

5045
DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT SION-CHAPEL,

On Sunday Afternoon, September 18, 1796,

TO THE

J E W S.

BY WILLIAM COOPER.

BEING HIS SECOND ADDRESS TO THAT PEOPLE.

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1798.

HYMN,

At the Beginning of the Service.

CROWN Him, ye morning stars of light,
 Who fix'd this floating ball;
 Now hail the strength of Israel's might,
 And crown him Lord of all.

Ye chosen seed of Israel's race,
 Ye ransom'd of the fall,
 Hail Him, who saves you by his grace,
 And crown Him Lord of all.

Hail Him, ye heirs of David's line,
 Whom David Lord did call;
 The God Incarnate! Man Divine!
 The crowned Lord of all!

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget
 The wormwood and the gall,
 Go, spread your trophies at his feet,
 And crown Him Lord of all.

Let every tribe, and ev'ry tongue,
 That bound Creation's ball;
 Now shout in universal song,
 The crowned Lord of all!

 PRAYER, BEFORE SERMON.

O THOU most high God! before whom angels and arch-
 angels, veiling their faces, bow with the profoundest
 reverence; we thy poor unworthy creatures, who are here
 assembled in thy more immediate presence, would pre-
 sent our praises unto thee. We thank thee, O God! for

all the blessings of thy providence--that we have bread to eat, and cloaths to wear. But, above all, we thank thee for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world. We thank thee, O God! for the knowledge thou hast given us of thy blessed ways by the teaching of thy Holy Spirit; and we earnestly pray that thou wouldest still instruct us in the way everlasting. O Lord God! there are many assembled in thy presence, who, peradventure, are ignorant of thee, and have rushed into this house as the unthinking horse rusheth into the battle. But though they may be come hither without proper reverence, be pleased to make thyself known to them, and then shall they bow with awe before thee. O! teach them thyself; for till *thou* dost teach us, human learning and knowledge never can. O God! do thou be pleased to be in the midst of us to-day, as thou wast in the midst of the camps of Israel of old. Do thou grant that Jesus, the great Messiah, by his divine influences, may enlighten our souls, as the rising sun illuminates the world. And, O God! grant that the enmity of the human heart may be taken away this day by the illumination of thy Spirit. There are some of thine ancient Israel in thy presence. Be merciful to them. Shew them the error of their way, and bring them to the knowledge of thyself, as revealed in thy word. Tell them, that without the forgiveness of their sins, and the witness of it, in part, they have but little true hope of everlasting happiness. Shew them, O God! that as thou art the Lord, so besides thee there is no Saviour; and that in order to be their Saviour, thou must take their nature and sins upon thee. O! enable thy dust to speak something to-day that shall be of use to their souls! Grant that they may see the wisdom of thy word--that they may see that the prophecies respecting the Messiah are fulfilled: and that thou, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning, ever wast, and ever will be, true to thy promises. Shew them, O God! that the seventy weeks are accomplished, that the

Messiah

Messiah is cut off, and that there is reconciliation made for the transgressors. Be pleased to carry home the knowledge of these truths to their hearts, and may they rejoice in thee with joy inexpressible, and full of glory!

Lord! thou see'st that I am unprepared to speak thy word to-day. But I look unto thee, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Thou hast received gifts for men. Thou art the helper of thy people, and upon thee, great God! do I rely for support. I see, dear Lord! that without thee I can do nothing; but I desire to believe that I can do all things through thy strengthening.

Do thou be pleased to enable me to speak the truth, and nothing but the truth. Enable thy people to hear even as for eternity, without any prejudice; and may they feel the force of the truth operating upon their souls!

Hear prayers, O Lord! for those who desire an interest in them. Hear our prayers for the whole world. Grant that kingdoms wide, that sit in darkness, may have the glorious light of the Gospel shining into their hearts. But, above all, we pray for thine ancient Israel, the Jews. Though thou hast not called *all* Israel to the knowledge of the Messiah, yet, we trust, there are many here, at this time, which will be called. We thank thee, O God! for the glorious signs which we have beheld; and, we trust, that we shall see much greater things. Lord God Almighty! convert their souls. Reveal thyself unto them: and may they know and feel that thy word is, indeed, the truth! Hear our prayers, dear Lord! and do more and better for us than we can ask or think; not for our sakes, but for thine own. Our Father, who art in heaven, &c.

HYMN,

HYMN, BEFORE SERMON.

SING to the Lord, Jehovah's name,
 And in his strength rejoice;
 When his salvation is our theme,
 Exalted be our voice.

With thanks approach his awful sight,
 And psalms of honour sing;
 The Lord's a God of boundless might,
 The whole creation's king.

Come, and with humble souls adore,
 Come, kneel before his face;
 O! may the creatures of his power
 Be children of his grace!

SERMON.

S E R M O N.

DANIEL, ix. 24.

“ Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.”

I AGAIN enter upon the arduous work of preaching to God's ancient Israel, the Jews. And though there are not so many present as on a former occasion, that will not, I hope, discourage me. For notwithstanding many of them may be terrified from coming to hear, by the threats of some in their societies, yet, I know, that the things which I shall speak will come to their hearing, as they will be related to them in the books which will be printed. I do not intend so particularly as before, to prove that Jesus is the Messiah, or that the Messiah is come. I have said those things which appear to me to be sufficient arguments; and my business more particularly this afternoon, is to shew them *the work* of that Messiah. Nevertheless, as there may be many, and I know there are some here to-day, who did not hear me the last time I preached to the Jews, it may be necessary to mention a few words to prove that the Messiah is come: And I know no part of the book of God that is so evident a demonstration of that truth, as the text I have now read to you. It

is so plain, that many of your own people, O ye Jews! have forbid any one to calculate the time there specified, under the penalty of a heavy curse; because the truth, like a bright light, shines in their faces, and unless they deny the fullest evidence, they cannot help confessing that the Messiah is long ago come.

Daniel, we find, in the first year of Darius, was praying before his God; for he had understood by books (the book of Jeremiah and others) that the seventy years were nearly accomplished, in which Jerusalem was to be rebuilt, and the inhabitants thereof restored to their own country. So "he set his face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth, and ashes." The prayer he offers to heaven upon this important occasion takes up the greater part of this chapter. He intreats that the Lord would not correct them as their sins deserved, but that he would mingle mercy with all his judgments. He confesses both his own sins, and the sins of the people of Israel, and concludes his prayer with saying, "O Lord! hear; O Lord! forgive; O Lord! hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God! for thy city and thy people are called by thy name:" which is descriptive perhaps, of as much earnestness, as it is possible for words to express. After he had offered these supplications before his God; or rather, as he says, "while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin, and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God, for the holy mountain of my God; yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation." He touched Daniel—he talked with him—he opened his understanding, and then informed him concerning the times. He
begins

begins with the words of the text, " Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy."

Now there are many quarrels among the learned, or disagreements rather, when these seventy weeks commenced, and when they ended. Perhaps, it would appear presumptuous in me to enter into niceties of calculation; I shall, therefore, shew myself more wise if I neglect them. Only I would tell you that the general opinion is, that they commenced in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, and from that time to the death of Christ seventy weeks elapsed. For most people understand the seventy weeks to signify seventy jubilee weeks, or weeks of years, which make in all four hundred and ninety years.

I shall not insist upon the time when these weeks commenced. My drift is to prove, that, take them from what time you please, long ago they are accomplished. Some of your own nation, ye Jews, have said in their writings, that, " undoubtedly, the seventy weeks mean four hundred and ninety years." And yet, in a page or two after, they say, that the Messiah is not come; still confessing that this is a prophecy of the Messiah. Now, if the seventy weeks signify, as beyond a doubt they do, four hundred and ninety years, take them from what period you please, how is it possible but that they be accomplished, and that the Messiah should long ago become? The most wise among you will agree, that about the time when Jesus of Nazareth appeared upon the stage of this world, the seventy weeks were accomplished. But, for argument sake, allowing that the seventy weeks did *not commence* till the

dispersion of the Jews by the Romans, which cannot be the case, yet even upon that ground, long ago they must have been expired; for instead of four hundred and ninety years, seventeen hundred and odd have elapsed since that event; so that if you date the seventy weeks from that period, the Messiah hath appeared, or else the prophecies of God have fallen to the ground.

But most of you, O ye Jews! know that the seventy weeks commenced long before the coming of that person; and that they were accomplished about the time when he came. We cannot fix the period exactly from which they are to be dated; but knowing that they refer to the Messiah, and that it was to be four hundred and ninety years before he appeared, we may look back to that time, and so fix their date. But this is not my work at present; but rather to shew you that the Messiah was *to die*.

Some of you, perhaps, under the influence of strong prejudice, may insist that the Messiah is not intended in this prophecy. But, methinks, it is impossible for the human mind to be so blinded, when his name as *a prince* is mentioned. Read verse the twenty-fifth of our chapter—"Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going-forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the *Messiah the Prince*, shall be seven weeks, and three-score and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." He is also mentioned by name in the following verses. You observe, that the seventy weeks are divided into three parts; seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week. "From the going-forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and three-score and two weeks." In some Bibles, which are not so accurately printed, a comma is put at the end of the words *seven weeks*; but, in the Bibles which
are

are more correct, you read of seven weeks, and of seventy-two weeks, as expressive of one time. At the end of seven weeks, or forty-nine years, every one knows that the Messiah was not come. But if we put the seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks together, we shall find that at that time the Messiah did come.

But it may be inquired, why are the seventy weeks divided into three parts? The first seven weeks relate to the building of Jerusalem. It was about forty-nine years in building. In seven weeks the temple shall be built, and Jerusalem begun. In sixty-two weeks after, the Messiah was to come, and in the last week, Messiah was to be cut off, and, by being cut off, "cause the oblation and sacrifice to cease." He was "to confirm the covenant with many for one week." But now the Messiah is come, or the prophecy is not valid.

But let us now inquire, for what purpose he did make his appearance in the human nature? "To finish the transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy—and the Most Holy was to be anointed."

But some may object, that "this verse does not relate to the coming of the Messiah, but only verse the twenty-fifth; and that the twenty-fourth is merely an answer to the prayer of Daniel." These men may say so, but they cannot prove it. For if we suppose the twenty-fourth verse to be merely an answer to Daniel's prayer, we shall be greatly embarrassed in interpreting the words which follow, in reference to the coming of the Messiah. But the meaning of the twenty-fifth verse is made clear by the text.

The Messiah then was to come, and do this great work. But in order to effect it, he was to be cut off. You Jews say, that the Messiah, when he comes, shall abide for ever; and that he shall come as a glorious conqueror. True: he shall be a conqueror; but over whom? Is he promised as coming to conquer the sons of men in a literal sense, or is he spoken of as the conqueror of sin and Satan? I read that "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head*." But had he come merely as a great warrior, instead of bruising the serpent's head, he would have done the serpent's work. But if he comes "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity," by so doing, the serpent's head indeed is bruised, But how can it be that this Messiah, who is to reign till all nations are subdued under him, shall be cut off? Is he to be a sinner? By no means whatever; for the Spirit of God is to be given without measure to him; he is the anointed of the Father; he is that Lord of whom David speaks, saying, "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool†." He cannot, therefore, be a sinner. But unless there is sin, there cannot be sorrow; and death cannot take place upon any man, unless he is a sinner. But I have asserted that the Messiah should not be a sinner. How then came he to be cut off? It is said expressly, "not for himself." From which words I infer, that our iniquities, as in the fifty-third of Isaiah, were laid to his account, and that he was slain as a sacrifice for sin. He being the great sacrifice, of which every other sacrifice was a type, when he is slain, the sacrifice and the oblation shall be of no effect; and all those to whom he sends his Holy Spirit, shall look to him as the great atone-

* Gen. iii. 1

† Psa. cx. 1.

ment—as the Saviour of their souls. The Messiah being *cut off*, we may see clearly that he was a *man*. And if you examine the book of God, and consider him as a sacrifice for sin (which surely you cannot avoid, when Isaiah said, “Thou hast made his soul a sacrifice for sin;”)—if you view him in this character, you must consider him as *God*. So then taking the Scripture evidences of the Messiah, it appears, that he must be both God and man united in the same person. There is one text, there may be several perhaps, but one will suffice, which proves clearly to me, that the Messiah was to be God and man. It is in Isaiah, “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*.” Now the first part of this prophecy speaks of the Messiah as *man*, in these words, “unto us *a child* is born, unto us *a son* is given.” For every one knows, that it is impossible, with propriety, to call God either a child or a son; because he existed from eternity: and is, therefore, without beginning of days, or end of years; and, consequently, cannot be either a child or a son. The person spoken of in that text, must be a *man*. But if he be a *mere man*, how will you interpret the other part of the passage? “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace?” Some of you Jews have said, that God is to put this honourary title upon him as his ambassador. But I ask you Jews, and I ask every one present to-day, whether, if he was not *God*, God himself would call him so? If you agree that he would, you must confess that God himself will tell a lie, and give that title to a man, which, by no means, belongs to him. This cannot be, beloved.

* Isai ix. 6.

God would never say that he is the mighty God unless he was so. But you find it related, Jews, in your own prophecies, that the Messiah, who was to come, is “the Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, and the everlasting Father.” To explain this text, therefore, we must believe that the Messiah should be *both God and man*. As *God*, he deserves the title of “the mighty God, and the everlasting Father.” As *man*, he is a child, and a son. He is the son of David, after the flesh, not the seed of man. You Jews stumble at this doctrine, and say, “how is it possible that our Messiah can be called the seed of David?” My dear people, he was never spoken of as the seed of *man*, though as the seed of *David*: for it is written, *the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head*. You see then that the expression you make use of is improper. You must quarrel with God, and not with me. I have no authority to alter his word. Jesus of Nazareth is the seed of the woman. He, according to Scripture, is conceived of a virgin: “for a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel *.” The virgin hath conceived, a son is born, a child is given, and he has done the work of which my text so particularly speaks.

But you will inquire, what necessity there was for the Messiah to be both God and man? I beseech you, Jews, to consult your own prophets, and you will then understand, that he was not to be a *temporal* deliverer merely, but he was to deliver his people from *their sins*. Now, in order to make reconciliation for sin, he must be the mighty God. It is said in the text, “he shall make reconciliation.” And David declares, that “*a man cannot by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him †.*” But it cost infinitely more than man is capable of offering to redeem our souls. Cost more! What hath it cost?

* Matt. i. 23.

† Psal. xlix. 7.

I answer,

I answer, the blood of the Messiah, who was "cut off;" and from that very text it is evident he was more than a man. That he must be both God and man to redeem sinners, appears most evident. Had an angel undertaken the work of redemption, it would have fallen to the ground. Why? Because God hath said it. Our debt to God is an infinite debt; and an angel, being a finite creature, could, by no means, have paid an infinite debt. But the person who is to be the Saviour, must take flesh upon him. "Without shedding blood there can be no remission*." The blood of bulls and of goats cannot take away sin†." Your reason tells you this. All the shadows of the ancient dispensation referred to Christ, the great propitiation, who was to come. Now, had he been *God* and not *man*, he could not have shed his blood, and redeemed his people; because, as God, he had no blood to shed. But God has not only declared that Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, but he has declared also, that they shall be saved by the sacrifice of the Messiah; therefore he must have a body to offer, and blood to shed. But as God, he had neither, therefore he must be man. On the other hand, if he was *only man*, then his sacrifice could not be accepted; because man is a creature, and has nothing of his own to offer, and, not being infinite, he cannot pay an infinite debt. But if you consider the Messiah as both God and man; as man, he makes his soul an offering for sin, and as God, he stamps a value upon his sacrifice—he makes the law of God honourable, and saves the chief of sinners without derogating, in the smallest degree, from the divine justice. Justice is satisfied through his sacrifice, the sinner is acquitted, reconciliation is made for sin, and an everlasting righteousness brought in for all his people.

"Seventy weeks" are determined for this work. Now I will not pretend to argue, that the seventy

* Heb. ix, 22.

† Chap. x. 4.

weeks should be just at an end when the Messiah should suffer; for I take the words in this way—“Seventy weeks are determined,” within which space all this work is to be done—the temple to be built—the Messiah to come—the sacrifice and oblation to cease—and an everlasting righteousness to be brought in.

The first work of the Messiah is “to finish the transgression.” What transgression? The transgression of our forefathers, and also our actual transgression. How does he finish this? By stripping himself of all his glory, being made like unto his brethren, yet above them—taking their nature upon him, and with their nature all their sins, and bowing beneath the load of them. Now, taking the sins of his people, and bearing them as though they were his own, he must feel the vindictive arm of Justice. Why? because wherever Justice beholds sin, he must be revenged. Millions of sins are rolled upon the innocent Messiah. Justice sees them there; and, viewing them according to their nature and demerit, he must punish them. When the “transgression was finished,” the sword awoke against the shepherd, against the man who was the fellow of the Lord of hosts; the shepherd was smitten, and the sheep were scattered*. “Behold!” O that you may to-day! “the lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world†!” None of the ancients of Israel could bring any accusation against him; and though they asserted that he was a sinner, and even possessed of a devil, yet assertions are not proofs. They were never able, in any one instance, to convict him of sin. Nevertheless this spotless lamb bleeds and dies—he hangs upon the cross—the transgressions of his people are all rolled upon him—the sword of justice awakes—the wrath of heaven is poured upon the pas-

Zech. xiii. 7.

John, i. 29.

chal lamb, for so I will call him, and he, being sacrificed, “finishes the transgression.” Now the original sin is atoned for by the blood of Christ; so that infants, dying in their infancy, are received into eternal blessedness. The sins of all his people are expiated, both original and actual, and by believing in this dying Messiah, the sinner shall be saved, in spite of all the combined forces of earth and hell. And why? because the “transgression is finished.” Do you not remember the words of our dying Redeemer, when he hung groaning upon the cross? After the most severe agony, he cried out, with a loud voice—(who ever heard a dying man speaking with a loud voice!—But Jesus did, to show his triumph); he cried—“It is finished.” What is the import of these words? I have no doubt but he had his eye upon the prophecy before us, “to finish the transgression”—“The predictions of the prophets are now fulfilled—my work is done—justice is appeased—the love of God exalted, and the kingdom of heaven opened to all believers.”

But, he is “to make an end of sin.” If we read this clause as it is here translated, it is rather a tautology. But it is allowed, in general, that the words signify, to *seal up sin*. And this conveys to us the most noble ideas.—To *seal up sin*. You will find in the book of Job, that God is said to *seal up* the stars*. How does he do this? by the rising of the sun. The stars ever abide in the firmament; but when the sun, which is the greater light, arises, these twinkling luminaries all hide their faces, as if they no longer existed. And this may furnish us with one idea in illustrating this branch of our text. Jesus Christ came to “seal up sins.” David declares that his sins are exceeding great, “and ever before him †.” He is always looking upon them. And those that

* Chap. ix. 7.

† Psa. lvii. 3.

know what it is to sorrow on account of their sins, need not be informed, that to behold sin, without a sacrifice, is disrelishing in the highest degree. But the Messiah came to "seal up sin." He is called, "the son of righteousness*;" and when he arises on our souls, those sins which are visible during the night of desertion, are all sealed up—shut up in darkness; and are seen no more. Is this doctrine agreeable to the language of the prophets? It is: for it is there declared, that "he will cast our sins into the depths of the sea†—that he will cast them behind his back‡—into the land of oblivion, where, though they may be sought for, they shall not be found§;" and elsewhere it is affirmed, "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more||." The Messiah comes to "lock up" our sins. He restrains, he binds up the damning power of sin. Every one knows that sin is of a damning nature; because, "the soul that sinneth shall surely die**." Unless sin be expiated by the blood of some sacrifice, our souls are lost for ever. But the sacrifice of Jesus of Nazareth can be of no benefit to us, unless we believe in him as the Messiah. His blood atones or expiates sin. He is emphatically called a "Saviour from sin††." Why? because he locks up the damning power of sin. And though mankind are the miserable subjects of every species of iniquity, and come short of the glory of God, yet those that believe in him, shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; because he has "finished transgression, and sealed up sin."

But it is said further, that he is "to make reconciliation for iniquity." The Scriptures of truth declare, that our iniquities have separated between God and us. They also assure us, that it cost infinitely more to redeem our souls than what any, or all

* Mal. iv. 2. † Micah, vii. 19. ‡ Isa. xxxviii. 17. § Jer. l. 20.

|| Heb. viii. 12. ** Ezek. xviii. 4. †† Matt. i. 21.

our fellow-creatures are able to pay. But this Messiah, who was, in the fulness of time, to come, was to make “reconciliation for iniquity;” and that must be done by taking away sin—which he can only do by the sacrifice of himself. For unless Justice is satisfied, he will still demand. It is in the nature of Justice to make rigorous demands, till the last farthing of the debt is paid. Most of you know this, and you are sensible that when the debt is paid, Justice *must* acquit the prisoner. In our Gospel, it is said, that Ministers “pray you, in Christ’s stead, to be reconciled to God*.” How can you be reconciled to God? Through the Messiah who was cut off, but not for himself. He has satisfied Justice for us. He has paid the demands of God’s violated law. The Father is well pleased with him; and sinners, which are “afar off, are made nigh by the blood of his cross†:” for “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them‡.”

“To make reconciliation for iniquity.”—Perhaps, every one’s conscience will be convinced, if they will listen to it, that while in a state of nature, they are in a state of enmity against God. Consider it; it is a most awful truth. You are at enmity with God; your carnal minds “are not subject to the law of God§. All have sinned, and come short of his glory||. Every one has turned to his own way**;” and O! that you may see that “the Lord hath laid upon the Messiah the iniquity of us all††!” Now unless something be done to draw our affections to God—to slay this enmity, we are for ever undone. “How,” says the prophet, “can two walk together unless they be agreed‡‡?” and I may add, if they cannot *walk* together, how shall they *live* together to all eternity? But God and sinners are directly the

* 2 Cor. v. 20. † Eph. ii. 13. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 19. § Rom. viii. 7.
 || Rom. iii. 23. ** Isa. liii. 6. †† Isa. v. 36. ‡‡ Amos, iii. 3.

opposite of one another. If a reconciliation be not made between them, how can they live together in eternal happiness? It cannot be : for it is the nature of holiness to hate that which is sinful, and the nature of sin is to hate that which is holy. So that if it were possible for God and sinners to be brought together, without some change on our part, there would be discord in the kingdom of heaven. But God requires a new heart—he has promised to give it; and if every one of you seek it, by earnest supplication, I am certain he will bestow it upon you. He has promised to lead you into all truth—to teach you to profit—that you shall go from strength to strength—and that “he will never leave you, nor forsake you*.” Inquire then candidly respecting the reconciliation said to be made by the Messiah. Inquire whether he is, or is not, the reconciler between God and man. If you find him so, you may believe this Scripture, which positively declares, that he shall “make reconciliation for iniquity.”

But you may, perhaps, be disposed to ask, could he not do this without dying? I think not; because God has declared, that “the soul that sinneth shall die†.” If God could be intreated to alter his word, he could not be what he is, the unchangeable God; so that the word which he has spoken must abide for ever and ever. He demands perfect obedience to his law. He created man capable of rendering that obedience. Man hath fallen, and is now incapable of fulfilling the requisitions of God’s most holy law. But shall God therefore say, I will be satisfied with less? By no means. To be a God that changeth not, that which he required when man was able to answer his demands, he must still require, although man is incapable of answering them.

* Heb. xiii. 5. † Ezek. xviii. 4.

How then, you may inquire, can man be saved? By believing the. Truth the text asserts, that the Messiah, who was to come, has “made reconciliation for iniquity.” He takes our nature upon him, and with our nature he takes our sins. We had contracted an enormous debt; but the Messiah interposed, and suffered for us. We ourselves deserved to have been condemned, but he was condemned in our stead. He took our sins, with all their dreadful consequences, upon himself; and God will not condemn us and our surety too. If then the Messiah is made the surety of his people, God will never require any thing, by way of expiation for sin, at our hands. Believing, therefore, this glorious truth, we may indulge a joy in him, which is inexpressible, “and full of glory*.”

But it is said farther—“to bring in everlasting righteousness.” Our righteousness is by Isaiah declared to be “as filthy rags†” If we examine our best performances, we shall find there is much of the nature of sin in them. If this were not the case, why did the Jewish priest wear a mitre upon his forehead, upon which was intimated that there was iniquity in the most holy things. Every man, in the least enlightened, must know, that his very best works are stained and dyed with sin; and that all are nothing worth. It is declared, however, in the text, that this man, the Messiah, shall “bring in everlasting righteousness.” I argue, therefore, he must be more than man; and to bring in everlasting righteousness, he himself must be everlasting; for that which is not everlasting, can no more produce any thing of real value to us, as sinners, than a finite creature can comprehend infinity. But, he shall “bring in everlasting righteousness.” This is done

* 1 Pet. i. 8.

† Isa. lxiv. 6.

by Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah. His life was a life of the most consummate obedience to the law of God. He never once transgressed the commands, but he perfectly fulfilled the law of Moses. He went about doing good, and, by his good works, he wrought out a righteousness for his people. Some of you, O Jews, may laugh at this; but it is the doctrine of the Old Testament; for he is called, in more places than one, "the Lord our righteousness*." He must work out a righteousness, or else he cannot be the Lord our righteousness. By his life he wrought a righteousness for us to wear, and by his death he made reconciliation for iniquity. So that by the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah, everlasting righteousness is brought in, or *a righteousness of old*—"the righteousness of God †;" and we, believing in the promised Messiah, are justified from all things, from which "it is impossible we should have been justified by the law of Moses ‡." For though you work, and do all that you are able, to fulfil the law, yet you will fall almost infinitely short after all of its demands. Why will you not then believe, ye Jews, in that righteousness already wrought out? Why not believe in that divinely-glorious person, called "the Lord our righteousness?" Why not have faith in the Son of God, and be saved with an everlasting salvation? Am I sure that God "is well pleased with the righteousness §" of his Son? I am sure that he is. What I am going to relate, being an historical fact, cannot be denied. The Father speaking of Jesus of Nazareth, declares, "in him I am well pleased ||." But if he did not work out a righteousness which satisfied the demands of justice, God hath pronounced an untruth from the kingdom of heaven; for he has declared, and many heard him, even the enemies of the Mes-

* Jer. xxiii. 6. xxxiii. 16. † 2 Cor. v. 12. ‡ Acts, xiii. 39.

§ Isa. lii. 21. || Matt. ii. 17.

siah, "in him I am well pleased." O! may the great God cause you to bow to the sceptre of truth and to cease from endeavouring to establish your own righteousness, by submitting to that everlasting righteousness wrought out for you by the Son of God!

But it is said—"to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." Now, I understand these words as expressive of the completion of all the prophecies respecting the Messiah. But what did the prophets foretell of Jesus of Nazareth? That he should be not the seed of man, but "the seed of the woman;" and that he should "bruise the serpent's head*." It is said, that the vision and prophecy, within seventy weeks, shall be sealed up, or finished; and so this among the rest. Behold the sufferings of the Son of God! and when you hear him groan his last, you hear, as it were, the shout of the conquest over all his and our enemies; for in that moment, death was deprived of its sting, and the serpent's head was bruised. The serpent thought of destroying all our hopes; but he was disappointed. The Messiah gave him a fatal, a mortal wound, which he will never be able to recover; but he will continue to wax weaker and weaker, till at last, the end shall come.

There is another prophecy, which speaks of his being born of a virgin†; and another, which expresses that "a woman shall compass a man‡," or shall inclose, in a miraculous way, a man in her womb. This was accomplished in the coming of the Messiah. A woman compassed a man. The Messiah was born of a virgin. And he is that Messiah which was to be cut off, but not for himself. He is also the Prophet which was to be raised up "like unto Moses§"—a worker of miracles—a teacher of the people—a law-giver. He is also a high-priest, and he hath offered

* Gen. iii. 15. † Matt. i. 23. ‡ Jer. xxxi. 22. § Acts, iii. 22.

a sacri-

a sacrifice ; not the blood of bulls and goats, but his own body and blood as a sacrifice for sin. The vision and the prophecy are sealed up with respect to his sufferings ; for his hands and feet were pierced, as it was foretold *—vinegar was given him to drink †—he was sold for thirty pieces of silver ‡—“ he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death §.” There are many other prophecies which relate to the Messiah, all which were fulfilled when he breathed his last.

It is farther said—“ to anoint the Most Holy.”

The Holy of Holies, as some say ; I cannot, however, but think that this refers to the Messiah, who was anointed by the Spirit of God. “ The Spirit of the Lord God,” he says, “ is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek ||.” The Psalmist also declares “ Thy throne, O God ! is for ever and ever ; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness ; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows **.” O Jews ! how do you explain these verses ? In the first place, this person is addressed as God—“ Thy throne, O God ! is for ever and ever.” He is then spoken of as being *anointed*—“ Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”—If he is only God, how, with propriety, could the Psalmist say, *thy* God ? for that implies some one above himself. If he is God, he is the highest, and none can be the God of God. But the Psalmist addresses him, first, as God, and then says, “ *thy* God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” This text, therefore, shows both the divine and human nature of the Messiah. He is addressed, in the first verse of this prophecy, as God ;

* Psalm xxii. 16.

§ Isa. liii. 9.

† Matt. xxvii. 58.

|| Isa. lxi. 1.

‡ Matt. xxvii. 3.

** Psa. xiv. 7.

“thy throne, O *God*!” And in the next verse he is addressed *as man*, “thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness, therefore God, *thy God*, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” How is he to be anointed? You may see, by different texts of Scripture, that he is to be anointed by the Spirit; and that the Spirit is to be poured, without measure, upon him. In the chapter I before quoted from Isaiah, the person who is speaking says, “that the Spirit of the Lord God is upon him.” In that text three persons are mentioned. Read the words, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me.” The *Spirit*; he is spoken of distinct from the others—of the *Lord God*; he is the second person who is mentioned.—The Spirit of the Lord God is upon *me*, which is the third. And if the Jews do not see a trinity in unity in these words, surely prejudice must blind their eyes. But the Messiah was anointed by the Spirit of God descending upon him like a dove. This, being an historical fact, cannot be denied. For, when he came out of the water, there was the Spirit descending from heaven, like a dove, and resting upon him; at the same time a voice issued from the throne of God; “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*.” Let me then exhort you, poor sinners—trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength†; or you may say, “trust in the Lord for ever, for in the *Son of God* is everlasting strength.” He is anointed to be a Prophet, Priest, and King. He is anointed to be “a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins unto Israel‡.”

I have one question to ask the Jews, I hope they will answer it to their own consciences, whether or not these seventy weeks commenced before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? I repeat the

* Matt. iii. 17. † Isa. xxvi. 5. ‡ Acts, v. 31.

question—Did the seventy weeks, mentioned in the prophecy before us, commence before Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans? I do not think there are any, who hear me to-day, will deny that they did commence previous to that event; since the greatest men in their nation have confessed it. If, then, they commenced before the destruction of Jerusalem, I ask, whether, according to this prophecy, the Messiah was not to be cut off before the city of Jerusalem was destroyed? I do not think you can deny but he was. I ask you a third question, Is your city destroyed, or is it not? It is evident to every one, that Jerusalem is laid in the dust; and that there remains not, at this day, one stone upon another. If, then, the seventy weeks commenced before the city was destroyed, as undoubtedly they did, and if they were to be fulfilled before that event, why is not the Messiah come? and supposing the Messiah is not come, why is your city destroyed?—an event which was to take place after Messiah should be cut off. And should Messiah now come, he will come, not before, (as the Prophet intimates) but after the destruction of Jerusalem. For it is said, that the “Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary*.” This is an event which is to take place after the cutting-off of the Messiah; and I will add, in consequence of his being “despised and rejected of men†.” But who were the people of the prince who was to come? Most of you know they are the Romans, who were not a nation when Daniel wrote, and therefore called the people of the prince that *should* come. They were to lay waste the city, to destroy the temple, and, by that destruction, the Jews were to be dispersed, as they are even to this day.

* Dan. ix. 26.

† Isa. liii. 3.

Now,

Now, my dear people, I am certain that your own consciences bear witness that the Messiah is come. We Gentiles have greatly the advantage of you. We believe in the Messiah. Our Messiah did come when these seventy weeks were accomplished, as it was foretold he would. All the prophecies relating to him were exactly fulfilled in him. But supposing that a Messiah were now to come, he could not be the promised Messiah. Why? Because the time of the coming of that Messiah, prophesied in the Old Testament Scriptures, hath been elapsed many hundreds of years. If then you want another Messiah, why not forge other prophecies? And if you believe these prophecies, why not believe in that Messiah who has exactly fulfilled them?

But—"the end of the destruction shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." Which things figure to us the destruction made by the Roman armies upon the city of Jerusalem, and its inhabitants. So that that country which, before, was like a pleasant garden, became like a desolate wilderness; and for many miles around, as historians inform us, no such thing was to be seen.

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." This is the last week of the seventy. "And in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." Now if the weeks before mentioned are weeks of years, then this one week must be understood as a week of years; which is seven years. "He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week he shall cause the oblation to cease." That Jesus confirmed the covenant with many for three years and an half by his own preaching; and with the Jews for three years and an half, after his death, by the ministry of his Apostles, is most evident; and by their fulfilling ancient predic-
D 2 tions

tions, working miracles, and expounding the Scriptures, many thousands were disposed to believe in him. But in the midst of that week Messiah was to be cut off. Accounting the week to mean seven years, Messiah was to be cut off in three years and an half from his beginning to confirm the covenant, and so cause, in the midst of the week, the sacrifice and oblation to cease. How? By the sacrifice of himself rendering every other sacrifice ineffectual. He has been once offered for our sins, and by that one sacrifice of himself, all his people are for ever perfected*. There is no need of the blood of bulls and of goats—there is no need of any sacrifice whatever at our hands to atone for sins. Jesus, the Lamb of God, has been sacrificed for us. The oblation and the sacrifice are now of no avail; and only through faith in his blood can we be saved from the wrath to come.

“For the overspreading of abominations, he shall make it desolate.” With the abominable armies of the Romans he shall make it desolate, “even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

From these words I would have you consider, what your faith is. I would have you ask the great God to interpret them to you; and, by prayer and fasting, without prejudice, become searchers after the truth. And if you seek the Lord, “the Sun of righteousness shall arise upon you with healing under his wings†.”

Beloved Jews, what is the reason that you reject Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah? You reply, “Because he was poor and despised.” He was, indeed, to be a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs, and, according to Isaiah, “to be despised and rejected of men‡.”

* Heb. x. 14.

† Mal. iv. 2.

‡ Isa. liii. 3.

But

But you say, "he did not appear in any sort of pomp." No; he was to come in a humble manner, "riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass*."

You add farther, "that he does not answer to the prophecies of Heaven respecting the Messiah." But I say, and insist upon it, in the name of God, that there is not one prophecy relative to the Messiah, but is exactly fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Why will you harden your hearts against our Saviour? Have you not heard of many dying in sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life; and blessing God, in their departing moments, that they ever became acquainted with Jesus Christ? Is there not something supernatural in this—that a man should exult in the agonies of death? Surely there is. And this, though not the strongest, is a good proof of the truth of the Christian religion. Another argument is, that the Christian religion has existed, and grown more and more extensive, from the time it was first preached, to this moment: if it were not of God, it could not stand. But the knowledge of divine truth shall, in due season, cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea. Did the Messiah ever do any harm to your nation? Did he not love you, and, by every action of his life, express his love? Did he not weep tears of blood on your behalf, mourn over your wicked city Jerusalem, and solemnly declare, that "he would have gathered you, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not†?" If he did not love you, why should he weep because of your approaching desolation? If he was not a true man, why did he suffer those agonies, when he had such an opportunity to escape them? If he was not the true Messiah, why did the rocks tremble? why was the veil of the temple rent? why were

* Mat. xxi. 5.

† Matt. xxii. 37.

the graves opened? and why was the sun turned into blackness? If he was not the promised Messiah, why, after the completion of prophecy (at least a part of it) did he arise from the dead? That he arose from the dead is evident, and cannot be denied; because he was seen by thousands, and for forty days together, and, by infallible proofs, manifested that he was risen. You must know, O ye Jews! that that man, whom your fathers crucified (Jews and Gentiles all united in crucifying the Messiah) after three days arose from the dead.

But you affirm, what the guards reported, "that his disciples came by night, and stole him away while they slept." But if they were asleep, which they themselves acknowledge, how could they know that his disciples had stolen him? And if they were awake, why did they permit him to be stolen? But many of them being afterwards converted to the faith of the Gospel, confessed the truth—that they were bribed to tell a lie; and ye know, O Jews! that what I now relate is not to be contradicted. The truth, I doubt not, glares upon your consciences. Be not any longer prejudiced against it. Your people threaten you if you attend the preaching of the Gospel. If it be better to follow men, follow them; but if not, follow God. That person who is influenced by the fear of man, falls into a snare; but "the way-faring man, though a fool, shall not err*," for giving earnest heed to the things that God's word teaches. Though men should be against him—though "father and mother forsake him, the Lord will take him up†." We invite you, poor dear people! this day, to embrace Christianity. We invite you to the blood of the Messiah; for know, O Jews, "through this man," through faith in his blood, "is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins‡." He hath died, and

* Isa. xxxv. 8.

† Psa. xxvii. 10.

‡ Acts, xii. 38.

risen again, and you are all welcome to salvation if you will believe on him. Will you sin against light and knowledge, and reject the hope of Israel? O! consider your ways; and, for God's sake, do not reject the truth.

I leave what, in great weakness, I have spoken with the mighty God, hoping that his Holy Spirit will impress it upon your hearts; and that at the last day you may be found in him, not having on the righteousness which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God, wrought out by the great Messiah. To him, with the holy Father, be everlasting praises.

HYMN, AFTER SERMON.

'TIS finish'd—the Messiah dies;
Cut off for sins, but not his own!
Accomplish'd is his sacrifice,
The great redeeming work is done.

Finish'd the first transgression is,
And purg'd the guilt of actual sin;
And everlasting righteousness
Is brought, for all his people, in.

'Tis finish'd, all my guilt and pain;
I want no sacrifice beside:
For me, for me, the Lamb is slain,
And I'm for ever justify'd.

Sin, death, and hell, are now subdu'd;
All grace is now to sinners giv'n;
And lo! I plead the atoning blood,
For pardon, holiness, and heav'n.

PRAYER

PRAYER AT THE CLOSE OF THE SERVICE.

O LORD our God! we worship thee, we praise thee, we magnify thy holy name! And we desire, O God! that we may be enabled to praise thee more than we do. The mercies we are daily receiving are more numerous than the sands; and the sins we are daily committing against thee are, beyond expression, innumerable. But thou, O Lord! dost give us double for all our sins. Thou givest us mercy for our rebellion, and forgiveness for all our trespasses. Glory to the riches of thy grace, that thou art this day reconciling sinners to thyself. O Lord! grant that thine ancient Israel may feel the power of thy Holy Spirit upon their hearts, and be turned to the Lord, in whom they are to be saved with an everlasting salvation. Thine arm, great God! is not shortened, that it cannot save, nor is thine ear heavy, that it cannot hear. Hear, O God! the prayers of this thy people: and though I have not ability to preach to them as I wish to do, yet, Lord! take the wish for the deed. I desire to carry conviction to every heart. But do thou take the most simple declaration of the truth, and apply it with wisdom and power to the most hardened heart, and, by that application, bring the most obdurate sinners humble in the dust before thee. Do this to-day, O God! and then shall I, as well as the whole congregation, confess that the power is of thee, and not of man. Take us into thy care and protection. Bless us, O God! and for thine own sake do more for us than we can ask or think.

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God! May the Spirit of God lead you into an understanding of his blessed world! May you know that Messiah is come, and that Jesus of Nazareth is he!--and may the same Spirit enable you to give him, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, three persons in one eternal God, equal and endless praises! Amen.

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