

Christ's Transfiguration

Luke 9:28-36, "And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment [was] white [and] glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept [it] close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen."

When the angel was sent to the Redeemer's beloved disciple John, we are told that the angel said unto him, "Come up hither." He was to be exalted, to be brought nearer heaven, that his mind might be better prepared for those great manifestations, which an infinitely great and condescending God intended to vouchsafe him. And on reading the verse that you have just now heard, when I also see such a great and serious assembly convened in the presence of God, I think I must address you, as the angel addressed John, and say unto you, "Come up hither;" leave your worldly thoughts, for a time forget the earth. And as it is the Lord's day, a time in which we ought more particularly to think of heaven, I must desire you to pray to God, that ye may get up on Pisgah's mount, and take a view of the promised land. It is true, indeed, eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of any man to conceive the great and good things, which God hath prepared for his people here; much less, those infinitely greater and more glorious things, that he hath laid up for them that fear him, in the eternal world: but, blessed be God! Though we are not yet in heaven, unless to be in Christ may properly be termed heaven, and then all real Christians are there already; yet, but blessed Jesus has been pleased to leave upon record some account of himself, of what happened to him in the days of his flesh, and of some manifestations he was pleased to grant to a few of his disciples; that from what happened to them here below, we may form some faint, though but a faint idea of that happiness that awaits his people in his kingdom above. If any of you inquire, in what part of our Lord's life those instances are recorded, I have an answer ready: One of these instances, and that a very remarkable one, is recorded in the verses that I have now chosen for the subject of your meditation.

The verses give us an account of what is generally called our Lord's Transfiguration; his being wonderfully changed, and his being wonderfully owned by his Father upon the mount. Some think that this was done upon a Sabbath-day; and the particular occasion of our blessed Lord's condescending to let his servants have such a sight as this, we may gather from the 27th verse. It seems our blessed Lord had been promising a great reward to those who should not be ashamed of him: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and of his Father, and of the holy angels." In this threatening is implied, a reward to those who should not be ashamed of him: "But, (adds he) I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, who shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God." As much as to say, There will be a day, when I will come in the glory of my Father and of his holy angels; but I tell you there are some of my favorites; I tell you of a truth, though you may think it too good news, there are some of you that shall not taste of death, till ye shall see the kingdom of God. Some divines think, that this promise has reference to our Lord's creating a gospel church; and if we take it in this sense, it means that the Apostles, who were then present, some of them at least, should not die,

till they saw Satan's kingdom in a great measure pulled down, and the

Redeemer's gospel kingdom erected. Some think it has a peculiar reference to John, who it seems survived all the other Apostles, and lived till Christ came; that is, till he came to destroy Jerusalem. But it is the opinion of Mr. Henry, of Bishop Hall, of Burkit, and others, who have written upon this passage, that our blessed Lord has a peculiar reference to the transfiguration upon the mount: "There be some of you here, that shall not taste of death, till ye see my transfiguration upon the mount; till ye see some glorified saint come down from heaven and pay me a visit, and consequently see a little of that kingdom of God, which ye shall have a full sight of when ye come to glory." This seems to be the right interpretation. If you will look to the margin of your Bibles, you will see the parallel place in Matthew, where the account of our Lord's transfiguration is given, and there you will find it immediately follows upon this promise of our Lord.

Well, as Christ had told them, that they should not taste of death, till they had seen the kingdom of God, why the Evangelist, at the 28th verse, tells us, "It came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, and John, and James, and went up into a mountain to pray." About an eight days; that is, as Bishop Hall thinks, upon the Sabbath-day; or, according to some, the first day of the week, which was hereafter to be the Christian Sabbath; our blessed Lord takes Peter, John, and James: Why did not the Lord Jesus Christ take more of his disciples? Why three, and these three? And why three only? Our blessed Lord was pleased to take three and no more, to show us that he is a sovereign agent; to show us, that though he loved all his disciples, yet there are some to whom he is pleased to allow peculiar visits. He loved Peter, and all the other disciples; yet John was the disciple that he peculiarly loved. And he took three rather than one, because three were sufficient to testify the truth of his being transfigured: "Out of the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established." And he took no more than three, because these three were enough. And he took these three, Peter, John, and James, in particular, because these very persons that were not to see Christ transfigured, were hereafter to see him agonizing in the garden, sweating great drops of blood falling unto the ground. And had not these three disciples seen Christ upon the mount, the seeing him afterwards in the garden, might have staggered them exceedingly: they might have doubted whether it was possible for the Son of God to be in such doleful circumstances. Well, our Lord takes these three "up into a mountain." Why so? Because Christ Jesus was to be like Moses, who was taken up into a mountain, when God intended to deliver unto him the moral law: And our blessed Lord went up into a mountain, because a mountain befriended devotion. When he had a mind to retire to pray to his Father, he went to such places where he could be most secret, and give the greatest vent to his heart. Thus we are told, that once when Peter prayed, it was upon the house-top. And if we have a mind to be near God, we should choose such places as are freest from ostentation, and that most befriend our communion with God. And what doth Christ, when he got up into a mountain? We are told, he went up into a mountain "to pray." Christ had no corruption to confess, and he had but few wants of his own to be relieved; yet we hear of Christ being much in prayer; we hear of his going up to a mountain to pray; of his rising up a great while before it was day to pray; and of his spending a whole night in prayer to God.

In the 20th verse, you have an account of the effect of our Lord's praying: "As he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glittering." I would have you take notice, that our Lord was not changed in respect of his body, while he was going up to the mount, but when he got upon the mount, and while engaged in prayer. It is sufficient that way for our souls to be transformed: the time we are more particularly to expect the influences of God's Spirit, is, when we are engaged in prayer. There seems to be a very great propriety in our Lord's being transfigured or changed upon the mount. I hope I need inform none of you, that when Moses went up to the mount of God, God was pleased to speak to him face to face; and when he came down from the mount, the people of Israel observed that Moses' face shone so, that he was obliged to have a veil put upon his face. Now the shining of Moses' face, was a proof to the people, that Moses had been conversing with God. And Moses told the people,

"That the Lord would raise up unto them a prophet like unto him, whom the

people were to hear." God the Father, in order to give his Son (considering him as man) a testimony that he was a prophet, was pleased not only to let his face glitter or shine; but to show that he was a prophet far superior to Moses, he was pleased to let his garment be white and glittering, and "his countenance (as we are told by another Evangelist) did shine as the sun." What change was here! What a sight! Methinks I see Peter, James, and John surprised; and, indeed, well might the Evangelist, considering what happened, usher in the following part of the story with the word Behold; "Behold, there talked with him two men, Moses and Elias:" And in the 31st verse, you have an account of their dress, "They appeared in glory;" and of their discourse, "They spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."

"Behold, two men, which were Moses and Elias;" these were two very proper persons to come upon this embassy to the Son of God. Moses was the great lawgiver, Elias was the great restorer of the law: The body of Moses was hidden and never found, Elias' body was translated immediately, and carried up in a fiery chariot to heaven: And it may be that this was done particularly, because these two were hereafter to have the honor of waiting upon the Son of God. "They appeared in glory;" that is, their bodies were not in that glorious habit, in which the bodies of believers are to be at the morning of the resurrection. Christ was, as it were, now fitting in his royal robes; and as it is usual for ambassadors, when they are to be admitted into the king's presence, on bringing a message from one king to another, to appear in all their grandeur, to make the message more solemn; so here, these heavenly messengers being to wait upon the Lord Jesus Christ, are invested as with royal dignity, they appeared in glory, and "they spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem," they came to tell the Redeemer of his sufferings, and of the place of his sufferings, and to acquaint him, that his sufferings, however great, however bitter, were to be accomplished; that there was to be an end put to them, as our Lord himself speaks, "The things concerning me are to have an end." What other particulars they spoke to our Lord, we are not told. But what effect this had upon the disciples, you may learn from the 32nd verse, "Peter, and they that were with him, were heavy with sleep."

We are not to suppose, that Peter, James and John, were now asleep in a literal sense; no, if we compare this, with another passage of holy writ, I mean the account given us of Daniel's being impressed and overcome, when he saw the angel of the Lord, you will find that this sleep implies what we call a swoon. They were overcome with the sight of the glory of Christ's garments, the glittering of his body, and the glory in Moses and Elias appeared: these quite overcame them, sunk them down, and, like the Queen of Sheba, when she saw Solomon's glory, they had no life in them. But they recovered themselves: "when they were awake," that is, when they had recovered their strength, when God had put strength into them, as the angel put strength into Daniel, "they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him." And how do you think they gazed upon Christ? How may we suppose they fixed their eyes upon Moses and Elias? Peter, who was always the first speaker, out of the abundance of his heart, spoke upon this occasion. Verse 33, "And it came to pass as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias, not knowing what he said." Peter, when he had drank a little of Christ's new wine, speaks like a person intoxicated; he was overpowered with the brightness of the manifestation. "Let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." It is well added, "not knowing what he said." That he should cry out, "Master, it is good for us to be here," in such good company, and in so glorious a condition, is no wonder; which of us all would not have been apt to have done the same? But to talk of building tabernacles, and one for Christ, and one for Moses, and one for Elias, was saying something for which Peter himself must stand reprov'd. Surely, Peter, thou wast not quite awake! Thou talkest like one I a dream: If thy Lord had taken thee at thy word, what a poor tabernacle wouldst thou have had, in comparison of that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, in which thou hast long since dwelt, now the earthly house of the tabernacle of thy body is dissolved? What! Build tabernacles below, and

have the crown, before thou hast borne the cross? O Peter, Peter! "Master, spare thyself," sticks too too closely to thee: And why so selfish, Peter?

Carest thou not for thy fellow disciples that are below, who came not up with thee to the mount? Carest thou not for the precious souls, that are as sheep having no shepherd, and must perish for ever, unless thy Master descends from the mount to teach, and to die for them? Wouldst thou thus eat thy spiritual morsels alone? Besides, if thou art for building tabernacles, why must there be three of them, one for Christ, and one for Moses, and one for Elias? Are Christ and the prophets divided? Do they not sweetly harmonize and agree in one? Did they not prophesy concerning the sufferings of thy Lord, as well as of the glory that should follow? Alas, how unlike is their conversation to thine? Moses and Elias came down to talk of suffering, and thou are dreaming of building I know not what tabernacles. Surely, Peter, thou art so high upon the mount, that thy head runs giddy.

However, in the midst of these infirmities, there was something that bespoke the honesty and integrity of his heart. Though he knew not very well what he said, yet he was not so stupid as his pretended successor at Rome. He does not fall down and worship these two departed saints, neither do I hear him say to either, Ora pro nobis; he had not so learnt Christ; no, he applies himself directly to the head, "he said unto Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here." And though he was for building, yet he would not build without his Master's leave. "Master, let us build," or, as St. Mark words it, "wilt thou that we build three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias?" I do not hear him add, and one for James, and one for John, and one for Peter. No, he would willingly stay out with them upon the mount, though it was in the cold and dark night, so that Christ and his heavenly attendants were taken care of. The sweetness of such a heavenly vision, would more than compensate for any bodily suffering that might be the consequence of their longer abode there: nay farther, he does not desire that either Christ, or Moses, or Elias, should have any trouble in building; neither does he say, let my curates, James and John, build, whilst I sit idle and lord it over my brethren; but he says, "let us build;" he will work as hard, if not harder than either of them, and desire to be distinguished only by his activity, enduring hardness, and his zeal to promote the welfare of their common Lord and Master.

Doubtless, Peter had read how the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, and the temple of old; and now Jesus is transfigured, and Moses and Elias appear in glory, he thinks it right that new tabernacles shall be erected for them. Such a mixture of nature and grace, of short-sightedness and infirmity, is there in the most ardent and well-meant zeal of the very best of men, when nearest the throne of grace, or even upon the mount with God. Perfection in any grace must be looked for, or expected, only among the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven. Those who talk of any such thing on earth, like Peter, they know not what they say.

But how came Peter so readily to distinguish which was Moses, and which was Elias? He seems to speak without the least hesitation, "Let us build three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias," as though he was very well acquainted with them, whereas they had both been dead, long, long before Peter was born. Was there, do you imagine, any thing distinguishing in their apparel? Or any thing in their conversation that discovered them? Or rather, did he not know them here on the mount, as we may from hence infer, that departed saints do, and will know each other in heaven, even by intuition and immediate revelation? But alas! how transient are our views of heaven, during our sojourning here on earth: Verse 34, "Whilst he thus spake," whilst Peter was talking of building tabernacles, whilst he was saying, "it is good for us to be here," whilst he was dreaming that his mountain was so strong that it never could be moved, "there came a cloud and overshadowed them." St. Matthew observes, it was a bright cloud, not dark like that on mount Sinai, but bright, because the gospel opens to us a far more bright dispensation than that of the law. This overshadowed, and thereby not only filled them with an holy awe, but also screened them, in some measure, from the brightness of that glory with which they were now surrounded, and which otherwise would have been insupportable. This cloud was like the veil thrown on the face of Moses, and prepared them for the voice which they were soon to hear coming

out of it. I am not much surprised at being informed by St. Matthew, that they feared as they entered into the cloud, or by St. Mark that "they were sore afraid." For since the fall, there is such a consciousness in us all

of deserved wrath, that we cannot help fearing when we enter into a cloud, even though Jesus Christ himself be in the midst of it. Ah Peter, where is thy talk of building tabernacles now? Is thy strong mountain so quickly removed? What, come down so soon? why do we not now hear thee saying, "It is good for us to be here?" Alas! he and his fellow disciples are quite struck dumb; see how they tremble, and, like Moses upon another occasion, exceedingly quake and fear. But how quickly are those fears dispelled, how soon is the tumult of their minds hushed and calmed, with that soul-reviving voice that came from the excellent glory, verse 35, "This is my beloved Son, hear him."

St. Mark and St. Matthew add "in whom I am well pleased." The same testimony that God the Father gave to the blessed Jesus at his baptism, before he entered upon his temptation, is now repeated, in order to strengthen and prepare him for his impending agony in the garden. Probably, it was a small still though articulate voice, attended neither with thunder nor lightning, nor the sound of a trumpet, but, agreeable to the blessed news which it contained, ushered in with tokens of unspeakable complacency and love. God the Father, hereby gives Moses and Elias a solemn discharge, as though they were sent from heaven on purpose to give up their commission to their rightful Lord, and like the morning star, disappear when the Sun of Righteousness himself arises to bring in a gospel day. "This is my beloved Son, hear Him." But the emphasis upon the word THIS; this Son of Man, this Jesus, whom you are shortly to see in a bloody sweat, blindfolded, spit upon, buffeted, scourged, and at length hanging upon a tree, I am not ashamed to own to be my Son, my only begotten Son, who was with me before the heavens were made, or the foundations of the earth were laid; my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom my soul delighteth, and whom I do by these presents, publicly constitute and appoint to be the king, priest, and prophet of the church. "Hear ye Him." No longer look to Moses or Elias, no longer expect to be saved by the works of the law; but by the preaching and application of the ever-blessed gospel. Hear ye him, so as to believe on, love, serve, obey, and, if needs be, to die and lay down your very lives for him. "Hear him;" hear what he hath to say, for he comes with a commission from above. Hear his doctrine; hear him, so as to obey him; hear him, so as to put in practice his precepts, and copy after his good example.

In the 36thverse, we have the close of his heavenly feast; "When the voice was past, Jesus was found alone; and they kept it close, and told no man in those days, any of those things which they had seen." If we compare this, with the account which the other Evangelists give of our blessed Lord's transfiguration, you will find this was done by Christ's order: Peter, James, and John, would otherwise have gone down and told the whole world, that they had seen the Lord Christ upon the mount of transfiguration; but our Lord ordered them to keep it silent. Why so? If they had gone down from the mount, and told it to the other disciples, it might have raised ill blood in the others; they might have said, Why did our Master single out Peter, James, and John? Why might not we have had the privilege of going up to the mount as well as they? Had they said, that their Lord was transfigured, people would not have believed them; they would have thought, that Peter, James, and John were only enthusiasts; but if they kept it till after his resurrection, and he had broken the gates of death, for them then to say, that they saw him upon the mount transfigured, would corroborate the evidence.

I have thus paraphrased the words for your better understanding the account the Evangelist gives of our blessed Lord's transfiguration; but I have not yet done; I have been speaking to your heads; the practical part is yet to come. O that God may reach your hearts! And though, according to order, I ought to begin with the practical inferences that might be drawn from the first part; yet, I think it best to show you, who are the people of God, especially you young converts, that have honesty, but not much prudence, what instructions our Lord would here have you to learn.

"When the voice was past, Jesus was found alone, and they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen." There is nothing more common, when God vouchsafes communications to a poor soul, than for the person that enjoys them, to go and tell all that he has seen and felt, and often at improper seasons and to improper persons. I remember that Mr. Henry observes, "Joseph had more honesty than

he had policy, or else he would never have told his brethren of his dreams." Young Christians are too apt to blunder thus: I am sure it is a fault of which I have been exceedingly guilty, speaking of things, which, perhaps, had better been concealed; which is a fault God's people are too apt to fall into. Though it is good for those that have seen Christ, and that have felt his love, to tell others what God hath done for their souls; yet, however you may think of it now, when you come down from the mount, and know yourselves a little, ye will find reason often to hold your tongue. Young Christians are like children, to whom if you give a little money in their pocket, they cannot be quiet till they have spent it upon something or other: young Christians, when they get a little of God, are ready to talk too much of it. They should therefore beware, and know when to speak, and when to be silent.

But, my dear friends, did our Lord Jesus Christ take Peter, James, and John into a mountain to pray? Are any of you fathers, mothers, masters and mistresses of families? Learn then from hence to take your children, your servants, and those that belong to you, from the world, at certain times, and not only pray for them, but pray with them. If Christ did thus, who had few wants of his own to be supplied, and nothing to confess and lament over; if Christ was such a lover of prayer, surely, you and I, who have so many wants to be supplied, so many corruptions to mourn over; you and I should spend much time in prayer. I do not say that you are to lock yourselves up in your closets, and not mind your shops or farms, or worldly business; I only say, that you should take care to husband all your time: and if you are God's children, you will frequently retire from the world, and seek a visit from your God.

Was the Lord Jesus transformed or transfigured, while he was praying? Learn hence, to be much in spiritual prayer. The way to have the soul transformed, changed into, and make like unto God, is frequently to converse with God. We say, a man is as his company. Persons by conversing together, frequently catch each others tempers: and if you have a mind to imbibe the divine temper, pray much. And as Christ's garments became white and glittering, so shall your souls get a little of God's light to shine upon them.

Did Moses and Elias appear in glory? Are there any old saints here? I doubt not but there are a considerable number. And are any of you afraid of death? Do any of you carry about with you a body that weighs down your immortal soul? I am sure a poor creature is preaching to you, that every day drags a crazy load along. But come, believers, come, ye children of God, come, ye aged decrepit saints, come and trample upon that monster death. As thou goest over yonder church-yard, do as I know an old excellent Christian in Maryland did; go, sit upon the grave, and meditate on thine own dissolution. Thou mayest, perhaps, have a natural fear of dying: the body and the soul do not care to part without a little sympathy and a groan; but O look yonder, loon up to heaven, see there thy Jesus, thy Redeemer, and learn, that thy body is to be fashioned here-after like unto Christ's most glorious body; that poor body which is not subject to gout and gravel, and that thou canst scarce drag along; that poor body, which hinders thee so much in the spiritual life, will ere long hinder thee no more; it shall be put into the grave; but though it be sown in corruption, it shall be raised in incorruption; though it is sown in dishonor, it shall be raised again in glory. This consideration made blessed Paul to cry out, "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!" Thy soul and body shall be united together again, and thou shalt be "forever with the Lord." Those knees of thine, which perhaps are hard by kneeling in prayer; that tongue of thine, which hath sung hymns to Christ; those hands of thine, which have wrought for God; those feet, which have ran to Christ's ordinances; shall all, in the twinkling of an eye, be changed; and thou shalt be able to stand under an exceeding and an eternal weight of glory. Come then, ye believers in Christ, look beyond the grave; come, ye dear children of God, and however weak and sickly ye are now, say, Blessed be God, I shall soon have a body strong, full of vigor and of glory.

But as this speaks comfort to saints, it speaks terror to sinners, to

all persons that live and die out of Christ. It is the opinion of Archbishop Usher, that as the bodies of the saints shall be glorified, so the bodies of the damned shall be deformed. And if this be true, alas! what a poor figure will the fine ladies cut, who die without a Christ! What a

poor figure will the fine gentleman cut in the morning of the resurrection, that now dresses up his body, and at the same time neglects to secure an interest in Christ and eternal happiness! It is the opinion, likewise of Archbishop Usher, that damned souls will lose all the good tempers they had here; so that though God gave unregenerate people a constitutional meekness, good nature, and courage, for the benefit of the commonwealth; yet, the use of those blessings being over, and they having died without Christ, and it being impossible there will be an appearance of good in hell, their good tempers will be forever lost. If this be so, it is an awful consideration; and I think persons who love their bodies, should also hence take care to secure the welfare of their souls.

Did Peter know which was Moses and which Elias? Then I think, and God be praised for it, it is plain from this and other passages of scripture, that we shall know one another when we come to heaven. Dives knew Lazarus: "Father Abraham, send Lazarus:" And we are told, "he saw Lazarus sitting in Abraham's bosom." Adam knew his wife Eve; though cast into a deep sleep when God made her out of his rib, yes, by a kind of intuition he says, "This is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." And it is on this account, that the Apostle, speaking to the Philippians, says, "Ye are my joy and crown of rejoicing, in the day of the Lord." What comfort will this be to a spiritual father! Says one, Here is the man, O Lord Jesus, that brought my soul to taste of thy love; says another, This is the man, that at such a time, and with such words, struck my heart: thou, O Lord knowest it. Then the spiritual father will rejoice over his children. You that have met and have prayed together, sighted and sympathized together, and told your temptations to one another, shall be forever with the Lord and with each other. There we shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob sitting, with all the redeemed company; and we shall know the names of every one mentioned in the book of God. O blessed prospect! O blessed time! Who that thinks of this, of seeing the Lamb sitting upon the throne, with all God's people about him, but must desire to go to heaven, and be forever, forever with the Lord. And if there is such comfort for believers to know one another in heaven, with what comfort may any of you, that have lost fathers, mothers, or friends, think of them: we are parted for a little while, but we shall see them again. My father died in Christ, my mother died in the Lord, my husband, my wife, was a follower of Jesus; I shall see them, though not now; I shall go to them, but they shall not return to me! This may keep you from sorrowing as persons without hope; and keep you from being so cruel, as to wish them to come down to this evil world.

But O what a dreadful consideration is this for damned souls! I believe, that as glorified spirits will know one another, so will damned souls know one another too. And as the company of the blessed increases the happiness of heaven, so the company of the damned will increase their torments. What made Dives to put up that petition? "I have five brethren; send somebody to my father's house to testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." One would imagine at first reading, that hell had made Dives charitable, and that though he was ill natured on earth, yet he had acquired some good nature in hell. No, no, there is not a spark of good nature in the place of torment. But Dives knew, if his five brethren came there, they might say, We may thank you, next to an evil heart, for coming hither; you made us drink healths, till we were drunk; you taught us to game, to curse, to swear, &c. He knew very well, that his five brethren being brought to hell by his example, hell would be heated five times hotter to torment his soul. One will cry out, Cursed be the day that ever I was companions with such an one in sin; cursed be the day that ever we hearkened to one another's advice, and were allured by each others example to sin against God!

But did a cloud overshadow Peter, James, and John? Were heavenly and divine visits here but short? Then wonder not, ye people of God, if ye are upon the mount one hour, and down in the valley of the shadow of death the next. There is nothing in the world more common, after you have been in a good frame, than for a cloud to overshadow you. We generally say, "It is good to be here," and often make a Christ of our graces; and therefore the Lord sends a cloud to overshadow us. But never fear; God shall speak to you out of the cloud; God will reveal himself to you; this cloud shall soon be gone; ere long we shall be in heaven, and in that glory where no cloud can possibly reach us.

I can now only mention one thing more, and that is, Did the Father say, "This is my beloved Son, hear him?" then let every one of our hearts echo to this testimony give of Christ, "This is my beloved Savior." Did God so love the world, as to send his only begotten Son, his well beloved Son to preach to us? Then, my dear friends, HEAR HIM. What God said seventeen hundred years ago, immediately by a voice from heaven, concerning his Son upon the mount, that same thing God says to you immediately by his word, "Hear him." If ye never heard him before, hear him now. Hear him so as to take him to be your prophet, priest, and your king; hear him, so as to take him to be your God and your all. Hear him today, ye youth, while it is called today; hear him now, lest God should cut you off before you have another invitation to hear him; hear him while he cries, "Come unto me;" hear him while he opens his hand and his heart; hear him while he knocks at the door of your souls, lest you should hear him saying, "Depart, depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Hear him, ye old and gray-headed, hear him, ye that have one foot in the grave; hear him, I say; and if ye are dull of hearing, beg of God to open the ears of your hearts, and your blind eyes; beg of God that you may have an enlarged and a believing heart, and that ye may know what the Lord God saith concerning you. God will resent it, he will avenge himself on his adversaries, if you do not hear a blessed Savior. He is God's son, he is God's beloved son; he came upon a great errand, even to shed his precious blood for sinners; he came to cleanse you from all sin, and to save you with an everlasting salvation. Ye who have heard him, hear him again; still go on, believe in and obey him, and by-and-by you shall hear him saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." May God grant it to you all, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake. Amen, and Amen.