

Monergism

THE SOVEREIGNTY
of **ZION'S KING**

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The Sovereignty of Zion's King
Being the Substance of Several Sermons
on Psalm 2:6

by Ebenezer Erskine

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THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ZION'S KING*
BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF SEVERAL
SERMONS
ON PSALM 2:6

The first preached at Perth before the Associate Presbytery, Thursday, Oct. 13, 1737, and afterwards enlarged upon at Stirling, for some Sabbaths thereafter.

PS. 2:6.—"Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion."

Sermon I

IN the first three verses of this psalm, we have an account of the strong opposition that is made to the kingdom and government of the Messiah. One would have thought, that when he came into the world, every knee would bow unto him, crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David;" and that all the sceptres of the earth should have been laid at his feet; but never was any government so much opposed. For, (1.) We are here told, that hell and earth take the alarm when he appears upon the stage: "The heathen rage," &c. (2.) The opposition they make is here described; it is spiteful and malicious; for they rage and gnash their teeth at him, filled with indignation against him, Luke 13:14; John 11:47; Acts 5:17, 33, and 19:28, &c. It is deliberate; they take counsel, &c. It is resolute; they "set themselves against the Lord," set their faces like flint, and make themselves a brow of brass. It is joint opposition; they combine. (3.) What they aim at by this opposition to Christ; they are children of Belial, that cannot endure the yoke, they cast away his cords, his commandments, his laws; these are what they resolve to break through. (4.) See how all these designs are baffled with the greatest ease, ver. 4, 5. (5.) Notice the stability of Christ's kingdom, notwithstanding of all these attempts of hell, in the words of my text, Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.

Where we may notice,

1. The royal office and character of our glorious Redeemer; he is a King: this name he hath "on his vesture, and on his thigh," Rev. 19:16.

2. The authority by which he reigns; He is my King, says God the Father, and I have set him up from everlasting: "The Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." The world disown his authority, but I own it; I have set him, I have "given him to be head over all things to the church."

3. His particular kingdom over which he rules; it is over my holy hill of Zion, an eminent type of the gospel-church. The temple was built upon mount Zion; and therefore called a holy hill. Christ's throne is in his church, it is his head-quarters, and the place of his particular residence, "The Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation. His laws go out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. There are the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David."

4. Notice the firmness of the divine purpose with respect unto this matter; Yet have I set him King. Q. d. Whatever be the plots of hell and earth to the contrary, he reigns by his Father's ordination.

OBSERVE, That Christ is king in Zion, the alone Sovereign of his church, by his Father's appointment and ordination. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.

In discoursing this doctrine, I shall endeavour, through divine assistance,

I. To speak a little of this sovereign Prince.

II. Of the kingdom which he governs.

III. Why God the Father hath appointed and ordained him King in Zion.

IV. Apply.

I. As to the first, I shall endeavour, 1. To prove, that Christ is a Prince of royal authority. 2. Give some of his excellent qualities and

properties, to recommend him to all.

As to the first, his sovereignty and royal authority appears,

1. From the scripture-prophecy: Gen. 49:10, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Luke 1:32, 33, "The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Mic. 5:2, "The Ruler of Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

2. From scripture-types. David, Solomon, and others of the kings of Judah, who were active in building and repairing the temple and worship thereof, did all typify him in his royal office; and though the royal family of David be extinct on earth, yet it is perpetuated in him for ever in heaven.

3. From scripture-titles that are ascribed to him: "Messiah the Prince," Dan. 9:25. "The Prince of peace," Is. 9:6. "The Prince of the kings of the earth. The King of kings, and Lord of lords," &c.

4. From the concurring testimony of enemies and strangers. The wise men of the east, when they come in quest of him, they inquire, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" And it was not without the hand and counsel of God, that Pilate was directed, to the disgusting of the Jews, whom he had, contrary to his light and conscience, gratified with the blood of Christ, to affix that title to his cross, in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." Balaam, Numb. 24:17, "A star shall arise out of Jacob, and a sceptre out of Israel, that shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth."

5. From the badges of sovereignty every where ascribed to him.

We read in scripture, 1st, Of his solemn investiture with the government; his mounting the throne, when he ascended up on high.

See the solemnity of his instalment, spoken of, Ps. 47:5, "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet," &c.

2dly, We read of his throne, Ps. 45:6, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; and his throne is "high and lifted up," Is. 6:1. The very same throne upon which his Father sits, Rev. 3:21. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me upon my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father upon his throne."

3dly, We read of his coronation, and that both by his Father, and the church, called his mother. You read of his Father's crowning him with glory, Heb. 2:7, "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands." And you read of the church, his mother, crowning him, Song. 3:11. "Go forth, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals," &c.

4thly, We read of his royal sceptre, the rod of his strength, which is also a rod of iron, to govern his subjects, and to dash his enemies in pieces.

5thly, We read of the laws issued out by his authority from Zion, and for Zion, for the government of his subjects. It was he that gave forth the law of commandments from mount Sinai, and it is he that gives forth the law of faith from mount Zion, Is. 2:3. "The law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

6thly, We read of courts, both for worship and discipline, held in his name; speaking of Zion, or the church, it is said, "There are the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David." In the church are courts for worship, where his subjects attend him, both for hearing his voice in his word, and for paying the rent of worship and adoration they owe him. And then for courts of judgment or government, we see a synod held in his name, Acts 15; and wherever

two or three of his officers meet in his name, for exercising the keys of doctrine or discipline, he promises to be in the midst of them.

7thly We read of the officers of his kingdom, such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, elders and deacons. And the apostle, speaking of ministers of the gospel, calls them "ambassadors of Christ," 2 Cor. 5:20. Every faithful minister has commission from Christ, as King in Zion; although, alas! many who pretend to carry his commission now-a-days, are changing their holding.

8thly, We read of the keys of the kingdom. Christ says unto his apostles and ministers, "Unto you I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." By the keys we are to understand the doctrine and discipline of his appointment.

9thly, The power of peace and war, of life and death, are in his hand. He casts out the white flag of peace to his enemies in the gospel. We preach the gospel of peace, publish the word of reconciliation, "That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." And if peace be not accepted, in his name we denounce war against sinners that do not believe in him: "He will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of him that goeth on in his trespasses." "He that believeth not, is condemned already; and the wrath of God abideth on him."

10thly, He is constituted the sovereign Judge of heaven and earth, of men and angels. The legislative and executive power is in his hand, "the keys of hell and death;" and it is left solely in his hand, for "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." From all these things it appears that Christ is a sovereign King, a Prince of royal authority.

Secondly, I would give you a view of the excellent qualities of Zion's King, and let them serve as so many motives to strangers to submit

unto his authority, and as so many cordials unto his friends and loyal subjects, in this dark and cloudy day.

1. Then, He is a very ancient King. He is indeed "the Ancient of days:" he is no upstart; his throne was "set up from everlasting;" none can compete with him for antiquity, "The everlasting Father; Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth were of old, from everlasting."

2. He is a King of incomparable wisdom: "A wiser than Solomon is here." Solomon's wisdom was but folly compared with his; for "in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

3. A King of irresistible power and absolute authority: "All power in heaven and earth are his." He is "the man of God's right hand;" the arm of JEHOVAH is in him: he hath "a name above every name, and at his name every knee shall bow," &c.

4. He is a King of unspotted holiness and purity. "The holy One of Israel is our King; of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity." His name is a holy name. His throne is a holy throne; he "sits upon the throne of his holiness." His laws are holy laws; "The law is holy; and the commandment holy, and just, and good." His covenant with his subjects is a holy covenant; "he hath commanded his holy covenant." The officers that bear the vessels of his house are, and should be holy.

5. He is a righteous King. "Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. Behold a King shall reign in righteousness," Is. 32:1. We have an account of the equity of his administration, Is. 11:1-3, &c. Ps. 45:7, "He loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity," &c.

6. He is a gracious King. His name is "the Lord, gracious." He is said to be "full of grace;" and grace comes by him, and rivers of grace run from his throne, Rev. 22:1; Ps. 46:4, "There is a river, the streams whereof do make glad the city of God." The throne whereon he sits is a throne of grace, and acts of grace are emitted from his throne, even

the great and precious promises, which are the edicts of the King, or beneficial laws issued out for the benefit of the subject.

7. He is a most merciful and compassionate King. He has bowels of compassion towards his enemies; he would have gathered his enemies in Jerusalem, "as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings;" and when his enemies prove obstinate, he "weeps over them," &c. He is loth, at his very heart, to give up with a people that are giving up with him, Hos. 11:8, "How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim?" &c.

8. Of wonderful sympathy with his subjects. He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" he reckons any favour or injury done to them, as done to himself, Matth. 25 at the close.

9. A King of immense riches, and unbounded liberality and bounty. His riches are unsearchable: "Riches and honour are with him." And as for his bounty, he distributes his grace as freely as the sun scatters his beams through the earth. He invites all the world to come and share of his fulness, Is. 55:1, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," &c. Prov. 9 at the beginning.

10. He is a King of untainted veracity and truth. One may depend upon his royal word, "He is not a man that he should lie, neither the Son of man that he should repent." His name is "Truth, the Word of God." One may venture his salvation with safety on his word, for he never failed; "all the promises of God are in him, yea and amen." He hath sealed them with his blood, and sets to his royal amen, as "the faithful and true witness," to every one of them.

11. He is an immortal King. Other kings they "die like men, they fall like the sons of the mighty;" death brings them out of their high seats, and sets them upon a level with the beggar; but the King of Zion "lives for ever and ever." It is true, he was once dead; but being "the Prince of life," it was not possible that death, the king of terrors,

could detain him in his territories, Rev. 1:18. "I was dead, but am alive," &c. And the life of all his subjects is bound up in his life.

12. He is at present an invisible King, out of the sight of our bodily eyes. He has gone within the veil "to appear in the presence of God for us;" he pleads the cause of all his subjects in the highest heavens. But still he is visible to the eye of faith; "Whom having not seen, we love." And in a little, he will be visible to every eye, Rev. 1:7, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him."

13. He is an eternal King: "The King eternal." As his kingdom is from everlasting, so it is to everlasting; "and of the increase of his kingdom and government there shall be no end."

14. He is an independent King. All the powers of the earth depend on him; "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice;" but he depends upon none. It is true his mediatory kingdom is committed to him by his Father, but his essential kingdom is as independent as that of God the Father, "he being in the form of God, and thinks it no robbery to be equal with God."

15. He is a puissant and warlike King. He is "the Lord of hosts; he is a man of war." He encountered Satan, and wounded, bruised, and destroyed him upon Mount Calvary, and he will wage war for ever against all that refuse his government, and say, "We will not have this man to rule over us." He will send out his armies and destroy them; and not only his own vengeance, but the vengeance of his Father will fall on them, Ps. 110:1. &c.

16. He is "the King of glory," Ps. 24. When the summons is given to sinners, to "lift up the everlasting doors" of their hearts to him, they are told, that it is no less a person than "the King of glory" that calls. Solomon, in all his glory, could not compare with the lily, far less with him who is "the brightness of his Father's glory," and on whom hangs all the glory of his Father's house, Is. 22:24. &c.

I should now proceed to the other things in the method; but I pass them at the time, and shall only offer a word of use unto what has been said, in a few inferences.

1. See what happy persons the true and loyal subjects of Christ (believers) are. As it was said by the queen of Sheba, concerning the servants of Solomon, so may we say of them, they are happy, for they dwell in the King's court, Ps. 84 &c. All his subjects are made sons and heirs, "kings and priests unto God;" their King hears them when they call, Ps. 20:9. They enjoy peace under his administration. They have trouble from the world; but "in him they have peace;" they dwell on high, dwell in safety. They shall all be well seen to in the day of famine and trouble.

2. See the dangerous risk they run that invade his government, and contemn his authority.

Quest. Who are these?

Answ. 1. They that turn the authority, derived from him, to the hurt and prejudice of his kingdom and interest. All power and authority, whether civil or ecclesiastic, is derived from him. All civil power is from him: "By me kings rule." He sets up kings, and casts them down at his pleasure. And therefore it must be a dangerous abuse of civil authority, to enact laws invading the royalties of his crown, and the liberties of his subjects; laws countenancing witchcraft; laws for the profaning of his day and worship, and for modelling the courts of his house, and officers of his kingdom, according to their mind; laws obliging the ambassadors of Zion's King to change their holding, and to become the heralds and officers of king and parliament. Again, as all civil, so all ecclesiastic authority is derived from him, as the fountain of it, having "all power in heaven and earth." And if so, what a horrid conspiracy against the King of Zion must it be, to employ that power for screening the erroneous, and censuring these that bear witness for him, for violating the rights and privileges of his subjects, and carrying on violent intrusions of officers into his house,

to the dividing, destroying, and scattering of his subjects? We may easily think what the King will do with such courts and officers, when he reckons with them.

2. They invade his kingdom and authority, who adventure to model his visible kingdom in the world, after their own fancy, and not according to the pattern shewed in the holy mount of divine revelation. The land-marks of the kingdom of Christ have been set from the word of God, by our great and worthy forefathers in this land, and adopted by the oath of the great God; and they who go about to remove these land-marks, and to cast the government of the church of Christ into another shape, as Episcopalians and Sectarians do, there is ground to suspect them as being enemies to the King of Zion. And among other things that convince me of the error, both of the Episcopalian and Independent schemes of government, this is one, that I never heard tell of one of their way, that suffered martyrdom for Christ, as King of Zion, particularly for his alone headship and sovereignty in his church. The spite and spirit of malignancy and persecution never ran against any of these ways, at least in this land; for the world loves its own. But it is well known, that all the power of hell, and of ecclesiastic and civil tyranny, has been bended for suppressing that form of government, which has been so solemnly adopted, from the word of God in Scotland; which to me, beside other things, is a convincing evidence, that it is of divine origin. When King Charles II. was restored to the crown, against whom or what did he bend his power? Was it against Episcopacy? No; he restored that form of government both in England and Scotland. Was it against Independents and Sectarians, who had taken off his father's head? One would have thought, that the storm should have broken in a way of resentment upon them; but I do not remember to have heard, that one drop of their blood was spilt during that persecuting period; the storm lighted upon those of the Presbyterian way, both in Scotland and England. Was this, because they had joined the usurper, or endeavoured to cut off the family of the Stuarts? The contrary of this is well known to all who know the history of these times. No good reason can be conceived,

why the flood of persecution did run with such violence against them beyond all others, but that Rev. 12:17. because they "kept the commandments of God," with reference to the kingdom of his Son, "and held the testimony of Jesus Christ, and the word of his patience."

3. They contemn the authority of the King of Zion, who walk willingly after the commandments of men, in opposition to the commands of Christ. When the commandments of men interfere with the authority of Christ, it is plain, from the practice of the apostles, and of the three children, what we are to do; "Whether it be right to obey God or man, judge ye," said the apostles before the Jewish Sanhedrim. And says the three children, when required by an angry king, in view of a fiery furnace, to bow down to his idol, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter," &c. How culpable then are those men, who call themselves ministers, officers, and ambassadors of Christ, who, contrary to the laws of his house, at the commandment of worm man, are profaning his Sabbaths, polluting his worship, prostituting their office by sinful compliance, and throwing up the headship and sovereignty of Christ, our only King, Judge, and Lawgiver, and casting the jewels of his crown under the feet of men?

They will be found equally guilty, who stand by, and see those injuries done to the King of Zion by others, and, who though they be not themselves actors, yet, I say, stand by as spectators, or are silent without witnessing against those things, yea, associate themselves with traitors to the Redeemer's crown, as though they were his loyal subjects and officers. Would any man be reckoned a loyal subject to King George, especially any who have sworn the allegiance and abjuration, and are entrusted with any honorary and beneficial posts, and are daily eating the king's bread, and receiving his pay; I say, what would any think of such a person being witness to manifest treason committed against the king, and yet should hold his peace; and not only so, but allow such to sit in the king's courts, and sit with them as if they had done no injury? When manifest treasons are committed against the King of Zion, and corruptions, either in

principle or practice are allowed, and not purged out by discipline, when the majority of a church and of her judicatories are in a conspiracy, the plain command in that case, is, 2 Cor. 6:17. to "come out from among them, and to be separate, not to touch the unclean thing," that the Lord may receive us. When the corrupt party are few, says Hooker, they are to be cast out; but when the body or majority of the church becomes wicked, then says he, the sound part is to withdraw from her; for which he cites the above scripture, 2 Cor. 6:17. The apostle Paul, when he orders the incestuous person to be cast out by excommunication, he gives this reason for it, because "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump;" plainly intimating, that, when the whole lump of a church is leavened with unpurged scandal and error, she is like the house under the law, overrun with the leprosy, which was not only to be left by the inhabitants, but to be taken down to the foundation. Sin is, in scripture, compared unto smoke. You know, when a house is so smoky, that it is like to stifle the breath, or smother the inhabitants, there is no help for it, they must leave the house, and seek new lodgings.

Last inference. See from this doctrine an excellent rule for all the subjects of the King of Zion who desire to be found faithful unto him in a dark and cloudy day, how to steer their course. You know in the time of a revolt and insurrection in a kingdom against the government, when all things are running to confusion, the loyal subjects who adhere to the interest of their king, they make inquiry after the king's standard. Their question is not, Who have the greatest numbers? or, Where away is the greatest body of men swaying? But if the king's standard be lifted up, however few they be that own it, why, their question is, Where doth it stand? or, What is the party that are cleaving to it? This is the very case in this divided and distracted day wherein we live. There is an insurrection against the King of Zion, even in the house of his professed friends, and even under the covert of his name and authority. Ecclesiastic judicatories are carrying matters quite contrary to the laws of his kingdom and privileges of his subjects; and yet affirm, that they have his authority to do these things. A judicial testimony is lifted up against their

corrupt courses, both in matters of doctrine, discipline, and government; and yet many that profess friendship to the King of Zion in this land, are in a suspense to what hand to turn; why, the way to come to a resolution is, to inquire, Where stands the standard of the covenanted testimony of Christ in the land? whether within or without the camp? If it be held faithfully within the camp, then it is duty to join it there: but if it be without the camp, we are to follow it there, although we should be obliged to take up the cross in following it.

Sermon II

Ps. 2:6.—"Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion."

THE doctrine was, "That Christ is King in Zion, the only Head and Sovereign of his church, by his Father's appointment and ordination." Yet have I set my King, &c.

The method in which I proposed to prosecute the doctrine, was,

- I. To give some account of this sovereign Prince here spoken of.
- II. To give some account of his kingdom, and the administration of it.
- III. Why God the Father has lodged the government upon him.
- IV. Apply.

I have only spoken to the first, given some account of this royal Prince, who is by God vested with the sovereignty, and made some application.

II. I come now to give some account of Christ's kingdom, and the administration of it. Here, 1. I shall offer a few distinctions of Christ's

kingdom. 2. Shew why the church is called the holy hill of Zion. 3. Give you some of the properties or qualities of Christ's kingdom. 4. Discourse a little concerning the actual execution and administration of the kingdom of Christ, as Mediator.

The first thing is, to offer a few distinctions of Christ's kingdom. Know then, that the kingdom of the Son of God is twofold, either essential or personal. His essential kingdom belongs unto him, as to his divine nature, or as he is the Son of God, the second person of the glorious and ever-blessed Trinity, the same in substance, equal in power and glory with the Father, and the Holy Ghost. Christ, considered in this view, is the great Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things therein, and the government and disposal belongs unto him by right of creation. But it is not of this absolute or essential kingdom of Christ that I now speak, but of his personal and mediatory kingdom, as he is Immanuel, God-man; and under this consideration he acts by a delegated authority, or a power committed, or given him by the Father, for the salvation of the elect that were given him. Man, being fallen from the state wherein he was created, must, in order to his recovery, be brought under another model of government than that which he was under at his creation, when he was subject to God only as his Creator and Benefactor, promising life to him upon the terms of the covenant of works; I say, in order to his recovery, a new scene of government behoved to be erected; the plan of which was laid in the council of peace from eternity. By virtue of this plan of government, the first person of the glorious Trinity sustains the part of the supreme Judge, passing a sentence of condemnation upon all mankind for the breach of his holy law; but yet so far dispenses with the rigour of the law, as to admit of a ransom and satisfaction. God, in the person of the Son, sustains the place of a Mediator, Surety, and Redeemer, promising to satisfy and to repair the honour of the holy law. Upon which undertaking, the Judge is so well pleased, that, in order to the accomplishment of the Son's undertaking, "all power in heaven and in earth is given him:" all government is committed to the Son, angels, men, and devils, and all creatures are put into his hand, that

he may make them subservient to the recovery of that poor contemptible creature man. And it is upon this foundation, that the great JEHOVAH says, in the text and context, Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen," &c.

Now, the mediatory kingdom of Christ, it is either more general or special.

1. His general mediatory kingdom extends itself over heaven, earth, and hell, (as I said just now): Eph. 1 at the close, God hath "given him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body." Phil. 2:9, 11, "At, or in, the name of Jesus every knee must bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue must confess, that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father." All persons, kingdoms, and revolutions of affairs in the world, are ordered and managed by our Mediator and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. He sets up kings and pulls them down, as serves the designs of his glory, and of his church's good: hence it is proposed, as matter of triumph to the church in her distress, Ps. 146:10. "The Lord doth reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord."

2. The kingdom of Christ is to be considered as more special and particular; and so his church is his kingdom, in which, and over which, he reigns. This kingdom, or church of Christ, is sometimes in scripture called his body; because of the union that is between him and them: sometimes his flock; because he, as a Shepherd, watches over them, and provides them their pasture.

Now, this particular kingdom of Christ, the church, is to be considered, either as militant on earth, or triumphant in heaven. The church triumphant is that part of the saints of God, who are, by death, gathered to him in glory, where Christ is; and the heavens are to contain him and them, until "the consummation of all things," at

the end of time, when he will descend to the last judgment, and all his saints and angels attending him as his retinue. But it is of the church militant on earth I now speak. They are called militant, because they are yet in a state of war upon the field of battle, wrestling with sin, Satan, and the world, &c.

The militant church, again, is either visible or invisible. The invisible church catholic consists of all believers, who are savingly united unto Christ, as their head of influence and government, by his regenerating and sanctifying Spirit. And those are called his invisible church, because the bonds of union between him and them, are such as are not visible to the eye of the world, they are not perceptible by sense and reason, their life, and all the concerns thereof, are "hid with Christ in God," and therefore sometimes called his hidden ones. The visible catholic church of Christ consists of all these through the whole world, who make a visible and credible profession of their faith in Christ, and subjection unto him as their Prophet, Priest, and King, and who own and acknowledge the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, that he has appointed, having the gospel preached unto them by ambassadors of his sending, and his ordinances administrated. This catholic visible church, consisting of all that profess the name of Christ, but especially of them who do really believe in him, this is that which in my text is called the holy hill of Zion, over which Christ doth reign.

Unto all that has been said, I shall only add, upon this head that the members of the catholic church, being spread over the face of the whole earth, wherever the gospel is preached, it is impossible that they can have a local communion one with another, in this world, in worshipping their glorious head, Jesus Christ, although it were desirable, if it could be attained. But because this cannot be attained, therefore the catholic church is divided into national churches, provincial churches, presbyterial churches, parochial churches, domestic churches, (for we read of the church of Christ in a house, or particular family); but all these are but so many parts, lesser or greater, of the catholic church of Christ, through the world, which

have "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." But I do not stand further upon this. So much shall serve for giving you a general view of the church, or kingdom of Christ in the world.

The second thing is, to shew why the church is called the holy hill of Zion. For clearing of this, you would know, that Mount Zion, literally, was a hill situated in the best part of the world, viz. Canaan, and in the best part of Canaan, which was the tribe of Judah, and in the best part of that tribe, namely, in the city of Jerusalem. This hill had two heads, or tops, the one of which was called Moriah, upon which the temple was built, whereby it became the seat of all the solemn worship under the old economy; the other top was called the city of David, because David's palace was there, the royal residence of the kings of Judah and Israel. The church of Christ is frequently, both in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, spoken of under the notion of this hill of Zion, particularly, Ps. 132:13, "The Lord hath chosen Zion: he hath desired it for his habitation," &c. And Heb. 12:22, "Ye are come unto Mount Zion," says the apostle, speaking of the New Testament church. Now, Mount Zion typified the gospel church upon these or the like accounts.

1. Mount Zion and Jerusalem was the habitation of Jebusites, a company of cursed and idolatrous Canaanites. So is the church, by nature, enemies to God, "aliens to the commonwealth of Israel," &c.
2. Mount Zion was taken by David out of the hands of the Jebusites. So Christ, our blessed David, he made a conquest of his church: he not only buys her with his blood from the hand of justice, but by the dint of the sword, girded on his thigh, he takes her by main force out of the hand of Satan; the weapons he makes use of for this end not being "carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds," &c.
3. David fortified Zion for his own use, and the sole place of his residence. So Christ he fixes his spiritual residence in Zion: "In Salem is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion." And his

presence in her makes her impregnable, "The Lord is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved:" hence is that song, Is. 26:1, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah, We have a strong city, salvation hath God appointed unto her for walls and for bulwarks."

4. Mount Zion and Jerusalem was renowned above all cities in the known world. So the church of Christ is the most renowned society upon earth, renowned for her dignity, her trade, her immunities, her present privileges, and future prospects.

5. Zion was the place of public worship, the ark was there, and all the solemn worship of Israel was there. So in the New Testament church are the ordinances for worship, word, prayer, praise, sacraments, and the like; these galleries of the King of Zion, where he holds fellowship with his subjects, and allows them access unto his presence, and communion with him.

6. All the sacred things of God were kept in Zion; there was the law, the oracles of God, the Shechinah, the pot of manna, the mercy-seat, the tabernacle. So the church of Christ is the repository of all the sacred things of heaven; to her belongs the adoption, the promises, the covenant; the ordinances, the doctrine, the worship, the discipline, the government, and truths of Christ are committed to her custody. O how zealous should the New Testament church, and every minister and member thereof, be for the preservation of these in their purity and power?

7. We find an opposition stated in scripture between Mount Zion and Mount Sinai, Gal. 4. God came down for a season on Sinai; but he comes to dwell on Mount Zion, &c.; he appeared in terror on Sinai; but Zion, or Jerusalem, is a vision of peace: he forsook Sinai, and left it in bondage; but Zion is free for ever: he gave the law on Mount Sinai; but the gospel on Mount Zion, &c.

The third thing is, to give you some of the properties or qualities of Christ's kingdom.

1. Then, It is a spiritual kingdom. It is not of this world, as the Jews imagined, and as others imagine, who would fashion and mould it according to the kingdom of this world. The laws, the ordinances, the discipline, and whole of this kingdom is spiritual, and has a relation principally to the souls of men and women, and an eternal state to come. And seeing it is so, what a strange notion of the kingdom of Christ must men and judicatories among us have, who distinguish men in the affairs of Christ's kingdom by the gold ring, gay clothing, and worldly heritages. Alas! true notions of the kingdom of Christ are generally lost among us in this generation. Some have no other notion of the church of Christ, than a society of men meeting together, under the name of judicatories, under the protection of civil authority, whether they be acting according to the laws of Christ, or against them, for the interest of the body of Christ, or to its hurt and prejudice; whether they be holding Christ as a head, or practically renouncing his headship, however they profess the contrary. I make no difficulty to affirm, that a church not holding the head, Christ, in all his offices, is but an idol of man's making; and zeal for such a church is but like the zeal of these who cried, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these," and yet were real enemies to the God of the temple; or like Ephraim, concerning whom it is said, "Ephraim hath forsaken the Lord, and buildeth temples." I say then, that the kingdom of Christ is of a spiritual nature, and it relates principally to the soul, or the inner man: hence Christ declares concerning his disciples and followers, "The kingdom of God is within you;" and without this, it is little matter what church or communion folk be of.

2. Christ's catholic kingdom is of a large extent. It is true, under the Old Testament dispensation, the kingdom of Christ was pent up within the confines of the land of Judea, "To them belonged the adoption, the covenants, the law, and the promises," while the generality of the Gentile nations were held as dogs, aliens to Israel's commonwealth, &c. But blessed be God, now the waters of the sanctuary have run down to the valley of Shittim, and the gospel is "preached unto all nations, for the obedience of faith." Ps. 2:8, "I will

give him the heathen for his inheritance," &c., Ps. 72:8, "His dominion shall reach from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

3. Although the kingdom of Christ, I mean his true church, be of a large extent, yet it is but a little kingdom, I mean, it is not populous, when compared with the kingdom of the god of this world. Christ's flock is but a little flock, comparatively considered, Luke 12:32, &c. They are but little in respect of their numbers. Indeed abstractly considered, at the end of the day, they will make an "innumerable company, which no man can number;" but, viewed in comparison of the wicked, they are but few: "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it;" like the gleanings after the vintage, "I will take them one of a city, and two of a family, and bring them unto Zion." They are but little in respect of quality. Christ's subjects are generally among the poorer sort of people: "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom," 1 Cor. 1:26. "Not many wise men after the flesh," &c. They are little in regard of esteem; the world make but little account of them; they are generally reckoned the dross and offscourings of the earth, 1 Cor. 4:11, 13: but however little account the world may make of them, yet when Christ, at the end of the day, presents them unto his Father, they will shine like the stars, yea, like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

4. The kingdom of Christ in this world is a kingdom of light. The Church is called the "valley of vision," because of the light of the revelation that shines in it. Wherever Christ sets up his kingdom in a land, though it "sat in darkness," the people of it are made to "see great light." Light ariseth to them that "sat in the regions of the shadow of death." And all that are the true subjects of Christ's kingdom, they are "translated out of darkness into his marvellous light;" the light of the glory of God, in the face of Christ, shines into their hearts.

5. It is a heavenly kingdom. Matth. 3:2, says John the Baptist, when Christ was come to set up his standard, and sway his sceptre among the Jews, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And Heb. 12:22, "Ye are come unto mount Zion, unto the heavenly Jerusalem." All the loyal subjects of the kingdom are heaven-born, &c.; they are all pointing toward heaven in their way, and walk, and traffic, their "conversation is in heaven," and they are looking for "a better country, that is, an heavenly," Heb. 11:16.

6. It is a regular and well governed kingdom: "Jerusalem is a city compactly built together. We have a description of the regularity and good order of the kingdom of Christ, under the notion of a city built four-square, Rev. 21. See to this purpose, Eph. 4:16. There are many irregularities and disorders in the church of Christ, as she is managed by the hands of men, as sad experience testifies among us at this day; but as she is under the administration of the great King that God has set in the midst of her, there is nothing but beauty and order. If the church of Christ were, even his visible militant church, governed exactly according to Zion's laws by her pretended officers, there would be nothing but order and beauty in the whole kingdom; but when men go about to make other laws than the laws of Christ, and to make their will the standard of government, rather than the will of the great King, this casts all into confusion, and yet even these confusions are managed by the King for the advantage of his true kingdom and subjects, and in due time he will bring light out of darkness, and order out of confusion.

7. The true kingdom of Christ is a kingdom that is much hated by the devil and the world. She is just the eye-sore of hell, and all its confederates; hence we are told in the beginning of this psalm, that when Christ comes to set up his kingdom, "The Heathen rage, the people imagine mischief, the kings of the earth, and princes thereof, take counsel" how to suppress this kingdom of Christ. The gates of hell wage war against the kingdom of Christ. The world loves its own, who are under the government of the "God of this world," and who "walk according to the course of this world;" but they hate the laws,

the ordinances, the discipline, and subjects of Christ's kingdom; they are intolerable unto them, and therefore they are always trying to make themselves rid of them: hence are all the reproaches, afflictions, persecutions, and massacres of the followers of Christ, that we read of both in sacred and profane history.

8. Notwithstanding of this, the kingdom of Christ, is a stable, firm, and everlasting kingdom; it is like the "little stone cut out of the mountain," that dashes all the kingdoms of the earth in pieces, and yet itself is not dashed or broken. As the King of Zion is himself "The everlasting God," so his kingdom is "an everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there shall be no end." He shall "rule over the house of Jacob for ever and ever."

9. The kingdom which Christ governs is a holy kingdom. The church of Christ, even his visible church, is a sanctified society, federally holy; you see in the text it is called the holy hill of Zion. All the members of the visible church are dedicated to God in baptism, in which ordinance we renounce all filthiness both of the flesh and spirit, and are solemnly engaged to wage war against sin, and to "resist it even unto blood." The design of all church discipline, and of all ordinances, ministers, officers, and judicatories, is to preserve the church, or kingdom of Christ, from corruption, either in principal or practice, that she may be a holy lump unto him. Whenever any scandal breaks out in a church, it is to be purged out by the discipline of Christ's appointment, lest that leaven leaven the whole lump, and provoke the Lord, the holy One of Israel, to depart from her. 1 Cor. 3:17, the church is called the temple of God: "The temple of God is holy, and if any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy." If this word of God be true, as I am sure it is, they stand but a sorry chance at this day, who are defiling the church of Christ, by complicated and multiplied scandals, of which I have taken notice in the preceding part of this discourse.

The fourth thing here was, to discourse a little concerning the actual execution and administration of the kingdom of Christ, as Mediator.

Now, this falls under a twofold consideration. 1. We may consider it as having a respect unto his general mediatory kingdom, over all things for his church. Or, 2. With respect unto his special mediatory kingdom, or administration in and over his church.

First, I say, we may consider Christ's government, as it relates unto his general mediatory kingdom. And so it takes in all things in heaven, earth, and hell; for "things in heaven, things on earth, and things under the earth, must bow at the name of Jesus, and every tongue must confess, that he is the Lord, and that he hath all power and authority in heaven and in earth." Now, considering Christ's kingdom in this extensive view, his government and administration takes in these few things following.

1. His sustaining and "upholding of all things by the word of his power, as the apostle speaks, Heb. 3:3. Our Redeemer, our Almighty King of Zion, is none other than the great God that made the heavens and the earth: John 1:3, "Without him was not any thing made that was made. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." And as he made all things by a word, so by the word of his power he upholdeth them in their being; "by him all things consist," Col. 1:17. This world is like a great theatre, upon which a glorious scene was to be acted, for the glory and honour of the free grace of God, in the salvation of a certain number of the lost race of Adam; and whenever the scene is ended, in the salvation of the last elect soul, the theatre is to be taken down, and then "the heavens will pass away with a great noise," &c.; but, until the scene be ended, the theatre, and all things in it, is upheld by the royal power and authority of the King of Zion.

2. Christ, the King of Zion, by virtue of his general mediatory power and authority, permits devils and wicked men to be, and act as they do; for "the deceived and the deceiver are his," Job 12:16. There we are told, that he suffered all nations to walk in their own way; he suffers the devil and persecutors sometimes, for holy and wise ends, cruelly to harass and persecute the righteous; to this purpose is that

which he says to the church of Smyrna, Rev. 2:10, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: but be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Thus, Rev. 12 he suffered the old dragon "to make war with the woman, and her seed, which kept the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus." This permissive power and providence, which Christ, as King of Zion, exercises with relation to the enemies of his church and people, is a glorious ground of encouragement to them in all their trials and troubles, that it is the Lord that allows the enemy to do this or that; especially if it be considered,

3. That by this absolute power of the King of Zion, he restrains and bridles up devils and men, and says to them, as he doth to the proud waves of the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." Ps. 76:10, "The wrath of man shall praise thee: and the remainder of his wrath wilt thou restrain." Thus he restrained both Laban's and Esau's resentment against Jacob, and Sennacherib in his destructive designs against the whole kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem. Christ, as King of Zion, he has his chain about the devil's neck, and the necks of all his wicked instruments in the world, and whenever they have gone the length of the link of the chain, which he has ordained, he gives the chain a pull, and then they are obliged to stop; the remainder of their wrath he doth restrain and bind up. We see this in the case of Job; when the devil was let loose to harass him, he went aye as far as his chain allowed him, but then he could go no further, till his chain was lengthened; and the same is the case with respect unto his church and people; Rev. 20:1-3, he lays hold on the dragon, that old serpent, the devil, and binds him a thousand years with a great chain. The devil, and his instruments at this day are burdened with the word of Christ's patience and testimony, and gladly would they destroy the witnesses, and all that cleave to his testimony; but they are like so many dogs, or lions chained by the King of Zion, they can go no further than he allows them; and he will allow them to go no further than he sees for his glory, and his people's good.

4. Another act of Christ's royal and absolute power, as King of Zion, is his protecting and defending his church in the midst of the most threatening and imminent dangers; hence they are called by the apostle Jude, the "preserved in Christ Jesus." You know when Christ appeared unto Moses in the bush, he saw the bush burning in the midst of the fire, yet the bush was not consumed; the thing represented thereby unto Moses was, the present situation of the church of Israel in Egypt, they were under sharp and exquisite sufferings under their cruel taskmasters; and the safety of the bush in the midst of the flames, represented the safety of Israel in the midst of all these troubles, under the care and tuition of Christ, that he would not suffer them to be swallowed up by their cruel enemies; no, he would see to their safety, "in the floods of great waters they shall not be overwhelmed," and in the hottest flames they shall not be consumed, &c.

5. By the royal authority of Zion's King, he over-rules and governs all creatures, and all their actions, yea, the most dark and cloudy dispensations, for his own and his Father's glory, and for the good and advantage of his church and people, according to that promise, Rom. 8:28, "All things shall work together for good, to them that love God." We see at this day very strange things casting up in the wheel of providence; we hear of wars and rumours of wars abroad; we see the mighty pulled out of their seats by death; we see signs in the heavens above, much like these that were seen before the destruction of Jerusalem; we see the winds blowing in the barn of the visible church, much chaff casting up, many blown away from their former profession; we see God making a separation between those that fear him, and others that are void of his fear; we see the enemy raging in the Lord's sanctuary, breaking down the carved work of the temple, and the crown of Christ profaned, and set upon the head of a mortal creature. Well, sense and reason, when it sits judge of these and the like dispensations, it is put to a nonplus; but if the eye of faith be opened, it will see the King of Zion, by his power, ruling and over-ruling all these ups and downs to the advantage of his kingdom, and

the on-carrying of the designs of his glory in the salvation of his mystical body.

6. By his royal power, as King of Zion, he avenges himself and his church upon all his and their enemies, as we see in the close of this psalm, "He shall break them as with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel." The beast and the false prophet, and the great whore, Gog and Magog, death and hell, shall be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," Rev. 20; Ps. 110. he will "make his enemies his footstool, he will strike through kings in the day of his wrath, fill the places with dead bodies, and wound the heads over many nations."

7. He will, at last, finally liberate his church and people from all these evils, sorrows, and troubles, under which she groans, Rev. 21:3, 4. These are some of the acts of Christ's government, in his general mediatory kingdom, over all things.

But, secondly, I come, more particularly, to consider the government of the King of Zion in his church, and among his people, which is his particular kingdom. And here again, with respect to his invisible kingdom of believers, there are these acts of his royal power that he puts forth.

1. He subdues them to himself. By nature they are the vassals of hell, "walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that rules in the children of disobedience." But in a day of his power, by swaying the rod of his strength, he makes of rebels a willing people: he convinces them of sin and misery, makes his arrows sharp in the heart of his enemies; he enlightens their minds in the knowledge of himself, discovers his personal and mediatory glory, the way and method of salvation through him; he bends the iron sinew of their rebellious wills, and makes them to fall in with the way of salvation revealed in the gospel; he persuades, and, by his grace, enables them to believe in him, and so to embrace him as he is exhibited and set forth unto

them in the promise and offer of the gospel. And thus the King of Zion calls and conquers the vassals of the devil, and makes them his loyal subjects. This work of the King of Zion, it does not come with a like observation in every one of his subjects, every one have not a like measure of law-work; some are dealt with in a more mild way, like Lydia, "whose heart the Lord opened" in the hearing of Paul; others must be hewed and battered with the hammer of the law, before they will yield: however, every subject of Christ, in their effectual calling, has so much of law-work as is sufficient to loose them from the first Adam, and to discover the vanity of all attempts to seek righteousness and life by Adam's covenant; so much of it as to discover their absolute need of Christ for "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption:" and thus Christ becomes "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

2. Christ, as King of Zion, he writes his law on the hearts of all his subjects: Jer. 31:33, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." That moment a sinner is translated from the power of darkness unto the kingdom of the Son of God, he that moment inlays a principle of holiness in the soul, a conformity to his laws; so that the man "delights in the law of the Lord, after the inner man." Hence are these breathings and longings of soul after holiness of heart and life. "O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Hold up my goings in thy paths," &c. "O let my heart be found in thy statutes, that I may not be ashamed:" and hence also are these groanings among the subjects of Christ, under the remains of a body of sin and death, like that of Paul. "O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of sin and death! Iniquities prevail against me," &c.

3. Christ, as King of Zion, he enforces subjection to his laws, and that both by promises and penalties, suited unto the nature of his government, and administration of grace. If they break his laws, and keep not his commandments, he declares that he will "visit their iniquities with the rod, and their transgressions with stripes." And, on the other hand he tells, them that, in the way of obedience and

holiness, he will meet them, and hold fellowship and communion with them; and thus, "in keeping his commandments, there is a great reward. He meeteth him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness, and remembers him in his ways."

4. Christ, as King of Zion, he casts a copy of obedience unto all his subjects, and calls them to imitate him; for, "though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience, by the things that he suffered." And he says to all his subjects, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly; take my yoke upon you," &c. He has left us an example that we should follow his steps; and accordingly every true subject of Christ, he studies to imitate his King, to run his race, "Looking unto Jesus."

5. Christ in his invisible kingdom, he actuates and excites all his subjects to obedience to him, by his own Spirit, which he puts within them, according to that promise, Ezek. 36:27, "I will put my Spirit within them, and cause them to walk in my statutes:" and by this Spirit of his in them, he makes them to study holiness in all manner of conversation; and their "light is made to shine so before men, that others seeing their good works, are made to glorify their Father which is in heaven."

6. Christ, as King of Zion, meekens the hearts of his subjects to a due regard to all the intimations of his mind and will, so as every one of them is ready to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" They just wait with submission, like a servant waiting the commands of his master, and then he gives direction, according to that promise, "The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way."

7. Christ, as King of Zion, he corrects and chastens his subjects; for "if we be without correction, whereof all are partakers, then are we bastards and not sons." Christ he will let these faults pass in aliens and foreigners, that he will severely correct in his own subjects: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; and therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." Sometimes by his rods and

corrections, he will make their bodies smart with sickness, as in the case of Hezekiah, &c. Sometimes he will make them to smart in their worldly substance, by reducing them to poverty, as you see in Job, whose substance he gave over unto the Sabean and Chaldean robbers. Sometimes he will make them to smart in their relations, friends, and children, by taking away the desire of their eyes with a stroke, or other things that are sharper than death, &c. Sometimes he will make them to smart in their name, by reproach and calumny, and letting loose the tongues of a wicked world upon them, yea, even the tongues of their fellow-subjects, as in the case of Job and his friends, &c. Sometimes he will correct his subjects in their inner man, their soul, which is the sharpest of his rods. Sometimes he will turn away the face of his throne, and hide his countenance, and then they are ready to cry with David, Ps. 30:7, "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled." Sometimes he will go that length in his correction with his subjects, that he will carry as an enemy, make the arrows of his reproof "to drink up their spirits," as we see in the case of Job and Heman, &c. And sometimes he corrects them, so as to make both external and internal trouble, like two seas to meet upon them, so as "deep calls unto deep:" this we see in the case of Joseph's brethren, &c. and of David, Ps. 116:3. when both "the sorrows of death and the pains of hell" took hold on him, and then he "found trouble and sorrow" to purpose: and the same we see in the case of Jonah, when he shifted the work and service that his Master, the King of Zion, called him to, with respect to Nineveh, &c.

8. As King of Zion he commands peace, quiet, comfort, and deliverance to his subjects; he turns the storm into a calm; when the wind and tempest of external troubles are blowing so hard, that they threaten no less than death and utter ruin, he comes treading upon the waves of the sea, and says to the wind and waves, "Peace, be still; and immediately there was a great calm." And as for the internal storms of troubles of mind, he quiets these also, by commanding or speaking "peace to them that are afar off," Is. 57:19. or by lifting up the light of his reconciled countenance on them, whereby he "puts more gladness in their heart, than when corn, wine, and oil doth

abound."—Now, by these, or the like acts of his kingly government, he manages his invisible kingdom of believers, until he give the finishing stroke unto the work of sanctification at death, and then he transports them under a convoy of angels from the church militant, to the church triumphant, where they shall sing that song, Col. 1:12, "Giving thanks unto the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;" and Rev. 1:5, 6, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.

Sermon III

Psalm 2:6.—"Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion."

I ENDEAVOURED, last Lord's day to give some account of Christ's government and administration in his general mediatory kingdom over all things for his church's sake, and also some acts of his royal authority, put forth with respect to his invisible kingdom of believers: and now I come to speak a little of his kingdom, as it relates unto his visible church. And here I shall, for the more distinctness, 1. Prove, that Christ, the King of Zion, hath a visible kingdom in the world. 2. Take notice of some acts of his royal authority in this visible kingdom.

The first thing here is to prove, that Christ hath a visible church, or kingdom in this world. And this will be evident, if we consider,

1. That the King of Zion himself is visible, as to his human nature. It is true, he is behind the vail, so that now we see him not as to his corporeal presence; but you know, a man may be in a far country, out of our sight, yet still he is a visible person; so here, though Christ be in the land afar off, yet still he is visible as to his human nature. His

divine nature is invisible by bodily eyes, but his human nature still remains visible. He was visible to ocular sight when he was upon earth. The apostles declare that he was seen of them, both before and after his resurrection, and that they saw him visibly ascend into glory. The inhabitants of heaven, they are beholding the glory of a GOD-MAN. And after he was ascended, he was seen of Paul and of Stephen, even with their bodily eyes. And when he comes again, "every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him." Now, I say, Zion's King being himself visible, his mystical body must be of a piece with himself, and be a company of visible men and women, bearing some visible character of their relation to him, which are not to be seen in the rest of the world.

2. The laws, and ordinances, and officers of Christ, are all visible; and therefore he hath a visible, as well as an invisible kingdom in the world. Your eyes see your teachers; you hear us speaking to you in his name, publishing his laws, and dispensing the ordinances of his appointment.

3. There is a visible difference between the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of the devil. The devil's kingdom is a kingdom of darkness, and the works of his subjects are "the works of darkness;" but Christ's kingdom is a kingdom of light, and the light of holiness shines in their way and walk, to the glory of God, and the edification of others, according to that of Christ, Matth. 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, as others, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven." The subjects of Christ's kingdom, they walk in the narrow way of holiness, and have their Father's name written on their foreheads, have a visible and credible profession of Christ, whereby all that run may read that they own Christ as their King. The subjects of the devil, they walk in the broad way of sin, and have his name and badge about them, whereby they are known to be the children of the devil, and the seed of the serpent.

4. The charge that is given to ministers, in the dispensation of the solemn ordinances of the New Testament, to make a difference

between the clean and the unclean, the holy and the profane, proves that Christ has a visible kingdom, and visible subjects in this world. We are forbid to cast that which is holy unto dogs, and commanded to make a difference between those whom we admit to the seals of the covenant, and others. Now, how should ministers ever fulfil this charge given them, if their were not visible tokens, whereby we may distinguish betwixt the one and the other.

5. There is a visible and open war betwixt the seed of the woman, and of the serpent. The seed of Christ, they are so far visible, that the devil and his instruments commonly know who are on the side of the Lamb, and bend their malice against them. Whenever a sinner takes on with Christ, the world begins to hate him; which says there is some visible marks about Christ's subjects, whereby the wicked themselves know them to belong to Christ. These things prove, that Christ hath a visible kingdom, and visible subjects, in the world. It is true, there may be many hypocrites among these visible subjects; but in so far as they bear the badges of Christ's subjects, they are by men to be sustained as belonging to Christ's visible kingdom, until, like Judas, they cast off the mask, and discover themselves to be real enemies to Christ and his kingdom.

Secondly, I come to take notice of some acts of the royal authority of the King of Zion in his visible kingdom.

1. It is an act of his royal authority to give the lively oracles of his word unto his visible church: "He (viz. Zion's King) gave his statutes unto Jacob, and his testimonies unto Israel; he dealt not so with any nation." Whence is it that the gospel comes to one nation, and not to another? Why was it given to the Jews under the Old Testament, when it was denied to the Gentiles? And whence is it, that now, under the New Testament, the gospel is preached to the Gentiles, when it is denied to the Jews? And whence is it, that the gospel is sent to us in this land, when many nations are worshipping the devil, for want of the knowledge of God and of his mind? Why, this is just an act of the sovereign power and pleasure of Zion's King.

2. By his royal authority he has appointed what form of government is to be observed in his visible kingdom. He has not left his church in a state of anarchy, or confusion, or to be moulded according to the fancies of men, as may best serve their politic views and designs. Now, every piece of the Old Testament tabernacle was to be placed according to the pattern shewed in the holy mount, much more the New Testament church, which is called "the true tabernacle of David," Acts 15:16. compared with Amos 9:11. What that form of government is, has been stated from the word of God, and solemnly sworn to by all ranks of the land, since our reformation from Popery. It is true, there are a set of men in the land, that set up for other schemes of government: but they that remove these land-marks, they will do it to their cost.

3. His appointing officers, both ordinary and extraordinary, is another act of the royal authority of the King of Zion. We have an account of these officers of both kinds, Eph. 4:11, 12, "When he ascended up on high, (whenever he had sitten down upon his throne of glory above), he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the edifying of his body." Ye know it is the prerogative of the king to nominate and call, and appoint, whom he pleases as officers civil or military, under him in the government of the kingdom; and no man dare, upon his highest peril, assume any of these offices, from the highest to the lowest, without the king's commission; if he should, he would be found guilty of treason, and of usurping the king's prerogative: so is it in the kingdom of Christ; it is his prerogative to call, and send out officers to serve him, "and no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Christ himself did not go without his Father's commission, to act as his viceroy, "I the Lord have called thee, I will hold thine hand, and will help thee;" and if Christ would not run without his Father's commission and call, it must be dangerous for any to intrude themselves into the sacred offices of his kingdom, without his call and commission.

4. His appointing and ordaining the way how his officers are to be chosen, and installed visibly in their office, is another act of Christ's royal power and authority, as King of Zion. As it is he that gives gifts unto men, for the edifying of his subjects; so he has given it as his pleasure, that his visible subjects, or these that are so in the judgment of charity, should be the electors of the office-bearers in his visible church or kingdom. It has been made evident from Acts 1 that when an apostle was to be chosen in the room of Judas, the hundred and twenty persons did nominate and present two to the apostles, and one of these was pitched upon by an immediate determination from heaven, because he was to be an extraordinary officer. It is clear from Acts 6 like a sun-beam, that the multitude of the disciples did elect the seven deacons, and present them for ordination to the apostles. It is contended against this, that the manner of electing deacons, who were to have the charge of the poor, and of the public money appointed for their relief, is no argument for the election of ministers and elders, who are superior officers. But to this it is easily answered, that if it be the privilege of the visible church, and of Christ's visible and credible subjects, to have the choice of these that are to have the care of their money, much more of those that are to have the care and charge of their precious souls, which are far more valuable. The argument, from the less to the greater, is strong in this matter. It has been also cleared from Acts 14:23. that the apostles, when going through and visiting the churches, which they had formerly planted, ordained elders, or presbyters, in every city, by chierotomie, or stretching out of the hand, which was the common way of taking the voices of the people at that time, both in civil and sacred affairs. So that the manner of electing ministers and other officers in the church, is not left to a patron, a presbytery, or to men that are heritors in this world; no, but it is a privilege that belongs unto the subjects of Christ's kingdom, or to the community of those who are visibly of, and in, the communion of the church of Christ, and who are walking according to his laws; by which means all ignorant, erroneous, or scandalous persons, or these that are not of the communion of the church, are evidently excluded. And this privilege of electing ministers and

officers to the church, continued in the church till about seven hundred years after Christ, when it was violently wrested from them by the usurpations of Popery.

5. Another act of Christ's royal power and authority in his visible church, is his appointing ordinances for worship to be dispensed by ministers of the gospel, such as the public preaching of the gospel: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." This is the great ordinance of God for gathering of subjects unto Christ's kingdom, and for the edifying of these that are brought in. And then there is the ordinance of baptism to be dispensed "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." The ordinance of the supper, "What we received of the Lord, that we are to deliver," 1 Cor. 11:23. And there is public prayer and praise, catechising, both in public, and teaching from house to house. These and the like ordinances, for edification and worship, Christ, as King of Zion, has appointed to be dispensed by ministers in his visible kingdom.

6. Christ, as King of Zion, has appointed censures for discipline and good order in his kingdom, for the removal of offences, and preventing the leaven of sin and scandal from running through and defiling his church, such as private and public admonition, reproof, exhortation, and the sentences of greater and lesser excommunication. These are called "the keys of the kingdom; and when these keys, or censures, are exercised according to Christ's appointment, by the officers of his kingdom, "what they bind on earth, is bound in heaven, and what they loose on earth, is loosed in heaven." The apostle writing to the Corinthians anent the scandal of incest, he appoints such a person to be excommunicated, and delivered over to Satan, 1 Cor. 5:4, 5; and the reason he gives for passing such a censure, with respect to the church, is, that she might not be defiled with that impure leaven, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" And it is the opinion of Dr Owen, in his treatise upon schism, that, whenever a visible church comes to that pass, that she will not, or cannot, purge herself of notour and evident scandals, she, in that case, is to be departed from; and the

reason is, because she has lost or cast away the keys of the kingdom, committed to her by her great King, and then error and scandal runs without control, till the whole mass be defiled.

7. Christ, as King of his visible church, has authorised the officers of his kingdom to meet in a judicative capacity, in his name and authority, for the better and joint regulating of the affairs of his kingdom. I cannot now stand to illustrate this head; it is done to excellent purpose by the Westminster Assembly, and approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the year 1645, bound in with our Confession of Faith, entitled, The Form of Presbyterial Church government; to which I refer.

8. Christ by his authority, as King of Zion, has bounded and limited all the courts and officers of his kingdom, to govern his subjects, and to teach them no other thing than he has commanded, Matth. 28:19, 20, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." So that, if the officers, or courts of Christ's kingdom, begin to "teach for doctrines the commandments of men," or to impose any laws upon his subjects than what Christ has given, they have good reason to ask, By what authority such or such things are done? and to disregard all such laws or impositions.

9. Christ, as King of Zion, has given express orders unto all his subjects, to examine all spirits, all doctrines, all laws and impositions, at the bar of the word, and to contend earnestly for the purity of his truth and worship, ordinances and institutions; Jude 3, "Contend earnestly for the faith delivered unto the saints." Where it is considerable, that the keeping of the truth and purity of doctrine, is not simply committed to ministers, or officers of his house, but to saints, i.e., to the whole visible church; it is a trust for which they are to be accountable, if, through their neglect, it fall in the streets; therefore commanded to contend earnestly for it. And as for Christian liberty, they are to do the same, as is plain from Gal. 5:1, "Stand fast in the liberties wherewith Christ hath made you free, that

you be not entangled," &c. In these things every subject of Christ is to be a soldier.

10. Christ acts as King of Zion, when he resents injuries done to his kingdom or subjects, and sent and called officers. Sometimes the King of Zion has resented visible injuries done to his visible church, in a very open and visible manner; he "makes Jerusalem a burdensome stone unto her enemies," Zech. 12:3: and ver. 2, he "makes Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about;" for the injuries done to Jerusalem God pulls down the nobles of Babylon, and dashes the Babylonish empire in pieces. So, for his true and loyal subjects he gives a charge unto the world, to beware of offending them, or doing them hurt; for, says he, "it were better for them," that do it, "that a millstone were hanged about their necks, and they cast into the midst of the sea." And as for the ministers and office-bearers, he says, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." They that receive them, coming in their Master's name, they receive himself, and his Father; and they that despise them, despise him, and him that sent him. The sound of their King's feet is behind them, when going his errands, Matth. 28 ult., "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." And it is our hearty prayer to God, that none who slight or despise us may fall under the resentment of our great and glorious King, but that his mercy may speedily prevent it by their repentance.

11. Christ, as King of Zion, removes his royal standard from one people or nation to another. When a people have long enjoyed the gospel, and the ordinances of his worship, and continue barren under them, and slight his ordinances, officers, and laws, in that case, by his royal authority, he translates the seat of his visible kingdom, and the badges of his presence, elsewhere: hence Christ tells the Jews, that his kingdom was to be taken from them, and given to a people that would make better use of it. So dealt he with the churches of the Lesser Asia; so has he dealt with many famous and once flourishing churches; to this purpose is what you read concerning "the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, the house of Israel," Is.

5. Thus I have given you an account of some of the royal actings of the King of Zion, with respect to his church as she is a visible society of men and women, professing allegiance to him.

I shall conclude this head of Christ's royal administration, as King of Zion, by giving you an account of some of his royal and kingly actings at the end of the world, when his mystical body is consummated and perfected. As,

1. He will then "descend from heaven," in an awful manner, "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." And when he comes he will shake heaven and earth: 2 Pet. 3:10, 12, "The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up," &c. His kingdom will then come with observation to all the world: Rev. 1:7, "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him."

2. He will erect his throne of judgment in the clouds or visible heavens. O how awful will the bench of judgment be, when he takes his seat! Dan. 7. And,

3. He will raise the dead, "All that sleep in the grave shall come forth, Dan. 12:2, &c. Not an infant of a span long, that was ever endowed with a rational soul, shall be left behind in the grave.

4. He will gather all nations to him, and make a separation between the righteous and the wicked, setting the one upon his left hand, and the other on his right hand.

5. There will be a public trial of all persons, and of all their actions; "he will bring every work into judgment, with ever secret thing, whether it be good or evil." All the laws and acts of kings, of parliaments, of councils, of assemblies, of judicatories of whatever sort, will be canvassed then by the solemn Judge, &c.

6. He will distribute rewards and punishments, unto men and women, according to what they are found to be at that day, righteous or wicked, gracious or graceless, building on the rock, or on the sand: he will say to the one, "Come, ye blessed," &c.; he will say to the other, "Depart, ye cursed," &c.

7. When all is done, he and his ransomed will return in triumph to heaven with singing, when the wicked shall be turned into hell with howlings, crying, "Lord, Lord, have we not eaten and drunk" at thy table? "have we not prophesied in thy name?" &c.; and then Christ will have all his enemies under his feet, and reign over his mystical body for ever. It is true, we are told, that Christ will deliver up the kingdom to his Father;" but this is to be understood of his presenting the ransomed to his Father, saying, "Here am I, and the children thou hast given me:" and he will indeed cease to rule them in that manner which he exercises in the church militant; but Christ will still be the head of the ransomed in Mount Zion above; but though it be so, "God will be all in all;" for the design of his whole mediation and government, was to bring them back to God, as their only all, from whom they had departed in the first Adam.

And thus I have given some lame account of the royal administration of the King of Zion, until "the consummation of all things." And so much for the second thing in the general method, which was, to speak of the kingdom and administration of Christ in his holy hill of Zion.

III. The third thing in the general method was, Why God the Father has set and ordained him to be King in Zion? I answer in the two or three particulars following.

1. This flows originally from the sovereign love and good pleasure of God: "Even so, O Father; for so it hath pleased thee. God so loved the world, as to send him into the world;" and God so loved his church, that he gave the true King Solomon to be her King.

2. Because it was for the Father's glory and honour, to set him upon the throne. None so fit to be his Father's viceroy, and to manifest his glory, as he, who is "the brightness of his Father's glory:" all the divine perfections shine in his person and administration. This the angels saw, when they saw him but in his swaddling clothes, which made them sing, "Glory to God in the highest," &c.

3. That he might bring about salvation to his mystical body the church: Eph. 1, "He hath given him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body:" hence the church is called (Zech. 9:9,) to rejoice, because her "King cometh, having salvation;" and the church cries, "Thou art my King of old, working manifold salvation in the midst of the earth:" salvation from sin, Satan, hell, and death. How soon would the church be swallowed up, if it were not for the safety she enjoys through the protection of her King? "The Lord is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved." His presence in his church is her walls and bulwarks, and makes her to sing that song, Is. 26:1, "We have a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."

4. Because his shoulders were only able to bear the weight of the government. No hand was able to sway the sceptre, but he who was God's fellow, and to whom it is "no robbery to be equal with God." The government had fallen into confusion and disorder, had it been committed either to angels or archangels.

5. He bought the church to himself, with the price of his blood, from the hand of justice; and therefore it was fit that the government of the church should be committed to him. And indeed his royal or kingly office, is founded upon the sacerdotal or priestly office: and therefore, Is. 63 at the beginning, the King of Zion is there represented as "coming from Edom with dyed garments, and red in his apparel, as one that treadeth in the wine-fat." And Rev. 19 he who hath that great name written on his thigh, and on his vesture, "The word of God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords," is said to have his "vesture dipped in blood," viz. his own blood, and the blood of his

enemies. But I do not insist further upon the reasons of the doctrine, that I may shut up with some further application.

IV. The fourth head in the method was the Application. And, waving all other uses, I shall only apply it by way of exhortation, 1. To the subjects; 2. To the enemies of his kingdom and government.

First, A word of exhortation unto all those that profess themselves the subjects of Christ's kingdom.

1. Imitate your King. The example of a King has great weight with the subjects, whether it be good or bad; folk follow the fashions of the court. Never was there a king so worthy of your imitation; he calls us to "learn of him;" he has left us an example, that we should follow his steps;" an example of holiness, "Be ye holy, as he is holy," &c.: an example of faith and trust under the darkest clouds, Ps. 22:1, &c.: an example of meekness and humility of spirit; "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly." Phil. 2:5, "Let the same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." An example of patience in affliction and persecution; Heb. 12:2, "Let us run our race, looking unto Jesus," &c.: an example of constancy and resolution; he "set his face like a flint."

2. I exhort all the professed subjects of Zion's King to "trust in him at all times; for blessed are all they that trust in him," as you see in the last verse of this psalm. Trust him with your all, and trust him for all you need. And to encourage your trust, consider, (1.) His word is the word of a King a royal word, and the subjects depend upon the royal promise. (2.) His word is the word of the King of Zion, is a well advised word, it is the effect of counsel. (3.) It is an invariable word; it "endures for ever: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot of his word shall not fall to the ground." (4.) It is a faithful word; "truth is the girdle of his loins," it is established in the heavens. (5.) It is a tried word; "The word of the Lord is tried like silver in a furnace;" it abides trial. All the saints in heaven tried it, and found it firm; and therefore let all saints on earth trust it. (6.) This puts honour upon

your King, to trust his word, to set to the seal that he is true. (7.) This is the way to obtain the promise, and the blessings promised in the covenant.

3. I exhort you to be much at your King's throne as supplicants; for you have continual business there. Consider, (1.) His throne is a throne of grace, calculated for the poor and needy. (2.) There comes a joyful sound out from his throne; "Whosoever will, let him come. Ask, and ye shall receive. If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God," &c. (3.) There are rivers of grace flow out of his throne, and bend their course toward you. (4.) There is a rainbow about his throne, the covenant of grace and promise, Rev. 4:3, which alludes to God's covenant with Noah. (5.) Acts and interlocutors of grace are passed from the throne, to encourage your approach, "I will be their God, I will give them a new heart," &c. (6.) The King's throne of grace is founded on justice and judgment, &c. (7.) His throne and administration stands by bounty and liberality; and therefore can never be exhausted, no more than the sun loses by giving light unto the world, and therefore, I say, be much about your King's throne, come when you will, or for what you will, you are aye welcome, "In every thing by prayer and supplication make your requests known unto God," &c.

4. I exhort you to rejoice in your King. "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice,. Rejoice, O daughter of Zion, behold thy King cometh." (1.) Rejoice in his person; for "he is altogether lovely;" his person is the joy and admiration of heaven and earth. (2.) Rejoice in his government and administration; for it is wholly calculated for your good. (3.) Rejoice in his equity; for he rules in righteousness, whatever seeming crooks may be in his administration. (4.) Rejoice in the power and authority of your King; for he hath all power in heaven and earth; things in heaven, earth, and under the earth, bow to him. (5.) Rejoice in the law magnifying righteousness that your King has brought in by his obedience unto death. (6.) Rejoice in the fulness and riches of your King; for all the fulness of the Godhead, unsearchable riches are in him." (7.) Rejoice

in the bounty and liberality of your King; he will do for you above what you can ask or think. (8.) Rejoice in the love of your King; for it is unchangeable; he "rests in his love, and changes not."

5. Obey your King's laws: have a regard to all his commandments; for his commandments are "holy, just, and good." Motive, (1.) He has obeyed the law himself, in the days of his humiliation; he wore the yoke that it might not gall you. (2.) There is great peace in the way of obedience: "Great peace have all they that love his commandments: As many as walk according to this rule, peace shall be upon them." (3.) A great reward in keeping his commandments; for "he meeteth them that rejoice to work righteousness." (4.) Hereby you will glorify your King, and commend him to others, Matth. 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men," &c. (5.) There is great danger in breaking his laws, he will resent it, and "visit your transgression with the rod, and your iniquities with stripes."

Quest. What sort of obedience should we yield unto the laws of the King of Zion? Answ. (1.) A willing and cheerful obedience, such as he yielded unto his Father, when he said, "Lo, I come: I delight to do thy will." (2.) Universal obedience to all his commands, not picking and choosing, obeying one and casting at another; "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments." (3.) An inward as well as an outward obedience: "I delight in the law of the Lord after the inner man." Obedience, when it is not with the heart, is nauseous to the King of Zion, who "searches the hearts;" his laws reach the inward, as well as the outward man." (4.) A disinterested obedience, self-denied, reckoning yourselves unprofitable servants, when you have done all; do not think that your King is in your debt for your obedience and service, &c. (5.) It must be the obedience of faith; for "without that it is impossible to please God." A faith in the promise uniting the soul to God is the foundation of all true obedience to Christ, or God in him. (6.) A constant and stedfast obedience; not by fits or starts, but continually: 1 Cor. 15:58, "Be ye constant, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," &c.

6. Yield not only an active, but a passive obedience to the King of Zion, so as to submit unto his disposing will, even when his administrations run cross to your worldly interest and inclination. When he sends the rod of affliction, consider, (1.) That cross dispensations are for your good, &c. Many advantages rise out of afflictions. (2.) He will not keep his anger for ever. (3.) This is the spirit and temper of his true subjects, to be dumb with silence when he afflicts. (4.) Consider how submissive he was unto his Father's heavy afflicting hand, yea, avenging hand, &c. (5.) Your "light afflictions work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

7. I exhort all the subjects of the King of Zion to keep the King's courts, I mean his ordinances for worship. David, though he was a great king, yet we find, Ps. 84 he made conscience of attending the tabernacles of the King of Zion, and reckoned it his honour so to do; and when driven from the place of public worship, through the persecution of Saul, or Absalom's rebellion, he envies the happiness of the very swallows or sparrows, which were allowed to nestle about the sanctuary, while he was driven away from it, and had not access to attend his Lord and King there, Ps. 84:1, 2, 10, &c. What shall we think of those, who have the doors of the sanctuary of the King opened, the ordinances of the New Testament dispensed at their door; and yet either through pride, or heart-contempt of the ordinances, or love to the world, or sloth, or other carnal causes or pretences, turn their back on the courts of the great King; and yet take it in very ill part, if ministers tell them they do not act the part of loyal subjects unto Zion's King? Is it to be supposed, that people over opened their hearts unto him, who contemn and disregard his institutions, where he has required his subjects to attend upon him, and do him homage? They may fancy they are his subjects as well as others, but they have reason to fear, that the day is coming, when the King of Zion will say to them, or of them, "Bring forth those mine enemies who would not that I should rule over them, and slay them before me." See what became of these men who were bidden to the supper, when all things were made ready, and yet excused

themselves from attending, with these and the other pretences; why, Luke 14:24, the Lord declares, that "none of those that were called," and refused (whatever were their pretences), "should ever taste of his supper."

But to return: I say, let all that love Christ, the exalted King of Zion, attend carefully upon his royal courts and ordinances for worship, whether it be upon Sabbath day, or week day, particularly public preaching, public prayer and praise, and the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the supper, solemn occasions for fasting, prayer and humiliation. In these, or the like ordinances of the King of Zion, it is that he allows his subjects sweet interviews with himself; "the King is held in these galleries;" there it is that the king intimates his mind and will to the subjects; there his precepts, promises, and doctrines, are published; and there it is that he drops such words of grace and love into their hearts, as makes their hearts to burn within them, &c.; there they are made to say, "His word quickened me, and made my soul like the chariots of a willing people; there King Solomon shews himself with the crown upon his head, before the daughters of Zion; there the King covers a table of fat things, and makes them to sit down under his shadow with great delight; there sometimes they get the secrets of their hearts told them, and the secrets of his covenant, and the secrets of providence also opened, as David when he went into the sanctuary, Ps. 73. And therefore, I say, attend the King's courts for worship.

8. Let all the subjects of the King of Zion stand up for the honour of their King, especially in a day when manifold indignities are done unto his royal authority. I had occasion already to shew, in several particulars, what open indignities are done to him among us; his laws are counteracted both by civil and ecclesiastic authority, the liberties of his subjects are invaded, his Sabbaths are profaned, his professed ambassadors throwing up their Master's sovereignty and alone headship in his church, and yet sustained by others, that have not gone there length, as fellow-members in judicatories, without any censure or testimony. There seems to be a saying, a confederacy

with open and avowed traitors to the royal crown of Zion's King, by a deep silence, and sinful association with his enemies. I am afraid Christ will be saying this day, "These are the wounds whereby they have wounded me in the house of my friends:" I am wounded in my truths, in my members, in my prerogatives, as the supreme God, and the supreme King of my church; and yet no due testimony or resentment shewed against these wounds and injuries I have received. I am afraid Zion's King be on his way to wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of them that are going on in their trespasses." But while others are injuring and affronting the King of Zion, let all that would be found among his loyal subjects study to put honour upon him. Quest. How should we do this? Answ. (1.) We should put honour upon him, by believing in him, and trusting in him, particularly in his kingly office: trust that he will rule and defend his subjects, and that he will restrain all his and his people's enemies. O, Sirs, he never erred in his administration: and therefore whatever seeming confusions may cast up, yet trust that the wheel in his hand shall cast up such glory to himself, and such good to his subjects, as that it shall be said of Jacob, and of Israel, "What hath God wrought!" (2.) Let us put honour upon him, by confessing him with the mouth; Rom. 10:10. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." This is a day wherein the devil and his emissaries have laid a plot for banishing any profession of Christ and religion. I condemn, as much as any, a hypocritical profession of Christ and Christianity; but let us not cast away our King's livery, because a secret enemy may put it on, and mingle in among his loyal subjects. (3.) Let us put honour upon him, by a conscious regard unto all his laws and commandments, "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments:" and while others are breaking his bonds, and casting away his cords from them, let us say with Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (4.) By witnessing for him and his cause in our sphere, and by owning a testimony for him when it is lifted up. The standard of Christ, particularly in Scotland, is a covenanted standard and testimony; and whenever Christ's covenanted standard and testimony is lifted

up, we are obliged, by the oath of God, to own it, and cleave to it; and it is not this or the other pretence of order, that will dissolve the obligation of the oath of God. (5.) By avoiding the fellowship and society of those who are the known enemies to the King of Zion, and his cause and interest, whatever be their pretences of friendship: "O my soul come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united," &c. It is dangerous to stay in the camp where there is a mutiny and conspiracy against the King and his kingdom, especially when the King's standard is lifted up without it, and the cry given, "Who is on the Lord's side?" When judicatories of the church are bending their force to slay the witnesses, and to cast them out of the city, it is time for any that profess friendship to Christ, and own him as their King, to inquire where they are, or where they stand. (6.) By suffering for him, through grace, when called, as he suffered for us.

9. Another word of exhortation to the subjects of the King of Zion, is, to act the part of faithful soldiers in fighting your King's battles, against sin, Satan, and the world. Fight against sin; this is the grand enemy that Christ came to destroy, and make an end of; and therefore, &c. Wage war against Satan; for Christ came to bruise his head: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," &c. Wage war against the world; for "the friendship of this world is enmity against God; the world was an enemy to Christ, and it will be an enemy to his cause, work, and testimony, to the end. These are the enemies you are to enter the lists with. Mot. (1.) He has fought your battles; he entered the lists with sin, Satan, and the world, yea, with the wrath of God, and the curse of the law, to the dying of his garments, and the pouring out of his soul unto death. (2.) Your King has gained the victory, he has broken and routed the enemy, and is wearing the victorious palm, &c. (3.) His victory is yours in law, by virtue of the legal and mystical union betwixt you and him; and therefore he calls all his friends to rejoice, and take up the spoils of his victory as their own: hence the apostle cries, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." (4.) Your King, who is also your leader and commander, he has given command to "fight the good

fight of faith, to stand fast, to quit yourselves like men, and to be strong." All the subjects of Christ are soldiers, while in the church militant, and required to "contend for the faith, to resist even unto blood, striving against sin." (5.) Your King is a spectator of your behaviour in the field of battle, and sees who acts as cowards in his cause, and who acts the part of valiant soldiers. (6.) Your King is ready to succour you, when the battle is hot, and when you are like to be worsted: "Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God." The Lord stood with Paul, when all men forsook him. (7.) Your King will sound the retreat in a little time, and call you off the field, to triumph with him in glory; for "if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; your light afflictions and combats, which are but for a moment, work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

I conclude this branch of the exhortation with a few advices. If you would fight the battles of the King of Zion, (1.) Be sure to have his kingdom and authority established within you, and study to have every thought brought into captivity unto the obedience of the King of Zion, and be aware of harbouring any traitor in your own bosom. Can ever that man fight the open battles with the external enemies of the King of Zion, who is saying a confederacy with sin in his bosom? &c. And therefore give daily battle unto indwelling sin, a body of sin and death, and "take heed, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief," turning you aside "from the living God." (2.) You must make use of your King's armoury, and the weapons of his providing and appointing, if you would fight his battles; what these are, see Eph. 6:13, 14, &c. "Above all, taking the shield of faith." &c. (3.) Keep within the sight of your royal King. As we must run our race, so we must fight our battles, "looking unto Jesus." A sight of the King of Zion, inspires the soldiers with courage and greatness of spirit: "They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. Consider him who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (4.) Carry the blood of your King continually along with you, in the hand of faith, especially in the day of battle; for the enemy flees at the sight

of it: Rev. 12:11, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb," &c. (5.) In the time of open war study to know and keep the camp of the King of Zion, and be aware of the camp of the enemy. That is a question we would gladly be solved of, Where is the King's camp? for some are saying, in our divided day, "Lo, it is here," and others, "Lo, it is there;" will you tell us "where he feedeth, where he makes his flocks to rest?" Answer, negatively, it is not always where stands the greatest multitude; for Christ's flock is but a little flock. In the days of Elijah it was among seven thousand. It is not always with a body of men calling themselves the church of Christ, enjoying the protection of law, and civil authority on their side; for we have heard and seen the day when Popery and Prelacy had the law of the land, and civil authority for them.

Quest. How then may the camp of the King of Zion be known?

Answ. (1.) The King's camp is where the King's standard is upheld, not where it is pulled down. Where is "the testimony of Jesus," the covenanted testimony of Scotland? Whoever they be that are holding the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of his house, in their purity, there is the King's camp. (2.) The King's camp is where his flock is gathered, and not where they are scattered, born down, and oppressed. (3.) The King's camp is where his glory is most displayed, and not where his glory is darkened and obscured. (4.) The King's camp is where the smell of his garments gladdens the hearts of his subjects, Ps. 45 &c. (5.) The King's camp may be known by the current of the flood of the old serpent's malice: Rev. 12:15, 17, there we read that "the serpent cast out of his mouth waters as a flood, after the woman;" i.e., the devil raised a storm of persecution and trouble against the church of Christ, represented by the woman: and ver. 17, "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." So then if you would know where is the camp of the King of Zion, where his standard is; you may observe whereaway the weapons of hell are levelled, malice, reproach, persecution of hand or tongue; for there is

the camp of Christ, for he "fights neither against small nor great, but against the King of Israel," and his seed and interest.

10. A tenth word of exhortation to the subjects of the King of Zion, is, to rejoice in the hope of his heavenly kingdom; for ere it be long thy King, O believer, will call thee out of the church militant to the church triumphant; and therefore rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." And, to excite your joy, and quicken your longings after the heavenly kingdom, where the King of Zion is in person, I will tell you of a few things ye shall then be freed of, which are gravaminous and heavy to you while in the church militant on earth. (1.) Freed of all necessities of nature. No need of food when dismantled of the body of clay; and when it is raised again it will be a spiritual body, they do not eat and drink, &c. No need of clothing to cover the shame of your nakedness: for they shall not only be like the bodies of Adam and Eve, but like Christ's glorious body. No need of armour; for then there shall be no enemy. No need of sleep; for "there will be no night there." So then, (2.) Freed from all imperfection, both of soul and body. The infirmities of the body are left in the grave; and as for the soul it is made perfect in holiness; "that which is in part, shall be done away." (3.) Freed from all your toil and labour: Rev. 14:13, "They rest from their labours;" their work shall be their element, like the singing of the bird, which is its pleasure. (4.) Freed from all sorrow: Rev. 21:4, "There shall be no more sorrow. We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." (5.) Freed from all temptations. The poisoned arrows of the enemy do not touch the inhabitants of the church triumphant; he is cast out; "no lion to hurt," &c. (6.) Freed from all vexing and carking cares, whereby ye are now tortured. Care wastes the spirits, and eats out the comforts of our life here always; but no such thing in the church triumphant; no fear, and therefore no care: no fear of want where all things will be enjoyed. (7.) Freed of all doubts of the love of God; none saying, "where is thy former loving kindness?" You shall be in the embraces of your King for ever, wrapt up in his arms and bosom. (8.) Freed of the society of the wicked world. Christ's lily is now among the thorns, but in the church triumphant there is no more pricking briars in all

God's field; Christ will "thoroughly purge his floor." (9.) Freed from all divisions. The saddest thing in the church militant is the divisions among those that are really gracious. The divisions between godly and wicked are not so afflicting as the divisions among saints. But this shall be done away then, then they will be all one in the Lord, and all their jealousies and censures of one another will end. (10.) Freed of all distraction and wandering of spirit in the worship of God; now the heart will be fixed on God for ever. Let these things excite you to long for the day-break of everlasting vision above.

Quest. What security have we, while in the church militant, that we shall come to the church triumphant, where the King of Zion is in person?

Answ. (1.) God has ordained it for you, as you see Matth. 25 ult. &c. (2.) The promise of God, which is "yea and amen in Christ," secures it, Luke 12:32, &c., and 22:29, &c. (3.) Your King has purchased it for you; Eph. 1:14, a "purchased possession." (4.) Your King, who is also your Intercessor, has prayed for it, John 17:24, &c. (5.) Your King has taken possession of it for you, John 14:2, "I go to prepare a place for you." (6.) Your King has given you the earnest of it; his kingdom within you says you are come to his kingdom above; the first-fruits of the Spirit assures you of the full vintage. (7.) Your union with the King of Zion secures it; the glory of his natural body is a presage of the glory of his mystical body. (8.) A goodly company are already arrived, "an innumerable company of the first-born," and therefore the rest shall follow; therefore "look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

I proceed now to offer a word of exhortation unto the second sort of persons I named, and that is to you who are yet strangers to Zion's King, and enemies to his kingdom and government. I already gave you the character and marks both of his friends and enemies: in a few words, to clear the matter to you. All who are yet in a state of nature, and never felt the efficacy of the grace of God in a work of regeneration, are among the enemies of Zion's King; for "the carnal

mind is enmity against God." All who never felt the power of Christ's prophetic office execute upon them in a work of illumination, opening the eyes of their understanding to know Christ in his person, natures, offices, and undertaking, and to know the mind and will of God revealed in the word. All who are "ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own righteousness," I mean all legalists, who are cleaving to the law as a covenant, and have not "submitted to the righteousness of JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU," are yet enemies to the kingdom and government of Zion's King; never any, in reality, submitted to his laws and government, who did not first submit unto his righteousness. All who sit under the drop of the gospel, and have a Saviour and his whole salvation brought near unto them, and yet continue to reject him and his salvation through unbelief, Christ will hold all such as enemies to his kingdom and government: Heb. 2:3, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" They that were invited to the marriage-supper of the King, and yet refused, the King sends forth his armies, and miserably destroys those wicked men. All Gallios and neutrals in the cause of Christ, who are easy whether the cause of Christ sink or swim, they are among his enemies; for "he that gathereth not with us, scattereth abroad;" lukewarm Laodiceans the Lord spues them out of his mouth. All that are combining against the Lord, and against his Anointed, and laying their heads and hands together to ruin the kingdom of Christ, a covenanted work of reformation, and with axes and hammers breaking down the carved work of the temple, &c. All profane Esaus, who for a mess of pottage are selling their birth-right as Christians, sacrificing their liberties whereby Christ hath made them free, for any secular or worldly consideration whatever. All who are, with the serpent, licking up the dust of the earth, and preferring the vanities of this world to things of eternal concern All who are rejecting his laws as the rule of their obedience, and who are saying, "we ourselves are lords, and will come no more unto thee," and whose practice has this language, "We will not have this man to reign over us: Let him depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of his ways:" I say, you, and all such, are enemies to Zion's King, and strangers to his government?

Now, my exhortation to you, as one of the heralds of the renowned King of Zion, is, to surrender your rebellious arms, and submit unto his royal authority: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in."

By way of motive, I need only put you in mind of some things that have already been insisted on; as, 1st, Consider the dismal wrath and danger abiding all his enemies. See the use of terror. 2dly, Consider what for a King he is to whom ye are called to submit. See the properties or qualities of Zion's King, spoken to on the first head of doctrine. 3dly, Consider the advantages of his government. Spoken to in the use of consolation. 4thly, Consider how earnest he is with the rebellious sinners, to come in under his rule and administration. (1.) He invites the rebels to submit, Is. 55:7. "Let the wicked forsake his way," &c. (2.) He beseeches sinners to be reconciled to him, and to God in him, 2 Cor. 5:20. (3.) He promises welcome with the golden sceptre of peace in his hand; "Come to me who will, I will in no wise cast out." (4.) He is grieved at the obstinacy of sinners, who will not submit, as in the case of Jerusalem, Luke 19. (5.) He reasons with sinners, and expostulates the matter, Is. 1:18., Jer. 2. (6.) He swears that he has no pleasure in their death and ruin, Ezek. 33:11. "As I live, I have no pleasure in your death," &c. (7.) When there is no persuading of them, he takes away his kingdom with regret, Matth. 23 at the close. (8.) Consider how glad he is when a rebel sinner submits to him, as the father of the prodigal, &c.

I conclude with two or three advices, in order to your becoming his subjects.

1. Be convinced that ye are by nature enemies, yea, enmity itself; and do not deceive yourselves, by imagining that you have good hearts towards God; for they are desperately wicked.

2. Meditate much on your miserable thralldom and bondage to sin, Satan, and the world, until the Son make you free, &c.

3. Attend carefully on the ordinances of the King of Zion, particularly that great converting ordinance of the preaching of the word; for this is "the rod of his strength, and it pleases him by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe;" and listen carefully to hear the voice of the King of Zion in that ordinance, as Lydia, who attended on the ministry of Paul. See Is. 55:2, 3. &c.

4. With hearing of the word join a diligent reading of it: "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they which testify of me." The Bible is God's record concerning him whom he has set King in his holy hill of Zion; there his glory and beauty is decyphered with his own hand; there you have the will of the King, the latter will of the King sealed with his blood.

5. Be importunate supplicants at the King's throne for grace and mercy. Zion's King is a merciful King; his work is to "save the poor and needy," Ps. 72 &c. He is liberal; "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God," &c.

6. In the use of other means, see that ye essay the great work of believing; for without this it is impossible to please the King, or his eternal Father; "This is his commandment, that ye believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." Do what you will, you will be held as rebels till you believe: "He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." And therefore, I say, in obedience to the commands of God, and in a dependence on his grace and Spirit, essay the work of believing: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on his Son whom he hath sent."

7. Pray much for the purchased and promised Spirit from the King who is in the midst of the throne; plead the promise, "I will put my Spirit within you," Ezek. 36:27, and that promise, Ps. 110:3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

8. Cast out a red flag of war against all the enemies of the King of Zion, whether within or without you. Begin the war against his

enemies in your own hearts, in your walk, and in your families; begin reformation there: and having begun the war within, carry it abroad in your profession; and take up the cause of Christ in the land, his public interest, and do what in you lies to oppose and discountenance those who are attempting to ruin his kingdom and interest in the world, particularly in the land wherein you live; for if his kingdom be taken from us, if he remove the doctrine, discipline, worship, and government of his house, woe to our land; then the songs of our temple shall be turned into howlings, and our poor posterity shall, in a few years, be a company of Pagan and Popish idolaters.

Well, then, let me renew my call and invitation unto all strangers, foreigners, and rebels, to come and submit to the government of him whom God has set King in his holy hill of Zion. It was foretold by Jacob, on his death-bed, that "the gathering of the people should be to him," and by Isaiah, that "unto him should the Gentiles seek." O that this may be the day and time wherein this prophecy shall be fulfilled! This time hundred years, viz. 1638, there was a strange gathering of the whole land unto the Lord Jesus, as their glorious Head and King. When his work seemed to be buried, and his friends were reckoning that they were like a company of dry bones, it pleased the Lord to breathe upon the dry bones, by the wind of his Spirit, and presently a great army stood up, and gathered life and strength to fight his battles, insomuch that the whole land, in a little time, was brought under the oath of a covenanted allegiance to the King of Zion; and such a vigorous stand was at that time made for the royalties of his crown, that these very powers then in being, which had been attempting to bury his cause, were obliged to give way to it. Although the kingdom and interest of Christ be brought low at this day, yet let us not lose hopes of its resurrection, but "remember the years of the right hand of the Most High;" let us "remember the works of the Lord, and his wonders of old; for the residue of the Spirit" is still with him; "his hand is not shortened, that he cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that he cannot hear." A nation can be born to him at once, just by the swaying of his royal sceptre, the

sound of his voice in the dispensation of the gospel. O that this may be the hour or year in which the dead through Scotland may hear the voice of the Son of man, and live!

Mean time, I say, I desire, as one of the meanest of his heralds, to invite and call, to intreat and beseech, yea, in his name and authority, I require all hearing me this day, to believe in his name, to trust him for salvation from sin, Satan, wrath, and hell, and to submit to his authority, to receive the law at his mouth, and to own him as their alone Judge, King, and Lawgiver: "Thou art my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth."

Object. 1. I have been in rebellion against the King of Zion, he will never shew favour to me.

Answ. All Adam's posterity are rebels; and if he did not receive such, he should have no kingdom on earth. But see what is said of Zion's King, Ps. 68:18, "He gives gifts unto men, yea, even to the rebellious." And therefore let not this stand in the way; break your covenant with hell, and submit.

Object. 2. My acts of rebellion draw deeper than can be supposed to be forgiven.

Answ. "Though your sins be as scarlet and crimson, he will make them white as snow, and as wool." The King stands with an indemnity in his hand to the greatest of rebels, saying, "I, even I am he that blotteth out all your transgressions," &c.

Object. 3. I am such a miserable, wretched, and worthless creature, that the King of Zion will never look upon me.

Answ. Though Zion's King be high, yet so condescending is he, that he regards the most worthless and wretched sinner that is out of hell, that will submit to his righteousness and sceptre. His cry is, "He that hath no money, let him come and buy without money, and without price."

Object. 4. I am a poor blind creature, I was born blind, and continue blind, like a mole, to this day, in the things of God; what will the King of Zion care for me?

Answ. The King of Zion he "opens the eyes of the blind," and he counsels the blind to come and "buy of him eye salve."

Object. 5. I am stark naked of all good qualifications, I have no holiness, no righteousness, no goodness, to recommend me to the King of Zion, as one of his subjects.

Answ. Zion's King calls the naked to come and "buy of him white raiment, to cover the shame of their nakedness." He clothes all his subjects with change of raiment, yea, with the King's own robe; only cast away your own filthy rags, the works of the law, and all qualifications of self, and come to him as you are, for he says, "Come to me who will, I will in no wise cast out."

Object. 6. I am so polluted and defiled with the uncleanness of sin, and have followed so many idols, that the King of Zion will never own me.

Answ. Ezek. 36:25, "I will sprinkle them with clean water, and they shall be clean: from all their filthiness, and from all their idols will I cleanse them." "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." The King washes the subjects with his own blood, and ye shall be made to sing, Rev. 1. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; to him be glory," &c.

Object. 7. I have a heart of stone like the adamant in my breast; will ever the King of Zion receive me?

Answ. Ezek. 36:26, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." The King of Zion cries, "My son, give me thine heart," hard as it is, and I will soften it.

Object. 8. I am unacquainted with the kingdom of the King of Zion, and know nothing of the secrets of his kingdom and government.

Answ. Well, be it so, the King of Zion hath "pity on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way;" he will let you into his secrets, and "to you it shall be given to know the mysteries of the kingdom." Zion's King is also a Prophet to reveal secrets, and his "secret is with them that fear him, and to them he will shew his covenant."

Object. 9. I am a stranger to the laws and government of the King, &c.

Answ. He will "write his law in your heart, and put it in your inward parts: I will put my spirit within them, and cause them to walk in my statutes."

Object. 10. If I should own the King of Zion for my King, I will prove a deserter, and turn back again unto the devil's camp, and then my latter end will be worse than my beginning.

Answ. It is the promise of Zion's King to all that believe in him, "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will never turn away from them to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

Object. 11. I am a dead sinner; what cares the King of Zion for the dead?

Answ. Zion's King quickens the dead, and commands "things that are not as if they were." His voice raises the dead; and therefore I cry, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Object. 12. What if I be not among those that are given to the King of Zion by his Father? in that case he will never receive me among his subjects.

Answ. That is none of your business, at the first instant to leap in among things secret, which belong unto the Lord: "Things revealed belong unto us, and to our children." The voice of the King of Zion, in his word and ministry, is unto you, "Unto you, O men, do I call, and my voice is to the sons of men." And therefore come in upon the King's proclamation, for that is your warrant, and not the secret thoughts of the King's heart.

Object. 13. I am a prisoner to sin and Satan, my bonds are so strong, that I cannot stir myself to come to Zion's King.

Answ. Zion's King comes to prisoners, because they cannot come to him, and says to the prisoners of sin and Satan, Come forth; unto you that sit in darkness, Show yourselves. It is just the work of the King of Zion to loose prisoners: and therefore submit to him, that he may loose your bands, and "whom the Son makes free, they are free indeed," &c.

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