

THE
SINNER'S SOBS,

OR, THE

Way to Sion.

A SERMON.

DEMONSTRATING

THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF

True Godly Sorrow,

FOR THE SINNER'S SAFETY.

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THE SINNER'S SOBS,

OR, THE

Way to Sion's Joy.

Acts ii. 17. *Now when they heard this they were pricked in their hearts, and said to Peter and the other Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?*

IN this chapter you have an account of the effects of the Apostle St Peter's famous sermon; having told the Jews in the verses before my text, that they were the men that had crucified the Lord of life, and shed the blood of the Son of God that they had consented to it and imbrued their hands in it. This stung their consciences, and pricked their hearts; the arrows of

the Lord, which the Apostles had shot secretly into their souls came home to their hearts and consciences, that they could bear no longer; but came to Peter and the rest, and said, What shall we do to be saved!

The doctrine which I would briefly speak of from these words is this:

Doctrine an unfeigned sorrow and contrition of heart, convinced of God's hatred of sin, is absolutely necessary to salvation.

This is that we call the beginning of the work of grace, even in the bruising of a sinner's heart, under the sense of any sin committed.

To prove this to be absolutely necessary to salvation, not only scripture, but reason will tell us. For Scripture see the 1 Cor. vii 10. Godly sorrow causeth repentance unto salvation. And as the prophet David in the bitterness of his spirit, said, Thou keepest mine eyes waking, and my sin is ever before me. If the Lord loves a sinner and means to do him good, he will not let the sinner alone in his own sinful courses, but will free him from his den, bruise and beat him as in a mortar. What caused David's sorrow but his sin? He needed no restoring had he not been degraded.

Well then, is this a work of grace! Is this contrition and sorrow for sin, a beginning of repentance; then it must needs be of great necessity to salvation.

Now, that something may be hinted to our sinners in a way to this unfeigned sorrow, let me beg of you, in the bowels of love, earnestly desiring your souls welfare, to meditate seriously on these three things, which will if set home by the spirit of God, help you to the after work, even hearty sorrow and true contrition.

I. Look over your past life, and labour to see the goodness and patience of God, who hath been abused and despised by that unkind dealing of yours: Oh souls! remember the days of old, and reckon up God's gracious dealings with you. Were you ever in want, who supplied you; Were you ever in weakness, who strengthened you; in sickness, who cured you; in miseries, who succoured you; in poverty who relieved you; Was it not the Lord? And how can you forget him, who forgot not you in your low estate; Will you reward the Lord thus. What shall I say of you; Hear, O heavens, and hearken O earth, The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his

master's crib, & will you not acknowledge God's kindness and goodness to you? Look into your houses, go to your tables and beds and say, who gives these, and continues them to us? doth not the Lord? and yet ye sin against this God! Certainly, my friends, serious meditation on this must break the heart, and cause sorrow for sin! But,

II. If the mercy, goodness and long patience of God will not move nor melt you. Consider that God is just too, if mercy cannot prevail, you will have justice enough. Take heed, O hard hearted and undaunted sinners; the just law contemned, and these righteous statutes that hath been broken, and that God that hath been provoked by you and will be revenged of you. Where's Nimrod and Nebuchadnezzar, Pharoah & Herod, and all these proud persons that set their nibuths against God and their hearts against heaven, what is now become of them! they are now in the bottomless pit of hell.

s the apostle saith, Our God is a consuming fire, Heb. xiii. 29. And if my fire be kindled it shall burn to the bottom of hell. Meditate then on the justice of God lest thou art called to the bar too soon to answer for thy sins, and certain-

serious meditation here must needs produce an unfeigned contrition.

I. Meditate on the cost and punishment of sin. Consider, O stubborn sinner, what thy sin cost you! namely, those torments that cannot be conceived. Hath not God of heaven and earth, with all his attributes, passed before you, viz. his long-suffering; hath not all these come to your eyes and whispered in your ears, and said courtesy hath kept you, patience hath borne with you, long-suffering hath endured you, mercy hath relieved you, the goodness of God hath been gracious to you? All these I bid you all adieu, and then you will be sentenced to the bottomless pit, where thy companions will be devils, horror the language, brimstone and fire the torture, and eternal death the soul's eternal life. Certainly, my friends, serious meditation on these must break the heart, and cause sorrow for sin.

What a terrible day shall this be when thou shalt leave this mansion and enter into an unknown region! Who can defend thee from those hellish monsters? God is incensed, hell prepared, justice threatened, only mercy must prevent or the soul is damned. O miserable news the soul committed

sin. But to give you some reasons why there must be this piercing and wounding of souls for sin.

1 Reason. Because sin is the greatest evil of the soul, and the greatest burden also; that is most grievous which is most heavy. Now as there is no evil so properly and directly evil to the soul as the evil of sin is, so there is nothing that can properly do the soul good but God. Now while a sinner cannot see his sin he cannot sorrow for his sin. Now it is a godly sorrow that causeth repentance unto life, as you may see in 2 Cor. vii. 10. And assuredly the soul that sees not the evil of sin, shall fall by the evil of punishment:

2 Reason. 'Why unfeigned sorrow and contrition of heart for sin is necessary to salvation.' Because by sound sorrow the soul is truly prepared and fitted for Jesus Christ, as you may see in the Prophet Jer. xi. 3. Plow up the fallen ground of your hearts, and sow not among thorns; What is it else, but to have the heart pierced with the terrors of the Lord, by a sound saving sorrow for sin. 'Plow up the corruptions which are the thorns and thistles in your hearts,' as the Prophet David saith, Psalm li. 27. 'Tis a broken and a contrite heart,

O God, thou wilt not despise. The heart must be broken all to pieces, beaten to powder, and must be content to be weaved from all sin, which is the way to be fitted for Jesus Christ.

3 Reason. The soul cannot part with its sins and lusts, which is its god, until he find himself wearied with them, and as gall and wormwood to him; and now this weariedness and burden of sin, must needs cause in the soul a sound sorrow for it, before the soul sees the venomous and ugly nature of it, he is not willing to part with it. Go to pull away the adulterer's whore, and the drunkard's pots, you had as good go to kill them: the reason is because they find sweetness in those base courses, and they are all their delight. But now when the Lord comes to lay a heavy weight on this man's shoulders than those wicked sins, which were so sweet before, he finds them now as bitter as gall and wormwood, and now he lies down in sorrow, and cries out, 'Oh is sin such a deadly killing evil, as it will certainly destroy body and soul in hell, and is there no entering into heaven with the guilt of these upon my soul? Oh Good Lord, do what thou wilt with me, only take my soul and save me, and take away my lusts and corruption from me.'

Thus have you briefly the reasons of the print that this is the way of God's working that sorrow and contrition of heart for sin is the way to conversion from sin, and turning to God. I now proceed, to the application.

The first shall be for instruction.

The second for reproof and complaint.

The third for exhortation.

Use 1. It is so that this sorrow, under the burden and weight of sin, will pierce man's soul to the quick, and grinds him as if it were to powder, being run through by the arrows of the almighty, and that it is of so great necessity to be humbled and greatly sorrowful for sin. Then let this teach us now to carry themselves one towards another, and to such as God hath dealt thus with having their souls pierced. O do you pity them. They lie down in sorrow, eat the bread of adversity, and drink the water of affliction, have compassion on them. See what the Lord says, Deut. xxii. Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox nor his sheep go astray and hide thyself from them: thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother.

And henceforth the Lord commande

mercy to be shewn to the unreasonable creature that is wearied with the weight he carries. Hath the Lord care of oxen, and O wilt thou help to ease the herd of thy brother, that is thus tried with the wrath of the almighty! Do you see and cannot mourn for them, pray for them, and speak in the behalf of distressed souls. See what Job saith, Chap. xix. 11. 22. 23. Oh, saith he, that my sorrows were all weighed they would prove heavier than the sands, As if he had said, 'O my friends have pity upon me! What have you no regard for a man in misery! Have you no pity, though he cry in bitterness of his soul, help, help, for the Lord's sake!' O, pray for and pity those wounds and vexations of spirit which no man feels but he that is thus wounded. The poor man lies crying under the burden of sin, sighing and saying, Oh, when will God revive his drooping soul! Certainly it would make one's heart bleed to hear the sounding away of such a man, that the sword of the almighty hath pierced his heart, and he lying breathing out his sorrow as though he was going down to hell. It is a sign that soul is marked for destruction of himself who harboureth such a desperate design against poor wounded souls. Oh! could you see Job all smitten with

broils, he lying miserably forlorn in the eye of men; and would you not lend him hand nor a mouth to help him. Can you endure to see them pricked to the heart, roaring and staring under the heavy yoke and burden of their sins, crying out, What shall we do to be saved; O what shall we do to escape hell and damnation, and those unsupportable and unquenchable flames of the wrath of God. Canst thou stand still and say or do nothing, or rather, canst thou upbraid them. O soul, assuredly the Lord will remember thee in the day of thy death, and as thou hast shewn no mercy, so shall thou receive no mercy in that day; such willing and violent opposers of God's grace, the Lord will bring them one day on a bed of languishing, and make them roar by force, under the violence of his wrath. O friends, be troubled at others' troubles, and mourn in secret for all them that mourn under the terrible burden of their sin.

Use 2. And here let me make a lamentation, in the nature of reproof, against the secure souls in this generation wherein we live: the Lord be merciful unto a world of men, that live within the bosom of the church. O that we had a fountain of tears to bewail this age, in this respect, as Dio-

genes went about Athens with a lanthorn & candles at noon-day seeking honest men, so should a minister go from country to country, and from shire to shire. O how few would he find mourning for sin; Sin is so far from being a burden to them, that it is their sport and pastime, just Esau like. What did he when he had eat and drank; he rose up to play, Gen. xxv. How few are there like Ephraim, who smite upon their thigh, and cry out, What have I done. Men upon their ale-beaches can swear, drink, rail against God, and defy the Holy One of Israel. O how few rail against their sins, and wish the death and destruction of them. How few cry out, Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved; but on the contrary. O that it were soundly lamented for and reprov'd. Many do despight to the spirit of grace, and glory in these things for which they have cause to be ashamed. Says the vile swearer, I have swore such a man out of his house. Saith the drunkard, I have drank such a man under the table dead.

O sinners! pray read that place of the apostle, and there you may see your doom, I speak to impudent and incorrigible sinners, 2 Thes. ii. 12. That all will be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness. These words

should shake one's heart to think on them, and the Lord in mercy look upon you, and make sin as loathsome and bitter to you as ever it hath been sweet and pleasant. Oh sport not with sin. Consider that Dives for a drunken feast here had a dry feast in hell, and could not get one drop of water to cool his tongue. So will it be with you; you must either repent and mourn for sin, or else burn for ever. What wilt thou do? O man, when God shall come to tear thee in pieces, and there be none to help; when God shall grant the devil leave to take thee into his accursed mansions, and there shalt thou lie, weeping and gnashing of thy teeth for ever; thou there shalt lie blaspheming with God's wrath like a pile of fire upon thy soul, burning with floods and seas of tears, which thou mayest shed but shall never quench it. Which way soever thou lookest, thou shalt see matter and cause of everlasting grief. Look up to heaven, as there thou shalt see O! that God is good for ever. Look about thee, and thou shalt see devils quaking and cursing God; as thousands, nay millions of sinful damned creatures crying and roaring out with doleful shrieks! "O the day that ever I was born;" Look within thee, there is a guilty conscience continually gnawing thee; Look on the time past, O those golden days

grace and sweet seasons of mercy are gone.
 Look to the time to come, and there shalt
 thou behold devils, troops and swarms of
 sorrows and woes, and raging waves, and
 billows of wrath coming roaring on thee.
 Fly from it, O fools, before you feel it, be-
 wail yourselves, be sorry, grieve & mourn,
 humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord,
 be pricked to the heart; go tell God you
 cannot bear your sins, they are too heavy
 for you, much more the punishment; com-
 plain to him who is able to ease you. O vex
 not the righteous soul of the godly from day
 to day, neither grieve the holy spirit of God
 but be converted that ye may live. Cry
 mightily to the Lord, peradventure he may
 hear and forget and forgive all your provo-
 cations; weep that you have not lamented
 more; and grieve that you have not grieved
 more for sin.

Use 3, Is of exhortation, to exhort and
 beseech poor unconverted sinners that are
 under the command of the prince of the
 power of the air, who are strangers to God
 and aliens to the covenant of promise, who
 have lived all this while without God in the
 world to come in hither, and take the right
 way to bring your hearts to a right pitch
 of sorrow. Let me tell you it will never
 repent you at the last day, that you have

had your heart humbled, it will never repent you that you have wept, when our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ comes to wipe away all tears from your eyes. Hear what our blessed Saviour saith, Mat. v. 4. Blessed are all they that mourn for they shall be comforted. Is it not better to endure a little torment here for a small time than to be tormented in hell fire for ever? O therefore if you desire ever to see the face of God with comfort, and to have Christ speak for you, break your hearts with sorrow for sin. For the Lord's sake do not cozen yourself. It is not only the tears of the eye, but the blood of the heart your sins must cost, and till you come to this never think your sorrow is good. This sorrow consists, not in a bare rending of garments, or change of apparel, or denying themselves those outward ornaments, as some people of late days do foolishly conceive, who had been filled with desperate hypocrisy, having left off here, & gone no further, but you must break open your hearts, wound yourselves here, and be driven into amazement for sin, or else 'twill live with you here and in hell too. O therefore when God begins to work, follow the blow, and say with the prophet David, Ps. xxiii. 2. Our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us. Get your consciences wounded, and resolv

not to hear the counsel of carnal friends. Go thou and lie at God's footstool and confess thy sins before him, for it is he that confesseth and forsaketh all shall find mercy, and where there is this true and hearty confession there must needs be a godly sorrow for sin.

To provoke you to it, let me leave you two or three motives.

1. Consider it is not a vain thing that you are exhorted to, but that upon which the life of your souls depends, for without a thorough sense and pricking at the heart for sin, there is no salvation from sin. He that would be Christ's disciple, must leave all he hath, father, mother, wife, children, all that's near and dear to him, and take up the cross and follow Christ. He that would be a true convert must both confess and grieve for sin, as the prophet Ezekiel saith, They shall remember their ways that were not good, and shall be ashamed. O then be persuaded, poor careless and unregenerate sinners to mind the check of yer conscience within you, and the clear perspicuous light of the gospel without you, and come among the number of mourners to mourn for sin. You may mourn your eyes out hereafter, and answer no purpose. Better

A
MEDITATION
ON THE
Four Last Things,
VIZ—
DEATH, JUDGMENT.
HEAVEN, HELL.

A MEDITATION ON DEATH.

DEATH, the old serpent's son,
Thou hadst a sting once like thy sire,
That carion hell, and ever burning fire,
But these black days are o'er.

Thy foolish pride buried thy sting
 In the profound and wide
 Wound of our Saviour's side.
 And now thou art become a tame and harm-
 less thing we dare not fear [less thing,
 Since we hear
 That our triumphant God to punish thee
 For the affront thou didst him on the tree,
 Hath snatch'd the keys of hell out of thy hand
 And made thee stand
 Porter at the gate of life thy mortal enemy.

Thou who art thy gate, command that he
 May, when we die,
 And thither flee,
 Carry us into the courts of heaven through thee.
 Hallelujah.

ON JUDGMENT.

GREAT Judge of all, how we vile wretches
 Our guilty bones do ake, (quake,
 Our marrow freezes when we think
 Of the consuming fire
 Of thine ire.
 And horrid phials thou shalt make
 The wicked drink,
 Thou the wine press of thy wrath shalt tread,
 With feet of lead,

Sinful rebellious clay, what unknown place
 Shall hide it from thy face,
 When earth shall vanish from thy sight;
 The heavens that never err'd,
 But observ'd (flight,
 Thy laws, shall from thy presence take their
 And, kill'd with glory, their bright eyes start
 Start from their head; (deac
 Lord how shall we,
 Thy enemies, endure to see
 So bright, so killing majesty;
 Mercy, dear Saviour, thy judgment seat
 We dare not, Lord, intreat;
 We're condemn'd already there.
 Mercy, vouchsafe one look
 Of life; Lord, we can read thy saving Jesus
 And in his name our own salvation see [here
 Lord set us free;
 The book of sin
 Is cross'd within,
 Our debts are paid thee.

ON HEAVEN.

O beauteous God, uncircumscribed treasure
 Of an eternal pleasure;
 Thy throne is seated far
 Above the highest star,
 Where thou'st prepar'd a glorious place,
 Within the brightness of thy face,
 For every spirit
 To inherit,

21
 t builds his hopes on thy merit,
 loves thee with a holy charity,
 at ravish'd heart, seraphic tongue or eyes,

Clear as the morning's rise.

Can speak or think or see

That bright eternity.

ere the great king's transparent throne

f an entire jasper stone;

There the eye

O' the chrysolite,

And a sky

diamonds, rubies, chrysoprase;

And above all thy holy face,

fakes an eternal charity,

en thou thy jewels dost bind, that day

Remember us we pray;

That where the bervi lies,

And the crystal 'bove the skies,

ere thou may'st appoint us place,

thin the brightness of thy face;

And our soul

In the scroll

life and blissfulness enrol,

at we may praise thee to eternity.

ON HELL.

rrid darkness, sad and sore,

And an eternal night;

es and shrieks, and thousands more,

In the want of glorious light;

Every corner hath a snake

In the accursed lake.

Seas of fire, beds of snow,
 Are the best delights below;
 A viper from the fire
 Is his hire,
 That knows not moments from eterni
 Glorious God of day and nig
 Spring of eternal light;
 Hallelujahs, hymns and psalms,
 And coronets of palms
 Fill thy people evermore,
 O mighty God,
 Let not thy bruising rod
 Crush our loins with an eternal press
 O let thy mercy be the measure;
 For if thou keepest wrath in store,
 We shall all die,
 And none shall be left to gl
 Thy name, and tell,
 How thou hast sav'd our souls from hell.

FINIS.