

God's Great Name, the Ground and Reason of Saving Great Sinners

by Ralph Erskine

Ralph Erskine's sermon explores how God's saving grace is rooted in His own glory and name, emphasizing His mercy towards great sinners.

Scripture: Psalm 79:9, Psalm 106:8, Psalm 115:1, Isaiah 43:25, Isaiah 48:11, Jeremiah 14:7, Acts 4:12, Romans 9:23, Ephesians 1:6, Philippians 2:10

Topics: "God's Glory", "Salvation of Sinners"

Description

Ralph Erskine emphasizes that God's salvation of sinners is fundamentally for His own name's sake, rather than for any merit on the part of the sinners themselves. He explains that the glory of God's name is paramount in the act of salvation, as it showcases His mercy, justice, and power, even in the face of human sinfulness. Erskine illustrates this through the historical example of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, highlighting that God's grace is extended to the most grievous sinners, demonstrating His willingness to save despite their unworthiness. The sermon calls believers to recognize their dependence on God's grace and to glorify His name in their lives. Ultimately, Erskine reassures that God's saving work is rooted in His desire to magnify His name and attributes.

Transcript

[This sermon was preached at Carnock, July 18th, 1730, before the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.]

"Nevertheless, he saved them for his name's sake."--Psalm 106:8.

My friends, the sacramental cup that some of you have in view, is a cup of salvation; and those that adventure to take that cup into their hand, had need to be persons duly informed, and heartily concerned about salvation. The very first piece of heart-exercise in all that are effectually convinced and awakened to a sense of sin and fear of wrath, is that or the like question, arising from the bottom of the heart; "Men and brethren, what shall I do to be saved?" Surely they are not fit for a communion-table, who have never yet come this length in religion, so as to be more concerned about salvation, and the solution of this question than ever they were about any temporal concern in the world; for such as stand fair to be worthy communicants, they have come yet a greater length than this, namely, to get that question resolved to their satisfaction, and their mind spiritually enlightened in the knowledge of the method of salvation

through Christ, so as to see upon what terms, and for what reason it is that God saves them: and particularly, that there is no reason why he should save them, unless he bring the reason from himself, that it will not be for their sake, but for his own. God's great end, in all his works, is the glory of his own name; and especially his work of saving sinners through Christ; and that which makes it a great work, is, because his great name is so much concerned therein, and magnified thereby, that it is not so greatly glorified any other way, as it is here. God proposes, in this work, that the loftiness of man shall be brought down, and the Lord alone exalted; and hence all whom he saves, he humbles them so low for their sin and wickedness, as that to bring them to this acknowledgment, that, if ever God save them, it will be owing, not unto them, but unto his own glorious name. What thought and concern about salvation ye have, I know not; but if ye be of these that believe, to the saving of your souls, you will see so much of your own sinfulness and guiltiness before God, that you will be brought to despair of salvation in any other way, and upon any other account, that that which was his method of saving Israel of old; "Nevertheless, he saved them for his name's sake."

How this people sinned, we are told in the two preceding verses: and how God saved them, we are told here in the text: "Nevertheless, he saved them for his name's sake." The more full history of their sinning, even in the extremity of danger they were in, and of God's saving them at the Red sea, ye have Exod. 14 throughout. And concerning this wonderful salvation, there are four things ye may notice in the words.

1. We have a glorious Saviour in the pronoun, He, namely, JEHOVAH, the great God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, the Angel of the covenant, that appeared to Moses in the bush, and delivered Israel by the hand of Moses. He is the Saviour; even he that says, "Look unto me, and be saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

2. The grievous sinners whom he saved, in the word, THEM. He saved them: namely, the Israelites, his professing people, when they were in great peril, having the Red Sea before them, the rude enemy behind them, and inaccessible mountains on each side of them: in the greatest extremity, and yet a sinful people; sinning against God even in that extremity; yet, he saved them.

3. The great argument that moved him to save them, or upon what account he thus appeared; it was, for his name's sake; that is, for his own sake, as Hezekiah prays to be saved from Senacherib, Isa. 37:20, "That all the kingdoms of the earth may know, that thou art the Lord, even thou only:" or, for thy name's sake; that is for thy glory's sake, Psal. 79:9, "Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake." That is, also for thy mercy's sake, for thy goodness' sake; or, because they were called by his name; this is urged, Jer. 14:9, "Thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name, leave us not."

4. The marvellous nature and circumstance of this salvation, in the word, Nevertheless; the glory of divine mercy is herein magnified, that he saved them for his name's sake, with a non obstante, with a nevertheless; that is, notwithstanding all their sin, though their sin cried to God, not to save them, but to damn them: not to help them, but to destroy them. Nevertheless, he saved them for his name's sake, notwithstanding their provocations.

Observe. That when God saves sinners, or a sinful people, he does it for his name's sake, notwithstanding their provocation, whereby they forfeit his help, and deserve destruction.

I shall first premise some general positions for clearing the text and doctrine. Secondly, illustrate the truth of the doctrine, from some parallel texts of scripture.

1st, I shall premise some general positions for clearing the text and doctrine.

First Position. That the salvation and temporal deliverance, that God, for his name's sake, wrought for Israel of old, in bringing them out of Egypt through the Red Sea to Canaan, was typical of the great salvation from sin and wrath, to eternal life, through Jesus Christ; which spiritual and eternal salvation this text itself leads me to speak of, not excluding the temporal deliverance, remarkable appearances of divine providence, for the visible church in general. As Israel's sin and provocation, and the judgments that came on them for the same, was our example and warning-piece, 1 Cor. 10:6; and great destructions happened for ensamples and types, ver. 11, "And written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come:" so the great deliverances God wrought for them were types of the great salvation that God works for sinners, through Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of his grace; or, For his name's sake.

Second Position. Many unconverted persons, in the visible church, may be delivered from temporal judgments, and saved of God only in outward respects, and that for his name's sake; so, doubtless, many unconverted persons were among the Israelites; yea, most of them gave discoveries that they were so. They forfeited his help in many respects; yet he saved them in many respects, for his name's sake. See Ezek. 36:22, 23, "Thus saith the Lord, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel but for my holy name's sake. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God! be it known unto you." Their slavery was so great, that it opened the mouth of the heathen, as if the God of Israel were no God; therefore God, for his name's sake, helped them. See also, Deut. 9:5, Israel was bad enough, but the heathen were no better, but rather worse; therefore, for his name's sake, he appeared. Many whom God will not be merciful to in the world, may yet, for his name's sake, be delivered in time.

Third Position. Gracious souls do too much forfeit God's help in time of danger, and deserve to be forsaken of God, and exposed to misery; yet, for his name's sake he saved them; this is their acknowledgment, as you see in Jacob, Gen. 32:10, "I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies." Even so does the church acknowledge, Ezra 9:8, 13, and Lam. 3:22, "It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed." And again,

Fourth Position. God may punish his people dolefully, whom yet, for his name's sake, he will not destroy; as in these instances just now recited. See Jer. 30:10. God may punish his people for their sin severely, whom yet he will save eternally, for his name's sake; yea, and punish them more than others, Amos 4:6-13, and 3:2, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." Those whom, for his name's sake, he saved from sin to eternity, he will make them feel it to be an evil and bitter thing in time.

Fifth Position is, God may save a visible church, in many outward respects, for the sake of his name, which he resolves to magnify, especially, in behalf of his invisible remnant among them, his hidden ones. Isa. 1:10, "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah." Many are saved with a temporal salvation, for the sake of those whom God resolves, for his name's sake to save with eternal salvation. Hence it is said, with respect to the day of outward calamity, that, for the elect's sake, these days shall be shortened. The wicked are more obliged to God's people than they are aware of. Hence,

Sixth Position is, That that salvation, wherein God's name is most concerned, is salvation in Christ Jesus to eternal life: wherein he brings sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; from death to life; from a hell of sin and misery to a heaven of holiness and happiness. Having proposed

these things shortly for clearing the text and doctrine in the general; before I proceed to the particular parts thereof, I shall,

2dly, Prove the doctrine by scripture instances; Ezek. 20:8, 9. Read 1 Sam. 12:22, Isa. 48:22, 25. Consider, for this purpose, God's promises; such as, Isa. 48:8, 9, 11. His people's prayers; such as, Jer. 14:7. But an induction of particulars, to this purpose, may afterwards occur for the confirmation.

Now having promised some things, and confirmed the doctrine, the method may be as follows:--

I. To inquire what is that name of God, for the sake of which he saves.

II. What it is for God to save for his name's sake.

III. What salvation he works for his name's sake.

IV. What is imported in this Nevertheless; or, in God's saying with a notwithstanding; and so over what impediments, real provocations, and seeming impossibility, he brings about this salvation for his name's sake.

V. Offer some reasons why he thus saves for his name's sake.

VI. Deduce some inferences from the whole, for the application.

I. I am to inquire what is the name of God, for the sake of which he saves. And,

1. By the name of God we may understand his being, God himself; Deut. 28:58, "That thou mayest fear this glorious and dreadful Name, The Lord thy God." Our Lord Jesus commands his apostles, to go and teach [or discipline] all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Matthew 28:19. Whatever then is intended by the name of God, each of the adorable persons of the glorious Trinity, are equally concerned therein. It is a name common to them all: and in this sense they have not distinct or diverse names for it is not simply the name Father, and the name Son, and the name Holy Ghost that is intended, but the name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God. By the name of God then, is meant God himself; and to save, for his name's sake, is to save for his own sake, as he says, Isa. 43:20, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own sake." We find the names of things, taken for the things themselves; "A few names in Sardis;" that is, a few persons.

2. By the name of God, we may understand the authority of God, that is, his absolute right and power to do what he pleases with his own creatures. He hath right to order, and power to execute, whatsoever he will concerning them: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," Isa. 66:10; so that when he saves, for his name's sake, he saves for the sake of his sovereign will and pleasure, and for manifesting his own absolute authority; his right and might to effectuate what he pleases.

3. By the name of God, we may understand the Christ of God for in our Lord Jesus Christ is the whole name and authority of God: Exod. 23:21, "Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him." But in case any should think, This is not a part of God's name, that indeed he does pardon iniquity, transgression, and sin; Why then it is said of Christ, "He will not pardon your iniquity, for my name is in him;" I answer, The pardon here is not a pardon that respects condemnation, and freedom from hell; but castigation, as a father is said to pardon a child, when he will not spare the rod, nor forbear to chasten; thus he will not pardon your iniquity, without taking

vengeance on your inventions; "For my name is in him;" i.e., my authority is in him. Christ is the very name of God; and when he pardons for his name's sake, he pardons for his Christ's sake. Thus the Old Testament saints, as they used to pray to be saved of God, for his name's sake, so they sometimes pray for his word's sake, 2 Sam. 7:21; that is, for Christ's sake, the Word that was made flesh; for the same prayer is rendered, "For thy Servant's sake," 1 Chron. 17:19. (Also see Psalm 84:9 for this purpose.) David's prayer is, "Behold, O God, our Shield; look upon the face of thine Anointed;" And Daniel's prayer is, "For the Lord's sake," Dan. 9:17. And, O but God hath done much, and will do much for Christ; because his name is in him, and in him he is wellpleased and reconciled.

4. By the name of God we are to understand, the attributes of God. I shall mention some of these.

(1.) His Power is his name, and for the sake of that, he saves as in the text: "He saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power known." Compare Exod. 19:16, and Rom. 9:17. For this cause God raised up Pharaoh, that he might show his mighty power in him, that his name, might be declared throughout all the earth, even his mighty power in saving of Israel out of his hand. This argument Moses makes use of, to divert God's threatened wrath, Numb. 14:15, 16. This is the name God manifests to Abraham, Gen. 17:1. "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be thou perfect." And the three children, Dan. 3:17 have recourse to his name: "Our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us." If there be anything that stands in the way of the accomplishment of his promises, he is able to remove it; so Abraham's faith fixed here, Rom. 4:21, "Being thus persuaded, that he that had promised was able also to perform." When God saves for his name's sake, it is for the sake of his power, to shew, that he is able to do above all that we are able to ask or think; that he is able to do above our wants, above our deserts, above our prayers, and above our thoughts: we cannot want more than he can give; we cannot pray for so much as he can bestow; we are not able to think what he can do. God's power is a part of his name that faith may take hold of for salvation, and flee unto, even when there is no explicit view of his will; thus saith the leper, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." I cannot tell if he will help me, a soul may say, but I know he is able, and I am called to trust in his powerful name, and to take hold of his strength, Isa. 26:24, chap. 27:5. While you can do no better, it is good to trust in his power, and put his will in his own discretion, and refer that to himself; that soul is not far behind.

(2.) His mercy is another part of his name: when he saves for his name's sake, he saves for his mercy's sake; "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy," Micah 7:18. He is, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious," Exod. 23:6. He so far delights in mercy, that mercy rejoices over judgment, James 2:13. Hence the Psalmist's prayer is, Psalm 6:4, "Return, O Lord, deliver my soul, for thy mercy's sake:" and Psal. 79:8. "O remember not against us former iniquities; let thy tender mercy speedily prevent us, for we are brought very low;" and, ver. 9, "Help, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake." David had fainted, unless he had believed to see the goodness of the Lord, Psal. 27:13. Out of a sense of misery, we ought to go to the fountain of mercy, and so look to be saved for his name's sake.

(3.) His Wisdom is another part of his name: "The Lord is a God of knowledge, by him actions are weighed," 1 Sam. 2:3; Yea, "His understanding is infinite." The psalmist takes up the wisdom of God as his name, and for the sake thereof seeks to be led and guided; "For thy name's sake lead me and guide me," Psalm 31:3. God, in saving sinners, through Christ, has such a regard to his name, as a God of infinite wisdom, that in this method of salvation, the manifold wisdom of God is shown, Eph. 3:10.

(4.) His Truth and Faithfulness is another part of his name, for the sake of which he saves and shows mercy; "His mercies are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness," Lam. 3:3. It is declared to be one of the capital letters of his name, Exod. 34:62 "Abundant in goodness and truth:" and hence, how often did God remember, toward Israel, his promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob notwithstanding their sin? Read Psalm 105:8, 97 10, 2 Kings 13:23. And, O what will not God do for his truth's sake for his promise's sake! for, "He is not a man that he should lie." He that, for his mercy's sake, makes the promise, will, for his truth's sake accomplish it; "Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old," Micah 7:20. In saving sinners, through Christ, his truth is exceedingly manifested; his truth in fulfilling the threatening of the law upon the Surety, in the room of the sinner: his truth in fulfilling the promises of the gospel, that are all Yea and Amen in Christ; his truth and faithfulness in fulfilling the promises made to Christ in the eternal compact; which may be part of the meaning of that word, Rom. 3:25, "To declare his righteousness for the remission of sin, through that propitiation; when God forgives sin through his blood, he declares his righteousness and faithfulness in his promise made to Christ, with reference to his seeing his seed, upon his giving his soul an offering for sin, Isa. 53:10.

(5.) His justice is another part of his name, for the sake of which he saves, and works salvation. The justice of God may be viewed as either retributive or vindictive; Retributive justice is that for the sake of which he saves either more generally, or in a more special way; In a general way, even some wicked sinners in the visible church may be unjustly oppressed by their enemies that are more wicked than they, as Israel was by the Egyptians; therefore God righteously took vengeance on them, and delivered Israel. In a special way it may be viewed in the saints themselves, who are sinners; yet, because objects of promised mercy in Christ Jesus, therefore, he saves and delivers for his righteousness and justice' sake: "Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake; for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble," Psalm 143:11. Thus he is said to uphold his people with the right hand of his righteousness, Isa. 41:10. His vindictive justice is also that for the sake whereof he saves, upon the supposition of its having got full satisfaction: and so we ordinarily understand, Rom. 3:25, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of the sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." It is ordinary for people to seek to be saved for his mercy's sake; but believing views of justice satisfied, and God reconciled in Christ, would make the soul as freely and boldly seek to be saved for justice's sake in and through Christ the atonement, in whom that name of God, justice, hath more glorious satisfaction than ever it will have in the damnation of sinners. This is expressly God's name, Exod. 34:7. "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty:" that is, in dispensing mercy, he will be so far from dispensing with justice, that, by no means, will he show mercy, in pardoning sin to the sinner, without the highest respect to justice, in punishing sin in the surety, in whom his vindictive justice, taking vengeance on sin, is so cleared and vindicated, that when he pardons sin, through Christ, he is as just in pardoning sin, as he is merciful in doing so; for he has so ordained it, to the glory of his great name, "That he might be just, and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus."

(6.) His Holiness is a part of his Name, for the sake of which he saves. This is declared to be his name, Exod. 15:11, "Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness." Isa. 57:15. "The high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy." For the sake of this he pities and saves, Ezek. 36:21. "But I had pity, for my holy name's sake, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen." Hence read, verse 22, "I do not this for your sake, but for mine holy name's sake." God, in saving sinners, through Christ's righteousness, hath his holiness, in the precept of the law, as much magnified by the active

obedience of Christ, as his justice in the threatening of the law is magnified by his passive obedience.

I might here mention the Providence of God, as a part of his name his watchful care over his people: "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro, to show himself strong in their behalf." 2 Chron. 16:9. He rules and over-rules all for their good. I might mention his titles whereby he is designed--such as, "The Lord of hosts, the mighty God, the King of kings." And I might likewise notice his Word, which he is said to magnify above all his name. But, in a word, as the name is that by which any thing or person is known; so the name of God is the very thing whereby he makes himself known; whether it be in his titles, attributes, ordinances, words, or works. He hath made himself known by his works of creation and providence, but a thousand times more clearly in the work of redemption and salvation; herein appear, not only those attributes that shine in creation and providence, but also some perfection of the divine nature, that would not have been displayed, in case the first covenant had stood; such as the infinite mercy and patience of God toward guilty sinners; nor such a pitch of condescension as he hath here discovered; nay, nor any other attribute had shined forth in such lustre and beauty as here it doth; therefore, while Satan thought to have deleted the name of God, that he wrote upon the creature at first, behold how infinite wisdom counteracts him, and makes that the occasion of making his name more known than before. These attributes of God, therefore, that are displayed in the new covenant of grace, and exerted in the salvation of sinners according to that covenant, is that name of God that is principally here to be considered.

II. The second thing was, to show, what it is for God to save for his name's sake; or, for the sake of his name. Having cleared what his name is, what is it, I say, for God to save for his name's sake?

In general, beside what has been said, God's saying for his name's sake, imports, I think, his making his name the ALL of our salvation, because the sinful creature is nothing, hath nothing, will do nothing, can do nothing in the affair of his own salvation; therefore God himself will be all, and do all: Isa. 59:16, and Isa. 63:5. "He looked, and there was none to help; therefore his own arm brought salvation." Thus God designed to show himself to be, all in all. More particularly,

1. For God to save for his name's sake, is to make his name the motive whence he saves. What moved him to save any guilty sinner? It is his name; his own mercy moved him; his own grace moved him; his own bowels of pity and compassion moved him; his own love moved him; his own name moved him; "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life."

2. For God to save for his name's sake, is to make his name the reason why he saves. Though his name be the motive, yet some may think there is surely some reason drawn from the creature: Arminians say, that it was the foresight of faith and good works, that he foresaw some would be better than others, and improve the means better; and for this reason he would save them; but the word of God says otherwise, Deut. 7:7, 8. God loves sinners, because he loves them. His sovereign mercy is the cause of his showing mercy; "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," Rom. 9:15.

3. To save for his name's sake, is to make his name the matter of their salvation, inasmuch as his name itself is their salvation. His name is their strong tower. Prov. 18:10. His name, the eternal God himself, is their refuge, Deut. 33:27. Insomuch, that whom he saves, they have not only salvation from him, but in him: "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation," Isa. 45:17. Christ, therefore, who calls us to look to him, and be saved, he himself is the salvation of the sinner. "Now mine eyes have seen thy salvation," said old Simeon, Luke 2:22. "Behold thy salvation cometh," says God, Isa. 62:11. Christ is

not only the helper, but the help itself; "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help," Hos. 13:9. See Psalm 18:2. "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. He is given for a covenant of the people, a light to the Gentiles," Isa. 49:6, 7. Again,

4. To save for his name's sake, is to make his name the means of salvation; and so it must be, if his name itself be the all of our salvation. By what means doth he save? It is even by his name. By whom doth Jacob arise but by the God of Jacob? By whom are sinners saved, but by the name of God, by the Christ of God? And, "There is none other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved," Acts 4:12. No man comes to the Father, but by him as the Way, by him as the Leader, and as the name of God.

5. To save for his name's sake, is to make his name the measure of our salvation; he will, therefore, save as far as his name and honour is engaged by promise to Christ, or to his people in him; 1 Kings 8:56. Read also Josh. 21:45. There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass. Thus God saves his people in particular cases, as far as his name, and faithfulness, and truth is concerned; "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it," 1 Cor. 10:13.

6. To save for his name's sake, is to make his name the end of our salvation, even the glory of his name; the great end he proposes in saving, is even the praise of the glory of his grace, Eph. 1:6. The praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. This is the great end of God in his work of saving sinners through Christ; "This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise," Isa. 43:21. Christ's grand prayer, when he was accomplishing the work of our salvation and redemption, was, "Father glorify thy name." And here let us stay a little, and admire the great design that God had in hand in saving, for his name's sake. God's chief end herein being the glory and honour of his name, What is that? Why,

(1.) In saving for his name's sake, he designs the manifestation of his name, the declaration of his name, as it is said Rom. 3:25. "To declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" to make known his name in every salvation of Israel, or of his church, his great design still is, that his name may be, known, declared, published, and proclaimed.

(2.) In saving for his name's sake, he designs the vindication of his name. His name is abused and reproached in the world, which is filled with harsh thoughts of God, as if he were either unjust or unmerciful; therefore, in saving for his name's sake, he will vindicate his name, "That he may be just when he speaks, and clear when he judges," Psalm 2:4. That he may appear to be not only merciful in saving; but also just, and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus; and as just in saving believing sinners, that flee to his name, as he is just in damning unbelieving impenitent sinners.

(3.) In saving for his name's sake, he designs the exaltation of his name; "I will be exalted among the heathen; I will be exalted in the earth," Psalm 46:10. He designs that the right hand of the Lord should be exalted in doing valiantly, Psalm 118:16; and make mention that his name is exalted, Isa. 12:4, "Therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy on you," Isa. 30:18. Wherefore hath God exalted Christ to his right-hand, but that his name may be exalted in him? "Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God: that at the name [or, in the name] of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth," Phil. 2:6, 10. On which account, God hath highly

exalted him to the glory of God the Father. And wherefore does he save, and glorify, and exalt any sinner through Christ, but that his name may be glorified and exalted.

(4.) In saving sinners for his name's sake, he designs the pleasure of his name; that his name should not only be exalted but delighted in, because it delights in shewing mercy, through Christ, Micah 7:18. We read of the good pleasure of his will, Eph. 1:5, the good pleasure of his goodness, 2 Thes. 1:11. God being infinitely well-pleased in Christ, he takes pleasure in giving out of his goodness through him; and he saves to the good pleasure of his name, and to the contentment of all his attributes; to the good pleasure of his goodness, the good pleasure of his grace, the good pleasure of his holiness, the good pleasure of his justice, the good pleasure of his truth and faithfulness: all the perfections of God are well-pleased; "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other," Psalm 85:10.

(5.) In saving sinners for his name's sake, he designs the aggrandising of his name; I mean, that his name should not only be glorified and exalted, but magnified to the highest, according to the song of the angel upon the coming of the Saviour; "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good-will towards men," Luke 2:14. His name is magnified to the highest in this way of salvation through Christ. Damnation is but the lowest way, wherein God is glorified himself by the instrumentality of sinners, and it is to their eternal ruin. Let sinners consider this, that they may not go on in the road to hell, but may fall in love with that way, wherein God is glorified and magnified to the highest. For, herein God is glorified by the highest person, his eternal Son, in his doing and dying, and rising and reigning, and mediating at his right hand; glorified in the highest place, with the highest praise, in the highest manner, and to the highest degree.

(6.) In saving sinners for his name's sake, he designs the eternalising of his name; "It shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off," Isa. 4:13, that is, that his name may be celebrated with Hallelujahs of praise to all eternity: "The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever; the Lord shall rejoice in his works," Psal. 104:31. "Thy name, O Lord, endureth for ever, and thy memorial throughout all generations," Psalm 135:13. Christ, the Saviour, was set up from everlasting, that the sinner saved of God in him might praise him to everlasting: "His name shall endure for ever;" and his ransomed shall come to Zion with everlasting songs, saying, "Salvation to our God that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever," Rev. 7:12.

QUESTION. What is it in the name of God that he hath such regard to, when he saves for his name's sake?

ANSWER. He hath regard to his name in all the parts of it that I have already mentioned, and in every attribute, insomuch, that no attribute shall be injured, but every one of them extolled more than another. He also hath regard to his name in all the properties and qualities of it. His name is a glorious name; and, in saving sinners, through Christ, he hath regard to the glory of it; that it be glorified in the manner I have hinted at. His name is a great name; and, in saving sinners, through Christ, he hath regard to the greatness of it by bringing about such a great salvation. And, what will he not do for his great name? His name is a holy name, and therefore, in saving sinners, through Christ, he hath a regard to the holiness of it; not only in sanctifying all whom he saves, but in saving, by a righteousness, whereby his holy law is not only fulfilled, but magnified and made honourable; in providing a Saviour of such infinite dignity, that he casts a lustre on the law, by his obedience to it. His name is a dreadful name; and therefore, in saving sinners, through Christ, he has such a regard to the dreadfulness of it, that his most dreadful vengeance lighted upon sin, in the person of the Surety, the Saviour, when he became a sacrifice for sin. His name is a precious name, and therefore, in saving sinners, he has such a regard to the manifesting the

preciousness of it, so as to make it appear in the precious blood of Christ, which is the price of salvation. His name is a blessed name, and he cannot be more blessed and happy than he is in himself; yet, to manifest the blessedness of his name, he saves sinners, so as to show he loves not to be blest and happy alone, but will have men to be blest in him, that all nations may call him blessed. His name is a wonderful name, a mysterious and unsearchable name; and therefore it is said, Isa. 9:6, "His name shall be called Wonderful." Angels have been prying into this depth, so many thousand of years, and yet are not at the bottom of it, but still are prying into the mystery of the gospel salvation through Christ; and such is the regard God hath to this wonderful name, in saving sinners, that every part of their salvation is a miracle and wonder, manifesting the wisdom of God in a mystery. In a word, his name is an everlasting and unchangeable name: and it is his regard thereunto that makes him, by the means of his everlasting righteousness, bring about this everlasting salvation.

III. The third thing proposed in the general method was, To show what salvation he works for his name's sake. Salvation is either temporal, spiritual, or eternal; and though God, for his name's sake, works many temporal deliverances for his church and people, as you see in Israel here, ver. 9, 10, 11, 21, 22, 43, 45, 46, and all this for his name's sake: also, he saved the Church of Scotland many a time, for his name's sake: he saved us, from Paganism, for his name's sake, when he first sent gospel light to our land; he saved us from Popery, for his name's sake, at the glorious Reformation, which was here carried on by solemn National Covenants, that were the glory of our land, whatever contempt is now put upon them; he saved us from Prelacy, and arbitrary power and tyranny, at the merciful Revolution, for his name's sake; and he hath saved us, from time to time, from many attempts of enemies that were seeking to raze us to the foundation, as some are subtilly doing at this day, by damnable errors, which strike at the foundation of all religion; I mean, especially Arian blasphemy, but, whatever church salvation, or temporal salvation of this sort to a visible church, God works, for his name's sake, yet it is that spiritual and eternal salvation typified by Israel's salvation, that the name of God is most concerned with and exalted by; therefore, I especially speak of this everlasting salvation in Christ.

And therefore, if the question be, What salvation of this sort he works, for his name's sake?

I answer, There is no part of this great salvation but the name of God is engraven upon it, as being what he works, for his name's sake. I shall offer a few instances thereof; from election to glorification, all the parts of salvation that lie betwixt these two words, from everlasting to everlasting, are brought about for his name's sake.

1. Wherefore did he elect any sinners from eternity? It was for his name's sake, to show his absolute sovereignty in making vessels of mercy, of whom he pleased; "And that he might make known the riches of his glory to them," Rom. 9:23. He hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace," Eph. 1:4, 5, 6.

2. Wherefore did he redeem any sinners by the blood of his eternal Son? It was for his name's sake, Eph. 1:7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence." The redemption of Israel is designed and ordered for the glory of the God of Israel, "Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel," Isa, 44:22.

3. Wherefore doth he call any sinners effectually? It is for his name's sake: this is illustrated at large by the apostle; "You see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of this world," &c., 1 Cor. 26-31. "He hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which he purposed in Christ before the world began," 2 Tim. 1:9. Hence the saints ascribe their conversion and quickening to the name of God, and to the grace of God; "By grace I am what I am," says, Paul, 1 Cor. 15:10, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory," Psalm 115:1.

4. Wherefore doth he justify and pardon any guilty sinner? It is even for his name's sake, Isa. 43:25, "I even I am he that blotteth out thy transgression for my name's sake." And Rom. 3:24, 25, 26, "We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past," &c. Again,

5. Wherefore doth he adopt any child of wrath into his family? It is for his name's sake, Eph. 1:5, "We are predestined to the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace." Again,

6. Wherefore doth he sanctify any filthy sinner? It is even for his name's sake, 1 Cor. 1:30, "Christ is made of God to us sanctification, that no flesh might glory in his sight: but that he that glorieth might glory in the Lord." And hence all the great things promised in the covenant of grace, Ezek. 36:25, 26, 27. Among the rest, His putting his Spirit within them, and causing them to walk in his statutes, are said to be done for his holy name's sake, ver. 22.

7. Wherefore will he carry on the good work, which he hath begun, and never utterly leave his people, nor suffer them altogether to depart from him? Why? It is even for his name's sake and his promise's sake, Jer. 32:40, "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their heart, and they shall not depart from me. Heb. 13:5, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee finally."

8. Wherefore doth he glorify at last? It is for his name's sake, who is the giver both of grace and glory, Psalm 84:11. It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus every part of salvation, from first to last, is wrought for his name's sake. "The Lord is a rock, and his work is perfect:" he begins for his name's sake; carries on for his name's sake, and completes work for his name's sake, that the headstone of salvation may be laid on with shoutings of "Grace, grace unto it."

As all the parts of salvation, so all the means of salvation are granted for his name's sake. Is right hearing a means of salvation? Well, this is what he gives, for his name's sake, according to that promise, John 10:16, "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice." Is prayer a means? Well, right praying is what he alone grants, for his name's sake, according to the promise, Zech. 12:10, "I will pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication." Is faith a means of salvation? Yea, and it is a part of salvation also, which God gives, for his name's sake, according to his word, Eph. 2:8, "By grace you are saved, through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Is repentance a leading part of salvation? This is also what he gives for his name's sake, on the back of faith, as a fruit thereof, according to his promise, Zech. 12:10, "They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn," and he hath exalted Christ to give it, Acts 5:31.

My friends, if there be any other thing that we reckon pertain to salvation, which God doth not work, for his name's sake, you may realise it as no part of salvation; for, I will assure you, his name will have the glory of every part of salvation.

IV. The fourth thing proposed was, What is imported in this Nevertheless, or in God's saving with a Notwithstanding; and so to show over what impediments, whether real provocations, or seeming impossibilities of bringing about this salvation, for his name's sake; "Nevertheless, he saved them, for his name's sake." It is impediments on the sinner's part that the text speaks of; therefore I confine myself to these. He saved Israel here, notwithstanding dreadful sins. Read verses 6, 7, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 28, 29, 32, 34, 39, 43. Yet, "Nevertheless he saved them, for his name's sake." Did he notwithstanding all this, save them, for his name's sake? Then, what will not he do for his name? And what may not sinners expect upon this ground? What bar cannot God break, for his name's sake? What mountain cannot be come over, for his name's sake? What provocation can he not overlook, for his name's sake? Let all the sinners that hear this doctrine, beware of provoking God any more by their sins. When thus the saving mercy of God is proclaimed in your ears; for provoked mercy will turn to fearful vengeance: Damnation to eternity will be your doom, if this offered salvation be not received: and in order to allure you to the reception and welcoming of it, I am now telling you the freedom of it, and how God can save you with an everlasting salvation, notwithstanding of the most grievous provocations that hitherto you have been guilty of, and notwithstanding of the greatest impediments that you have laid in the way. More particularly,

1. He can save for his name's sake, notwithstanding grievous guilt and heinous transgressions. Hence his name is declared to be a God pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin, "Come now, and let us reason together," says God, Isa. 1:18. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Make not this objection against yourselves in coming to a God in Christ for salvation; for here you see mercy courting you, notwithstanding this very objection.

2. He can save for his name's sake, notwithstanding long continuance in sin; though you have been a transgressor from the womb to this day, be it never so long that you have been following that fearful trade of sin, yet mercy is now following you with a "how long, how long." Many a how long is he pursuing you with; one is, Numb. 14:11 "How LONG will this people provoke me? And how LONG will it be ere they believe me? Another how long is, Psalm 4:2, "How LONG will ye turn my glory into shame? How LONG will ye love vanity?" Another how long is, Prov. 1:22, "How LONG, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?" Another is, Prov. 6:92 "How LONG wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?" A sixth how long is, Jer. 4:1.4, "How LONG shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?"

3. He can save for his name's sake, notwithstanding manifold apostacies and backslidings, Jer. 4:14, "O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved; how long shall vain thoughts lodge within you? Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you," Jer. 3:14. And ver. 1, "Though thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return again unto me. Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. 4:5, "I will heal your backslidings."

4. He can save for his name's sake, notwithstanding of your prodigious neglect and contempt of God hitherto. See Isa. 43:22-25, "But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel; I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for my name's sake, and will not remember thy sins." O wonder of wonders! that such may be saved, for his name's sake.

5. He can save for his name's sake, notwithstanding grievous, rebellious incorrigibleness and frowardness. See Isa. 57:17, 18, "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him; I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners."

6. He can save for his name's sake, notwithstanding outward afflictions and poor circumstances in the world, Zeph. 3:12. And, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Isa. 76:87 "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee." Though you be an out-cast, that no body cares for you, he may save you for his name's sake; for, "He gathers the outcasts of Israel," Isa. 56:8.

7. He can save for his name's sake, notwithstanding baseness, unworthiness, and pollution, for there is a fountain opened, Zech. 13:12 "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin, and for uncleanness."

8. He can save for his name's sake, notwithstanding gross darkness and fearful ignorance; "It is written in the prophets, They shall all be taught of God," Isaiah 54:13; John 6:45.

9. He can save for his name's sake, notwithstanding long refusals, and resisting of many calls, and slighting many opportunities, Rom. 10:21, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." Importing, that after all these refusals, he is yet standing with open arms to receive all comers saying, "Whoever will, let him come."

10. He can save for his name's sake notwithstanding of nonesuch, and unparalleled wickedness; what, if there be no sinner like you, nevertheless, he can save for his name's sake; because there is no Saviour like him; if thy unbelieving heart suggests desperate thoughts, as if there were no salvation for thee, saying, Who is a sinner like unto me? Let Micah 7:18, be an answer, "Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity?"

In a word, he can save for his name's sake, notwithstanding the greatest and highest mountains either of sin or misery, that seem to be in the way, Zech. 4:7, "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before our Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." He can save for his name's sake, notwithstanding dreadful hardness of heart, and innumerable plagues of heart, atheism, unbelief, deadness, and security; the God that works for his name's sake can take away the heart of stone, and give the heart of flesh; and out of stones raise up children to Abraham. He can save, for his name's sake, notwithstanding of nameless maladies, nameless objections, that no minister in the world can mention, far less remove: may be the obstacles in the way of your salvation are out of the sight of man, out of the sight of ministers; but they are in God's sight, and the omniscient God, that knows it, is the omnipotent God, that can remove it, and save for his name's sake. Oh! but may some poor soul think, Do doubt, he can save for his name's sake: but my objection is, I doubt of his will. Why, man? Wherefore is God now telling you what he can do; but to remove your ill thoughts of him, and to manifest his good-will towards you; behold, he is more willing to save than you are willing to be saved: if it be salvation from sin, as well as salvation from hell, that you mean, then you are either unwilling to be thus saved, and so your ruin is, that you will not come to him for salvation; or, if you be willing, you are more than welcome to him for all the salvation he can work for you. It is his will to save you, notwithstanding of thousands and millions of objections in the way.

V. The fifth thing proposed, in the general method, was, To offer some reasons why he thus saves for his name's sake. Why,

1. He saves for his name's sake, because if he did not so, he would save none of Adam's race; the best saints on earth cannot deserve mercy; the salvation of the most righteous is an act of grace; therefore, the righteous run to his name; and even the just must live by faith, saying, "Though our iniquities testify against us, yet do thou it for thy name's sake," Jer. 14:7. And, "Help us for the glory of thy name," Psalm 79:9. He can save none, if he did not save them for his name's sake.

2. He saves for his name's sake, that sinners may hope in his name; that they may return to him, and call upon him for mercy; "There is mercy and forgiveness with him, that he may be feared," Psalm 130:4. Why, say you, could not God be more feared, if he had no mercy and forgiveness with him? It is true; man, in that case, could fear as devils do, desparingly; but not with any penitential fear; "The goodness of God leads to repentance," Rom. 2:4. Thus God interprets his merciful providences, as a drawing with the cords of love. None could trust in his name, if he did not save for his name's sake.

3. He saves for his name's sake, that sinners may adore his name; that they may admire his mercy. God remembers his own glory; and therefore saves for his name's sake, that men may glorify his name. O wonder-working God, that can show mercy, when nothing is deserved but misery; this effect it had upon David, Psalm 8:1, 9. "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Psalm 48:10, "According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth."

4. He saves for his name's sake, that sinners, who will not flee to his name as a strong tower, and afterwards glorify his name, by living to his praise, may be left inexcusable in their sins. The glory of God's justice will be conspicuous in those that have slighted his mercy; "Behold you despisers, and wonder and perish!" They that despise such mercy, treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath, Rom. 2:5.

5. He saves for his name's sake, because it is the only fit way for us to be saved in; if God should offer to save us for our own sakes, for our righteousness' sake, for our duties' sake; Oh! how unfit would that be. We might think God were mocking us, because we have nothing but sin and hell about us; and our best righteousness deserves damnation; but when he offers salvation for his own name's sake, then it appears to be a fit offer; we cannot think God is mocking us; would he thus affront himself when his own name is the ground of faith laid before us?

6. He saves for his name's sake, because it is the only fit way for him to save us in; it is the only way of salvation suitable to his infinite excellency, who cannot but consult the glory of his perfections in all his works. Now, God's glory requires that no salvation should be found but in his name. Why hath he told us of mercy running in the channel of the new covenant? Why hath he told us that justice itself is drawn in to be upon the sinner's side, inasmuch as he can be justified in forgiving them? Why hath he displayed so much of wisdom in making judgment and mercy to kiss each other? Wisdom in punishing sin, and yet saving the sinner? Why? It is even that he might be glorified; that the pride of man might be brought down, and the haughtiness of man laid low, and that the Lord alone may be exalted, Isa. 2:11. This way of saving is suitable to his nature.

VI. The sixth thing proposed, was to draw some inferences from the whole. And it is so, that when God saves sinners, or a sinful people, he does it for his Name's sake notwithstanding their provocations, whereby they forfeit his help, and deserve destruction: then,

1st, Hence learn, by way of caution, the following particulars

1. That this doctrine yields no encouragement to sin, though God saves sinners, for his name's sake; the current of his providence, the current of his word, the current of his dealing, all declare, his enmity at sin. What is there in the word that can encourage us in sin? All the threatenings of the law say, in effect, as you regard the wrath of God beware of sin; all the commands of the law say, as you regard the authority of God, beware of sin; all the promises of the gospel say, as you regard the grace, love, and mercy of God, beware of sin; and God's saying for his name's sake, says, as you regard the great name of God, beware of sin. The great salvation that he exhibits for his name's sake, is salvation from sin; and therefore, to make this an encouragement to sin is to affront his name, to abuse his name, to profane his name, and to take his name in vain; "And he will not hold them guiltless that take his name in vain."

2. Think not that God will deliver any from eternal damnation, who are gone to hell, or save them for his name's sake; no, by no means: they are lost for ever, that die out of Christ.

2dly, Hence see, by way of information, a foundation for the following truths:--

1. The reason why the saints confide in God; and why believers trust in his name, and flee to his name in time of danger; they are acquainted with his name; "And they that know his name will put their trust in him," Psalm 9:10. They know his grace, his goodness, his power, his holiness, justice, and truth; and they have the encouragement of a promise so to do, Psalm 91:14. "I will set him on high, because he hath known my name." And why is it that they pray for help, for his name's sake? Because they know God will do more for his name, than otherwise he could do, Psalm 25:11, Jer. 14:7. Thus Joshua, when Israel were smitten at Ai, chap. 7:9, "And what will thou do unto thy great name?" Again,

2. Hence see, to whom we ought to give the glory of experienced mercy, even to God's name; as Psalm 115:1, "Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name be the glory, for thy mercy and thy truth's sake." Thus you will find David frequently at this work, Psalm 145:1, 2, "I will extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee, and I will praise thy name for ever and ever." This is one ground of God's helping, Isa. 29:22, 23. This is in a manner, all that JEHOVAH gets by all his glorious salvations wrought for us, Ezek. 36:23. Let us therefore learn to render the glory of all God's works unto his glorious name.

3. Hence see a door of hope opened for sinners in this gospel. Does God save for his name's sake these who may not put in for salvation? Whatever they be, whatever objections you can make, they are answered by this one argument, God saves for his name's sake, when there is no other reason for his doing so in the world; he can make a reason to himself, and find the answer in himself why he will save.

4. Hence see the freeness of the gospel-method of salvation; for God saves with a non obstante, that is, with a notwithstanding. O but the gospel-salvation is free! The law brings in so many provisos; that is, either the law of works, truly so called. It says, If ye do, ye shall live, if you be perfect, ye shall be happy; or the law, falsely so called, the many remainders of it in man's heart that makes the sinner think, Why, I cannot be saved, unless I do as well as I can; unless I be so and so qualified, I cannot expect to be saved; but the gospel opens a door of free access to sinners with a Nevertheless; notwithstanding whatever sins, guilt, disorder, confusion, death, distress, and ruin; notwithstanding whatsoever wickedness be about you, yet here is a way wherein you may expect salvation; "Nevertheless he saved them, for his name's sake."

OBJECTION. Must I not be saved upon my believing and repenting, is not faith at least the condition of my salvation?

ANSWER. Faith and repentance are parts of this salvation that God gives for his name's sake; and how can they be conditions of that salvation, whereof they are leading parts? "By grace you are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God," Eph. 2:8. Christ is exalted to give repentance, Acts 5:51. None are saved without faith and repentance; because all that are saved of the Lord, are saved thereunto; they are saved from unbelief, and brought to faith; saved from impenitency, and brought to repentance. Faith and repentance are the beginnings of this salvation, and salvation cannot be completed, without having a beginning; but both beginning and end are what God gives for his name's sake.

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Christ," Phil. 1:6; because his name is "Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending." Faith itself is not necessary to salvation, as a moral condition; but only a physical instrument. And hence as it is not possible a beggar can be the better of a free gift offered to him, if he does not take it, or accept of it; yet his taking of it is no moral condition, but only the natural instrument, or mean of possession, so neither can any possibly be the better of this free salvation that God offers in the gospel, if they will not take it, or have it in the manner it is offered, namely, Salvation from sin and wrath, unto eternal holiness and happiness, and all freely, for God's name's sake. Taking is no moral condition, otherwise it would contradict the design of the gospel. Faith is nothing else but a welcoming this salvation in this manner; it is the soul's acquiescing and falling in with this method; not a condition of it properly, but a closing with it freely it is a believing that God will save in this way for his name's sake and not for the sake of our faith, or any thing else done by, or wrought in us. It is a being content to be saved this way, that the name of God may for ever get the praise; and renouncing all other grounds of faith and reasons of hope, taking this name of the Lord for his strong tower, resolving to rest here.

5. Hence see, what is the last and ultimate refuge of faith. The first resort of faith is to a word, a "maybe the Lord will be gracious:" but a finding no rest here, then perhaps it goes to a direct promise; such as that, "A new heart will I give you," and pleads for the promise' sake: but needing to be better fixed, it goes to Christ, and pleads for Christ's sake; in whom all the promises are Yea and Amen. But why should God save for Christ's sake? What obligation is God under to accept of that ransom and atonement in the blood of Christ for me? Why? Then last of all it flees to God's name, and sees that God's name will be more magnified in this way of salvation, than it can be in any other way of God's dealing with it; and hence it is never said he damns for his name's sake; for his name gets not so much glory that way. Here then is the last shift of faith, and its ultimate refuge and ground of hope and there is ground enough here.

Use 3. The next Use shall be for Examination. Try whether or not God hath begun to save you for his name's sake; or, if you have got his name engaged and concerned in your salvation-work. For the trial of this interesting point, consider the following things:

1. They whom God hath begun to save for his name's sake, and to whom he will be further merciful for his name's sake, they are made sensible that God hath hitherto helped them for his name's sake; and that they are beholden to God's name for every bit of bread; indebted, to his name for their preservation out of hell; obligated to his mercy and power, that hitherto he hath helped, pitied, and saved them from everlasting ruin: and they are so affected with his mercy, that they endeavour to live like persons sensible of this obligation they are under to his name; though, in strict justice, they deserve nothing, and God may say, as Judges 10:13, "I will deliver you no more;" and swear, as Jer. 44:26, 27, "Behold, I have sworn by

my great name, saith the Lord, that my name shall be no more named in the mouth of any man." Yet, being a gracious God, will not utterly leave them, 1 Sam. 12:22, but save them, and others, for their sake; so good is he to them, Gen. 18:32.

2. Hath frowning providence done you good? Are you purged by afflictions? For these whom God delivers for his name's sake, their deliverance from trouble bears some resemblance to his name who delivers.

QUESTION. How shall we know, when God's rod hath done its work, and when God hath said, "It is enough?" 2 Sam. 24:16.

ANSWER. (I.) When you are humbled for the sin that caused God to take his rod in his hand; such as want of love, despising the gospel, abounding of error, division, unbrotherly animosities. Have these things been lamented, loathing the simplicity of the gospel, and the plain administration of God's ordinances? Professors groan when full in their stomach. Is the case altered? The abounding hypocrisy under the specious name of higher attainments, &c.

(2.) When a people can thrive under merciful providences without the rod; for God will not needlessly afflict any, much less his own people, 1 Pet. 1:6, Lam. 3:33. More particularly,

1. Are your salvation and God's glory twisted and conjoined? Will God's name be a loser, if your bonds be strengthened and continued? Joshua said, "What wilt thou do unto thy name?" This moved God to show mercy on a wicked people, Deut. 33:26, 27; lest God should lose his declarative glory in the wonders he had wrought for Israel; lest the heathen should say, God cannot save his people. Can you say, Oh! I think God will want much glory, if I be not saved; and I cannot think that his name should want that glory and praise that I see it will get in saving me.

2. They whom he saves, for his name's sake, are removed from any hope of being saved for their own sake; as God says, "Not for your sakes have I done this, but my own name's sake;" so they are brought to say, not for my sake will God do so and so, but for his name's sake.

3. They seek all they want from God, for his name's sake. Many a graceless beggar seeks an alms for God's sake, that know not what they say; but believers are beggars at God's door, and they seek for God's sake; they seek pardon for his name's sake with David; "For thy name's sake, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great:" they seek, saying, Quicken me, for thy name's sake, purify, for thy name's sake; give grace, for thy name's sake: and every thing they seek is for his name's sake. Thus they lean upon his lap, and give evidence of their being loved with an everlasting love.

4. They will desire to do much for his name's sake; and will be content to suffer for his name's sake. Such is their regard to his name, that every duty they perform will be easy to them, when they have his name and honour in their eye; and they count their sufferings all to be light, when they suffer for his name: this made them take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, Heb. 10:34.

5. They will set his name on high, as being a name above every name. Hence they will desire, and endeavour to have his name exalted in the world, that all men may know his name; they will be grie

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