

CHAPTER 22

All the evangelists, whatever they omit, give us a particular account of the death and resurrection of Christ, because he died for our sins and rose for our justification, this evangelist as fully as any, and with many circumstances and passages added which we had not before. In this chapter we have,

- I.** The plot to take Jesus, and Judas's coming into it (v. 1-6).
- II.** Christ's eating the passover with his disciples (v. 7-18).
- III.** The instituting of the Lord's supper (v. 19, 20).
- IV.** Christ's discourse with his disciples after supper, upon several heads (v. 21-38).
- V.** His agony in the garden (v. 39-46).
- VI.** The apprehending of him, by the assistance of Judas (v. 47-53).
- VII.** Peter's denying him (v. 54-62).
- VIII.** The indignities done to Christ by those that had him in custody, and his trial and condemnation in the ecclesiastical court (v. 63-71).

LUKE 22:1-6

THE TREACHERY OF JUDAS

The *year of the redeemed* is now *come*, which had been from eternity fixed in the divine counsels, and long looked for by them that waited for the consolation of Israel. After the revolutions of many ages, it is at length *come*, ^{<2674>}Isaiah 63:4. And, it is observable, it is in the very *first month* of that year that the redemption is wrought out, so much in haste was the Redeemer to perform his undertaking, so was he *straitened* till it was *accomplished*. It was in the same month, and at the same time of the month (in the *beginning of months*, ^{<2675>}Exodus 12:2), that God by Moses brought Israel out of Egypt, that the Antitype might answer the type. Christ is here delivered up, *when the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh*,

v. 1. About as long before that feast as they began to make preparation for it, here was preparation making for our Passover's being offered for us. Here we have,

I. His sworn enemies contriving it (v. 2), *the chief priests*, men of sanctity, and the scribes, men of learning, *seeking how they might kill him*, either by force of fraud. Could they have had their will, it had been soon done, but they *feared the people*, and the more for what they now saw of their diligent attendance upon his preaching.

II. A treacherous disciple joining in with them, and coming to their assistance, Judas surnamed *Iscariot*. He is here said to be *of the number of the twelve*, that dignified distinguished number. One would wonder that Christ, who *knew* all men, should take a traitor into *that number*, and that one of *that number*, who could not but *know Christ*, should be so base as to betray him; but Christ had wise and holy ends in taking Judas to be a disciple, and how he who knew Christ so well yet came to betray him we are here told: *Satan entered into Judas*, v. 3. It was the devil's work, who thought hereby to ruin Christ's undertaking, to have broken his head; but it proved only the bruising of his heel. Whoever betrays Christ, or his truths or ways, it is Satan that puts them upon it. Judas knew how desirous the chief priests were to get Christ into their hands, and that they could not do it safely without the assistance of some that knew his retirements, as he did. He therefore went himself, and made the motion to them, v. 4. Note, It is hard to say whether more mischief is done to Christ's kingdom by the power and policy of its open enemies, or by the treachery and self-seeking of its pretended friends: nay, without the latter its enemies could not gain their point as they do. When you see Judas communing with the *chief priests*, be sure some mischief is hatching; it is for no good that they are laying their heads together.

III. The issue of the treaty between them.

1. Judas must *betray Christ to them*, must bring them to a place where they might seize him without danger of tumult, and this they would be *glad of*.

2. They must give him a sum of money for doing it, and this he would be glad of (v. 5): *They covenanted to give him money*. When the bargain was made, Judas sought *opportunity to betray him*. Probably, he slyly enquired of Peter and John, who were more intimate with their Master than he was,

where he would be at such a time, and whither he would retire after the passover, and they were not sharp enough to suspect him. Somehow or other, in a little time he gained the advantage he sought, and fixed the time and place where it might be done, *in the absence of the multitude, and without tumult.*

~~4217~~ LUKE 22:7-20

THE KEEPING OF THE PASSOVER

What a hopeful prospect had we of Christ's doing a great deal of good by his preaching in the temple during the feast of unleavened bread, which continued seven days, when the people were *every* morning, and *early* in the morning, so attentive to hear him! But here is a stop put to it. He must enter upon work of another kind; in this, however, he shall do more good than in the other, for neither Christ's nor his church's suffering days are their idle empty days. Now here we have,

I. The preparation that was made for Christ's eating the passover with his disciples, upon the very *day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed* according to the law, v. 7. Christ was made under the law, and observed the ordinances of it, particularly that of the passover, to teach us in like manner to observe his gospel institutions, particularly that of the Lord's supper, and not to neglect them. It is probable that he went to the temple to preach in the morning, when he sent Peter and John another way into the city to *prepare the passover*. Those who have attendants about them, to do their secular business for them in a great measure, must not think that this *allows* them to be *idle*; it *engages* them to employ themselves more in *spiritual* business, or service to *the public*. He directed those whom he employed whither they should go (v. 9, 10): *they must follow a man bearing a pitcher of water*, and he must be their guide to the house. Christ could have described the house to them; probably it was a house they knew, and he might have said no more than, Go to such a one's house, or to a house in such a street, with such a sign, etc. But he directed them thus, to teach them to depend upon the conduct of Providence, and to follow that, *step by step*. They went, not knowing *whither they went*, nor *whom they followed*. Being come to the house, they must desire the master of the house to show them a room (v. 11), and he will readily do it, v. 12.

Whether it was a friend's house or a public house does not appear; but the disciples found their guide, and the house, and the room, just as he had said to them (v. 13); for *they* need not fear a disappointment who go upon Christ's word; according to the orders given them, they got every thing in readiness for *the passover*, v. 11.

II. The solemnizing of the passover, according to the law. When *the hour was come* that they should go to supper *he sat down*, probably at the head-end of the table, and *the twelve apostles with him*, Judas not excepted; for it is possible that those whose hearts are filled with Satan, and all manner of wickedness, may yet continue a plausible profession of religion, and be found in the performance of its external services; and while it is in the heart, and does not break out into any thing scandalous, such cannot be denied the external privileges of their external profession. Though Judas has already been guilty of an *overt act* of treason, yet, it not being publicly known, Christ admits him to sit down with the rest at the passover. Now observe,

1. How Christ *bids this passover welcome*, to teach us in like manner to welcome his passover, the Lord's supper, and to come to it with an appetite (v. 15): "*With desire I have desired, I have most earnestly desired, to eat this passover with you before I suffer.*" He knew it was to be the prologue to his sufferings, and *therefore* he desired it, because it was in order to his Father's glory and man's redemption. He *delighted* to do even this part of the *will of God* concerning him as Mediator. Shall we be *backward* to any service for him who was so *forward* in the work of our salvation? See the love he had to his disciples; he desired to eat it *with them*, that he and they might have a little time together, themselves, and none besides, for private conversation, which they could not have in Jerusalem but upon this occasion. He was now about to leave them, but was very desirous to *eat this passover with them before he suffered*, as if the comfort of that would carry him the more cheerfully through his sufferings, and make them the easier to him. Note, Our gospel passover, eaten by faith with Jesus Christ, will be an excellent preparation for sufferings, and trials, and death itself.

2. How Christ in it *takes his leave of all passovers*, thereby signifying his abrogating all the ordinances of the ceremonial law, of which that of the passover was one of the *earliest* and one of the most *eminent* (v. 16): "*I*

will not any more eat thereof, nor shall it by any more celebrated by my disciples, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

(1.) It was fulfilled when *Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us*, ^{<48E>}1 Corinthians 5:7. And *therefore* that type and shadow was laid aside, because now in the *kingdom of God* the substance was come, which superseded it.

(2.) It was fulfilled in the *Lord's supper*, an ordinance of the gospel kingdom, in which the passover had its accomplishment, and which the disciples, after the pouring out of the Spirit, did frequently celebrate, as we find ^{<48E>}Acts 2:42, 46. They ate of it, and Christ might be said to eat with them, because of the spiritual communion they had with him in that ordinance. He is said to *sup with them* and *they with him*, ^{<48E>}Revelation 3:20. But,

(3.) The complete accomplishment of that commemoration of liberty will be in the kingdom of glory, when all God's spiritual Israel shall be released from the bondage of death and sin, and be put in possession of the land of promise. What he had said of his eating of the paschal lamb, he repeats concerning his drinking of the *passover wine*, the cup of *blessing*, or of thanksgiving, in which all the company pledged the Master of the feast, at the close of the passover supper. This cup *he took*, according to the custom, and *gave thanks* for the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, and the preservation of their first-born, and then said, *Take this, and divide it among yourselves*, v. 17. This is not said afterwards of the sacramental cup, which being probably of much more weight and value, being the *New Testament in his blood*, he might give into every one's hand, to teach them to make a particular application of it to their own souls; but, as for the paschal cup which is to be abolished, it is enough to say, “*Take it, and divide it among yourselves*, do what you will with it, for we shall have no more occasion for it, v. 18. *I will not drink of the fruit of the vine any more*, I will not have it any more drank of, *till the kingdom of God shall come*, till the Spirit be poured out, and then you shall in *the Lord's supper* commemorate a much more glorious redemption, of which both the deliverance out of Egypt and the passover commemoration of it were types and figures. The kingdom of God is now so near being set up that you will not need to eat or drink any more till it comes.” Christ dying next day opened it. As Christ with a great deal of pleasure took leave of all the legal feasts (which fell of course with the passover) for the evangelical ones,

both spiritual and sacramental; so may good Christians, when they are called to remove from the church militant to that which is triumphant, cheerfully exchange even their spiritual repasts, much more their sacramental ones, for the eternal feast.

III. The institution of the Lord's supper, v. 19, 20. The *passover* and the *deliverance* out of Egypt were *typical* and *prophetic signs* of a Christ to come, who should by dying deliver us from sin and death, and the tyranny of Satan; but they shall no more say, *The Lord liveth, that brought us up out of the land of Egypt*; a much greater deliverance shall eclipse the lustre of that, and therefore the Lord's supper is instituted to be a commemorative sign or memorial of a Christ already come, that *has* by dying delivered us; and it is his death that is in a special manner set before us in that ordinance.

1. The *breaking of Christ's body* as a *sacrifice for us* is here commemorated by the *breaking of bread*; and the sacrifices under the law were called the *bread of our God* (⁽¹²¹⁶⁾Leviticus 21:6, 8, 17): *This is my body which is given for you*. And there is a feast upon that sacrifice instituted, in which we are to apply it to ourselves, and to take the benefit and comfort of it. This bread that was given for us is given *to us* to be food for our souls, for nothing can be more *nourishing* and *satisfying* to our souls than the doctrine of Christ's making atonement for sin, and the assurance of our interest in that atonement; this bread that was *broken* and *given for us*, to satisfy for the guilt of our sins, is *broken* and *given to us*, to satisfy the desire of our souls. And this we do in *remembrance* of what he did for us, when he died for us, and for a *memorial* of what we *do*, in making ourselves *partakers of him*, and joining ourselves to him in an everlasting covenant; like the stone Joshua set up for a *witness*, ⁽¹²²⁷⁾Joshua 24:27.

2. The *shedding of Christ's blood*, by which the atonement was made (for *the blood made atonement for the soul*, ⁽¹²⁷¹⁾Leviticus 17:11), as represented by the wine in the cup; and that cup of wine is a sign and token of the New Testament, or new covenant, made with us. It *commemorates* the purchase of the covenant by the blood of Christ, and *confirms* the promises of the covenant, which are all *Yea* and *Amen* in him. This will be reviving and refreshing to our souls, as wine that *makes glad the heart*. In all our commemorations of the shedding of Christ's blood, we must have an eye to it as shed for us; we needed it, we take hold of it, we hope to have

benefit by it; *who loved me, and gave himself for me.* And in all our regards to the New Testament we must have an eye to the *blood of Christ*, which gave life and being to it, and seals to us all the promises of it. Had it not been for the blood of Christ, we had never had the New Testament; and, had it not been for the New Testament, we had never know the meaning of Christ's blood shed.

LUKE 22:21-38

THE DISCIPLES ADMONISHED

We have here Christ's discourse with his disciples after supper, much of which is new here; and in St. John's gospel we shall find other additions. We should take example from him to entertain and edify our family and friends with such discourse at table as is good and to the use of edifying, which may minister grace to the hearers; but especially after we have been at the Lord's table, by Christian conference to keep one another in a suitable frame. The matters Christ here discoursed of were of weight, and to the present purpose.

I. He discoursed with them concerning him that should betray him, who was now present.

1. He signifies to them that the traitor was now among them, and one of them, v. 21. By placing this after the institution of the Lord's supper, though in Matthew and Mark it is placed before it, it seems plain that Judas did receive the Lord's supper, did *eat of that bread* and *drink of that cup*; for, after the solemnity was over, Christ said, *Behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.* There have been those that have eaten bread with Christ and yet have betrayed him.

2. He foretels that the treason would take effect (v. 22): *Truly the Son of man goes as it was determined*, goes to the place where he will be betrayed; for he is delivered up by the counsel and foreknowledge of God, else Judas could not have delivered him up. Christ was not driven to his sufferings, but cheerfully *went to them.* He said, *Lo, I come.*

3. He threatens the traitor: *Woe to that man by whom he is betrayed.* Note, Neither the patience of the saints under their sufferings, nor the counsel of

God concerning their sufferings, will be any excuse for those that have any hand in their sufferings, or that persecute them. Though God has *determined* that Christ shall be betrayed and he himself has cheerfully submitted to it, yet Judas's sin or punishment is not at all the less.

4. He frightens the rest of the disciples into a suspicion of themselves, by saying that it was one of them, and not naming which (v. 23): *They began to enquire among themselves*, to interrogate themselves, to put the question to themselves, *who it was that should do this thing*, that could be so base to so good a Master. The enquiry was not, *Is it you?* or, *Is it such a one?* but, *Is it I?*

II. Concerning the strife that was among them for precedency or supremacy.

1. See what the dispute was: *Which of them should be accounted the greatest*. Such and so many contests among the disciples for dignity and dominion, *before* the Spirit was poured upon them, were a sad presage of the like strifes for, and affections of, supremacy in the churches, after the Spirit should be provoked to depart from them. How inconsistent is this with that in the verse before! There they were enquiring which would be the traitor, and here which should be the prince. Could such an instance of humility, and such an instance of pride and vanity, be found in the same men, so near together? This is like *sweet* waters and *bitter* proceeding at the same time out of the same fountain. What a self-contradiction is the deceitful heart of man!

2. See what Christ said to this dispute. He was not sharp upon them, as might have been expected (he having so often reproved them for this very thing), but mildly showed them the sin and folly of it.

(1.) This was to make themselves like the *kings of the Gentiles*, who affect worldly pomp, and worldly power, v. 25. They *exercise lordship* over their subjects, and are ever and anon striving to exercise lordship too over the *princes* that are about them, though as *good* as themselves, if they think them not *so strong* as themselves. Note, The *exercising of lordship* better becomes the *kings of the Gentiles* than the ministers of Christ. But observe, *They that exercise authority*, and take upon themselves to bear sway, and give law, they are called *Benefactors* — *Euergetas*, they call themselves so, and so their flatterers call them, and those that set themselves to serve their interests. It is pretended that they have *been*

benefactors, and upon *that* account they should be admitted to *have rule*; nay, that in exercising authority they are benefactors. However they may really serve themselves, they would be thought to *serve their country*. One of the Ptolemies was surnamed *Euergetes* — *The Benefactor*. Now our Saviour, by taking notice of this, intimates,

[1.] That to *do good* is much more honourable than to *look great*; for these princes that were the *terror of the mighty* would not be called so, but rather the *benefactors of the needy*; so that, by their own confession, a benefactor to his country is much more valued than a ruler of his country.

[2.] That to *do good* is the surest way to be great, else they that aimed to be *rulers* would not have been so solicitous to be called *Benefactors*. This therefore he would have his disciples believe, that their great honour would be to do all the good they could in the world. They would indeed be *benefactors* to the world, by bringing the gospel to it. Let them value themselves upon that title, which they would indeed be *entitled* to, and then they need not strive which should be the greatest, for they would all be *greater* — treading blessings to mankind than the kings of the earth, that exercise lordship over them. If they have that which is confessedly the *greater* honour, of being benefactors, let them despise the less, of being rulers.

(2.) It was to make themselves unlike the disciples of Christ, and unlike Christ himself: “*You shall not be so,*” v. 26, 27. “It was never intended that you should *rule* any otherwise than by the power of truth and grace, but that you should *serve*.” When church-rulers affect external pomp and power, and bear up themselves by secular interests and influences, they debase their office, and it is an instance of degeneracy like that of Israel when they would have a king like the nations that were round about them, whereas the Lord was their King. See here,

[1.] What is the rule Christ gave to his disciples: He that is *greater among you*, that is *senior*, to whom precedency is due upon the account of his age, let him be as the *younger*, both in point of *lowness of place* (let him condescend to sit with the younger, and be free and familiar with them) and in point of *labour and work*. We say, *Juniores ad labores, seniores ad honores* — *Let the young work, and the aged receive their honours*. But let the elder take pains as well as the younger; their age and honour, instead of warranting them to take their ease, bind them to double work. And he that is *chief*, *ho hegoumenos* — *the president* of the college or assembly,

let him be *as he that serves, hos ho diakonon* — *as the deacon*; let him stoop to the meanest and most toilsome services for the public good, if there be occasion.

[2.] What was the example which he himself gave to this rule: *Whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat or he that serveth?* he that attendeth or he that is attended on? Now Christ was among his disciples just like one that waited at table. He was so far from *taking state*, or *taking his ease*, by commanding their attendance upon him, that he was ready to do any office of kindness and service for them; witness his *washing* their feet. Shall those take upon them the form of princes who call themselves followers of him that *took upon him the form of a servant*?

(3.) They ought not to strive for worldly honour and grandeur, because he had better honours in reserve for them, of another nature, a *kingdom*, a *feast*, a *throne*, for each of them, wherein they should all share alike, and should have no occasion to strive for precedency, v. 28-30. Where observe,

[1.] Christ's commendation of his disciples for their faithfulness to him; and this was honour enough for them, they needed not to strive for any greater. It is spoken with an air of encomium and applause: "*You are they who have continued with me in my temptations*, you are they who have stood by me and stuck to me when others have deserted me and turned their backs upon me." Christ had his temptations; he was despised and rejected of men, reproached and reviled, and *endured the contradiction of sinners*. But his disciples continued with him, and were afflicted in all his afflictions. It was but little help that they could give him, or service that they could do him; nevertheless, he took it kindly that they *continued with him*, and he here owns their kindness, though it was by the assistance of his own grace that they did continue. Christ's disciples had been very defective in their duty. We find them guilty of many mistakes and weaknesses: they were very dull and very forgetful, and often blundered, yet their Master passes all by and forgets it; he does not upbraid them with their infirmities, but gives them this memorable testimonial, *You are they who have continued with me*. Thus does he praise at parting, to show how willing he is to make the best of those whose hearts he knows to be upright with him.

[2.] The recompence he designed them for their fidelity: *I appoint, diatithemai, I bequeath, unto you a kingdom*. Or thus, *I appoint to you, as*

my Father has appointed a kingdom to me, that you may eat and drink at my table. Understand it, *First*, Of what should be done for them in this world. God gave his Son a *kingdom among men*, the gospel church, of which he is the living, quickening, ruling, Head. This *kingdom* he *appointed* to his apostles and their successors in the ministry of the gospel, that they should enjoy the comforts and privileges of the gospel, help to communicate them to others by gospel ordinances, sit on thrones as officers of the church, not only declaratively, but exhortatively *judging the tribes of Israel* that persist in their infidelity, and denouncing the wrath of God against them, and ruling the gospel Israel, the spiritual Israel, by the instituted discipline of the church, administered with gentleness and love. This is the honour reserved for you. Or, *Secondly*, Of what should be done for them in the other world, which I take to be chiefly meant. Let them go on in their services in this world; their preferments shall be in the other world. God will give them *the kingdom*, in which they shall be sure to have,

1. The *richest dainties*; for they shall *eat and drink at Christ's table in his kingdom*, of which he had spoken, v. 16, 18. They shall partake of those joys and pleasures which were the recompence of his services and sufferings. They shall have a full satisfaction of soul in the vision and fruition of God; and herein they shall have the best society, as at a feast, in the perfection of love.

2. The *highest dignities*: “You shall not only be provided for at the royal table, as Mephibosheth at David's, but you shall be preferred to the royal throne; shall *sit down with me on my throne*, ^(REV) Revelation 3:21. In the great day you shall *sit on thrones*, as assessors with Christ, to approve of and applaud his judgment of the *twelve tribes of Israel*.” If the *saints shall judge the world* (^(1COR) 1 Corinthians 6:2), much more the church.

III. Concerning Peter's denying him. And in this part of the discourse we may observe,

1. The general notice Christ gives to Peter of the devil's design upon him and the rest of the apostles (v. 31): *The Lord said, Simon, Simon*, observe what I say; *Satan hath desired to have you*, to have you all in his hands, *that he may sift you as wheat*. Peter, who used to be the *mouth* of the rest in speaking to Christ, is here made the *ear* of the rest; and what is designed for warning to them all (*all you shall be offended, because of me*)

is directed to Peter, because he was principally concerned, being in particular manner struck at by the tempter: *Satan has desired to have you*. Probably Satan had *accused* the disciples to God as mercenary in following Christ, and aiming at nothing else therein but enriching and advancing themselves in this world, as he accused Job. “No,” saith God, “they are honest men, and men of integrity.” “Give me leave to try them,” saith Satan, “and Peter particularly.” He desired to have them, *that he might sift them*, that he might show them to be chaff, and not wheat. The troubles that were now coming upon them were *sifting*, would try what there was in them: but this was not all; Satan desired to sift them by his temptations, and endeavoured by those troubles to draw them into sin, to put them into a loss and hurry, as corn when it is sifted to bring the chaff uppermost, or rather to shake out the wheat and leave nothing but the chaff. Observe, Satan could not sift them unless God gave him leave: He *desired to have them*, as he begged of God a permission to try and tempt Job. *Exetesato* — “*He has challenged you*, has undertaken to prove you a company of hypocrites, and Peter especially, the forwardest of you.” Some suggest that Satan demanded leave to sift them as their punishment for striving who should be greatest, in which contest Peter perhaps was very warm: “Leave them to me, to sift them for it.”

2. The particular encouragement he gave to Peter, in reference to this trial: “*I have prayed for thee*, because, though he desires to have them all, he is permitted to make his strongest onset upon thee only: thou wilt be most violently assaulted, *but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*, that it may not totally and finally fail.” Note,

- (1.)** If faith be kept up in an hour of temptation, though we may fall, yet we shall not be utterly cast down. Faith will quench Satan's fiery darts.
- (2.)** Though there may be many failings in the faith of true believers, yet there shall not be a total and final failure of their faith. It is their seed, their root, remaining in them.
- (3.)** It is owing to the mediation and intercession of Jesus Christ that the faith of his disciples, though sometimes sadly shaken, yet is not sunk. If they were left to themselves, they would fail; but they are *kept by the power of God* and the prayer of Christ. The intercession of Christ is not only general, for all that believe, but for *particular* believers (I have prayed for *thee*), which is an encouragement for us to pray for ourselves, and an engagement upon us to pray for others too.

3. The charge he gives to Peter to help others as he should himself be helped of God: “*When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren; when thou art recovered by the grace of God, and brought to repentance, do what thou canst to recover others; when thou hast found they faith kept from failing, labour to confirm the faith of others, and to establish them; when thou hast found mercy with God thyself, encourage others to hope that they also shall find mercy.*” Note,

(1.) Those that have fallen into sin must be *converted from it*; those that have turned aside must *return*; those that have left their first love must do their first works.

(2.) Those that through grace are converted from sin must do what they can to strengthen their brethren that stand, and to prevent *their falling*; see ~~1~~ Psalm 51:11-13; ~~1~~ Timothy 1:13.

4. Peter's declared resolution to cleave to Christ, whatever it cost him (v. 33): *Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death.* This was a great word, and yet I believe no more than he meant at this time, and thought he should *make good* too. Judas never protested thus against denying Christ, though often warned of it; for his heart was as fully set in him to the evil as Peter's was against it. Note, All the true disciples of Christ sincerely desire and design to *follow him, whithersoever he goes*, and whithersoever he leads them, though into a prison, though out of the world.

5. Christ's express prediction of his denying him thrice (v. 34): “*I tell thee, Peter (thou dost not know thine own heart, but must be left to thyself a little, that thou mayest know it, and mayest never trust to it again), the cock shall not crow this day before thou even deny that thou knowest me.*” Note, Christ knows us better than we know ourselves, and knows the evil that is in us, and will be done by us, which we ourselves do not suspect. It is well for us that Christ knows where we are weak better than we do, and therefore where to come in with grace sufficient; that he knows how far a temptation will prevail, and therefore when to say, *Hitherto shall it come, and no further.*

IV. Concerning the condition of all the disciples.

1. He appeals to them concerning what had been, v. 35. He had owned that they had been faithful servants to him, v. 28. Now he expects, at parting,

that they should acknowledge that he had been a kind and careful Master to them ever since they left all to follow him: *When I sent you without purse, lacked you any thing?*

(1.) He owns that he had sent them out in a very poor and bare condition, barefoot, and with no money in their purses, because they were not to go far, nor be out long; and he would thus teach them to depend upon the providence of God, and, under that, upon the kindness of their friends. If God thus send us out into the world, let us remember that better than we have thus begun low.

(2.) Yet ye will have them own that, notwithstanding this, they had *lacked nothing*; they then lived as plentifully and comfortably as ever; and they readily acknowledged it: "*Nothing, Lord; I have all, and abound.*" Note,

[1.] It is good for us often to review the providences of God that have been concerning us all our days, and to observe how we have got through the straits and difficulties we have met with.

[2.] Christ is a good Master, and his service a good service; for though his servants may sometimes be brought low, yet he will help them; and though he *try* them, yet will he not leave them. *Jehovah-jireh.*

[3.] We must reckon ourselves well done by, and must not complain, but be thankful, if we have had the necessary supports of life, though we have had neither dainties nor superfluities, though we have lived from hand to mouth, and lived upon the kindness of our friends. The disciples lived upon contribution, and yet did not complain that their maintenance was precarious, but owned, to their Master's honour, that it was sufficient; they had wanted nothing.

2. He gives them notice of a very great change of their circumstances now approaching. For,

(1.) He that was their Master was now entering upon his sufferings, which he had often foretold (v. 37): "*Now that which is written must be fulfilled in me, and this among the rest, He was numbered among the transgressors* — he must suffer and die as a malefactor, and in company with some of the vilest of malefactors. This is that which is *yet to be accomplished*, after all the rest, and then *the things concerning me*, the things written concerning me, will have an end; then I shall say, *It is finished.*" Note, It may be the comfort of suffering Christians, as it was of a suffering Christ,

that their sufferings were foretold, and *determined* in the counsels of heaven, and will shortly *determine* in the joys of heaven. They were *written* concerning them, and they *will have an end*, and will end well, everlastingly well.

(2.) They must therefore expect troubles, and must not think now to have such an easy and comfortable life as they had had; no, the scene will alter. They must now in some degree suffer *with* their Master; and, when he is gone, they must expect to suffer *like* him. The servant is not better than his Lord.

[1.] They must not now expect that their friends would be so kind and generous to them as they had been; and therefore, *He that has a purse, let him take it*, for he may have occasion for it, and for all the good husbandry he can use.

[2.] They must now expect that their enemies would be more fierce upon them than they had been, and they would need magazines as well as stores: *He that has no sword* wherewith to defend himself against robbers and assassins (⁴⁷¹²⁵2 Corinthians 11:26) will find a great want of it, and will be ready to wish, some time or other, that he had sold his garment and bought one. This is intended only to show that the times would be very perilous, so that no man would think himself safe if he had not a sword by his side. But the *sword of the Spirit* is the sword which the disciples of Christ must furnish themselves with. *Christ having suffered for us*, we must *arm ourselves* with the same mind (⁴⁹¹¹¹1 Peter 4:1), arm ourselves with an expectation of trouble, that it may not be a surprise to us, and with a holy resignation to the will of God in it, that there may be no opposition in us to it: and then we are better prepared than if we had sold a coat to buy a sword. The disciples hereupon enquire what strength they had, and find they had among them *two swords* (v. 38), of which one was Peter's. The Galileans generally travelled with swords. Christ wore none himself, but he was not against his disciples' wearing them. But he intimates how little he would have them depend upon this when he saith, *It is enough*, which some think is spoken ironically: "Two swords among twelve men! you are bravely armed indeed when our enemies are now coming out against us in great multitudes, and every one with a sword!" Yet two swords are sufficient for those who need none, having God himself to be *the shield of their help and the sword of their excellency*, (⁴⁶³⁹Deuteronomy 33:29.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN

We have here the awful story of Christ's *agony in the garden*, just before he was betrayed, which was largely related by the other evangelists. In it Christ *accommodated himself* to that part of his undertaking which he was now entering upon — the making of *his soul an offering for sin*. He afflicted his own soul with grief for the sin he was to satisfy for, and an apprehension of the wrath of God to which man had by sin made himself obnoxious, which he was pleased as a sacrifice to admit the impressions of, the consuming of a sacrifice with fire from heaven being the surest token of its acceptance. In it Christ entered the lists with the powers of darkness, gave them all the advantages they could desire, and yet conquered them.

I. What we have in this passage which we had before is,

- 1.** That when Christ went out, though it was in the night, and a long walk, *his disciples* (eleven of them, for Judas had given them the slip) *followed him*. Having continued with him hitherto in his temptations, they would not leave him now.
- 2.** That he went to the place *where he was wont* to be private, which intimates that Christ accustomed himself to retirement, was often alone, to teach us to be so, for freedom of converse with God and our own hearts. Though Christ had no conveniency for retirement but a garden, yet he retired. This should particularly be our practice after we have been at the Lord's table; we have then work to do which requires us to be private.
- 3.** That he exhorted his disciples to *pray* that, though the approaching trial could not be avoided, yet they might not in it *enter into temptation* to sin; that, when they were in the greatest fright and danger, yet they might not have any inclination to desert Christ, nor take a step towards it: "Pray that you may be *kept from sin*."
- 4.** That he withdrew from them, and prayed himself; they had their errands at the throne of grace, and he had his, and therefore it was fit that they should pray separately, as sometimes, when they had joint errands, they prayed together. He withdrew about a *stone's cast* further into the garden,

which some reckon about fifty of sixty paces, and there he *kneeled down* (so it is here) upon the bare ground; but the other evangelists say that afterwards he *fell on his face*, and there *prayed* that, if it were the will of God, this cup of suffering, this bitter cup, might be *removed from him*. This was the language of that innocent dread of suffering which, being really and truly man, he could not but have in his nature.

5. That he, knowing it to be his Father's will that he should suffer and die, and that, as the matter was now settled, it was necessary for our redemption and salvation, presently withdrew that petition, did not insist upon it, but resigned himself to his heavenly Father's will: "*Nevertheless not my will be done*, not the will of my human nature, but the will of God as it is written concerning me in the volume of the book, *which I delight to do*, let that be done," ⁴⁰⁷Psalm 40:7, 8.

6. That his disciples were *asleep* when he was at prayer, and when they should have been themselves praying, v. 45. When he *rose from prayer*, he *found them sleeping*, unconcerned in his sorrows; but see what a favourable construction is here put upon it, which we had not in the other evangelists — they were *sleeping for sorrow*. The great sorrow they were in upon the mournful farewells their Master had been this evening giving them had exhausted their spirits, and made them very dull and heavy, which (it being now late) disposed them to sleep. This teaches us to make the best of our brethren's infirmities, and, if there be one cause better than another, charitably impute them to that.

7. That when he awoke them, then he exhorted them to pray (v. 46): "*Why sleep ye? Why do you allow yourselves to sleep? Rise and pray. Shake off your drowsiness, that you may be fit to pray, and pray for grace, that you may be able to shake off your drowsiness.*" This was like the ship-master's call to Jonah in a storm (³¹⁶Jonah 1:6): *Arise, call upon thy God*. When we find ourselves either by our outward circumstances or our inward dispositions entering into temptation, it concerns us to *rise and pray*, Lord, help me in this *time of need*. But,

II. There are three things in this passage which we had not in the other evangelists: —

1. That, when Christ was in his agony, *there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him*, v. 43.

(1.) It was an instance of the deep humiliation of our Lord Jesus that he *needed* the assistance of an angel, and would *admit* it. The influence of the divine nature withdrew for the present, and then, as to his human nature, he was for a little while *lower than the angels*, and was capable of receiving help from them.

(2.) When he was not delivered from his sufferings, yet he was *strengthened* and supported under them, and that was *equivalent*. If God proportion the shoulders to the burden, we shall have no reason to complain, whatever he is pleased to lay upon us. David owns this a sufficient *answer to his prayer*, in the day of trouble, that God *strengthened him with strength in his soul*, and so does the son of David, ~~138~~ Psalm 138:3.

(3.) The angels ministered to the Lord Jesus in his sufferings. He could have had legions of them to rescue him; nay, this one could have done it, could have chased and conquered the whole band of men that came to take him; but he made use of his ministration only to *strengthen him*; and the very visit which this angel made him now in his grief, when his enemies were awake and his friends asleep, was such a seasonable token of the divine favour as would be a very great strengthening to him. Yet this was not all: he probably *said something* to him to strengthen him; put him in mind that his sufferings were in order to his Father's glory, to his own glory, and to the salvation of those that were given him, represented to him the joy set before him, the seed he should see; with these and the like suggestions he encouraged him to go on cheerfully; and what is comforting is strengthening. Perhaps he *did something* to strengthen him, wiped away his sweat and tears, perhaps ministered some cordial to him, as after his temptation, or, it may be, took him by the arm, and helped him off the ground, or bore him up when he was ready to faint away; and in these services of the angel the Holy Spirit was *enischyon auton* — *putting strength into him*; for so the word signifies. *It pleased the Lord to bruise him* indeed; yet *did he plead against him with his great power*? No, but he *put strength in him* (~~321~~ Job 23:6), as he had promised, ~~182~~ Psalm 89:21; ~~308~~ Isaiah 49:8; 50:7.

2. That, *being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly*, v. 44. As his sorrow and trouble grew upon him, he grew more importunate in prayer; not that there was before any coldness or indifferency in his prayers, but there was now a greater vehemency in them, which was expressed in his voice and

gesture. Note, Prayer, though never out of season, is in a special manner seasonable when we are in an agony; and the stronger our agonies are the more lively and frequent our prayers should be. Now it was that Christ *offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, and was heard in that he feared* (^{<380>}Hebrews 5:7), and in his fear *wrestled*, as Jacob with the angel.

3. That, in this agony, *his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground*. Sweat came in with sin, and was a branch of the curse, ^{<100>}Genesis 3:19. And therefore, when Christ was made sin and a curse for us, he underwent a grievous sweat, that *in the sweat of his face* we might eat bread, and that he might sanctify and sweeten all our trials to us. There is some dispute among the critics whether this *sweat* is only *compared to drops of blood*, being much *thicker* than drops of sweat commonly are, the pores of the body being more than ordinarily opened, or whether *real* blood out of the capillary veins mingled with it, so that it was in colour like blood, and might truly be called a *bloody sweat*; the matter is not great. Some reckon this one of the times when Christ shed his blood for us, *for without the shedding of blood there is no remission*. Every pore was as it were a bleeding wound, and his blood stained all his raiment. This showed the *travail of his soul*. He was now abroad in the open air, in a cool season, upon the cold ground, far in the night, which, one would think, had been enough to strike in a sweat; yet now he breaks out into a sweat, which bespeaks the extremity of the agony he was in.

^{<227>}LUKE 22:47-53

THE TREACHERY OF JUDAS

Satan, finding himself baffled in his attempts to terrify our Lord Jesus, and so to put him out of the possession of his own soul, betakes himself (according to his usual method) to force and arms, and brings a party into the field to seize him, and Satan was *in them*. Here is,

I. The marking of him by Judas. Here a numerous party appears, and Judas at the head of them, for he was *guide to them that took Jesus*; they knew not where to *find him*, but he brought them to the place: when they were there, they knew not which was he, but Judas told them that whomsoever he should kiss, that same was he; so he *drew near to him to*

kiss him, according to the wonted freedom and familiarity to which our Lord Jesus admitted his disciples. Luke takes notice of the question Christ asked him, which we have not in the other evangelists: *Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?* What! Is this the signal? v. 48. Must the Son of man be *betrayed*, as if any thing could be concealed from him, and a plot carried on against him unknown to him? Must one of his own disciples betray him, as if he had been a hard Master to them, or deserved ill at their hands? Must he be betrayed with a kiss? Must the badge of friendship be the instrument of treachery? Was ever a love-token so desecrated and abused? Note, Nothing can be a greater affront or grief to the Lord Jesus than to be betrayed, and betrayed with a kiss, by those that profess relation to him and an affection for him. Those do so who, under pretence of zeal for his honour, persecute his servants, who, under the cloak of a seeming affection for the honour of free grace, give a blow to the root of holiness and strictness of conversation. Many instances there are of Christ's being betrayed with a kiss, by those who, under the form of godliness, fight against the power of it. It were well if their own consciences would put this question to them, which Christ here puts to Judas, *Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?* And will he not resent it? Will he not revenge it?

II. The effort which his disciples made for his protection (v. 49): *When they saw what would follow*, that those armed men were come to seize him, they said, "*Lord, shall we smite with the sword?* Thou didst allow us to *have* two swords, shall we now make use of them? Never was there more occasion; and to what purpose should we have them if we do not use them?" They asked the question as if they would not have drawn the sword without commission from their Master, but they were in too much *haste* and too much *heat* to stay for an answer. But Peter, aiming at the head of one of the servants of the *high priest*, missed his blow, and *cut off his right ear*. As Christ, by throwing them to the ground that came to take him, showed what he could have done, so Peter, by this exploit, showed what he could have done too in so good a cause if he had had leave. The other evangelists tell us what was the check Christ gave to Peter for it. Luke here tells us,

1. How Christ excused the blow: *Suffer ye thus far*, v. 51. Dr. Whitby thinks he said this to his enemies who came to take him, to pacify them, that they might not be provoked by it to fall upon the disciples, whom he had undertaken the preservation of: "*Pass by this injury and affront; it was*

without warrant from me, and there shall not be another blow struck.” Though Christ had power to have struck them down, and struck them dead, yet he *speaks them fair*, and, as it were, *begs their pardon* for an assault made upon them by one of his followers, to teach us to give good words even to our enemies.

2. How he cured the wound, which was more than amends sufficient for the injury: *He touched his ear, and healed him*; fastened his ear on again, that he might not so much as go away *stigmatized*, though he well deserved it. Christ hereby gave them a proof,

(1.) Of his power. He that could *heal* could *destroy* if he pleased, which should have obliged them in interest to submit to him. Had they returned the blow upon Peter, he would immediately have healed him; and what could not a small regiment do that had such a surgeon to it, immediately to help the *sick* and *wounded*?

(2.) Of his mercy and goodness. Christ here gave an illustrious example to his own rule of *doing good to them that hate us*, as afterwards he did of *praying for them that spitefully use us*. Those who render good for evil do as Christ did. One would have thought that this generous piece of kindness should have overcome them, that such coals, heaped on their heads, should have *melted them*, that they could not have bound him as a malefactor who had approved himself such a benefactor; but their hearts were hardened.

III. Christ's expostulation with the officers of the detachment that came to apprehend him, to show what an absurd thing it was for them to make all this rout and noise, v. 52, 53. Matthew relates it as said to *the multitude*. Luke tells us that it was said to the *chief priests and captains of the temple* the latter commanded the several orders of the priests, and therefore are here put between the *chief priests* and *the elders*, so that they were all ecclesiastics, retainers to the temple, who were employed in this odious piece of service; and some of the first rank too disparaged themselves so far as to be seen in it. Now see here,

1. How Christ *reasons* with them concerning their proceedings. What occasion was there for them to come out in the dead of the night, and *with swords and staves*?

(1.) They knew that he was one that would not *resist*, nor raise the mob against them; he never had done any thing like this. Why then *are ye come out as against a thief?*

(2.) They knew he was one that would not *abscond*, for he was daily with them in the temple, in the midst of them, and never sought to conceal himself, nor did they offer to lay hands on him. Before his hour was come, it was folly for them to think to take him; and when his hour was come it was folly for them to make all this ado to take him.

2. How he reconciles himself to their proceedings; and this we had not before: “*But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.* How hard soever it may seem that I should be thus exposed, I submit, for so it is determined. This is the hour *allowed you* to have your will against me. There is an hour *appointed me* to reckon for it. Now the *power of darkness, Satan, the ruler of the darkness of this world,* is permitted to do his worst, to bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, and I resolve to acquiesce; let him do his worst. *The Lord shall laugh at him, for he sees that his day, his hour, is coming.*” ^{<487B>}Psalm 37:13. Let this quiet us under the prevalency of the church's enemies; let it quiet us in a dying hour, that,

(1.) It is but an *hour* that is permitted for the triumph of our adversary, a short time, a limited time.

(2.) It is *their hour*, which is appointed them, and in which they are permitted to try their strength, that omnipotence may be the more glorified in their fall.

(3.) It is *the power of darkness* that *rides master*, and darkness must give way to light, and the power of darkness be made to truckle to the prince of light. Christ was willing to wait for his triumphs till his warfare was accomplished, and we must be so too.

^{<225>}LUKE 22:54-62

THE FALL OF PETER

We have here the melancholy story of Peter's denying his Master, at the time when he was arraigned before the high priest, and those that were of the *cabal*, that were ready to receive the prey, and to prepare the evidence

for his arraignment, *as soon as it was day*, before the *great sanhedrim*, v. 66. But notice is not taken here, as was in the other evangelists, of Christ's being now upon his examination before the high priest, only of his being brought into *the high priest's house*, v. 54. But the manner of expression is observable. They *took him, and led him, and brought him*, which methinks is like that concerning Saul (¹Samuel 15:12): *He is gone about, and passed on, and gone down*; and intimates that, even when they had seized their prey, they were in confusion, and, for fear of the people, or rather struck with inward terror upon what they had seen and heard, they took him the furthest way about, or, rather, knew not which way they hurried him, such a hurry were they in in their own bosoms. Now observe,

I. Peter's falling.

1. It began in *sneaking*. He *followed Christ* when he was had away prisoner; this was well, and showed a concern for his Master. But he followed *afar off*, that he might be out of danger. He thought to trim the matter, to *follow Christ*, and so to satisfy his conscience, but to follow *afar off*, and so to save his reputation, and sleep in a whole skin.

2. It proceeded in keeping his distance still, and associating himself with the high priest's servants, when he should have been at his master's elbow. The *servants kindled a fire in the midst of the hall and sat down together*, to talk over their night-expedition. Probably Malchus was among them, and *Peter sat down among them*, as if he had been one of them, at least would be thought to be so. His fall itself was disclaiming all acquaintance with Christ, and relation to him, disowning him because he was now in distress and danger. He was charged by a sorry simple maid, that belonged to the house, with being a retainer to this *Jesus*, about whom there was now so much noise. She *looked wistfully* upon him as he *at by the fire*, only because he was a stranger, and one whom she had not seen before; and concluding that at this time of night there were no neuters there, and knowing him not to be any of the retinue of the high priest, she concludes him to be one of the retinue of this *Jesus*, or perhaps she had been some time or other looking about her in the temple, and had seen *Jesus* there and *Peter* with him, officious about him, and remembered him; *and this man was with him*, saith she. And *Peter*, as he had not the courage to *own* the charge, so he had not the wit and presence of mind to *turn it off*, as he might have done many ways, and therefore flatly and plainly denies it: *Woman, I know him not*.

4. His fall was repeated a second time (v. 58): *After a little while*, before he had time to recollect himself, *another saw him*, and said, “*Even thou art one of them*, as slyly as thou sittest here among the high priest's servants.” *Not I*, saith Peter; *Man, I am not*. And a *third time*, *about the space of an hour after* (for, saith the tempter, “When he is down, down with him; let us follow the blow, till we get him past recovery”), *another* confidently affirms, *strenuously* asserts it, “*Of a truth this fellow also was with him*, let him deny it if he can, for you may all perceive *he is a Galilean*.” But he that has once told a lie is strongly tempted to persist in it; the *beginning of that sin is as the letting forth of water*. Peter now not only denies that he is a disciple of Christ, but that he knows any thing of him (v. 60): “*Man, I know not what thou sayest; I never heard of this Jesus*.”

II. *Peter's getting up again*. See how happily he recovered himself, or, rather, the grace of God recovered him. See how it was brought about: —

1. The *cock crew* just as he was the third time denying that he knew Christ, and this startled him and put him upon thinking. Note, Small accidents may involve great consequences.

2. *The Lord turned and looked upon him*. This circumstance we had not in the other evangelists, but it is a very remarkable one. Christ is here called *the Lord*, for there was much of divine knowledge, power, and grace, appearing in this. Observe, Though Christ had now his back upon Peter, and was upon his trial (when, one would think, he had something else to mind), yet he knew all that Peter said. Note, Christ takes more notice of what we say and do than we think he does. When Peter disowned Christ, yet Christ did not disown him, though he might justly have cast him off, and never looked upon him more, but have denied him before his Father. It is well for us that Christ does not deal with us as we deal with him. Christ *looked upon Peter*, not doubting but that Peter would soon be aware of it; for he knew that, though he had denied him with his lips, yet his eye would still be towards him. Observe, Though Peter had now been guilty of a very great offence, and which was very provoking, yet Christ would not *call to him*, lest he should *shame* him or *expose* him; he only gave him *a look* which none but Peter would understand the meaning of, and it had a great deal in it.

(1.) It was a *convincing* look. Peter said that he did not *know Christ*. Christ *turned, and looked upon him*, as if he should say, “Dost thou not know me, Peter? Look me in the face, and tell me so.”

(2.) It was a *chiding* look. We may suppose that he looked upon him and *frowned*, or some way signified his displeasure. Let us think with what an angry countenance Christ justly looks upon us when we have sinned.

(3.) It was an *expostulating* upbraiding look: “What, Peter, art thou he that disownest me now, when thou shouldst come and witness for me? What thou a disciple? Thou that wast the most forward to confess me to be the Son of God, and didst solemnly promise thou wouldest never disown me?”

(4.) It was a *compassionate* look; he looked upon him with tenderness. “Poor Peter, how weak is thine heart! How art thou fallen and undone if I do not help thee!”

(5.) It was a *directing* look. Christ *guided him with his eye*, gave him a wink to go out from that sorry company, to *retire*, and bethink himself a little, and then he would soon see what he had to do.

(6.) It was a *significant* look: it signified the conveying of grace to Peter's heart, to enable him to repent; the crowing of the cock would not have brought him to repentance without this look, nor will the external means without special efficacious grace. Power went along with this look, to change the heart of Peter, and to bring him to himself, to his *right mind*.

3. *Peter remembered the words of the Lord*. Note, The *grace of God* works in and by the *word of God*, brings that to mind, and sets that home upon the conscience, and so gives the soul a happy turn. *Tolle et lege* — *Take it up, and read*.

4. Then *Peter went out, and wept bitterly*. One look from Christ melted him into tears of godly sorrow for sin. The candle was newly put out, and then a little thing lighted it again. Christ looked upon the chief priests, and made no impression upon them as he did on Peter, who had the divine seed remaining in him to work upon. It was not the look from Christ, but the grace of God with it, that recovered Peter, and brought him to-rights.

CHRIST ABUSED AND INSULTED

We are here told, as before in the other gospels,

I. How our Lord Jesus was *abused* by the servants of the high priest. *The abjects*, the rude and barbarous servants, *gathered themselves together against him*. They that *held Jesus*, that had him in custody till the court sat, they *mocked him*, and *smote him* (v. 63), they would not allow him to *repose* himself one minute, though he had had no sleep all night, nor to *compose* himself, though he was hurried to his trial, and no time given him to prepare for it. They made sport with him: this sorrowful night to him shall be a merry night to them; and the blessed Jesus, like Samson, is made the fool in the play. They *hood-winked* him, and then, according to the common play that young people have among them, they *struck him on the face*, and continued to do so till he named the person that smote him (v. 64), intending hereby an affront to his prophetic office, and that knowledge of secret things which he was said to have. We are not told that he said *any thing*, but *bore every thing*; hell was let loose, and he suffered it to do its worst. A greater indignity could not be done to the blessed Jesus, yet this was but one instance of many; for *many other things blasphemously spoke they against him*, v. 65. They that condemned him for a blasphemer were themselves the vilest blasphemers that ever were.

II. How he was accused and condemned by the great sanhedrim, consisting of the *elders of the people, the chief priests, and the scribes*, who were all up betimes, and got together *as soon as it was day*, about five of the clock in the morning, to prosecute this matter. They were *working this evil upon their beds*, and, as soon as ever the *morning was light*, practised it, ³⁰¹¹ Micah 2:1. They would not have been up so early for any good work. It is but a short account that we have here of his trial in the ecclesiastical court.

1. They ask him, *Art thou the Christ?* He was generally believed by his followers to be the Christ, but they could not prove it upon him that he had ever said so *totidem verbis* — *in so many words*, and therefore urge him to own it to them, v. 67. If they had asked him this question with a willingness to admit that he was the Christ, and to receive him accordingly

if he could give sufficient proof of his being so, it had been *well*, and might have been for ever *well with them*; but they asked it with a resolution not to believe him, but a design to ensnare him.

2. He justly complained of their unfair and unjust usage of him, v. 67, 68. They all, as Jews, professed to expect the Messiah, and to expect him at *this time*. No other appeared, or had appeared, that pretended to be the Messiah. He had no competitor, nor was he likely to have any. He had given amazing proofs of a divine power going along with him, which made his claims very well worthy of a free and impartial enquiry. It had been but just for these leaders of the people to have taken him into their council, and examined him there as a *candidate* for the messiahship, not at the bar as a *criminal*. “But,” saith he,

(1.) “*If I tell you that I am the Christ, and give you ever such convincing proofs of it, you are resolved that you will not believe. Why should the cause be brought on before you who have already prejudged it, and are resolved, right or wrong, to run it down, and to condemn it?*”

(2.) “*If I ask you what you have to object against the proofs I produce, you will not answer me.*” Here he refers to their silence when he put a question to them, which would have led them to own his authority, ²⁰¹⁵Luke 20:5-7. They were neither fair judges, nor fair disputants; but, when they were pinched with an argument, would rather be silent than own their conviction: “*You will neither answer me nor let me go; if I be not the Christ, you ought to answer the arguments with which I prove that I am; if I be, you ought to let me go; but you will do neither.*”

3. He referred them to his second coming, for the full proof of his being the Christ, to their confusion, since they would not now admit the proof of it, to their conviction (v. 69): “*Hereafter shall the Son of man sit, and be seen to sit, on the right hand of the power of God, and then you will not need to ask whether he be the Christ or no.*”

4. Hence they inferred that he set up himself as the Son of God, and asked him *whether he were so or no* (v. 70): *Art thou then the Son of God?* He called himself the *Son of man*, referring to Daniel's vision of the *Son of man that came near before the Ancient of days*, ²⁰¹³Daniel 7:13, 14. But they understood so much as to know that if he was *that Son of man*, he was also *the Son of God*. And art thou so? By this it appears to have been

the faith of the Jewish church that the Messiah should be both *Son of man* and *Son of God*.

5. He owns himself to be the Son of God: *Ye say that I am*; that is, “I am, as ye say.” Compare ⁴¹⁴²Mark 14:62. *Jesus said, I am*. This confirms Christ's testimony concerning himself, that he was the Son of God, that he stood to it, when he knew he should suffer for standing to it.

6. Upon this they ground his condemnation (v. 71): *What need we any further witness?* It was true, they needed not any further witness to prove that he said he was *the Son of God*, they had it from *his own mouth*; but did they not need proof that he was not so, before they condemned him as a blasphemer for saying that he was so? Had they no apprehension that it was possible he might be so, and then what horrid guilt they should bring upon themselves in putting him to death? No, *they know not, neither will they understand*. They cannot think it possible that he should be the Messiah, though ever so evidently clothed with divine power and grace, if he appear not, as they expect, in worldly pomp and grandeur. Their eyes being blinded with the admiration of that, they rush on in this dangerous prosecution, as the horse into the battle.