 2:9; Psalms 21:3; Song of Solomon 3:11; Revelation 19:12). Do kings sometimes sit on thrones when in state? Isaiah, in vision, saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, when he saw the glory of Christ, and spake of him: and when our Lord had overcome all his enemies, he sat down with his Father on his throne, as he makes every overcomer sit down with him on his throne; and this throne of his is for ever and ever: and when he comes to judge the world, he will sit on a great white throne; an emblem of his greatness, purity, and justice, in discharging this part of his kingly office, judging quick and dead (Isa. 6:1 45:6; Revelation 3:21; Revelation 20:11). Do kings sometimes hold sceptres in their hands, as an ensign of their royalty? so does Christ; his sceptre is a "sceptre of righteousness"; he reigns in righteousness; he has a golden sceptre of clemency, grace, and mercy, which he holds forth towards his own people, his faithful subjects; and he has an iron one, with which he rules his enemies; (see Psalms 45:6; Psalms 2:9). Do kings sometimes appear in robes of majesty and state? Christ is arrayed with majesty itself; "The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty" (Psalms 93:1), and so is he appeared, as now set down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; of which his transfiguration on the mountain was an emblem, when his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light (Hebrews 8:1; Matthew 17:2).

3. Having shown that Christ was to be a King, and is one; I shall next consider the exercise and administration of the kingly office by him; and observe,

3a. First, his qualifications for it. David, who well knew what was requisite to a civil ruler, or governor, says, "He that ruleth over men, must be just, ruling in the fear of God"; and this he said with a view to the Messiah, as appears by what follows (2 Samuel 23:3, 2 Samuel 23:4), and with whom these characters fully agree; he is the righteous Branch, raised up to David; and sits upon his throne, and establishes it with judgment and justice; a king that reigns in righteousness, and governs according to the rules of justice and equity; who with righteousness judges, and reproveth with equity; the girdle of whose loins is righteousness, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins, all the while he is executing his kingly office; his sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness; and his throne is established by it; and one of the characters of Zion's King, by which he is described, is just, as well as lowly; (see Jeremiah 23:5, Jeremiah 23:6; Isaiah 9:7; Isaiah 11:4, Isaiah 11:5; Psalms 45:6; Zechariah 9:9). And the other character, "ruling in the fear of God", is found in him; on whom the Spirit of the fear of the Lord rests, and makes him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, so that he judges impartially; not through favour and affection to any, nor according to the

outward appearance; but with true judgment (Isaiah 11:2, Isaiah 11:3), and a king should be as wise as an angel of God, to know all things appertaining to civil government, as the woman of Tekoah said David was; even to know and to be able to penetrate into the designs of his enemies, to guard against them, to provide for the safety and welfare of his subjects: and such is David's Son and Antitype, the Messiah; on whom rests "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and of knowledge"; and who has all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and all that wisdom by which kings reign, and princes decree judgment, is from him; to which may be added, "the Spirit of might" rests upon him (Isaiah 11:2), he has power and authority to execute judgment, to enforce his laws, and command obedience from his subjects; all power in heaven and on earth is given to him, and which he exercises; yea, he is the Lord God omnipotent; and as such reigns (Matthew 28:18; Revelation 19:6), and how capable therefore, on all accounts, must he be to exercise his kingly office? The next inquiry is,

3b. Secondly, Who are his subjects? a king is a relative term, and connotes subjects: a king without subjects, is no king. The natural and essential kingdom of Christ, as God, reaches to all creatures; as has been observed; "His kingdom ruleth over all" (Psalms 103:19), but his kingdom, as Mediator, is special and limited, and is over a certain number of men; who go under the names of Israel, the house of Jacob, the holy hill of Zion, and are called saints; hence Christ is said to be "King of Israel"; to reign over "the house of Jacob"; to be set King upon "the holy hill of Zion"; and to be "King of saints" (John 1:49; Luke 1:33; Psalms 2:6; Revelation 15:3), and by Israel, and the house of Jacob, are not meant the people of the Jews, as a body politic, of whom Christ was never king in such a sense; nor carnal Israel, or Israel according to the flesh, especially the unbelieving part of them, who would not have him to reign over them, in a spiritual sense; nor only that part of them called the election of grace among them; the lost sheep of the house of Israel Christ came to seek and save, and so to rule over, protect, and keep: but the whole spiritual Israel of Gods consisting both of Jews and Gentiles; even that Israel God has chose for his special and peculiar people, among all nations; whom Christ has redeemed by his blood, out of every kindred, tongue, and people; and whom, by his Spirit, he effectually calls, through grace; and who are saved in him, with an everlasting salvation: and these are meant by the holy hill of Zion, over which he is set, appointed, and anointed King; even all those whom God has loved with an everlasting love, and chosen in Christ his Son, and who are sanctified and made holy by his Spirit and grace; and are brought to make an open profession of his name, and become members of his visible church, and are immovable in grace and holiness; for all which they are compared to mount Zion, the object of God's love and choice, a hill visible, holy, and immovable: and to these Christ stands in the relation, and bears the office of a King; and they are his voluntary subjects; and who say of him and to him, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!" (Revelation 15:3), the church of God is Christ's kingdom, and the members of it his subjects.

3c. Thirdly, The form and manner of Christ's executing his kingly office; which is done, —1st. Externally, by the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances; and in the exercise of discipline in his church, which is his kingdom. And, —2dly, Internally, by his Spirit and grace, in the hearts of his people; and by his power, with respect to their enemies.

3c1. First, Externally, by the word and ordinances, and church discipline.

3c1a. By the ministry of the word; which is his sceptre he holds forth, and by which he invites his people to come and submit to him; and by which he rules and governs them when come; it is the rod of his strength he sends out of Zion, and which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe: it is signified by the weapons of warfare, the sword of the Spirit, the bow and arrows, with which Christ rides forth, conquering and to conquer; and with which he smites the hearts of his people, while enemies to him, and causes them to fall under him, and be subject to him; it is the rule and standard of their faith and practice, he sets before them, showing them what they are to believe concerning him, and what is their duty in obedience to him; it is the "magna charta" which contains all their privileges and immunities he grants them; and which he, as their King, inviolably maintains; and it is according to this his word, that he will execute that branch of his kingly office, judging the world in righteousness at the last day.

3c1b. By the administration of ordinances; as baptism: Christ, in virtue of that power in heaven and earth, which he received as King of saints, issued out a command, and gave a commission to his apostles, as to preach the gospel, so to baptize, such as are taught by it, in the name of the three divine Persons; and directed that all such who become members of his visible church, the subjects of his kingdom, should first submit to this ordinance of his; as the instance of the first converts after the commission given shows; who were first baptized, and then added to the church: this is part of that yoke of Christ's kingdom, which is easy; and one of those commandments of his, which are not grievous. The Lord's Supper is another of the ordinances kept by the church at Corinth, as delivered to them; for which the apostle commends them; the account of which he had from Christ himself, and delivered to them; and which he suggests was to be observed in his churches, and throughout his kingdom, to the end of the world. Public prayer in the house of God, is another appointment in Christ's kingdom, the church; which is distinct from the duty of private prayer, in private meetings, and in the family, and the closet; and is what goes along with the public ministry of the word; and is meant by what the apostles proposed to give themselves continually to; and which was attended to by the first Christians, and continued in, and by which they are described, and for it commended; (see Acts 2:42; Acts 4:31; Acts 6:4). Singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, in a public manner, in the churches, is another ordinance of Christ, enjoined them (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16), and in doing which, they express their joy and gladness, in Zion's King (Psalms 149:2).

3c1c. In the exercise of church discipline; about which Christ, as King in his church, has given orders and directions; in case of private offences, the rules how to proceed, are in Matthew 18:15-18. In case of public, scandalous sins, which bring a public disgrace on religion, and the church; the delinquents are to be rebuked before all in a public manner, and rejected from the communion of the church (1 Timothy 5:20). In case of immoralities and disorderly walking, such are to be withdrawn from, till repentance is given to satisfaction; and in case of false doctrines, and heretical opinions, such that hold them, are not only to be rebuked sharply, in a ministerial way, that they may be sound in the faith; but being incorrigible, are to be cut off from the communion of the church (Titus 1:13; Titus 3:10).

3c1d. For the execution and due performance of all this, the ministry of the word, administration of ordinances, and exercise of church discipline, Christ has appointed officers in his church and kingdom; whom he qualifies and empowers for such purposes; who have a rule and government under Christ, and over the churches, to see his laws and rules carried into execution; and who are

to be known, owned, and acknowledged, as having rule over the churches; and to be submitted to and obeyed by them, so far as they act according to the laws of Christ (Ephesians 4:10-12; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; Hebrews 13:7, Hebrews 13:17).

3c2. Secondly, The kingly office of Christ is exercised internally, by his Spirit and grace in the hearts of his people, and by his power, with respect to their enemies; and which chiefly lies in the conversion of his people; in the protection of them from their enemies; and in the utter abolition and destruction of them.

3c2a. In the conversion of his people; which is no other than a rescue of them out of the hands of those who have usurped a dominion over them. While unregenerate, they are in a state of enmity to Christ, and in open rebellion against him; they who are reconciled by him, are not only enemies in their minds, by wicked works; but enmity itself, while their minds remain carnal; and such they were when reconciled to God, by the death of Christ; and so they continue until the enmity is slain, by his powerful grace in them; by which the arrows of his word are made sharp in them; and thereby they are conquered, and fall under him. While in a state of nature, other lords have dominion over them, sin, Satan, and the world; sin reigns in their mortal bodies, and they yield their members instruments of unrighteousness! and are servants and slaves to sin, even unto death; for it reigns in them to death; and though its reign is so severe and rigorous, yet they yield a ready obedience to it; "We ourselves", says the apostle, "were foolish and disobedient", disobedient to God, and disobedient to Christ, "serving divers lusts and pleasures": Satan, the prince of the power of the air, works in them, while they are the children of disobedience; and they have their conversation according to him, and according to the course of the world, while in such a state; and live according to the will of men, and not according to the will of God (Isaiah 26:13; Titus 3:3; Ephesians 2:2, Ephesians 2:3). Satan particularly, the god of this world, has power over them, and leads them captive at his will, until the prey is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered; he is the strong man armed, that keeps the palace and goods in peace, till a stronger than he comes; who is Christ, the King of glory, who causes the everlasting doors of men's hearts to lift up, and let him in, when he enters, binds the strong man armed, dispossesses him, and spoils his armor, wherein he trusted; sets up a throne of grace in the heart, where he himself sits and reigns, having destroyed sin, and caused grace to reign, through righteousness; and will not suffer sin to have any more dominion there. By the power of his grace he makes those his people willing to submit to him, and serve him, and him only, disclaiming all other lords (Isaiah 26:13; Isaiah 33:22). Christ, as King in Zion, enacts laws, appoints ordinances, and gives out commands, which he enjoins his subjects to observe and obey; and those he writes, not on paper, nor on tables of stone, nor on monuments of brass, but upon the tables of the heart; and puts his Spirit within his people, to enable them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them. Moreover, Christ being set up as an ensign to the people, they flock unto him, and enlist themselves under his banner, and become volunteers, in the day of his power, or when he musters his armies; and declare themselves willing to endure hardness, as good soldiers of Christ; to fight the Lord's battles, the good fight of faith, and against every enemy; when they are clad by him with the whole armor of God, and become more than conquerors, through their victorious Lord and King; by, and under whom, they abide as his faithful subjects and soldiers unto death.

3c2b. Christ's kingly office is further exercised, in the protection and preservation of his people from their enemies; out of whose hands they are taken, and who attempt to reduce them to their

former captivity and slavery: they are protected and preserved from sin: not from the indwelling and actings of it in them; but from its dominion and damning power; and the grace that is wrought in them is preserved, and its reigning power is continued and confirmed. Christ, as a Prince, as well as a Saviour, gives repentance to his people, attended with the manifestation and application of pardon of sin; and he not only gives this grace; but every other, faith, hope, and love: these are his royal bounties, and are principles of grace, wrought in the souls of his people; according to which, and by the influence of which, he rules and governs them: and these he preserves, that they are not lost; that their faith fail not; their hope remain, as an anchor, sure and stedfast; and their love continue: and the fear of God, put into them, abide; so that they shall never depart from him: he is able to keep them from falling, finally and totally, and he does keep them; they are in his hands, out of which none can pluck them: they are protected by him from Satan; not from his assaults and temptations, to which the most eminent saints are exposed; but from being destroyed by him, who goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and would gladly devour them: but Christ is able to help them, and does; and knows how to deliver them out of temptation, and does, in his time and way, and bruises Satan under their feet; so that, instead of being destroyed by him, he himself is destroyed by Christ: and they are protected from the world, its force and fury; he makes their wrath to praise him, and restrains the remainder of it. In short, he protects them from every enemy; and from the last enemy, death; not from dying a corporal death, but from the sting of it; and from it as a penal evil; and from a spiritual death ever more taking place in them; and from an eternal death, by which they shall not be hurt, and which shall have no power over them.

3c2c. Christ's kingly office appears to be exercised in the utter destruction of the said enemies of his people. He came to finish transgression, and make an end of sin; and he did it meritoriously, on the cross; where the old man was crucified, that the body of sin might be destroyed; and by his Spirit and grace he weakens the power of sin in conversion; and will never leave, till he has rooted out the very being of it in his people: he came to destroy Satan, and his works: and he has destroyed him; and spoiled his principalities and powers, on the cross; and rescued his people out of his hands, at conversion; and will not only bruise him under their feet shortly, but will bind him, and cast him into the bottomless pit for a thousand years; and after loosed from thence, will cast him into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, where he will continue for ever. Christ has also overcome the world; so that it could not hinder him from doing the work he came about: and he gives his people that faith by which they overcome it also; and nothing they meet with in it, even tribulation, persecution, and everything of that kind, shall not be able to separate them from Christ, from a profession of him, and love unto him; but they become more than conquerors over the world, through Christ that loved them; and who must reign till all enemies are put under his feet; and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death: which will be destroyed at the resurrection; when mortal shall put on immortality, and corruption incorruption; and then that saying will be brought to pass, that "death is swallowed up in victory"; in a victory obtained by Christ over that and every other enemy (1 Corinthians 15:25, 1 Corinthians 15:26, 1 Corinthians 15:54).

3d. Fourthly, The properties of Christ's kingdom and government; showing the nature and excellency of it.

3d1. It is spiritual; not carnal, earthly, and worldly: "My kingdom", says Christ, "is not of this world" (John 18:36). Though it is in the world, it is not of it; its original is not from it; it is not founded on

maxims of worldly policy; it is not established by worldly power, nor promoted and increased by worldly means, nor attended with worldly pomp and grandeur; "The kingdom of God", that is, of Christ, "cometh not with observation", with outward glory and splendor (Luke 17:20). The Jews, at the coming of Christ, having lost the notion of the spirituality of his kingdom, thought of nothing but an earthly and worldly one; and expected the Messiah as a temporal king, who would deliver them from the Roman yoke; and make them a free and flourishing people, as in the days of David and Solomon: and this was the general and national belief; the disciples and followers of Christ were possessed of it; as appears from the request of the mother of Zebedee's children (Matthew 20:20, Matthew 20:21), and from the question of the apostles to Christ, even after his resurrection (Acts 1:6). But this notion was contrary to the prophecies of the Messiah; which represent him as poor, mean, and abject; a man of sorrows and griefs, despised of men; and should be treated ill, and be put to death (Isaiah 53:2-4, Isaiah 53:8, Isaiah 53:12; Zechariah 9:9), and not being able to reconcile these prophecies, with those which speak of him as exalted and glorious, they have feigned and expect two messiahs; the one they call the son of Ephraim, who shall make a poor figure, be unsuccessful, and shall be slain in the war of Gog and Magog; the other they call the son of David, who prosperous, gain many victories, and shall live long; restore the Jews to their own land, and make them an happy people. But the true Messiah was neither to destroy his enemies with carnal weapons; but smite them with the rod of his mouth, and consume them with the breath of his lips, his gospel; nor to save his people by bow, by sword, by horses and horsemen; but by himself, his righteousness and sacrifice. His kingdom was not to be, and has not been, set up and spread by the sword, by dint of arms; as the kingdom of Mahomet has been; but by his Spirit and grace attending the ministration of his gospel. Christ never had, nor never will have, an earthly, worldly kingdom; such will not be his personal reign on earth a thousand years, as some have fancied, imagining it will be a state of worldly grandeur, riches, and civil power; which has brought the doctrine of the millennium into disgrace and contempt; whereas they that are worthy to obtain that world and kingdom, which will take place at the first resurrection, will neither eat nor drink, nor marry, nor be given in marriage; but will be like the angels of God: there will be nothing carnal nor worldly in it; it will be a spiritual state, suited to bodies raised spiritual; and to the spirits of just men made perfect: what will have the greatest appearance of a worldly kingdom, will be in what we call the spiritual reign of Christ, when multitudes of all ranks and degrees shall be converted; and great personages, as kings and queens, shall be nursing fathers and nursing mothers to the churches; shall join them, and submit to the ordinances in them; and when they shall bring their riches and wealth into them; and all civil power and authority shall be in the hands of true Christians; and the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the saints of the most High; but then there will be such a pouring down of the Spirit, which will be an over balance to this worldly grandeur, and shall check it, that it shall not hurt, or do prejudice to the spirituality of God's people. But of this, more hereafter, in its proper place. The kingdom of Christ is spiritual; he is a spiritual King, the Lord from heaven, the second Adam, that is spiritual, the Lord and Head of his church; his throne is spiritual, he reigns in the hearts of his people by faith; his sceptre is a spiritual sceptre, a sceptre of righteousness; his subjects are spiritual men born of the Spirit, and savour the things of the Spirit of God; they are subdued, and brought to submit to Christ by spiritual means; not by carnal weapons of warfare, but by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; the kingdom of God is within them, set up in their hearts, where grace reigns; and it lies not in outward things; it is "not meat and drink", and such like carnal things; "but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy

Ghost"; they are spiritual promises Christ makes to them, to encourage them in their obedience to him; and spiritual blessings and layouts are bestowed upon them by him; and even their enemies, with whom their conflict is, are spiritual wickednesses in high places; and are not to be fought with carnal weapons; nor to be subdued and conquered by means of them; but by the shield of faith and sword of the Spirit; even by the rod of Christ's mouth, and the breath of his lips.

3d2. Christ's kingdom is a righteous one; this has been suggested already; the whole administration of it is righteous; he is a King that reigns in righteousness, his throne is established by it; his sceptre is a right sceptre; justice and judgment are executed in his kingdom, and nothing else, by Christ the King; no injustice, violence, or oppression; just and true are his ways, who is King of saints.

3d3. Christ's kingdom is a peaceable kingdom: he is the prince of peace; his gospel, which is his sceptre, is the gospel of peace; his subjects are sons of peace; the kingdom of grace in them, lies in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; and in the latter day, there will be abundance of peace in Christ's kingdom, the church; and of it, and its increase, there will be no end.

3d4. Christ's kingdom is gradually carried on; so it has been from the first; it arose from a small beginning, in the external administration of it; it was like a little stone cut out of the mountain, without hands, which will, in due time, fill the face of the whole earth; it was like a grain of mustard seed, the least of all seeds, in the times of Christ, which grows up to a large tree; as Christ's kingdom afterwards greatly increased, first in Judea, and then in the Gentile world; notwithstanding all the opposition made unto it; until the whole Roman empire became Christian, and paganism abolished in it: and though it has met with some stops, in some periods, yet it has revived again; as at the reformation; and will hereafter be extended from sea to sea; and from the river to the ends of the earth: and the internal kingdom of Christ in the hearts of his people is gradually carried on: it is like seed sown in the earth, which springs up, and whose appearance is but small, and by degrees grows up to maturity; as grace in the heart does; until it arrives to the fulness of the stature of Christ.

3d5. Christ's kingdom is durable; of his government there will be no end; his throne is for ever and ever; he will reign over the house of Jacob evermore; his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. Christ will never have any successor in his kingdom; for he lives for evermore and has the keys of hell and death in his hands: as his Priesthood is an unchangeable priesthood, which passes not from one to another, as the Aaronic priesthood did, by reason of the death of priests; so his kingdom is an unchangeable kingdom, which passes not from one to another; he being an everliving and everlasting King; his kingdom will never give way to another; nor be subverted by another; as earthly kingdoms are, and the greatest monarchies have been: the Babylonian monarchy gave way to the Persian and Median, and was succeeded by that; the Persian to the Grecian; and the Grecian to the Roman: but Christ's kingdom will stand for ever; his church, which is his kingdom, is built on a rock; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The word and ordinances of the gospel, by which the government of Christ is externally administered, will always continue: the gospel is an everlasting gospel, the word of God, which abides for ever: and the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's Supper, are to be administered until the second coming of Christ: and the internal kingdom of grace, set up in the hearts of Christ's subjects, is a kingdom that cannot be moved; grace can never be lost; it is a governing principle, and reigns unto eternal

life by Christ: and even when Christ shall have finished his mediatorial kingdom, and delivered it up to his Father, complete and perfect; all the elect of God being gathered in; he will not cease to reign, though in another and different manner: he will reign after the spiritual kingdom is ended a thousand years with his saints, in a glorious manner on earth; and when that is ended, he will reign with them, and they with him, in heaven, for ever and ever.

## 05-14 Of the Spiritual Reign of Christ

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### A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 5—Chapter 14 Of the Spiritual Reign of Christ

It has been observed in the preceding chapter, that Christ has been exercising his kingly office in all ages of time, both before and since his incarnation: and there are two remarkable periods of time yet to come; in which Christ will exercise his kingly office in a more visible and glorious manner; the one may be called, the "spiritual reign of Christ;" and the other his "personal reign;" it is the former of these that will now be attended to; and which is no other than the present reign continued; and which will be administered in the same manner: only, 1. First, with greater purity, and to a greater degree of perfection; both as to doctrine and practice.

1a. The kingdom of Christ will be carried on by the ministry of the word, as now; the gospel will then be preached; and in this the spiritual reign will differ from the personal one, in which there will be no ministry of the word, all God's elect being gathered in, and the saints in a perfect state; but in this there will be multitudes to be converted, and will be converted by the word, and saints be in an imperfect state, and to be edified and comforted. The gospel is to be preached unto the end of the world, and Christ has promised his presence with his ministers so long; and hence the gospel is called the "everlasting gospel" (Matthew 28:19, Matthew 28:20; Revelation 14:6), but in the spiritual reign it will be preached.

1a1. With more light and clearness than now. The light of the present time is fitly described as being neither "clear nor dark;" not so clear as in the first times of the gospel, nor so dark as in the darkest times of Popery, or as it may be before a brighter day appears. It is "one day," a remarkable uncommon day; "known to the Lord," how long it will last, and to him only; "not day nor night," not clear day nor dark night, but a sort of an evening twilight; and at "evening time," when a greater darkness may be expected to be coming on, "it shall be light" (Zechariah 14:6, Zechariah 14:7), a blaze of light shall break out, and that to such a degree, that "the light of the moon," which at most is the light we now have, "shall be as the light of the sun" in its meridian splendor; and "the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days;" as great as the light of seven days could it be collected together; so great will be the difference between the gospel light as now, and as it will be then (Isaiah 30:26). "The angel having the everlasting gospel to preach;" by whom is meant a set of gospel ministers in the spiritual reign; is said to "fly in the midst of heaven" with it, which not only denotes the public but the clear ministration of it (Revelation 14:6).

1a2. The gospel will be preached with greater consistence; a principal fault in the present ministry of the word is inconsistency; not only in different ministers, but in the same ministers at different times, and even in the same discourse; "the trumpet gives an uncertain sound;" but "in that day," in the spiritual reign, "the great trumpet" of the gospel will be "blown" with great strength and fervour, and with a more even and unwavering note, and so be understood by saints and sinners, and be a better direction to them; there will not be that yea and nay as now, but the ministry of the word will be uniform and all of a piece.

1a3. There will be an agreement in the ministers of it; now they clash with one another, scarcely two persons think and speak the same thing; and some so widely different, that it seems to be another gospel preached by some than what is by others; though indeed there is not another gospel; but in the spiritual reign the "watchmen," Christ's ministers, who watch for the good of the souls of men, "shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion," or restore his church to its former state and glory (Isaiah 52:8 their light will be the same, their ministry will be alike, they will see things in the same light, and speak the same things, and in the same manner.

1a4. There will be one faith, one doctrine of faith or system of truths, which will be preached and professed by all; there will be no more an Arian, a Socinian, a Pelagian and Arminian, or any other heterodox person; as there will be but one Lord, "his name" will be "one," one religion professed by all that name the name of Christ; they will be all of one accord, of one mind (Zechariah 14:9).

1a5. The gospel will have a greater spread than now; at present it lies in a narrow compass, chiefly in the isles, very little on the continent; and in the countries where it is, it is but in few places there; but hereafter many will run to and fro, and knowledge, evangelical knowledge, will be increased; the earth shall be full of it, as the waters cover the sea; the angel, or a set of gospel ministers, shall have it to preach to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Those "living waters," the doctrines of grace, which are the means of quickening sinners and enlivening saints, "shall go out from Jerusalem," the church of God; "half of them towards the former," or eastern "sea," and "half of them towards the hinder" or western "sea;" that is, they shall go east and west, even into all parts; "in summer and in winter shall it be;" these waters shall be always flowing, or these doctrines constantly and continually preached (Daniel 12:4; Isaiah 11:9; Revelation 14:6; Zechariah 14:8).

1a6. The gospel will be preached with greater success; there will be no more such complaints, as "Who hath believed our report?" the report of the gospel will be generally believed; and "to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" the power of God will go along with the word, to the conversion of multitudes; who, to the great surprise of the church, will "fly as a cloud" for number; so that there shall scarce be room enough in the church for them; and it will be said, "The place is too strait for me, give place to me that I may dwell;" the place of her tent must be enlarged, the curtains of her habitation stretched forth, and her cords lengthened, since she shall break forth on the right hand and on the left, and her seed shall inherit the Gentiles (Isaiah 49:18-20; Isaiah 54:2, Isaiah 54:3; Isaiah 60:4-8).

1b. The same ordinances will be administered in the spiritual reign as now; in this it will differ also from the personal reign; for then the "city," the church, will have no "need of the sun nor moon" of gospel ordinances, the Lord himself personally will be the light of his people; but in this state the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper will be celebrated; for they are to continue till Christ's second coming and personal appearance (Matthew 28:19, Matthew 28:20; 1 Corinthians 11:26), but not as they are commonly administered now, but as they were first delivered; through a course of time and prevailing corruption, men "have transgressed the laws, change the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant" (Isaiah 24:5), so that were the apostles to rise from the dead, they would not know the ordinances as in general use, to be the same that were given to them; but in the spiritual reign of Christ they will be restored to their primitive purity, and be observed clear of all renovation and corruption; we shall no more hear of that absurd notion of transubstantiation, or

of the bread and wine in the ordinance of the supper being transubstantiated into the very body and blood of Christ; nor of withholding the cup from the laity; nor of kneeling at the reception of the elements, as if adored; nor of the prostitution of this sacred ordinance to secular purposes, to qualify for places of honour or trust, or profit in civil things; nor shall we hear any more of the childish practice of infant sprinkling; the ordinance of baptism will be administered only to its proper subjects, believers in Christ, and in its proper manner, by immersion.

1c. The same discipline will be observed in the churches of Christ as now; only with greater strictness, and more agreeable to the laws and rules of Christ: in this also the spiritual reign will differ from the personal; there will be no temple seen in that, but the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb will be the temple of it (Revelation 21:22). The worship and discipline of Christ's house will not be carried on in the manner as in the present state: but in the spiritual reign, "the temple of God will be opened in heaven, and the ark of his testament will be seen" in it: the affairs of the church will be restored as at first; and all things will be done according to the pattern Christ has given; the form and fashion of the house, the church, its comings in, and goings out, admission and exclusion of members, the laws and ordinances of it, respecting discipline, will be shown most clearly to it; and which will be strictly and punctually observed: there will be no more controversies about the nature of a church, and the government of it, and of officers in it; and in whom the exercise of power lies; and who to be admitted into it, and rejected from it, and by whom; see (Revelation 11:19; Isaiah 1:26; Jeremiah 30:18; Ezekiel 43:10, Ezekiel 43:11). Churches will be formed and governed upon the plan they were in the times of the apostles.

2. Secondly, The spiritual reign of Christ will be more large and ample than now it is; it will reach all over the world.

2a. The first step towards the increase and enlargement of Christ's kingdom, will be the destruction of antichrist; who, in the prophecy of Daniel, is spoken of as a "little horn;" an "horn," which is an emblem of strength, power, and dominion: a "little" one, as at his first rise, and in comparison of other powers; having eyes like "the eyes of man;" denoting his sagacity, penetration, and looking out sharp on all sides, to enlarge his power and dominion; and a "mouth speaking great things," in favour of himself, and against the most high, and his people; and a "look more stout than his fellows," than his fellow bishops, more bold, arrogant, and impudent; making war with the saints, the Waldenses and Albigenses; and thinking to "change times and laws;" to change times and seasons, for different purposes than for what they were designed; and to dispense with the laws of God and man, and make new ones: but though he should continue thus great and mighty for a time, it is said, his "dominion should be taken away, consumed and destroyed;" and that he should "come to his end, and none shall help him" (Daniel 7:20-26; Daniel 11:45). In the New Testament he is called, "the man of sin," because extremely wicked; and "the son of perdition," because not only deserving of it, but shall certainly come into it; who "opposeth" Christ in his offices; "exalteth himself above all that is called god;" above heathen deities, above angels, and above civil magistrates; "sits in the temple of God," the church, over which he sets himself as head; "showing himself that he is God;" taking the name of God to himself; and assuming the prerogative of God, to forgive sin: he is called, "that wicked" and lawless one, and "mystery of iniquity," that began doctrinally and practically to work in the times of the apostles; though this evil one lay greatly hid for a while, and was let and hindered from a more open appearance by the Roman emperor; yet, upon his removal from Rome to Constantinople, way was

made for him to take his seat, and show his power: but notwithstanding his long and tyrannical reign, Christ will consume him "with the Spirit of his mouth," and destroy him "with the brightness of his coming" (2 Thessalonians 2:3-8). In the book of Revelation, he is described by two beasts, one rising out of the sea, the other out of the earth; signifying his twofold capacity, civil and ecclesiastical; and his twofold power, temporal and spiritual: great things are ascribed to him, and said to be done by him; who shall continue long, but at last go into perdition: this mother of harlots, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, shall be hated by them, and she be burnt with fire; (see Revelation 13:1-18; Revelation 17:8, Revelation 17:16), then they that destroyed the earth with false doctrines and worship shall be destroyed (Revelation 11:18), the man of the earth shall no more oppress and tyrannize over the consciences of men; the Heathen, or Gentiles, by which name the papists are sometimes called, shall perish out of the land; and those sinners shall be consumed out of it, and those wicked ones be no more; see (Psalms 10:16, Psalms 10:18; Psalms 104:35) so the judgment and burning of the beast, antichrist, is related as previous to the kingdom of Christ, the Son of man (Daniel 7:12-14). The reign of antichrist is fixed in prophecy, for a certain time; in (Daniel 7:25), for a time, and times, and the dividing of time; that is, for three years and a half; the same with forty-two months, and one thousand two hundred and sixty days; which are so many years: but when these will end, cannot be said with any precision, because it is difficult to settle the beginning of his reign; could that be done, it would easily be known when it would end: there have been many conjectures made, and times fixed, but without effect; even this very year, one thousand, seven hundred, and sixty-six (The substance of this Chapter was preached in that year) has been pitched upon as the time of antichrist's destruction, and the beginning of the millennium; but nothing of this kind appears; or as being very near at hand: however, what is said of the ruin of antichrist, and of the antichristian states, will be fulfilled by the Lord in his own time. And this will be done, partly by the preaching of the gospel, which is the Spirit and breath of Christ's mouth; with which antichrist will be consumed and destroyed, upon the angel flying in the midst of heaven, with the everlasting gospel, to preach to all nations; and upon mother angel appearing with such splendor, power, and glory, as to lighten the whole earth, the fall of Babylon will immediately follow, and be proclaimed; the gospel then preached, will give such a light as to open the eyes of men, to behold the abominable doctrines and practices of the church of Rome, so as to hate it, depart from it, and leave it desolate; (see Revelation 14:6-8; Revelation 18:1-2; Revelation 17:16), and partly the ruin of antichrist, and the antichristian states, will be effected by the pouring out of the seven vials of God's wrath upon them; which will be put into the hands of seven angels, or protestant princes, by one of the four beasts, or living creatures, the emblems of gospel ministers; who having some knowledge of the time of antichrist's destruction being near, will stir up the protestant princes to take this work in hand; who will carry their victorious arms into popish countries, and make a conquest of them; first into Germany, then into France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy; and into the very kingdom and seat of the beast; for the first five vials will be poured out on the Western antichrist, and his dominions; which will cause revolutions in them from popery, and where the gospel will take place; and all those countries now under the power of papacy, will become the kingdom of Christ, and will make a large addition to his interest in the world; (see Revelation 15:1-8; Revelation 16:1-21).

2b. The next step to the increase and enlargement of Christ's kingdom and government in the world, will be the conversion of the Jews, which will follow upon the destruction of antichrist; for the Popish religion is the great stumbling block which lies in the way of the Jews; and therefore must

be first removed. There are many prophecies that speak of their conversion; as that they shall be "born" at once; not in a civil sense, set up and established as a nation; but in a spiritual sense, born again of water and of the spirit; they shall be brought into a thorough conviction of sin, and a true sense of it, and shall mourn for it; particularly the sin of their obstinate rejection of the true Messiah, and their continued unbelief in him; when they shall be led and go forth with weeping and with supplication, and shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king, the Messiah, and receive him and submit unto him; and join themselves to Christian churches, and be subject to the ordinances of Christ: and this will be universal; all Israel shall be saved, the whole nation shall be born at once, suddenly; for which for many hundreds of years they have been kept a distinct people, and have not been reckoned and mixed among the nations, though scattered in the midst of them; which is a most marvelous thing in providence, and plainly shows that God has some great things to do for them and by them. In the reign of the late king, and within our knowledge and memory, was a very surprising event respecting this people, yet little taken notice of; a bill was brought into our British Parliament to naturalize them; I then thought in my own mind it would never pass; God would not suffer it in providence, being so contrary to scripture revelation and prophecy, and the state of that people, in which they are to continue until their conversion; but the bill did pass to my great astonishment, not knowing what to think of prophecy, and of what God was about to do in the world, and with that people. But lo! the bill was repealed, and that before one Jew was naturalized upon it; and then all difficulties were removed, and it appeared to be the will of God, that an attempt should be made, and that carried into execution as near as possible, without crossing purposes, and contradicting prophecy; and to let us see what a watchful eye the Lord keeps upon the counsels of men, and that there is no counsel against the Lord; and that the Jews must remain a distinct people until the time of their conversion. How otherwise at that time would it appear that a nation is born at once, if not then a people that dwell alone, and not reckoned among the nations? These two sticks, Jews and Gentiles, will become one; but it will be in and by the hand of the Lord; it will not be effected by Acts of Parliament, but by works of grace upon the souls of men; the Jews will never be naturalized until they are spiritualized; and when they are, they will return to their own land and possess it, being assisted, as they will be, by Protestant princes, who will drive out the Turk and establish them in it; this will be another addition to the kingdom of Christ.

2c. By this means, the conversion of the Jews, and the settlement of them in their own land, a way will be opened for the great spread of the gospel in the Eastern nations, and for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom there; for the Protestant princes, who will be assisting to the Jews in replacing them in their own land, will carry their victorious arms into other parts of the Turkish dominions, and dispossess the Turk of his empire; which will be effected by the pouring out of the sixth vial upon the river Euphrates, which will be dried up; an emblem of the utter destruction of the Ottoman empire; whereby way will be made for the kings of the East; or for the gospel being carried into the kingdoms of the East; not only into Turkey, but Tartary, Persia, China, and the countries of the Great Mogul; which, upon the passing away of the second, or Turkish woe, the kingdoms of this world, those vast kingdoms just mentioned, will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ (Revelation 16:12; Revelation 11:14, Revelation 11:15). And now will the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in; and those vast conversions made among them, prophesied of in (Isaiah 60:1-22). And now will the interest and church of Christ, make the greatest figure it ever did in the world; now kings shall come to the brightness and glory of Zion; her gates shall stand open

continually for the kings of the Gentiles to enter in; who will become church members, and submit to all the ordinances of Christ's house; their kings shall be nursing fathers, and their queens nursing mothers: and this will be the case, not only of one or two, or a few of them; but even of all of them; for all kings shall fall down before Christ, and all nations shall serve him: churches shall be raised and formed everywhere; and those be filled with great personages: now will be the time when the kingdom, and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High (Isaiah 60:3, Isaiah 60:10, Isaiah 60:11; Isaiah 49:23; Psalms 72:10, Psalms 72:11; Daniel 9:27). Yet such will be the spirituality of this state, that it will be a counterbalance to the grandeur and riches of it; so that the saints shall not be hurt thereby; as in former times, particularly in the times of Constantine; which leads me further to observe, 3. Thirdly, That the reign of Christ in this state, will be more spiritual than now; from whence it has its name.

3a. There will be a more plentiful effusion of the Spirit of God upon ministers and churches, in this state: the prophecy of Joel, concerning the pouring forth of the Spirit, had a very great accomplishment on the day of Pentecost, upon the apostles; but not its whole accomplishment; for the Spirit was not then poured forth upon "all" flesh, as promised; nor upon the Gentiles: but now it will be poured out on them in general from on high; so that the wilderness of the Gentiles shall become a fruitful field (Isaiah 32:15, Isaiah 32:16), and to this will be owing the above things; as the destruction of antichrist, which will be by the Spirit of Christ accompanying his word; and the conversion of the Jews will follow, upon the Spirit of grace and supplication being poured forth on the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and the many and great conversions in the Gentile world, will be, not by might or power of mere, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts.

3b. The saints in general will be more spiritualized than now: they will have more spiritual frames of soul; and will more mind, savour, and relish the things of the Spirit of God; and with their whole hearts and spirits, seek more after God, and communion with him; they will have more spiritual light and knowledge in the doctrines of the gospel; and the light of Zion will rise, and be very bright and glorious, conspicuous to others, and be very inviting; it will be like the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day. The saints will be more spiritual in their conversation; there will be less of that frothiness, vanity, and emptiness, which now too often appear in them; they will frequently meet together, and speak often one to another, about divine, spiritual, and experimental things. They will be more spiritual in their worship; they will worship God in the Spirit, with their spirits, and under the influence and conduct of the divine Spirit; and will enjoy more of the spiritual presence of God and Christ; who will come down upon them like rain upon the mown grass, and as showers of rain upon the earth, very refreshing and delightful.

3c. The graces of the Spirit of God will be more in exercise. Faith, which a little before this time will be scarcely found in the earth, will now be in high exercise; and especially the grace of love, which will be the distinguishing character of this state; and which will answer to its name, Philadelphia, which signifies brotherly love; for in that church state, the spiritual reign will be: then the saints will be of one heart, and of one soul; as the primitive Christians were; they will be kindly affectioned one to another; no animosities and contentions among them, on any account, civil or religious; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim; but all being of one mind, having one Lord, one faith, one baptism, they will keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; (see Isaiah 11:13; Ephesians 4:2-4).

3d. There will be abundance of peace in this reign, even of outward peace; no more wars, nor rumors of wars; swords and spears will be beaten into plowshares and pruning hooks; and war shall be learnt no more: no more persecution, nor persecutors: there will be none to hurt and destroy in all God's holy mountain: and such as were like wolves, and leopards, and bears, shall be as tame as lambs, kids, and calves; and shall feed and lie down together: there shall be an abundance of peace of every kind, and of it no end; and particularly internal and spiritual peace; for as grace will be high in exercise, joy and peace will increase and abound; see (Psalms 72:7, Psalms 72:8; Isaiah 9:7; Isaiah 11:6-9).

3e. There will be a great degree of holiness in all saints, of every class and rank; all the Lord's people will be righteous; "Every pot in Jerusalem, and in Judea;" that is, every member of the church, "shall be holiness unto the Lord;" in his sight, and to his glory; yea, "holiness to the Lord shall be upon the bells of the horses;" signifying how common it should be, and appear in every civil action of life, as well as in religious ones; and that holiness shall then be as common as unholiness is now; and that it shall be visible in the lives and conversations of saints; and be seen of all; (see Isaiah 9:21; Zechariah 14:20, Zechariah 14:21). The other period of time in which Christ will, in a most glorious manner, reign with his people on earth, and which may be called, his personal reign; being what will take place at his second coming to judgment, and personal appearance then, and upon the first resurrection; it will be most proper to defer it, until those articles come under consideration.

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