

CHRIST EXALTED

or

Jesus Christ gloriously exalted above all evil in the work of redemption

1 Corinthians XV. 25, 26 For he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death

The Apostle in this chapter particularly opposes some among the Christian Corinthians who denied the resurrection of the dead, and infested the church with their doctrine. There were two sorts of persons in that age, who were especially great opposers of the doctrine of the resurrection: one among the Jews, and the other among the heathen. Among the Jews were the Sadducees, of whom we read, Acts xxiii. 8. For the Sadducees say, that there is no resurrection, either angel or spirit; and we have the same account in other places. Among the heathen, that were the chief opposers of this doctrine, were their philosophers. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, was not consistent with their philosophy, by the principles of which, it was impossible that one who was deprived of the habit of life, should ever receive it again. And therefore they ridiculed the doctrine when the Apostle preached it among them at Athens. Probably the church at Corinth received this corruption from the philosophers, and not the Sadducees. For Corinth was near to Athens, the place of the chief resort of the philosophers of Greece.

The apostle, in opposing this error, first insists on Christ's resurrection from the dead; and next on the resurrection of all the saints at the end of the world. And, in the verses next before the text, shows how both are connected, or that one arises or follows from the other. And then adds, "then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." – Observe,

1. Here is one thing wherein appears the glory of that exaltation and dominion, that Christ has as our redeemer, viz. that it issues in the subjection of all enemies under his feet. It is not said all his enemies; possibly because, because all those that shall be put under his feet, are not only his enemies, but also the enemies of his Father, and of his people. Their being under his feet, denotes their being perfectly subdued, and his being gloriously exalted over them. It shall be thus with respect to God's and his, and his people's enemies universally, not one excepted; which universality is signified here two ways; all enemies – and the very last enemy: when there shall be but one enemy left, that shall be put under his feet.

2. We may learn what is here meant by enemies, by the particular instance here given as instance here given as the last that shall be destroyed, viz, death. Which shows that by enemies is not meant persons only, that set themselves in opposition to God and his people, but evils; whatever is against God and his people, and opposes Christ or his saints, whether they be persons or things.

SECTION I

How evil of all kinds has prevailed and highly exalted itself in the world.

EVIL, of all kinds, has risen to an exceeding height in the world, and highly exalted itself against God, and Christ, and the church. This will appear by the following particulars.

i. Satan has highly exalted himself, and greatly prevailed. He is vastly superior in his natural capacity and abilities, to mankind. He was originally one of the highest rank of creatures; but proudly exalted himself, in rebellion against God in heaven. We are told, that pride was the condemnation of the devil. He became proud of his own superior dignity and mighty abilities, and the glory which his Creator had put upon him; and probably thought it too much to submit to the Son of God, and attempted to exalt his throne above him. And he prevailed to draw away vast multitudes of the heavenly hosts, into an open rebellion against God.

And after he was cast down from heaven, he proudly exalted himself in this world, and prevailed to do great things.

By his subtle temptations he procured the fall of our first parents, and so brought about the ruin of their whole race. He procured their ruin in body and soul, and the death of both; and that they should be exposed to all manner of calamity in this world, and to eternal ruin hereafter. He so far prevailed, that he drew men off from the service of their Maker, and set up himself to be the god of this world; and in a little time drew the world into that almost universal corruption, which brought on the flood of waters, by which it was destroyed. And after that, he drew off all nations, except the posterity of Jacob, from the worship of the true God, and darkened all the world with heathenism; and held them under this darkness for a great many ages, he himself being worshipped as God almost all over the world; the nations of the earth offered sacrifices to him; and multitudes offered up their children. And during that time, he often so far prevailed against the people of God, that he had almost swallowed them up. The church was often brought to the very brink of ruin.

And when Christ himself appeared in the world, how did he exalt himself against him! and prevailed so far, as to influence men to hate and despise him all the days of his life. And at last he persuaded one of his own disciples to betray him. Accordingly, he was delivered into the hands of men, to be mocked, buffeted, spit upon, and treated with the greatest ignominy that unrestrained malice could devise; and at last procured that he should be put to the most cruel and ignominious kind of death. And since that, he has greatly exalted himself against the gospel and kingdom of Christ. He has procured that the church, for the most part, has been the subject of great persecution; has often brought it to the brink of utter destruction; has accomplished great works in setting up those great kingdoms of antichrist and Mahomet; and darkened a great part of the world, that was once enlightened with the gospel of Christ, with worse than heathen darkness. And he has infected the Christian world with multitudes of heresies and false ways of worship, and greatly promoted atheism and infidelity: Thus highly has the devil exalted himself against God and Christ, and the elect; and so far he prevailed.

2. Guilt is another evil which has come to a great height in the world. All guilt is an evil of a dreadful nature: the least degree of it is enough utterly to undo any creature. It is a thing that reaches unto heaven, and cries to God, and brings down his wrath. The guilt of any one sin is so terrible an evil, that it prevails to bind over the guilty person to suffer everlasting burnings: and so is in some respect infinite, in that it obliges to that punishment which has no end; and so is infinitely terrible. But this kind of evil has risen to a most amazing height in this world; where not only some persons are guilty, but all, in all nations and ages, are naturally guilty wretches. And they who live to act any time in the world, are not only guilty of one sin, but of thousands, and thousands of thousands. What multiplied and what aggravated sins are some men guilty of! What guilt lies on some particular persons! How much more on some particular populous cities! How much more still on this wicked world! How much does the guilt of the world transcend all account, all expression, all powers of numbers or measures! And above all, how vast is the guilt of the world, in all ages, from the beginning to the end of it! To what a pitch has guilt risen! The world being, as it were, on every side, loaded with it, as with mountains heaped on mountains, above the clouds and stars of heaven.

And guilt, when it was imputed to Christ, greatly prevailed against him— though in himself innocent, and the eternal Son of God—even so as to hold him prisoner of justice for a while; and to open the flood-gates of God’s wrath upon him, and bring his waves and billows over him.

3. Corruption and wickedness of heart is another thing that has arisen to an exceeding height in the world. Sin has so far prevailed, that it has become universal: all, mere men, are become sinful and corrupt creatures. Let us attend to St. Paul’s description of the world. “Jews and Gentiles are all under sin. As is written, There is none righteous, no not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” And not only is every one corrupt, but they are all over corrupt, in every power, faculty, and principle; every part is depraved. Which is here represented by the several parts of the body being corrupt, as the throat, the tongue, the lips, the tongue, the lips, the mouth, the feet. “Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood.” And not only is every part corrupt, but exceeding corrupt; being possessed with dreadful principles of corruption, horribly evil dispositions and principles of sin, that may be represented by the poison of asps: which makes men like vipers and devils: principles of all uncleanness, pride, deceit, injustice, enmity, malice, blasphemy, murder. Here their throats are compared to an open

sepulchre, and their mouth is said to be full of cursing and bitterness, and destruction and misery are said to be in their ways.

And there are those principles of sin not only that are very bad, but every kind; here is no sort of wickedness, but there is a seed of it in men. And these seeds and principles have not only a being in men's hearts, but are there in great strength: they have the absolute possession and dominion over men, so that they are sold under sin. Yea, wicked principles, and those only, are in the heart. The imagination of the thoughts of their heart is evil only. There are bad principles only, and no good ones. "There is no fear of God before their eyes." Thus the hearts of all men are deceitful and desperately wicked.

And if we look, not only at the natural corruption of the heart, but at the contracted habits of sin, by wicked education and customs, how full shall we find the world of wickedness, in this respect! How have men, by bad customs in sinning, broken down all restraints upon natural corruption, and as it were abandoned themselves to wickedness! So far has corruption and wickedness prevailed in the world, and so high has it risen, that it is become a great and universal deluge, that overtops all things, and prevails with that strength, that it is like the raging waves of the tempestuous ocean which are ready to bear down all before them.

4. Many of the devil's instruments have greatly prevailed, and have been exalted to an exceeding height in the world. It has been so in almost all ages of the world. Many of the devil's instruments have prospered and prevailed, till they have got to the head of great kingdoms and empires, with vast riches and mighty power.

Those four great heathen monarchies that rose in the world before Christ are spoken of in Scripture as kingdoms set up in opposition to the kingdom of Christ. So they are represented in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. These monarchies were exceeding powerful. The last two ruled over the greater part of the then known world. And the last especially, viz, the Roman empire, was exceeding mighty: so that it is said to be diverse from all kingdoms; and that it should devour the whole earth, and tread it down, and break it in pieces. It is represented by the fourth beast, which was dreadful and terrible; and strong exceedingly; and had great iron teeth, that devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet. These four kingdoms all persecuted the church of God in their turns, especially the last. One of the governors of this monarchy put Christ to death. And afterwards one emperor after another made dreadful havoc of the church; making a business of it, with the force of all the empire, to torment and destroy the Christians; endeavouring, if possible, to root out the Christian name from under heaven.

And in these latter ages, how have those two great instruments of the devil, viz. antichrist and Mahomet, prevailed, and to what a pitch of advancement have they arrived; ruling over vast empires, with mighty wealth, pride and power: so that the earth has been, as it were, subdued by them. Antichrist has set up himself as the vicar of Christ; and has for many ages usurped the power of God, "sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself that he is God; and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped."

And how dreadfully has he ravaged the church of God, being drunk with the blood of the saints, and the martyrs of Jesus. And has often, as it were, deluged the world in Christian blood, shed with the utmost cruelty that human wit and malice could invent.—And at this day, many other instruments of the devil, many heretics, atheists, and other infidels, are exerting themselves against Christ and his church, with great pride and contempt.

5. Affliction and misery have also prevailed and risen to an unspeakable height in the world. The spiritual misery which the elect are naturally in, is great. They are miserable captives of sin and Satan, and under obligations to suffer eternal burnings. This misery all mankind are naturally in. And spiritual troubles and sorrows have often risen to a great height in the elect. The troubles of a wounded spirit and guilty conscience have been felt with intolerable and insupportable weight. "A wounded spirit who can bear?" And the darkness that has risen to God's people after conversion, through the temptations and buffetings of the devil, and the hidings of God's face, and manifestations of his anger, have been very terrible. And temporal afflictions have often arisen exceeding high. The church of God has, for the most part, all along, been a seat of great affliction and tribulation.

But the height to which the evil of affliction has risen nowhere appears so much as in the afflictions that Christ suffered. The evil of affliction and sorrow exalted itself so high, as to seize the Son of God himself, and to cause him to be all in a bloody sweat, and to make his soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. It caused him to cry out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?“ Affliction never prevailed to such a degree in this world, as in Christ, whose soul was, as it were, overwhelmed in an ocean of it.

6. Death is an evil which has greatly prevailed, and made dreadful havoc in this world. How does it waste and devour mankind, one age after another; sparing none, high or low, rich or poor, good or bad! Wild beasts have destroyed many; many cruel princes have taken away the lives of thousands, and laid waste whole countries: but death devours all; none are suffered to escape. And the bodies of the saints as well as others, fall a prey to this great devourer. Yea, so high did this enemy rise, that he took hold on Christ himself, and swallowed him among the rest. He became the prey of this great, insatiable monster. By his means, was his bodily frame destroyed, and laid dead in the dark and silent grave. And death still goes on destroying thousands every day. And therefore the grave is one of those things which Agur says, never has enough. — So have evils of every kind prevailed; and to such a degree have they exalted themselves in the world.

SECTION II

How Jesus Christ, in the work of redemption, appears gloriously above all these evils.

IT was not the will of the infinitely wise and holy Governor of the world that things should remain in this confusion; this reign of evil, which had prevailed and exalted itself to such a height. But he had a design of subduing it; and delivering an elect part of the world from it, and exalting them to the possession of the greatest good, and to reign in the highest glory, out of a state of subjection to all these evils. And he chose his Son as the person most fit for an undertaking that was infinitely too great for any mere creature: and he has undertaken the work of our redemption. And though these evils are so many and so great, and have prevailed to such a degree, and have risen to such a height, and have been, as it were, all combined together; yet wherein they have exalted themselves, Christ, in the work of redemption, appears above them. He hath gloriously prevailed against them all, and brings them under his feet; and rides forth, in the chariots of salvation, over their heads; or leading them in triumph at his chariot wheels. He appears in this work infinitely higher and mightier than they, and sufficient to carry his people above them, and utterly to destroy them all.

i. Christ appears gloriously above all evil in what he did to procure redemption for us in his state of humiliation, by the righteousness he wrought out, and the atonement he made for sin. The evils mentioned never seemed so much to prevail against him as in his sufferings: but in them, the foundation was laid for their overthrow. In them he appeared above Satan. Though Satan never exalted himself so high as he did in procuring these sufferings of Christ, yet then, Christ laid the foundation for the utter overthrow of his kingdom. He slew Satan, as it were, with his own weapon, the spiritual David cut off this Goliath’s head with his own sword; and he triumphed over him in his cross. “Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it:” i.e. in his cross, mentioned in the preceding words. Then the wisdom of Christ appeared gloriously above the subtlety of Satan. Satan, that old serpent, used a great deal of subtlety to procure Christ’s death; and doubtless, when he had accomplished it, thought he had obtained a complete victory; being then ignorant of the contrivance of our redemption. But so did the wisdom of Christ order things, that Satan’s subtlety and malice should be made the very means of undermining the foundations of his kingdom; and so he wisely led him into the pit that he had digged.

In this also Christ appeared gloriously above the guilt of men. For he offered a sacrifice, that was sufficient to do away all the guilt of the whole world. Though the guilt of man was like the great mountains, whose heads are lifted up to the heavens; yet his dying love, and his merits, appeared as a mighty deluge that overflowed the highest mountains; or like a boundless ocean that swallows them up; or like an immense fountain of light, that with the fullness and redundance of its brightness, swallows up men’s greatest sins, as little motes are swallowed up and hidden in the disk of the sun.

In this Christ appeared above all the corruption of man, in that hereby he purchased holiness for the chief of sinners. And Christ in undergoing such extreme affliction, got the victory over all misery; and laid a foundation for its being utterly abolished, with respect to his elect. In dying he became the plague and destruction of death. When death slew him, it slew itself: for Christ, through death, destroyed him that had the power of death, even the devil. By this he laid the foundation of the glorious resurrection of all his people to an immortal life. Christ appears gloriously exalted above all evil, in his resurrection and ascension into heaven. When Christ rose from the dead, then it appeared that he was above death, which, though it had taken him captive, could not hold him.

Then he appeared above the devil. Then this Leviathan that had swallowed him, was forced to vomit him up again; as the Philistines that had taken captive the ark, were forced to return it; Dagon being fallen before it, with his head and hands broken off, and only the stumps left.—Then he appeared above our guilt: for he was justified in his resurrection. In his resurrection he appeared above all affliction. For though he had been subject to much affliction, and overwhelmed in it, he then emerged out of it, as having gotten the victory, never to conflict with any more sorrow.

When he ascended up into heaven, he rose far above the reach of the devil and all his instruments, who had before had him in their hands. And now has he sat down at the right hand of God, as being made head over all things to the church, in order to a complete and perfect victory over sin, Satan, death, and all his enemies. It was then said to him, “Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” He entered into a state of glory, wherein he is exalted far above all these evils, as the forerunner of his people; and to make intercession for them, till they also are brought to be with him, in like manner exalted above all evil.

3. Christ appears gloriously above all evil, in his work in the hearts of the elect, in their conversion and sanctification. This is what the application of redemption, so far as it is applied in this world, consists in; which is done by the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of Christ. In this work of Christ in the hearts of his elect, he appears glorious above Satan. For the strong man armed is overcome, and all his armour, wherein he trusted, is taken from him, and his spoil divided. In this work, the lamb is, by the spiritual David, taken out of the mouth of the lion and bear: the poor captive is delivered from his mighty and cruel enemies.

In this Christ appears gloriously above the corruption and wickedness of the heart; above its natural darkness in dispelling it, and letting in light; and above its enmity and opposition, by prevailing over it, drawing it powerfully and irresistibly to himself, and turning a heart of stone into a heart of flesh: above the obstinacy and perverseness of the will, by making them willing in the day of his power. In this he appears above all their lusts. For all sin is mortified in this work, and the soul is delivered from the power and dominion of it.—In this work the grace of Christ gloriously triumphs over men’s guilt. He comes over the mountains of their sins, and visits them with his salvation.

And God is wont often in this work, either in the beginning or progress of it, to give his people those spiritual comforts, in which he gloriously appears to be above all affliction and sorrow: and often gives them to triumph over the devil, and his powerful and cruel instruments. Many saints, by the influences of Christ’s Spirit on their hearts, have rejoiced and triumphed, when suffering the greatest torments and cruelties of their persecutors. And in this work Christ sometimes gloriously appears above death, in carrying his people far above the fears of it, and making them to say, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

4. Christ gloriously appears above all these forementioned evils, in his glorifying the souls of departed saints in heaven. In this he gives a glorious victory over death. Death by it is turned from an enemy into a servant; and their death, by the glorious change that passes in the state of their souls, is become a resurrection, rather than a death. Now Christ exalts the soul to a state of glory, wherein it is perfectly delivered from Satan and all his temptations, and all his instruments; and from all remains of sin and corruption, and from all affliction: “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat—and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

5. Christ appears gloriously above these evils in what he doth in his providence in the world, as head and redeemer of his church. He appears gloriously above Satan and all his instruments in upholding his church, even from its first establishment, through all the powerful attempts that have been made against it by earth and hell: hereby fulfilling his

promise, "That the gates of hell should never prevail against it."

Christ gloriously triumphed over these his enemies, in a remarkable success of his gospel, soon after his ascension, when many thousands in Jerusalem, and in all parts of the world, were so soon turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God: and in causing his word to go on and prosper, and his church to increase and prevail against all the opposition of the heathen world, when they united all their power to put a stop to it and root it out. So that, in spite of all that the philosophers, and wise men, and emperors and princes could do, the gospel in a little time overthrew Satan's old heathenish kingdom in the whole Roman empire, which was then the main part of the world; and so brought about the greatest and most glorious revolution. Instead of one single nation, now the greater part of the nations of the known world were become God's people.

And Christ's exaltation above all evil in his government of the world, in his providence, as the Redeemer of his people, has since gloriously appeared in reviving his church by the reformation from popery, after it had for many ages lain in a great measure hid, and dwelt in a wilderness, under antichristian persecution.

And he will yet far more gloriously triumph over Satan and all his instruments, in all the mighty kingdoms that have been set up in opposition to the kingdom of Christ, at the time of the fall of antichrist, and the beginning of those glorious times so much spoken of in Scripture prophecy. Then shall the stone that has been cut out without hands smite all these kingdoms, and break them to pieces; and they shall become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind-floors, and the wind shall carry them away, that no place should be found for them: and the stone which smote them shall become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth. "Then shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. And then the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." Though great and mighty empires have been set up one after another in the world, in opposition to the kingdom of Christ, during the succession of so many ages; yet Christ's kingdom shall be the last and the universal kingdom, which he has given him, as the heir of the world. Whatever great works Satan has wrought, the final issue and event of all, in the winding up of things in the last ages of the world, shall be the glorious kingdom of Christ through the world; a kingdom of righteousness and holiness, of love and peace, established every where. Agreeable to the ancient prediction, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man, came wit the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

Then shall Christ appear gloriously exalted indeed above all evil: and then shall all the saints in earth and heaven gloriously triumph in him, and sing, "Hallelujah; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. Hallelujah: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

6. Christ will appear gloriously above all evil in the consummation of the redemption of his elect church at the end of the world. Then will be completed the whole work of redemption with respect to all that Christ died for, both in its impetration and application; and not till then. And then will Christ's exaltation above all evil be most perfectly and fully manifest. Then shall the conquest and triumph be completed with respect to all of them. Then shall all the devils, and all their instruments, be brought before Christ, to be judged and condemned. And then shall be completed their destruction in their consummate and everlasting misery; when they shall be all cast into the lake of fire, no more to range, and usurp dominion in the world; or have liberty to make opposition against God and Christ: they shall for ever be shut up, thenceforward only to suffer. Then shall death be totally destroyed. All the saints shall be delivered everlastingly from it. Even their bodies shall be taken from the power of death, to a glorious resurrection.

Then shall all guilt, and all sin and corruption, and all affliction, all sighs and tears, be utterly and eternally abolished, concerning every one of the elect; they being all brought to one complete body, to their consummate and immutable glory. And all this as the fruit of Christ's blood, and as an accomplishment of his redemption.

Then all that evil, which has so prevailed, and so exalted itself, and usurped and raged and reigned, shall be perfectly and for ever thrust down and destroyed, with respect to all the elect; and all will be exalted to a state wherein they will be for ever immensely above all these things. "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

SECTION III

The subject improved and applied.

I. IN this we may see how the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ appears in the work of redemption. It was because the Father had from eternity a design of exceedingly glorifying his Son, that he appointed him to be the person that should thus triumph over the evil in the world. The work of redemption is the most glorious of all God's works that are made known to us. The glory of God most remarkably shines forth in it. And this is one thing wherein its glory eminently appears, that therein Christ appears so gloriously above Satan and all his instruments; above all guilt, all corruption, all affliction, above death, and above all evil. And more especially, because evil hath so exalted itself in the world, as we have heard; and exalted itself against Christ in particular.

Satan has ever had a peculiar enmity against the Son of God. Probably his first rebellion, which was his condemnation, was his proudly taking it in disdain, when God declared the decree in heaven, that his Son in man's nature, should be the King of heaven; and that all the angels should worship him. However that was, yet it is certain that his strife has ever been especially against the Son of God. The enmity has always been between the seed of the woman, and the serpent. And therefore that war which the devil maintains against God, is represented by the devil and his angels fighting against Michael and his angels. This Michael is Christ.

God had appointed his Son to be the heir of the world; but the devil has contested this matter with him, and has striven to set himself up as God of the world. And how exceedingly has the devil exalted himself against Christ! How did he oppose him as he dwelt among the Jews, in his tabernacle and temple! And how did he oppose him when on earth! And how has he opposed him since his ascension! What great and mighty works has Satan brought to pass in the world! how many Babels has he built up to heaven, in his opposition to the Son of God! How exceeding proud and haughty has he appeared in his opposition! How have he and his instruments, and sin, affliction, and death, of which he is the father, raged against Christ? But yet Christ, in the work of redemption, appears infinitely above them all. In this work he triumphs over them, however they have dealt proudly; and they all appear under his feet. In this the glory of the Son of God, in the work of redemption, remarkably appears.

The beauty of good appears with the greatest advantage, when compared with its contrary evil. And the glory of that which is excellent then especially shows itself, when it triumphs over its contrary, and appears vastly above it, in its greatest height. The glory of Christ, in this glorious exaltation over so great evil, that so exalted itself against him, the more remarkably appears, in that he is thus exalted out of so low a state. Though he appeared in the world as a little child; yet how does he triumph over the most gigantic enemies of God and men! He who was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief", is a man of war, and triumphed over his enemies in all their power. He who was meek and lowly of heart has triumphed over those proud foes. And he is exalted over them all, in that which appears most despicable, even his cross.

2. Here is matter of exceeding great encouragement for all sinful miserable creatures in the world of mankind, to come to Christ. For let them be as sinful as they will, and ever so miserable; Christ, in the work of redemption, is gloriously exalted above all their sin and misery.

How high soever their guilt has risen, though mountains have been heaping on mountains all the days of their lives,

till the pile appears towering up to heaven, and above the very stars; yet Christ in the work of redemption appears gloriously exalted above all this height. —Though they are overwhelmed in a mighty deluge of woe and misery, a deluge that is not only above their heads but above the heads of the highest mountains, and they do not see how it is possible that they should escape, yet they have no reason to be discouraged from looking to Christ for help, who in the work of redemption, appears gloriously above the deluge of evil. Though they see dreadful corruption in their hearts; though their lusts appear like giants, or like the raging waves of the sea; yet they need not despair of help; but may look to Christ, who appears in the work of redemption, gloriously above all this corruption.

If they apprehend themselves to be miserable captives of Satan; and find him too strong an adversary for them; and the devil is often tempting and buffeting them, and triumphing over them with great cruelty: if it seems to them that the devil has swallowed them up, and has got full possession of them, as the whale had of Jonah; yet there is encouragement for them to look again, as Jonah did, towards God's holy temple, and to trust in Christ for deliverance from Satan, who appears so gloriously exalted above him in the work of redemption.

If they are ready to sink with darkness and sorrows, distress of conscience, or those frowns of God upon them, so that God's waves and billows seem to pass over them, yet they have encouragement enough to look to Christ for deliverance. These waves and billows have before exalted themselves against Christ; and he appeared to be infinitely above them. And if they are afraid of death; if it looks exceeding terrible, as an enemy that would swallow them up; yet let them look to Christ who has appeared so gloriously above death, and their fears will turn into joy and triumph.

3. What cause have they who have an interest in Christ, to glory in their Redeemer! They are often beset! They are often beset with many evils, and many mighty enemies surround them on every side, with open mouths ready to devour them: but they need not fear any of them. They may glory in Christ, the rock of their salvation, who appears so gloriously above them all. They may triumph over Satan, over this evil world, over guilt, and over death. For as their Redeemer is mighty, and is so exalted above all evil; so shall they also be exalted in him. They are now, in a sense, so exalted; for nothing can hurt them. Christ carries them, as on eagles' wings, high out of the reach of all evils, so that they cannot come near them, to do them any real harm. And, in a little time, they shall be carried so out of their reach, that they shall not be able even to molest them any more for ever.

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