

# The Agreement of the Old and New Testament.

by John Gill

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*John Gill's sermon explores the profound agreement between the Old and New Testaments, highlighting their shared doctrines and the importance of witnessing to the gospel.*

**Scripture:** Acts 26:22

**Topics:** "Agreement of Testaments", "Christ's Suffering and Resurrection"

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## Description

John Gill emphasizes the harmony between the Old and New Testaments, illustrating how the teachings of the prophets and Moses align with the gospel of Christ. He highlights the significance of Christ's suffering, resurrection, and role as a light to both Jews and Gentiles, asserting that these truths are foundational to the Christian faith. Gill reflects on his ministry's focus on the doctrines of grace, justification, and the divine nature of Christ, encouraging believers to recognize the continuity of God's revelation through scripture. He concludes with gratitude for the support he has received throughout his ministry and a call for steadfastness in faith.

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## Transcript

THE AGREEMENT OF THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

A Sermon,

Preached at a Wednesday's Evening Lecture,

in

GREAT EAST-CHEAP, Mar. 24, 1756.

Acts 26: 22, 23.

Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great; saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

This Lecture, which I am now about to take my leave of, was set up in the year 1729, between six and seven and twenty years ago. I opened it with a discourse or two on the words of the Psalmist, in Psalm 71:16, I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only: My view in the choice of those words was, partly to observe that I undertook the service of the Lecture, and engaged in this work, not in my own strength, but in the strength of Christ, hoping for and expecting the aid and assistance of his Spirit and grace; and partly to shew that my intentions and resolutions were to preach that great and glorious doctrine of a sinner's free justification before God, by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, with all others that are analogous to it, or in connection with it; which Luther rightly called *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*, "the article of the church standing or falling, or that by which it stands or falls;" for as that doctrine is received or rejected, the church of Christ in all ages and periods of time flourishes or declines.

And through the grace of God I have been enabled to abide by these resolutions throughout my concern in this Lecture; and now I close it with a discourse on the words read, having therefore obtained help of God, &c., which are part of an apology or defence, which the apostle Paul made for himself in a very numerous assembly; at the head of which were very great personages, as Agrippa king of the Jews, Bernice his sister, Festus the Roman governor, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city of Cesarea, and all in open court; which verified what our Lord had foretold to his disciples, saying, ye shall be brought before kings and governors for my sake (Matt. 10:10).

The apostle being permitted to speak for himself, addressed the king in a very polite manner, and gave an account of himself from his youth upwards; "how that he was brought up in the strictest sect of the Jewish religion, a Pharisee; trained up in the belief and hope of the promised Messiah, and of the resurrection of the dead; and possessed with prejudices against Jesus of Nazareth and his followers, against whom he was exceeding mad, and persecuted them to strange cities; and how that in the midst of his career of rage and fury against them, it pleased the Lord to meet with him, and convert him," And then he relates the manner of his conversion; "how an amazing light surrounded him and struck him, and those that were with him, to the ground; that he heard a voice speaking to him by name, and what answer he returned to it; when he was not only effectually called by grace, but the Lord Jesus Christ personally appeared to him, and made him a minister of the everlasting gospel; promised him protection and deliverance from all people, Jews and Gentiles, to whom he should send him; and pointed out the ends and usefulness of his ministration; to open the eyes of men, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ:" upon which he observes to Agrippa, that he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; but immediately preached the doctrines of faith, repentance and good works at Damascus; the place where he then was, and at Jerusalem, and through all the land of Judea, and then among the Gentiles; and these were the only causes and reasons of the rage of the Jews against him, and which moved them to seek to take away his life time after time: but notwithstanding, the Lord preserved him for much and long usefulness in the ministry of the gospel; which he takes notice of in the words before us, having therefore obtained help of God, &c.

In which may be observed, First, That the apostle ascribes his continuance in life, and in the ministry of the word, to the help that he had obtained of God, which help, Designs the care of divine providence exercised towards him in a special way and manner. The providence of God is common to all his creatures; it is owing to that, the souls of men are upheld in life; and as life itself is a grant and favour from the Lord, so it is his providential visitation that preserves the spirits of men.

In him all live, and move, and have their being (Ps. 66:9; Job 10:12; Acts 17:28), they not only have it from him, but they are supported in it by him; and there is a special providence which superintends the people of God; though he is the Saviour of all men, yet more especially of those that believe (1 Tim. 4:10); and particularly ministers of the gospel are in a remarkable manner preserved by the Lord; he holds these stars in his right hand (Rev. 2:1); they are his peculiar care and charge, and he continues their useful lives for much service in his church.

This was the happy case of our apostle. It takes in, and has a particular respect unto, the deliverance of him from dangers to which he was exposed, and which Christ promised him, verse 17, and he here acknowledges was made good unto him. As soon as he became a convert, and a preacher of the gospel, the Jews laid in wait for him to take away his life; insomuch that the disciples were obliged to let him down in a basket by the wall of the city of Damascus, to make his escape; at another time they found him in the temple, and fell upon him, and beat him unmercifully, and would have destroyed him, had not the chief captain of a Roman band ran to his relief: and after this, forty of them bound themselves under a curse, not to eat or drink until they had killed him; besides many perils of life was he in among the Gentiles, as at Lystra, Iconium, and other places (Acts 9:24, 25; 14:19; 21:32, 33; 23:12, 13); but he obtained help of the Lord against all his enemies, and deliverance from all dangers; and continued a faithful dispenser of the word, and stood his ground, through all difficulties, and in spite of all opposition.

This includes all that help and assistance which he received from the Lord in preaching the gospel; for notwithstanding his natural and acquired abilities, and the ordinary and extraordinary gifts of the spirit bestowed on him, yet he was conscious of his own weakness and inability in himself to perform such service; and therefore asks (2 Cor. 2:16), who is sufficient for these things? He knew he was not of himself, and that the grace of Christ alone was sufficient for him; that it was his strength which was made perfect in his weakness; that it was through Christ strengthening him he did all those wonderful things he did; that though he laboured more abundantly than any of the apostles, yet it was not he, but the grace of God which was with him (1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 12:9; Phil. 4:13); by which he was what he was, as a minister, and had what he had as such, and did what he did under that character; and by which he was enabled to preach the gospel so frequently, so constantly, so fully, and in so many places, from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum.

Secondly, The apostle expresses the nature of the work he was engaged and continued in, by witnessing; it was a testifying of the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24); bearing witness to the truth of it, to the grace of God in it; his free favour in choosing men to salvation, in providing and sending Christ to be the Saviour of them, and in the whole of their salvation by him: it was a giving testimony to Christ, to his person, office and grace; hence the gospel is called, the testimony of our Lord (2 Tim. 1:8): the apostles of Christ were made and appointed to be his witnesses, to testify of his incarnation, works, sufferings, death, resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and of all things they had heard, and seen, and knew concerning him; and so was the apostle Paul, verse 17, and all ministers of the gospel are witnesses, who prophesy, though in sackcloth, and will do so to the end of the reign of antichrist.

Thirdly, The persons to whom he witnessed, he says, were small and great; having, no doubt, a special regard to the audience he was now addressing, consisting of great personages, as before observed, and of a multitude of the common people; he bore witness to the truths of Christ and his gospel, to all sorts of men, of every age, rank and condition of life, high and low, rich and poor; and of every character, wise and unwise; his commission being the same with the rest of the apostles, reached to all; go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15).

Fourthly, The subject-matter of the apostle's ministry is signified; 1st, More generally, as what agreed with the doctrine of the Old Testament, with Moses and the prophets: 2dly, More particularly, as it respected, in agreement with them, the sufferings and resurrection of Christ, and his being a light to Jews and Gentiles. And on these two things I shall a little enlarge. What the apostle chiefly insisted upon in his ministry in general, was the same with what Moses and the prophets had spoken of; saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come, or should be: as he agreed with them in the following things, which are particularly respected, so in every thing they said there is an entire harmony and consent between the prophets of the Old, and the apostles of the New Testament; and especially in every thing concerning Christ: they agreed in laying him as the foundation of the church and people of God, and of their faith, hope and happiness; hence he is called (Eph. 2:20), the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

The Old and New Testaments are like the cherubim over the mercy seat, which were exactly of the same form and size; their faces were to each other, and both to the mercy seat, a type of Christ; as the cherubim were of the ministers of the word, the prophets of the Old, and the apostles of the New Testament. These two parts of the sacred scripture are the church's two breasts, which are like two young roes that are twins (Cant. 4:5); that are in every thing, in nature, color and proportion like to each other.

Our Lord and his apostles appealed to the writings of Moses and the prophets, for the truth of what they delivered; they fetched quotations from them to support their doctrines by; and these are said by them to be able to make men wise unto salvation; and to be profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness; and to make the man of God thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:15-17): there is not a doctrine of the gospel, but what may be established and confirmed by these sacred books.

And this will soon and easily appear by a short detail of some of the principal and peculiar doctrines of it. As, The doctrine concerning the divine Being, and the persons in the Godhead. One branch of which is, that there is but one God. This is the voice of reason and revelation, the language of the Bible, of both Testaments, old and new. Our Lord frequently suggests this truth, and so do his apostles; and the apostle Paul particularly, in the name of the rest, and indeed of all Christians, says to us there is but one God (Matt. 19:17; Mark 12:29, 32; John 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; 1 Tim. 2:5); and this is what Moses said, hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord (Deut. 6:4): the prophets say the same, and the Lord by them; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me--is there a God beside me? yea there is no God, I know not any (Isa. 43:10; 44:8), all which is said in opposition to the polytheism of the heathens, but not to the exclusion of any of the divine persons in the Godhead; for another branch of this doctrine is, that there is a plurality of persons in God, and that these are neither more nor fewer than three; for as the apostle John says, There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one (1 John 5:7); and which agrees with the doctrine of Christ, as appears by his appointing the ordinance of baptism to be administered, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matt.28:19); which three divine persons appeared at the baptism of Christ; there was the Son of God in human nature submitting to that ordinance; and there was the voice of the Father from heaven, declaring, that this was his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased; and there was the Holy Spirit, which descended as a dove upon Christ (Matt. 3:16-17); hence the ancients used to say, "Go to Jordan and learn the doctrine of the Trinity:" and this is no other than what is to be found in the writings of Moses and the prophets.

Moses plainly intimates a plurality of persons in the Deity, which he represents God as saying, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:--Let us go down and there confound their language (Gen.1:26;11:7); and his account of the creation, plainly suggests there were three, and no more. God, the first person, the Father, made the heavens and the earth; and God the Word, the essential Word, the second person, said, Let there be light, and there was light; and the Spirit of God, or the Spirit of the Messiah, as the Jews call him, the third person, moved upon the face of the waters (Gen.1:1, 2, 3), and brought the dark and unformed chaos in a beautiful order.

All which is summarily comprehended in the words of the Psalmist; by the Word, the essential Word of the Lord, of Jehovah the Father, were the heavens made; and all the host of them, by the breath or spirit of his mouth (Ps. 33:6). And the prophets all agree in, and bear testimony to this truth not to mention any other than those words in Isaiah, and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me (Isa. 48:16); here are Jehovah and his Spirit spoken of, as concerned in the mission of Christ into this world.

Another branch of this doctrine is, that each of the divine persons is God; not to say any thing of the Father, the first person, about whom there is no question; the second person, the Son of God, is expressly called by the apostle John, the last of the apostles, with whom the rest agree, the true God and eternal life (1 John 5:20); and this doctrine clearly appears in the writings of the Old Testament, for to the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever (Psa. 45:6); and he that is promised as the child that should be born, and the Son given, is named the mighty God (Isa.9:6); he who is prophesied of as the Saviour of lost sinners, is called their God, your God will come and save you (Isa. 35:4); he that is spoken of that should be incarnate and become man, is said to be not a mere man, but the man, Jehovah's fellow (Zech.13:7); his equal, who thought it no robbery to be equal with God.

And as for the blessed Spirit, who, in the New Testament, is called the Lord the Spirit; and lying to him is represented as lying to God (2 Cor. 3:18; Acts 5:3, 4); so in the Old Testament such things are ascribed to him, as clearly shew him to be a divine person such as, his concern in the creation of all things; his bringing the earth into proper form and order, by moving on the face of the waters; garnishing the heavens, and bespangling them with stars; making man, and giving him life and understanding (Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; 32:8; 33:4).

The doctrine respecting the person and offices of Christ, is the same in both testaments. Is he called in the New Testament the Son of God? is the doctrine of his divine Sonship written as with a sunbeam, in the books of it? is he owned to be the Son of God, by angels and men, good and bad, as well as declared to be so by his Father himself? is this an article of the apostles creed, in which they all unite, saying (John 6:6, 29), We believe and are sure that thou art Christ the Son of the living God? not by office, but by nature; for this is not a term of office, but of relation.

The writings of the Old Testament agree herein, in which the second person is often called the Son of God. Daniel knew him as such, and had instilled such a sentiment of him into the mind of Nebuchadnezzar, an heathen monareh; or otherwise, how could he have said (Dan. 3:25), that the form of the fourth person, in the fiery furnace, is like the Son of God? Solomon, long before him, under the name of Agur, says (Prov. 30:4) of God, and his divine Word, What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?

And David his father, before him, introduces the second person, as declaring what his divine Father had said unto him; The Lord bath said Unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee: hence David

exhorts the kings and judges of the earth to kiss this Son of God; that is, to serve, worship, and obey him; who appeals to be a divine person, by his being a proper object of trust and confidence; blessed are all they that put their trust in him (Ps.2:7, 12). Do the writings of the New Testament speak of Christ as God and man in one person, this being the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16)?

The writings of the Old Testament speak of him also in both natures as meeting in him: when they represent him as a child to be born, they declare him to be the mighty God and everlasting Father; and when they intimate he should be a branch of David's family, they give him the name of Jehovah our righteousness; and when they speak of him as a man, they call him Jehovah's fellow Isa.9:6; Jer.23:5, 6; Zech.13:7). Is he in the New Testament said (1 Tim. 2:5) "to be the mediator between God and men?" the writers of the Old Testament speak of him as drawing near to God, engaging his heart to approach unto him; as becoming the surety of his people; as being the days-man that lays his hands on both; as signified by Jacob's ladder, which reached from earth to heaven, and united both; as the mercy seat, from off of which the Lord communes with his saints; and as the Angel of God's presence, who appears for his people in it, and introduces them into it (Jer. 30:21; Job 9:32; Gen. 28:12; Ex. 25:22; Isa. 63:9).

Do the apostles of Christ make mention of him as invested with the offices of prophet, priest, and king? This is no other than what Moses and the prophets said should be. Moses foretells that God would raise up a prophet like unto him out of the children of Israel, whom they should hearken to (Deut. 18:15); and David says of the Messiah, that he was by the constitution and oath of God, a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4); and other prophets signify that he should make his soul an offering for sin, and make intercession for transgressors (Isa. 53:10, 12); which are the two parts of his priestly office: and there is no need to say, that he is often promised and prophesied of as a king that should come, it is so notorious; Rejoice, O daughter of Zion,--thy king cometh unto thee (Zech. 9:9).

The several peculiar doctrines of special and distinguishing grace are to be observed in the writings of the Old Testament, as well as of the New. As for instance, the doctrine of eternal, personal election is it a truth of the New Testament, that some men are chosen in Christ their head before the foundation of the world, to be holy and happy? It is suggested in the Old, that Christ is God's, first and chief elect, in whom his soul delighteth, and is chosen by him out of the people; and has a people chosen by the Lord for his peculiar treasure and inheritance (Isa. 42:1; Ps. 89:19; 135:4); for himself, or his glory, to enjoy everlasting communion with him.

Know that the Lord hath set apart, in a most wonderful and gracious manner, him that is godly; him to whom God is good and gracious, and who is the object of his free grace and favour, as the word signifies; for himself, his service and honour. The same writings declare, that God has made with Christ, with David, his chosen, an everlasting covenant; that Christ is set up from everlasting as mediator of it; that his goings forth in it were of old, from everlasting; that he is the messenger of it, yea the covenant itself; that all the blessings and promises of it belong to him, and are therefore called the sure mercies of David (Ps.89:3; 2 Sam. 23:5; Prov. 8:22; Micah 5:2; Mal. 3:1; Isa. 42:6; 55:3); which are all absolute and unconditional, and are all confirmed and established by the blood of Christ, said to be the blood of the covenant (Zech. 9:11; Heb. 13:20), in one Testament, as in the other.

The doctrine of particular redemption is held forth in both, and appears alike, the person of the redeemer is the same, that should come to, and out of Zion: the redeemed are the spiritual and mystical Jacob and Israel; the things they are redeemed from, are all their sins, Satan that is stronger than they, and death and hell they deserve (Isa. 59:20; 43:1; Ps. 130:7; Jer. 31:11). The doctrine of justification, our apostle so

much insisted upon in his ministry and writings, is clearly expressed by the prophets; from whence it appears that it is God that justifies Christ the head, and all his people in him; that it is in, and by him, that all the seed of Israel are justified and glorified; and it is in him they have their justifying righteousness, which is called an everlasting one; and hence he is called the Lord their righteousness (Isa.50:8; 45:24, 25; Dan. 9:24; Jer. 23:6).

The doctrine of pardon of sin, which is an evangelical one, and of pure revelation, is spoken of by Moses and the prophets, as by Christ; for to him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins (Acts 10:43), and by them it appears that there is forgiveness with God; and that it is of all sins, and is an act of God's free grace and mercy, and peculiarly his; and who, before the face of Moses, proclaimed his name, a God gracious and merciful, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin (Ps. 130:4; 103:3; Isa. 43:25; Ex. 34:6, 7).

And the agreement of other doctrines of the New Testament with the Old, may easily be observed, as being no other than what is there asserted; as that conversion is not by might or power of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord (Zech. 4:6); and that they that have the true grace of God shall persevere to the end; shall go from strength to strength, grow stronger and stronger, and hold on their way; and that the fear of God being put into their hearts, they shall never depart from him (Ps. 84:7; Job 17:9; Jer. 32:40); and that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and a future judgment; that those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame and contempt (Dan. 12:2); and that God will judge the righteous and the wicked, and bring every work into judgment, good or evil, open or secret (Eccl. 3:17; 12:14).

II. The particular things here observed, in the ministration of which the apostle agreed with Moses and the prophets, are such as respect the sufferings and resurrection of Christ, and his being a light to Jews and Gentiles; that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and shew light to the people and to the Gentiles. 1st, That Christ should suffer; a suffering Christ is the principal subject of the gospel-ministry. The apostles preached Christ crucified, as having suffered the death of the cross in the room and stead of, and for the sake of men; and the apostle Paul determined to know, that is, to make known none but Christ, and him crucified, as the only Saviour of men.

This was the first and principal thing of all which he delivered wherever he came, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures (1 Cor. 1:23; 2:2; 15:3). The person said to suffer, is Christ; not the Father, as some, called Patri-passians from thence, are said to hold; they, as the Sabellians, asserting there is but one person in the Godhead; but of the Father our Lord says, ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape (John 5:37). He never assumed a nature capable of suffering; nor the Holy Spirit neither; he formed, prepared, and adorned the human nature of Christ, and Christ through the eternal Spirit offered himself to God (Heb. 9:14); but the Spirit suffered not; it was the Son of God that became incarnate, and appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh; and whom God spared not, but delivered up into the hands of justice and death for us all (Rom. 8:3, 32): it was not indeed in his divine nature, as the Son of God, he suffered, for that is impossible; but in the human nature he assumed, which he took on purpose, that he might have something to offer; as it was necessary he should, that he might be put to death, in the flesh, and be crucified through weakness (1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 13:4): and yet his sufferings are ascribed to his whole person, and even as that is denominated from his divine nature; just as what belongs to his divine nature is predicated of his person, as denominated from his human nature; for instance, his omnipresence, which is an attribute of Deity, is ascribed to Christ, denominated the Son of man; and no man bath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man

which is in heaven (John 3:13): and so, on the other hand, the sufferings of Christ, which are peculiar to his human nature, are spoken of his person, as described from his divine nature; as when it is said, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, and God purchased the church with his own blood (1 Cor.2:8; Acts 20:28): this is owing to that strict, close, hypostatical, or personal union there is of the two natures in the Son of God; and hence is the efficacy of the blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ: his blood cleanseth from all (1 John 1:7), because it is the blood of him who is the Son of God; and his righteousness justifies from all sin, because it is the righteousness of God, of him who is God as well as man; and his sacrifice expiates all sin, and is a sufficient atonement for it, because it is the sacrifice of himself.

Should it be asked, what it was that Christ suffered? The answer is, That he suffered in his name, credit, and reputation, which he willingly submitted to, and therefore is said to have made himself of no reputation (Phil. 2:8); he was content to be reckoned a worm, and no man (Ps. 22:6); he was traduced as a sinful man, as a seditious person, as having a devil, and doing his miracles by his help and assistance. He suffered in his body, being beat and bruised, buffeted and scourged, pierced in his hands and feet with nails, in his side with a spear, and in his head with thorns; he suffered the painful, shameful and accursed death of the cross: he suffered in his soul, partly by the temptations of Satan, for he suffered being tempted (Heb. 2:18): and partly by enduring the wrath of God in the room and stead of his people; in the garden, when his soul became exceeding sorrowful even unto death (Matt. 26:38); and upon the cross, when his God and Father forsook him, and he cried out in the agony of his spirit, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me (Matt. 27:46)? his soul, as well as his body, was offered, and became a sacrifice for sin.

And all this he endured, not on his own account; he was cut off in a judicial way, by the hand of divine justice, but not for himself (Dan. 11:26), not for any sin of his; he knew none, nor did any; but, he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; it was for the transgression of his people that he was stricken (Isa. 53:6, 8), smitten and afflicted of God; not for angels, and any sins of theirs, whose nature he did not assume, nor are they spared and saved; but for men, sinful men, the worst of men, the chief of sinners he suffered, the just for the unjust (1 Pet. 3:18); not for all the individuals of mankind; for his redeemed ones are redeemed from among men, and out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation (Rev.14:4; 5:9); they are a people Christ suffered for, his sheep he laid down his life for, the church he gave himself an offering and a sacrifice for unto God, of a sweet-smelling savour (Titus 2:14; John 10:15; Eph. 5:2, 25): and his ends in all his sufferings were to make peace with God for them, which is done by the blood of his cross; to procure the pardon of all their sins, which is obtained the same way; and to redeem them from all iniquity; which redemption is also through his blood; and to deliver them out of the hands of all their enemies, and particularly from him who had the power of death, the devil; and to bring many sons to glory, for which it was necessary the captain of their salvation should be made perfect through suffering.

For there was an absolute necessity of them; Ought not Christ to have suffered these things (Luke 24:26)? He must; partly on the account of God, his counsels and decrees, his promises and prophecies. God resolved on saving sinners by Christ; he appointed him to be his salvation; he determined he should suffer and die and he was given up to men, by the determinate counsel of God, who did to him "none other things than what his hand and counsel determined before should be done;" and to fulfill the decrees of God, it was necessary Christ should suffer for his council shall stand (Isa. 46:10); as well as to make good the many promises and prophecies concerning this matter, delivered out by the mouth of his holy

prophets; and had he not suffered, how then could the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be (Matt. 26:54)?

And partly on account of Christ himself, his covenant-engagements, to do this part of his Father's will, and the several predictions he himself gave out, that he should suffer many things of the scribes and Pharisees, and die and rise again. As also on the account of the Lord's people, who otherwise could not be saved for here was a law broken, which must be fulfilled; not only its precepts obeyed, but its penalty, which was death, must be endured; injured and affronted justice to be satisfied, which could only be done by the sinner, or surety for him, suffering the demerit of sin; there was no other way of saving sinners but by the sufferings of Christ; consistent with the purposes of God, his counsel and covenant; with the engagements of Christ, and the happiness of the Lord's people, these sufferings could not be avoided: it was not possible the cup should pass from him; could any other way have been found out, or these sufferings excused, that prayer of our Lord would have (Matt. 26:39) procured it.

Now all these sufferings of Christ were no other than what were foretold by Moses and the prophets. The first promise or hint of a Messiah, suggests, that he would be a suffering one, Thou shalt bruise his heel (Gen. 3:15); and all the prophets speak of him as subject to reproach and trouble, to pains and sorrows, to distress of every kind, and death itself. Read over the 22nd Psalm, and the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, and it will be abundantly evident from thence, and other passages, how the prophets testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow (1 Pet. 1:11): these show that he would be a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs; that he would be wounded, bruised, give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; that he would be brought to the dust of death, and his soul be poured out unto death; and that he should be buried, and make his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.

Yea, the several circumstances of his sufferings and death are most minutely and exactly foretold in the writings of the prophets; as that he should be betrayed by one of his disciples, one that ate bread with him should lift up his heel against him (Ps. 41:9); that he should be sold for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a servant (Zech 11:12, 13; 13:7); the godly price he was prized at by them; that he should be deserted by all the disciples, when he should be seized and smitten; that he should be crucified between two thieves, or numbered among the transgressors (Isa. 53:12); that the soldiers should part his garments, and cast lots on his vesture; that they should give him gall for his meat, and vinegar for his drink, and that his side should be pierced with a spear. 2dly, Another particular in which the apostle agreed with Moses and the prophets, is, that Christ should be the first of the resurrection of the dead, or should rise first from thence: that he is risen is certain, not only from the testimony of the women who first came to his sepulchre, and to whom he first appeared; but from the testimony of his disciples and others: of these, he was first seen of Cephas or Peter, then of the twelve, after that of above five hundred brethren at once; next of James, then of all the apostles; and even after his ascension he was seen by Stephen standing on the right hand of God; and last of all by our apostle, as here declared in the context, as one born out of due time (1 Cor. 15:6-8; Acts 7:55).

Now the apostles of our Lord were chosen witnesses of God for this purpose (Acts 10:41), and were men of unquestionable characters; they were thoroughly acquainted with Christ, and could not be imposed upon nor were they over-credulous; nay they were incredulous to a fault, and in this very case; they believed not the first report of it from the women, and the two disciples that traveled with Jesus to Emmaus; and therefore Christ at his first appearance to them upbraided them with their unbelief, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen (Mark 16:11, 13, 14): and they had all the

opportunities and advantages of satisfying themselves in this matter they could wish for; he shewed himself alive to them by in fallible proofs (Acts 1:3); he was seen of them for the space of forty days, during which time they frequently ate, and drank, and conversed with him; and they were men of probity and honesty, and had no sinister ends, nor worldly views to answer by making such a report; but were sure to meet with reproach and disgrace, with rage and persecution, and with death itself in every shape wherever they came with it: nay, the resurrection of Christ is further confirmed by the testimonies of angels, who declared at the grave, that he was not there, but was risen (Luke 24:6); and not they, and men only, were witnesses of this, but the Holy Ghost also, by signs and wonders of his attending the declaration of it (Acts 5:31, 32).

Moreover, not only Christ was to rise from the dead, but he was to rise first, as he did; for though there were others that rose before him, as to time, as the son of the widow of Sarepta, who was raised by Elijah, and the Shunamite's son by Elisha, and the daughter of Jairus, and the son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus, by our Lord; yet these were raised, not by their own power, but by the power of another: whereas Christ was raised by his own power, and so declared to be the Son of God: they rose to die again, but he rose to an immortal life, never to die more; he was the first to whom God, in this sense, shewed the path of life (Ps. 16:11); for though he was dead he is alive, and lives for evermore, and has the keys of hell and death (Rev. 1:18): likewise, he was the first in dignity that rose from the dead; he who is the first-born among men, brethren, is the first-begotten from the dead; he rose not as a private person, but as the head of the body, the church, as the representative of all his people, and they were raised up together with him (Col. 1:18; Eph. 2:6); also he is the first in causality; he is the first cause of the resurrection; as by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

It is by virtue of his power, and in consequence of union with him, the saints will rise; he is the first-fruits of them that sleep (1 Cor. 15:20, 21, 23); the earnest and pledge of their resurrection; as sure as his dead body is raised, so sure shall theirs; his glorious body, raised, is the exemplar and pattern, according to which the bodies of the saints will be fashioned in the resurrection-morn and it will be owing to his voice, and to the exertion of his almighty power, that the graves will be opened, and the dead will come forth and appear before him (Isa. 26:9; Phil. 3:21; John 5:28, 29).

Now this is a very principal doctrine of the gospel, and of great moment and importance; on this the proof of Jesus' being the true Messiah, greatly depends; this is the sign he chose to give to the adulterous and unbelieving generation of the Jews, when they required one of him, saying (Matt. 12:39), there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas; his lying three days and three nights in the whale's belly, a type of Christ's resurrection from the dead on the third day.

This doctrine is of so much consequence, that were it not true, the whole of Christianity, the doctrine and preaching of it, the faith and hope of Christians would be affected with it, yea, be all vain (1 Cor. 15:14) and worthless. The resurrection of Christ has a very great concern in the justification of men; for he was raised again for our justification (Rom. 4:25); and it has an influence on their regeneration, to which it is sometimes ascribed; and Kith may be designed by the power of his resurrection (1 Pet. 1:3; Phil. 3:10), as well as the resurrection of his people at the last day, which depends upon it.

And the whole of this doctrine is no other than what Moses and the prophets said should be; it is perfectly agreeable to the writings of the Old Testament; it was hinted at in the types, of Isaac being received from the dead as in a figure by his father, after he had given him up for dead for three days; and of Jonas being delivered from the belly of the whale, after he had lain in it three days and three nights; it was foretold by

David, Isaiah, and Hosea particularly; who declare he should not see corruption in the grave, that his dead body should arise, and he, and his people with him, should be quickened after two days (Ps.16:10; Isa. 26:19; Hos. 6:2). 3dly and lastly, Another thing the apostle had asserted, which Moses and the prophets had done before him, was, that Christ would be a light to Jews and Gentiles; or would shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles; first to the people of the Jews, and then to the nations of the world.

To the Jews. Christ was first sent to them, even to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. 15:24); and to them only; he was the minister of the circumcision (Rom. 15:8), or of the circumcised Jews, to fulfill to them what God had promised and foretold: and though they received him not, but rejected him, he sent his apostles to them first, and charged them not to go into the way of the Gentiles, or into any of the cities of the Samaritans; and when their commission was enlarged after his resurrection, they were ordered to begin their ministry at Jerusalem (Matt. 10:6, 7; Luke 24:47).

Now these people, notwithstanding they had the law and statutes of God, his word and ordinances, and the divine oracles committed to them, yet were in great darkness, and had no true understanding of them; in those times there was a veil over their minds in reading the books of the Old Testament concerning Christ, and the things of the gospel; they were blinded, and so were their leaders the scribes and Pharisees. Christ came a light unto them, and the light of grace and truth came by him; and some through his ministry, and that of his apostles, were spiritually and savingly enlightened.

To the Gentiles. These were in great darkness before the coming of Christ; they were without a divine revelation, without any knowledge of God and Christ; they were suffered to walk in their own ways of darkness, superstition, and idolatry; their times before this were times of ignorance and blindness: but when Christ came, he sent his apostles to them with the gospel to enlighten them; and they carried it throughout the world; and by means of it, many were called and turned from gross darkness to marvelous light.

And now all this was agreeable to the writings of the Old Testament, which represent Christ as the sun of righteousness; as that great light which should arise and shine on the Galilean Jews, that sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and should also be a light of the Gentiles (Mal. 4:2; Isa. 9:2; 42:6); and so good old Simeon understood the prophecies concerning him, that he should be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel (Luke 2:32).

The use of all this is, a wonderful confirmation of divine revelation, of the truth of Christianity, and of Jesus being the true Messiah; for since the various things foretold in the Old Testament by Moses and the prophets, at sundry times and in divers manners, appear to be fulfilled in the New, this proves the revelation to be of God; that Christianity stands upon a sure foundation, and that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ promised and prophesied of from the beginning of the world.

And this may serve to recommend the writings of the Old Testament to the reading and perusal of men; since they testify of Christ so clearly, concerning his person, office, and grace, and are so profitable for doctrine, and instruction in righteousness (John 5:39; 2 Tim. 3:16): we have here also the plan of the gospel-ministry; that it is a suffering, risen, and exalted Saviour, held forth as a light to Jews and Gentiles. This was the plan of the ministry of the apostle Paul; and no man need be ashamed to copy after such an example, who was the greatest preacher that ever was upon the earth, excepting our Lord Jesus Christ.

And now, my friends, If call you to dear witness that these truths, and what have been briefly suggested in this discourse, have been what I have chiefly insisted upon in the course of this Lecture; namely, the

doctrines of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead; of the person and office of Christ; of the person and operations of the Blessed Spirit; of special and distinguishing grace, as it appears in election, redemption, justification, adoption, regeneration, sanctification, and the final perseverance of the saints; with other doctrines which are in consequence of them, and in connection with them.

And now I, am about to take my leave of you, and this Lecture, and do: not through any dislike of the work I have been so long engaged in; not through any disgust at any thing I have met with; not through any discouragement for want of attendance or subscription; I have nothing to complain of; the Lecture was never in better circumstance than it now is. But I find my natural strength will not admit me to preach so frequently, and with so much constancy, as I have done for many years past; being now on the decline of life, in the fortieth year of my ministry; so that it is time for me to have done with extra-service, I mean, service out of the church of which I am pastor. But a more principal reason is, that I may have a little more time and leisure to attend to, and finish an arduous work upon my hands, An Exposition of the Whole Old Testament

Part of which work, I shall immediately propose for publication; and if I meet with encouragement, the publishing of this will be an additional weight upon me; and I have no other way of easing myself, but by dropping the Lecture; and these, and these only, are my reasons for so doing. And now as I would be, and am, thankful to the God of my life, who has given me so much health and strength, to carry on this Lecture for such a course of years, with very little interruption for want of health; so I would, and do return thanks to you, my friends, who have so long encouraged and supported me with your presence and purse; and I heartily wish and pray, that you may be preserved from the prevailing errors of the times, and may be kept steadfast in the faith of the gospel, and abide by the truths and ordinances of it; and that the means of grace you attend upon, in season, and out of season, here, or elsewhere, may be blessed unto you for your comfort and edification; and that you may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints of light.

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