

**MEDITATIONS  
ON MATTERS  
OF  
CHRISTIAN  
FAITH  
AND  
EXPERIENCE**

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# MEDITATIONS ON MATTERS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH AND EXPERIENCE

## VOLUME 1

### PREFACE

More than fifteen years have passed since the first of the Meditations now published in the present volume appeared in the pages of the *Gospel Standard*. In that short time how many of the dear family of God, to whose hearts these writings were once blest and applied, have gone to their eternal rest!—and the author of them amongst the number. His voice is no more heard comforting the hearts and edifying the minds of Christian hearers; his pen is no more busy writing for their exhortation and instruction. Both he and they are now, we know, beyond the need of either; but that which he, using the great gifts which God had given him, wrote in years past for the good of the saints, is still left to us, and it is in the trust that it may still be again and again blessed to the afflicted family of God, that the present edition is published.

Many, we say, have gone to their eternal rest since these Meditations were first printed; but have there not arisen many in their place who stand no less in need of comfort and instruction? We know that it is so; and knowing this, we have been unwilling to leave the Meditations to be forgotten in the pages of a periodical, and have ventured to bring them out in a separate form, to the end that those who cannot find access to the past numbers of the *Gospel Standard* may still have by them what has already proved of such value to many who have gone before. Further, it has been the express wish of many of the dear friends of the deceased writer that these Meditations should be printed in a separate form, and to such we now commend them, regretting that the republication has been so long delayed, but trusting that they may find in them again some words of comfort, recalling the past.

We have but one more word to add. In reprinting the Meditations, we have adhered almost word for word to the original, only altering an expression here and there, in order to give, as much as possible, the impression of a continuous and not a periodical series. We have had constant cause to regret that the hand which wrote them had not been spared, as we once hoped it might have been, to weld them into one continuous whole. Yet we could not bear that any

other hand than his should complete his work. The reader will observe that allusion is made in these pages to several events occurring at the time when they were written, such as the American war, and the publication of Dr. Colenso's book. It will be well to bear this constantly in mind. As they were originally written for the glory of a triune God, so now we pray for His blessing upon them.

*November, 1875*

## REVIEW\*

*The True Signification of the English Adjective, "Mortal," and the Awfully Erroneous Consequences of the Application of that Term to the Ever Immortal Body of Jesus Christ, briefly Considered. By Henry Cole. London.*

\* The review of Dr. Cole's work is included in the present volume, as the first series of Meditations would be incomplete without it.

## I.

In that wondrous prayer which the Lord Jesus Christ, as the great High Priest over the house of God, offered up to his heavenly Father on the eve of his sufferings and death, there is a declaration which demands of all who fear God the deepest and most attentive consideration. It is this: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."\* (John 17:3.) In the preceding verse the blessed Lord had told his heavenly Father that he had "given him power over all flesh," for this express purpose, "that he should give eternal life to as many as God had given him." But for the instruction of the Church of God for all time, that she might clearly understand and know what this eternal life is which he has to bestow, and that on a matter so vital, so essential, no mistake might be made, he graciously adds the explanation to which we have already referred. By this plain and decisive declaration, he would for ever show that the eternal life which he has to give is no visionary, imaginary, dim, and dreamy heaven; no mere deliverance at death from illness, pain, and suffering; no narrow escape from hell, just at the last gasp; no reward of merit, or purchase of a deathbed repentance; no fruit of juggling ceremonies or absolving priests, got in the very article of dissolution, by a drop of oil or a little bread and wine; no entrance for unregenerate souls into a paradise of unknown bliss, of which on

earth there had been no foretaste, and for which no previous meetness or spiritual preparedness had been inwardly wrought. All such carnal views of heaven, all such natural notions of a state of happiness after death of deceivers and deceived, the blessed Lord at once and for ever cast out by declaring with his own lips of truth and grace that the eternal life which he had to bestow consisted in two things: 1. The knowledge of the only true God; and, 2. The knowledge of himself as the sent of the Father.

\* These words are often incorrectly quoted, by which much of their force and meaning is lost, "And this is life eternal, to know thee," &c. But the Lord's words are, "that they might know thee." in the original the article stands before "life eternal," so that the meaning of the whole passage is, "And this is the life eternal which he has to give, that they whom thou hast given him may know thee," &c. He thus explains what this eternal life is, and that it is given to the objects of his Father's love and choice, that they, and they only, might have the inward and unfailing possession of it in time and for eternity.

The importance and significancy of this declaration it is impossible to overstate. Its infinite weight is determined by eternal life being laid in the opposite scale; its immeasurable breadth by the commencement of heaven dating from a life on earth. For eternal life begins below, to be consummated above; is sown in grace, to be harvested in glory. Thus Enoch walked with God before he was translated; Abraham was the friend of God; and Moses saw the Lord face to face. These and all the Old Testament saints "desired a heavenly country" before they reached it. (Heb. 11:16.) But how could they desire a country of which they had no knowledge, foretaste, or enjoyment? Can we desire that of which we know nothing, feel nothing, taste nothing, enjoy nothing? "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee," is the experience of every soul that by the letting down of heaven upon earth finds earth itself the very portal of heaven. But how can it know there is a God in heaven, unless it has found that God on earth; or desire none beside him even here below, unless here below it has felt and known his love?

But it is not our purpose to open or enlarge upon this declaration of the blessed Lord in its general bearings, or as comprehending the whole of the important truth couched therein. The part which rests with weight upon our own mind at this present moment is that which places the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ on the same level with the knowledge of the only true God. How deep, then, how mysterious, and yet how blessed must that knowledge be

to obtain, to possess, to enjoy which is to be put into possession, whilst here below, of life everlasting. Science, learning, knowledge, general or special, mental ability, mechanical skill, political wisdom, intellectual refinement, and every attainment which, in a state of high civilisation, elevates men above the slaves of drunkenness and debauchery, are well for time. Who can despise such a wonder of science and skill as the Great Eastern, though he that fears God and trembles at his word may call to mind the woes denounced against ancient Tyre for her riches and her pride, (Ezek. 26, 27, 28,) and may see with fear that what she was England is, and that the same sins may call down the same doom. But what are all the attainments of science, all the wonders of art, all the triumphs of engineering skill for eternity? Yes; were all the science and art, all the skill, wealth, and power, now divided among thousands, concentrated in one individual, what would the whole collective array be compared with one grain of grace, one ray of divine teaching, one drop of atoning blood in the conscience, or one gleam of the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost? If, then, this spiritual and saving knowledge of Jesus Christ whom God hath sent is a free gift, and yet is only bestowed upon those whom the Father has given to his dear Son, how precious the possession, but O how exclusive the boon! How as with a two-edged sword this word out of the mouth of the Son of God (Rev. 1:16) cuts both ways; how, as a key worn on his shoulder and wielded by his divine hand, it shuts as well as opens; how, whilst with one hand it raises millions to hope and heaven, with the other it sinks millions into despair and hell. As a healing word from the Lord's lips it brings rest and peace to prayerful hearts, wounded consciences, and contrite spirits; but, as a word of truth and righteousness, it for ever seals the doom of the ignorant and unbelieving, the self-confident and the self-righteous, the dead in sin and the dead in profession.

As all true Christians believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is God and man, this spiritual, saving knowledge of his Person and work, his love and grace, his blood and righteousness, divides itself into two branches: 1. A gracious acquaintance with his Deity as the eternal Son of God; 2. A gracious knowledge of his humanity as the Son of man.

In some of our late Numbers we ventured to lay before our spiritual readers some of those scriptural views of the eternal Sonship of our blessed Lord which we have seen and felt in our own soul as the solemn truth of God.\* And as we have reason to believe that what we were enabled to write upon that subject has been received with a measure of acceptance by those who know and love the truth as it is in Jesus, we have felt encouraged now to bring

before them some reflections on the sacred humanity of the blessed Redeemer. To know him as God, to know him as man, to know him as God-man, and this by a divine revelation of his glorious Person, blood, and love, to our souls—this is, indeed, to have eternal life in our breasts. Nor can he be savingly known in any other way but by divine and special revelation, "For no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any one the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matt. 11:27.) The Apostle, therefore, prays for the saints at Ephesus, that "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ would give unto them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened." (Eph. 1:17, 18.) He prayed for the same blessing for them as he had enjoyed for himself, as he speaks, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me." (Gal. 1:15, 16.) He knew, therefore in himself in his own blessed and happy experience, what it was to be "filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;" (Col. 1:9;) and to be blessed with "all riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment (or knowledge) of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. 2:2, 3.) Thus he travailed in birth again for the Galatians until "Christ was formed in them;" (Gal.4:19;) and prayed for the Ephesians, that "Christ might dwell in their heart by faith." (Eph. 3:17.) He speaks also of their having "learned Christ," "heard of Christ," and "been taught of Christ," (Eph. 4:20, 21,) all which expressions point to a divine discovery of his Person and work to the heart. The blessed Lord also assured his sorrowing disciples that he would "come to them," and that they should "see" him, and "live" upon him; that they should "know that he was in them," and that he would "manifest himself to them and make his abode with them." (John 14:18-23.) Nor were these blessings and favours limited to the Lord's own immediate disciples. As "the precious ointment which was poured upon the head" of our great High Priest "went down to the skirts of his garments," (Psa. 133:2,) so there is "an anointing which teacheth" the lowest and least of the members of the mystical body of Christ "of all things, and is truth, and no lie." (1 John 2:27.) By this unction from above every one that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto Christ; (John 6:45;) and knoweth for "himself that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true." (1 John 5:20.) If, then, we are favoured with this teaching, and "a man can receive nothing unless it be given him from heaven," (John 3:27,) we shall see by the eyes of our enlightened understanding "the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh,"

and what we thus see we shall believe, love, and adore.

\* These were afterwards collected and published under the title of "The True, Proper, and Eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God."

Should we not, then, with all holy awe and godly reverence, seek to approach this mystery of wisdom, power, and love? for all salvation and all happiness, as well as all grace and glory, are wrapped up in it. Right views are indispensable to a right faith, and a right faith is indispensable to salvation. To stumble at the foundation, is, concerning faith, to make shipwreck altogether; for as Immanuel, God with us, is the grand Object of faith, to err in views of his eternal Deity, or to err in views of his sacred humanity, is alike destructive. There are points of truth which are not fundamental, though erroneous views on any one point must lead to God-dishonouring consequences in strict proportion to its importance and magnitude; but there are certain foundation truths to err concerning which is to insure for the erroneous and the unbelieving the blackness of darkness for ever.

In opening up, therefore, according to our ability, this blessed subject, *the sacred humanity of the Lord Jesus*, we shall arrange our thoughts under four distinct heads.

- I. The wisdom, love, and grace of God as revealed in the incarnation of his dear Son.
- II. The nature of that sacred humanity which the blessed Lord assumed in the execution of this wondrous plan.
- III. The work accomplished in that sacred humanity whilst here on earth, in its state of humiliation and suffering.
- IV. The exaltation of that sacred humanity to the right hand of the Father in heaven; and what it involves for the present and for the future.

On a subject so deep and so important, yet so full of grace and truth, it may well behove us to seek wisdom from above, and to take especial heed that our pen may drop no word that may be inconsistent with the oracles of God, or sully the purity of the doctrine which is according to godliness.

I. To glorify his dear Son has from all eternity been the purpose of the Father; and both in the plan and in the execution has he manifested the depths of his infinite wisdom, power, and love. That the eternal Son of God should take into

intimate and indissoluble union with his divine Person the flesh and the blood of the children, that in that nature he might manifest the riches of the sovereign grace, the heights and depths of the everlasting love, and the fulness of the uncreated glory of a Triune Jehovah, has been from all eternity the determinate counsel and purpose of the great and glorious self-existent I AM; and all creation, all providence, and all events and circumstances of time and space were originally and definitely arranged to carry into execution this original plan. Creation, with all its wonders of power and wisdom, was not necessary either for the happiness or the glory of the self-existent Jehovah. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost had, from all eternity, that holy, intimate union and intercommunion with each other, that mutual love and ineffable fellowship of three distinct Persons and yet but one God, which creation could neither augment nor impair. Time, with all its incidents, is but a moment; space, with all its dimensions, is but a speck, compared with the existence of a God who inhabiteth eternity, and therefore filleth all time and all space. That a self-existent God should be amply sufficient for his own happiness and his own glory is a truth as self-evident to a believing heart as the very existence of God himself. But it pleased the sacred Triune Jehovah that there should be an external manifestation of his heavenly glory; and this was to be accomplished by the incarnation of the Son of God, the second Person of the holy Trinity. The Father, therefore, prepared him a body, which in due time he should assume. Thus addressing his heavenly Father, he says, "A body hast thou prepared me." (Heb. 10:5.) That he should take this prepared body into union with his divine Person was the eternal will of God; so that when the appointed time arrived for the decree to be accomplished, the eternal Son could and did come forth from the bosom of the Father with these words upon his lips, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me (the volume of God's eternal decrees), to do thy will, O God." (Heb. 10:7.)

Now, the word of truth declares that "God manifest in the flesh" is "the great mystery of godliness." (1 Tim. 3:16.) Therefore, without an experimental knowledge of this great mystery there can be no godliness in heart, lip, or life; and if no godliness no salvation, unless we mean to open the gates of bliss to the ungodly, who "shall not stand in the judgment;" (Psa. 1:5;) and to count for nothing that "ungodliness" against which "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven." (Rom. 1:18.) It is the truth, "the truth as it is in Jesus," which alone "maketh free;" and it is the truth, "the truth as it is in Jesus," which alone sanctifies as well as liberates: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." (John 17:17.) How important, then, how all-essential to know the truth for ourselves, in our own hearts and consciences, by divine teaching

and divine testimony, that, set free from bondage, darkness, ignorance, and error, liberated into the blessed enjoyment of the love and mercy of God, and sanctified by his Spirit and grace, we may walk before him in the light of his countenance. And as in the Person of the incarnate Son of God "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," how blessed is it to look up by faith to him at the right hand of the Father, and to receive out of his fulness those communications of wisdom and grace which not only enlighten us with the light of the living, but cause us to be partakers of his holiness, and thus make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

As thus taught and blessed, we desire to approach this solemn subject, and to look with the eyes of an enlightened understanding and of a believing heart at the mystery of an incarnate God. And if Moses at God's command put off his shoes from off his feet, when he looked at the burning bush, for the place whereon he stood was holy ground, (Exod. 3:5,) much more should we, when we look on the mystery of God made manifest in the flesh, of which the burning bush was but a type, put off the shoes of carnal reason from off our feet.

II. The sacred humanity of the blessed Lord consists of a perfect human body and a perfect human soul, taken at one and the same instant in the womb of the Virgin Mary, under the overshadowing operation and influence of the Holy Ghost. This is very evident from the language of the angel to the Virgin: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35.)

i. The first thing to be borne in mind is, that it was a *real* and *substantial* human nature, consisting of a real human body and a real human soul, both of which were assumed at one and the same instant in the womb of the Virgin. It was necessary that the same nature should be taken which had sinned, or there could have been no redemption or reconciliation of that nature, or of those that wore that nature. Thus the apostle argues, "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham;" (Heb. 2:16;) implying, that if fallen angels had to be redeemed and reconciled, the Son of God must have taken angelic nature; but as man had to be redeemed, he assumed human nature. It was not, then, a shadowy form which the son of God assumed in the womb of the Virgin, as he had appeared in human shape before his incarnation to Abraham, Jacob, Gideon, Manoah and his wife, but a real human nature, as real and as substantial as our own. Thus the Son of

God "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men;" (Phil. 2:7;) "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;" (John 1:14;) "God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh;" (Rom. 8:3;) "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." (Heb. 2:14.) These Scripture testimonies abundantly show that the Son of God assumed a real human nature, but not a fallen, peccable, mortal nature. He was "made *flesh*," therefore *real* flesh; "in the *likeness* of sinful flesh," therefore not in the *reality* of sinful flesh. He took flesh of the Virgin, or he could not have been the promised "seed of the woman," which was to bruise the serpent's head; (Gen 3:15;) or of "the seed of Abraham," to which the promise was especially made, (Gal. 3:16,) and from whom the Virgin Mary was lineally descended. And this nature he so assumed, or to use a scriptural expression, so "took hold of," (Heb. 2:16, *marg.*;) that it became his own nature as much as his divine nature is his own. It was not assumed, as a garment, to be laid aside after redemption's work was done, but was taken into indissoluble union with his divine Person. Nor did his death on the cross dissolve this union, for though body and soul were parted, and his immortal, incorruptible body lay in the grave, his soul was in paradise, in indissoluble union with his Deity. Thus, as each of us is really and truly man, by human nature being so personally and individually appropriated by us as our own subsistence, that it is as much ours as if there were no other partaker of it on earth but ourselves; so the Son of God, by assuming that nature which is common to all men, (therefore called "the flesh and blood of the children,") made it his own as much as ours is our own nature. He is, therefore, really and truly "the *man* Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 2:5.)

ii. The next thing to be believed in and held fast is, that this humanity was not a person, but a *nature*. This point may not seem at the first glance of deep and signal importance; but as all God's ways and works are stamped with infinite wisdom, it will be seen, on deeper reflection, that it involves matters of the greatest magnitude—of the richest grace and the highest glory. For look at the consequences which would necessarily follow, were the sacred humanity of our blessed Lord a person and not a nature. Were it a person, the Lord Jesus Christ would be two Persons, one Person as God, and another Person as man, and thus would be two distinct individuals. But being a nature, which had of itself no distinct individuality, but was assumed at the very instant of its conception into union with his divine Person, the Lord Jesus is still but one Person, though he possesses two distinct natures. The angel, therefore, called it "that holy *thing*"—*i.e.*, that holy nature, that holy flesh, that holy substance—a "thing," because it had a real substance, "holy," because not

begotten by natural generation, but sanctified in the moment of conception by the Holy Ghost, so as to be intrinsically holy, impeccable, immortal—capable of dying, but not tainted with the seeds of sickness or death. It was not a body like ours, "shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin;" (Psa. 51:5;) but was begotten by a divine and supernatural operation of the Holy Ghost, and was therefore "holy," not relatively, and partially, as we, but really, thoroughly, and intrinsically holy; "harmless," or as the word might be rendered, "free from all ill;" "undefiled" with any taint of corruption in body or soul, original or actual, in any seed, inclination, desire, feeling, or movement of or toward it; "separate from sinners" in its conception and formation, in every thought, word, or deed, so that it was as separate from sin, and sin as separate from it, when on earth as it is now in the presence of God; "and made higher than the heavens," by the exaltation of that human nature to the throne of glory; higher than the visible heavens, for what is the glory of sun, moon, or stars to the glory of the sacred humanity of Christ in the courts of heaven? and higher too than the invisible heavens, for in his human nature as the God-man, he is exalted far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. (Rom. 7:26; Eph. 1:20-22.)

Among the heresies and errors which pestered the early church, was the Nestorian heresy, which asserted that Christ's human nature was a Person, and thus made two persons in the Lord, and the Eutychian, which declared that there was but one nature, the humanity of Christ being absorbed into his divinity. Against both these errors the Athanasian Creed, that sound and admirable compendium and bulwark of divine truth, draws its two-edged sword. "Who, although he be God and man, yet he is not two, but one Christ; one not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking the Manhood into God; one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of Person; for as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ." The Nestorian heresy is cut to pieces by the declaration that "he is not two," (*i.e.*, persons,) but one Christ; and the Eutychian by the words, "one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person."

But consider the blessings that are connected with and flow out of this heavenly truth. The glory and beauty of this mystery, it is true, can only be seen and known by faith; for faith, as "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," alone gives to these divine realities a substantial existence in the believer's heart. But looking by faith into this heavenly mystery, we may see in the two points we have thus far touched upon

signal beauty and blessedness. The human nature which the blessed Lord assumed into union with his divine Person hungered, thirsted, was weary, wept, sighed, groaned, sweat drops of blood, agonised in the garden and on the cross, was tried, deserted, tempted, buffeted, spit upon, crucified, and, by a voluntary act, died. Had it not been a real human nature, the sufferings and sorrows of the holy soul, the pains and agonies of the sacred body, the obedience rendered, the blood shed, the sacrifice offered, the life laid down would not have been real, at least not really endured and offered in that very nature which was to be redeemed and reconciled. This is beautifully unfolded by the apostle: "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:17, 18.)

But again, were the human nature of our blessed Lord a Person, its acts would have been personally distinct, and the virtue and validity of Deity would not have been stamped upon them. We may thus illustrate the distinction between a nature and a person. Man and wife are mystically by marriage one flesh, but they still remain two distinct persons. Their acts, therefore, as persons, are individually distinct, and each is morally and really responsible for his or her individual actions. But were they so incorporated, like a grafted tree, as to become two natures and only one person, then the acts of the weaker nature, assuming for the moment that the female is the weaker, being the acts of one and the same person, would be stamped with all the strength and power of the stronger. Thus it is with the two natures of our blessed Lord. The human nature, though essentially and intrinsically holy, impeccable, incorruptible, and immortal, being the weaker and inferior nature, yet becomes stamped with all the worth, virtue, and validity of the divine nature, because though there are two natures there is but one Person. Thus the grand, vital truth of the two natures yet but one Person of the glorious Immanuel is no mere dry or abstract doctrine, no speculative theory spun out of the brains of ancient fathers and learned theologians, but a blessed revelation of the wisdom and grace of God.

iii. But much beauty and heavenly glory are wrapped up *in the way in which that humanity was assumed*. In the forming of this holy humanity we see the three Persons of the blessed Trinity engaged. The Father prepared the body, the Son assumed it, the Holy Ghost formed it. By the preparation of the body, as the act of the Father, we understand not its actual forming or framing in

the womb of the Virgin, but its eternal designation, its preparation in the council, wisdom, and love of the Father."A body hast thou prepared me;" (Heb. 10:5;) *margin*, "thou hast fitted me," literally, "put together joint by joint." To design, to contrive, to put together in his own eternal mind, not merely the framework of the Lord's body and the constitution of his soul, but so to prepare it that, conceived in the womb of the sinful Virgin, it should not partake of her sin, of her fall, of her sickness, of her corruptibility,—this was a greater wonder to appear in heaven than what holy John saw in vision. (Rev. 12:1.) This body, thus prepared, the eternal Son of God assumed. By its assumption by the Son we understand not a creating act, as if the Son of God himself created the body to be assumed, but that ineffable act of condescension and grace whereby he took at one and the same instant of its formation, that sacred humanity, consisting of a perfect human body and a perfect human soul, into union with his divine Person. We say "at one and the same instant," for we reject with abhorrence that vain figment, that idle tale, that pestilential and dangerous error of the pre-existence of the human soul of the Lord Jesus. He was made in *all things* like unto his brethren, sin only excepted; (Heb. 2:17; 4:15;) and unless it can be proved that our soul was created before our body, and pre-existed ages before it, it cannot be shown that the human soul of the Lord Jesus had any such pre-existence. This human nature, prepared by God the Father, and *assumed* by God the Son, God the Holy Ghost formed. By the forming of that sacred humanity by the Holy Ghost we understand that act of miraculous power whereby he overshadowed the Virgin by his operations and influence, and created, of her flesh, a holy human nature, which he sanctified and filled with grace in the very instant of its conception.

iv. But this leads us onward to a fourth point, not less full of truth and blessedness. And we may put it in the form of a solemn question. How was it possible that in a nature so prepared, so assumed, and created, there could be *any taint of sin, corruption, disease, or mortality?* The Father contemplated that human nature which he had prepared for his dear Son from all eternity with ineffable complacency and delight. Could he who made man in his original creation so pure and innocent, creating him in his own image, after his own likeness, have prepared for his own Son, his only-begotten, eternal Son, a body fallen, tainted, and corruptible, or even capable of corruption and decay? Could the Son, who is "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his Person," assume into union with his eternal Godhead any other but a pure, holy, immortal, and incorruptible nature? It was not a body to decay with sickness and die of disease, and then be thrust away out of sight

as the food of corruption, but taken into intimate union with Deity itself, as its immortal and incorruptible companion. Could the Holy Ghost form anything but a holy nature for the Son of God to assume into a union so close, intimate, and indissoluble?

But it may not be unprofitable to examine these points of divine truth a little more closely.

1. And first, as to the intrinsic *holiness and purity* of the Lord's human nature. It was essentially a nature *impeccable*, that is, not only not tainted with sin, but absolutely *incapable* of being so tainted. As we read of its being "impossible for God to lie," (Heb. 6:18,) so we may say of the sacred humanity of the blessed Lord, it was impossible it could sin. The testimonies in the word of truth are most full and clear to the impeccability of the human nature of the blessed Lord. "He hath made him to be sin for us *who knew no sin.*" (2 Cor. 5:21.) He knew no sin; that is, in his own Person, in its taint or defilement, or in any approach thereunto. "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." (John 14:30.) Satan, the prince of this world, came to tempt and to assail him; but he had nothing in him, as he has in us; that is, no internal material on which to work. If we may use such a figure, he had no ground within the walls on which to plant his infernal artillery. He might assault the blessed Lord from without, for "in all points he was tempted like as we are, yet without sin," which had neither birth nor being, root nor stem, nor the possibility of any, in the sacred humanity of the adorable Redeemer.

The late Dr. Cole, in the work before us, published many years ago, has exposed, in the most clear and forcible manner, the awful blasphemies of the once popular Edward Irving on this point. Well may we call them "awful blasphemies," for Dr. Cole declares that he heard with his own ears this poor, miserable, ranting orator, for he called his own sermons "Orations," term the holy humanity of the blessed Lord "that sinful substance." The sacred beauty, the ineffable blessedness of that holy humanity mainly consisted in the Lord's being "a lamb without blemish and without spot," (1 Pet. 1:19,) as was typified by the paschal lamb, (Exod. 12:5,) and indeed by every other ceremonial sacrifice. (Lev. 22:19-24; Deut. 15:21.) We must never lose sight of the peculiar nature of the blessed Lord's humanity. The nature of Adam was peccable, that is, capable of sinning, because, though created pure, it was not generated by any supernatural operation of the Holy Ghost. It was a pure created nature, but not a holy begotten nature. The two things are essentially distinct. Besides which, the humanity of Adam was a person, and therefore

could fall; but the humanity of Jesus is a nature taken into union with his divine Person, and therefore could no more sin or fall away from Godhead than his Godhead could sin or fall off from his manhood.

2. It was therefore, as Dr. Cole has well shown, *incorruptible*. The body of the blessed Redeemer lay three days and nights, according to the Jewish mode of calculation, in the sepulchre, but it knew no corruption. As the apostle expressly declares, "He whom God raised again saw no corruption." (Acts 13:37.) The sacred humanity of the Lord Jesus had no seeds in it of decay. Though a real body, like our own, though it ate and drank and slept as we do, not being under the original curse, nor involved in the Adam fall, it was not subject to sickness or corruption, as our body is. The voluntary death of the blessed Lord severed for a while body and soul; but the body was no more tainted with corruption in the sepulchre than the soul was tainted with sin in paradise.

3. This sacred humanity of the adorable Lord was therefore essentially *immortal*. Dr. Cole, in his letter on the subject, has admirably shown this. The body of the Lord was capable of death; indeed, as dying was the main part of every sacrifice, it was taken that it might die. It did not die from inherent necessity, as our bodies die, which are essentially mortal, because involved in Adam's transgression; but it died by a voluntary act. This is most plain from the Lord's own words, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." (John 10:17, 18.) It was not the pain of the cross, the nails driven through the hands and feet, the exhaustion of nature, or the agony of soul that killed, so to speak, the Lord Jesus. When he had finished the work which his Father gave him to do, so that he could say, "It is finished," "he bowed his head"—the head did not decline of itself, weighed down by death, but he himself, full of life and immortality, bowed it; and then, by a voluntary act, "gave up the ghost," or breathed out his life.

As in our next Number we hope, with God's help and blessing; to dwell more fully on this part of the subject, in our remarks on the sacred humanity of our blessed Lord in its state of humiliation, we shall enlarge no further upon it at present, but conclude with an extract from Dr. Cole's book:

"The awful and inevitable consequences of applying this term 'mortal' to the

body of Christ."

"1. If the body of Christ was 'mortal' in the unalterable meaning of that term, his death, as we have already hinted, was not *voluntary* but of *necessity*. He did not die of his own free will, but died, because, being a personal sinner, (tremble my soul at the thought!) he could not save himself from death! He had no power to 'lay down' his life, but was compelled to yield it up, because he had forfeited it by his own sins! He did not '*give* his life a ransom for many;' but the just judgments of God took it from him for his own transgressions: 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' (Ezek. 18:4.) But is this the truth as it is in Jesus Christ? Is this the doctrine concerning the adorable Person of the Son of God that is revealed in the Word? Is this the instruction which the Holy and Blessed Spirit seals upon the heart of the redeemed? No, no! The scriptures declare, and those that have been brought to experience the benefits of the death of Christ know and believe that his death was not of *necessity*, but a *free and voluntary gift*. How plainly does he declare, and how expressively describe this himself: 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd *giveth* his life for the sheep. I *lay down* my life that I may take it again. *No man taketh it from me*, but I lay it down of myself. I *have power* to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.' (John 16:11; 17:18.) His sacrifice is everywhere called 'a sacrifice of himself, a voluntary gift.' 'He offered up himself;' (Heb. 7:27;) 'By the sacrifice of himself;' (Heb. 9:26;) 'Who gave himself a ransom.' (1 Tim. 2:6.) And so universally. But all these scriptures are flatly contradicted, all this cloud of testimonies is utterly nullified, if the body of Christ was 'mortal.'"

## II.

In approaching the solemn subject of the sacred humanity of our blessed Lord, as engaged in the work of redemption when here below, we desire to do so under the special teaching and unction of the Holy Ghost, not only that nothing erroneous, inconsistent, or unbecoming may escape our pen, and that what we write may be in the strictest harmony with the oracles of God and the experience of his saints, but that life, and power, and savour may attend our reflections to those believing hearts which may desire to walk with us in these fields of heavenly meditation. To guide into all truth, to take of the things of Christ and to show them to his disciples; and thus glorify Jesus, is the especial work of the Holy Ghost. (John 16:13-15.) To have this divine teaching is to have an unction from the Holy One whereby we know all things;" (1 John 2:20;) and is to be blessed with that anointing which "teacheth of all things,

and is truth, and is no lie." (1 John 2:27.) Prayer and supplication, reverent thoughts and feelings towards the sacred Majesty of heaven, inward prostration of spirit before his throne, submission of mind to the word of truth, faith in living exercise upon the Person and work of the Son of God, hope anchoring within the veil, and love flowing forth to the adorable Redeemer, will all accompany this heavenly anointing. So unspeakably holy, so great, and so perfect is that true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man; one not made with hands, as the tabernacle in the wilderness, but prepared by God the Father, assumed by God the Son, and sanctified by God the Holy Ghost, that we should as much dread to drop any word derogatory to, or inconsistent with its grace and glory as the high priest under the law would have trembled to carry swine's blood, or the broth of abominable things into the most holy place.

The sacred humanity of his dear Son, as the temple of his Godhead, and as irradiated with the beams of his eternal glory, the eyes of the Father ever contemplate with ineffable complacency and delight. Nor was this tabernacle less glorious in his holy eyes who sees things as they really are, not as they appear to man, even in Jesus's deepest humiliation and shame, when he was "a worm, and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people." When dogs compassed him, when the assembly of the wicked inclosed him, when they pierced his hands and feet, when he could tell all his bones as they hung stripped on the cross, when his enemies looked and stared upon him, parted his garments among them, and cast lots upon his vesture, (Psa. 22:8, 16-18,) he was as much delighted in by the Father, and was as glorious in his eyes as he now is at the right hand of his throne. He ever was from the hour of his incarnation, he ever will be the same Jesus Christ,—the same yesterday, when he hung upon the cross, to-day as he sits at the right hand of God, and for ever in the eternity of his kingdom, power, and glory. May we, then, who believe in his name, and cleave to him with purpose of heart, as beholding the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, feel such a sacred communion with him in his suffering humanity that we may be able to say, with holy John, in the flowing forth of faith and affection, "And truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3.)

The foundation of this sacred mystery was laid in the eternal purposes of God, and determined by a covenant ordered in all things and sure. The creation of this lower world, and indeed we may say, of the higher world of bright, angelic beings, was but a first step to the bringing to light of these hidden purposes of Jehovah. When he formed man in his own likeness, it was not

merely after his moral image, (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10,) but after the likeness of that man who was set up in the mind of God from everlasting, or ever the earth was. (Prov. 8:23.) It was utterly impossible that a holy God could create a sinful man. He, therefore, made man upright, but able to fall. During the period of man's innocency the promises of the covenant of grace, so to speak, slept. They were in the bosom of the covenant, ready to appear, but were not yet needed. But immediately that man sinned and fell, as soon as Justice, which, as the revelation of the intrinsic holiness of Jehovah, had the first claim to speak, had pronounced sentence on the head of the guilty criminals, Mercy, as already laid up in the Covenant of grace, stepped in with the first promise which issued from the lips of a sin-pardoning God, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Here was the first intimation of the manifestation of the Son of God to destroy the works of the devil. The bruiser of the serpent's head was to be of the seed of the woman; and the sufferings of the sacred humanity to be assumed of the woman were at the same moment foreshadowed in the declaration that the seed of the serpent should bruise his heel. As a further development of the sacred mystery of the slaughtered Lamb, the gracious Lord then instituted worship by sacrifice; for it is evident from Abel's offering "of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof," which he doubtless burned on the altar, in strict accordance with the Mosaic ritual afterwards appointed, (Numb. 18:17,) that the Lord then instituted the rite of sacrifice, and himself clothed our first parents with the skins of the sacrificed victims as emblematic of the righteousness of the slain Lamb of God, who was thus revealed to their faith. Let us not think that these solemn transactions in the garden of Eden were a sudden thought in the mind of God—an expedient then and there for the first time devised to patch up the fall. The Covenant of grace between the three Persons of the sacred Trinity was entered into with a foreview of the fall; and therefore the blessed Lord is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8.) It is, indeed, derogatory to the character of him who "declareth the end from the beginning," (Isa. 46:10,) who "looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven," (Job 28:24,) to think that the Adam fall took him, so to speak, by surprise, was an unlooked-for, unexpected event, of which there had been no foresight, and for which there had been made no provision. Far from our mind be such low, grovelling thoughts of the great and glorious self-existent I AM. Such views would root up the very foundations of our faith in his omniscience and omnipotence. If God did not foresee the fall, an event charged with the eternal destiny of millions, what minor circumstance can he foresee now? If God did not provide a remedy for the fall as foreseen, where is his wisdom as well as his prescience of the circumstances whereby we are at

present surrounded? Such a blind God groping, as it were, for a remedy amidst the ruins of the fall, which he never foresaw, is worse than a heathen idol. At any rate it is not the God of the Bible—it is not the God whom living souls believe in, worship, and adore. They admire with holy reverence his eternal foresight, and bow with submission before his fixed decrees; they adore his sovereignty in the election of the vessels of mercy and the rejection of the vessels of wrath; and when favoured with a sip of his love, bless his holy name for having loved them with an everlasting love from before the foundation of the world. If these foundations of our most holy faith be destroyed, what can the righteous do? (Psa. 11:3.) But blessed be God, his prescience and his providence, his wisdom and his grace, his mercy and his love, are all from everlasting to everlasting, secured by a covenant ordered in all things and sure, fixed by firm decree and ratified by his word and by his oath, two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie (Heb. 6:18). In this everlasting covenant it was appointed that the Son of God, the second Person in the glorious Godhead, should take our nature into union with his own divine Person, that he might offer it as a sacrifice for the sins of his elect people, and thus redeem them from all the consequences of the fall, and reconcile them unto God.

III. We have already shown that this sacred humanity of our adorable Lord was a real human body, and a real human soul, taken at one and the same instant into union with the divine Person of the Son of God, and that it was essentially impeccable and immortal. We have, with God's blessing, in pursuance of our sacred theme, and as a further opening up of "the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh," to show the work accomplished in that sacred humanity whilst here on earth in its state of humiliation and suffering.

i. The first consideration is, *what he became* by this voluntary act of taking our nature into union with his divine Person. In opening up this part of our subject we shall tread closely in the footsteps of that portion of holy writ where the apostle Paul unfolds the sacred mystery of the humiliation of the blessed Lord. (Phil. 2:5-8.)

1. He *emptied* himself of all those outward adjuncts of his glorious Person wherewith he had for ever shone as the eternal Son of the Father in the courts of heaven. We use the word "emptied himself," as being the literal translation of the word rendered in our version, "made himself of no reputation;" but we do not mean thereby that he deprived himself of any one of the perfections of

the divine nature. Not a single essential attribute of Deity was, or indeed could be in the least degree diminished by his assumption of our nature, for he could no more cease to be all that God is than he could cease to be God. But he emptied himself of them before the eyes of men by laying aside their outward and visible manifestation. As an earthly king may lay aside for a while his regal state, and yet not cease to be a king, so the Son of God laid aside for a season those bright beams of his glory which would otherwise have shone forth too brightly and gloriously for human eyes to look upon; for no man can see God and live. (Exod. 33:20.) Besides which, there was a secret purpose in the mind of God, whose glory it is to conceal a thing as well as to reveal it, (Prov. 25:2,) that the glorious person of his dear Son should be veiled from all eyes, but those of faith. As, then, the sun is sometimes veiled in a mist, or by passing clouds, through which his light shines and his orb appears, though dimmed and shorn of those rays which the human eye cannot bear, so the Son of God veiled his divine glory by the tabernacle of the sacred humanity in which he dwelt. He is therefore said to have "tabernacled among us," as the word "dwelt" (John 1:14) literally means; for as the Shechinah, or divine presence, dwelt in a cloud of glory, upon the mercy-seat, in the tabernacle erected in the wilderness, (Lev. 16:2,) so that the most holy place needed not the light of the golden candlestick which illuminated the outer sanctuary, and yet was veiled by the curtains of the tabernacle, (2 Sam. 7:2,) so the sacred humanity of the blessed Lord was as a tabernacle to his divine nature, veiling it from the eyes of men, and yet by its indwelling presence filled with grace and glory. Thus, to common eyes, he had no form nor comeliness, was as a root out of a dry ground, was despised and rejected of men, and when they saw him there was no beauty in him that they should desire him. (Isa. 53:2.) It is true that sparkles of his eternal Sonship and glorious Godhead shone through the veil of his humanity to believing eyes and hearts, for John says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14.) And the Father not only outwardly, with a voice from heaven, twice declared that he was his beloved Son, (Matt. 3:17; 17:5,) but revealed him inwardly as such to the heart of his disciples, according to the Lord's own testimony in the case of Peter. (Matt. 16:16, 17.) As long as he was in the world he was the light of the world, (John 1:9; 8:12; 9:5,) as the sun, however veiled by clouds, is still the light of the earths. Though rejected and abhorred of men, he could, therefore, still look up to his heavenly Father, in the lowest depths of his humiliation, and speak in the language of filial love and confidence, "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength." (Isa. 49:5.)

2. The second act of humiliation of the eternal Son of God in assuming our nature was *to take upon him the form of a servant*. Some are born servants, as Abraham had three hundred and eighteen trained servants born in his house; (Gen. 14:14;) and some are made servants by others, either taken captive in war (Deut. 21:10) or bought with money. (Lev. 25:44-46.) But the blessed Son of God took upon him the form of a servant, as a voluntary act of grace; and not only the form, but the reality, for the word form respects not only his outward appearance whilst here below, but his inward subjection of soul to God. Therefore the Father said of him, in the language of prophecy, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth," (Isa. 42:1,) and unto him, "Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified. (Isa. 49:3.) He was formed from the womb to be God's servant, (Isa. 49:5), so that he became a servant at the very instant that he took our nature into union with his own divine Person in the womb of the Virgin. Thus the apostle, quoting the words of Psa. 40:6, "Mine ears hast thou opened," (*marg.* "dugged,") that is, "Hast made me thy willing servant," in allusion to Exod. 21:6, renders them, "A body hast thou prepared me;" for by taking the prepared body he became the willing servant of the Father, according to his own words, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." (Psa. 40:8.)

3. By taking this prepared body, he was therefore *made in the likeness of men*, and was *found in fashion as a man*, that is, though his sacred humanity was intrinsically different from ours, as being holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, impeccable, and immortal, yet, in outward form and appearance, as in reality and truth, it perfectly resembled man's. It ate, it drank, it slept, was weary, sweat drops of blood, endured pain of body and travail of soul. The early church was much pestered with what is called the Gnostic heresy, which, under the plausible assumption that real flesh was too gross and material a substance for the Son of God to assume, asserted that he took a shadowy, aerial form, in which there was no real flesh or blood, but only the appearance. It is against this heresy that holy John draws his sword, when he declares that "the Word was made flesh," and gives this as a test of saving truth and damnable error: "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world." (1 John 4:2, 3.) We must hold fast, then, to this vital truth, that it was real flesh and blood, though holy flesh and blood, that the Son of God assumed in the womb and offered on the tree.

4. Having, then, thus voluntarily assumed the form of a servant, the blessed Lord took that in which the very essence of servitude consists, viz., *obedience*, and that not only to the word, but to the will of his heavenly Father.

As this obedience forms our justifying righteousness and is a part of his finished work, it claims at our hands the most attentive, prayerful, and meditative consideration. Not, however, to dwell too long on this part of our subject, we may briefly name these five particulars as most marked and blessed features of the obedience of Jesus, whilst here in this state of humiliation. It was voluntary—delighted in—perfect—vicarious—and meritorious.

1. It was *voluntary*. "Lo! I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God," (Heb. 10:7,) were, so to speak, the words in his heart and mouth when he came out of the bosom of the Father to take flesh in the womb of the Virgin. There was no compulsion to bring him down from heaven to earth but the compulsion of love. As the love of Christ is said to constrain us not to live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again, (2 Cor. 5:14,) so, in a sense, we may say that the love of his people constrained him to live and die for them. They were his inheritance, the portion given him by his Father when he appointed him heir of all things, (Heb. 1:2,) that they might be his eternal possession. (Deut. 32:9; Psa. 2:8.) "Thine they were," he therefore meekly reminds his Father, "and thou gavest them me," adding, to show the unity of mind, will, purpose, and possession in the Father and the Son, "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." (John 17:6, 10.) He, therefore, loved the church as his own bride, the spouse of his heart, whom he had betrothed unto himself as the gift of the Father before time was. (Jer. 31:3; Hos. 2:19, 20.) Yes; before the mountains were settled; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world, even then was he rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth—that part which his saints should inhabit, and his delights were with the sons of men. (Prov. 8:25, 26, 31.) When, then, in and by the fall, the church had become defiled and polluted beyond all thought and expression, when sunk beyond all other help and hope, the image of God in which she had been created, marred, and defaced, she an enemy and an alien by wicked works, the willing captive of sin and Satan, with hell opening its mouth to swallow her up in the same gulf of eternal woe where the fallen angels were already weltering,—then, even then, O miracle of grace! O wonder of unutterable love! the Son of God, by a purely voluntary act, yet in accordance with the will and counsel of the Father and the Holy Ghost, gave

himself for her. This free, voluntary gift of himself, with all its blessed fruits and consequences, is beautifully unfolded by the apostle in that striking passage, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:25-27.) The forlorn, abject, helpless, and hopeless state of the church by the fall, and the pitiful compassion of the blessed Lord as her covenant Head and husband, are beautifully set forth by the prophet Ezekiel, where he compares her to a poor, deserted, abandoned infant, cast out in the open field to the loathing of its person in the day that it was born. No eye pitied it, no hand was stretched forth to do it any necessary office, or give it food, warmth, or shelter. Abandoned to die, had not he who is "very pitiful and of tender mercy" pitied her, (James 5:11,) had not he whose love passeth knowledge loved her, into what an unfathomable depth of everlasting woe must she not have sunk! But in this very hour of need he passed by, and the time was the time of love, for he spread his skirt over her, and swore unto her, entered into a covenant with her, and she became his. But before she could pass into his arms, he had himself to wash away all her filth in the fountain of his own blood, to anoint her with the oil of his grace, and the regenerating, sanctifying influences of the Blessed Spirit, and to clothe her with brodered work, even the righteousness that he wrought for her by his own active and suffering obedience,—the three blessings of which the apostle speaks as the present portion of the saints of God: "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (Ezek. 16:5-10; 1 Cor. 6:11.)

2. It was an obedience that the blessed Lord *delighted in*. His own words, in the language of prophecy, as if in holy anticipation of his coming from heaven to earth, a thousand years before the incarnation, were, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." (Psa. 40:8.) Thus he could say, when faint and weary at Samaria's well, his love and delight in doing the will of God absorbing all feeling of the natural wants of the body, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." (John 4:34.) In this spirit also he said, a year before his actual sufferings and death, "But I have a baptism to be baptized with,"—and O what a baptism of suffering and blood! of what agonies of body, and of what travail of soul! "and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 22:50,)—as though his holy soul panted with intense desires for the overwhelming baptism of garden sorrows, and pressed forward to meet it, and the sufferings of the cross, as the fulfilment of his Father's will.

So, on his last journey out of Galilee towards Judea, "he went before," as if he would exceed his usual pace, and outstrip his lagging disciples, "ascending up to Jerusalem," where the will of his Father was to be obeyed, and the atoning sacrifice to be offered. (Luke 13:33; 19:28.) Blessed Lord! would that we could follow thee in this holy example, and delight to do thy will as thou didst delight to do thy Father's will. And such surely would be our desire and delight were we more conformed to thy suffering image, and more moulded after the pattern of thine obedience. (Rom. 12:1, 2.) Animated by the same holy delight, he said to his disciples, on the eve of his sufferings and death, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15.) And when the solemn hour drew nigh when the waters came in unto his soul, when he sank in deep mire where there was no standing, when he came into deep waters where the floods overflowed him, (Psa. 69:1, 2,)\* in the gloomy garden, when he had to drink of the cup of wrath put into his hand, what meek submission, what holy resignation he showed to his Father's will! Where can we look to see such sorrows? But where can we look to find such holy obedience, such meek submission, such patient endurance of them.?

\* It is in the Psalms, especially Psa. 22, 40, and 69 that the inward experience of the blessed Lord as a man of sorrows is set forth.

3. Again. It was a *perfect* obedience. Every thought, every word, and every act of that holy and sacred humanity were perfect, not only as proceeding from a nature intrinsically pure, but as filled with all the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, that glorious Person in the undivided Godhead who not only begot by a divine operation the sacred humanity of our blessed Lord in the womb of the Virgin, but filled it with all his gifts and graces, descending upon him more visibly at his baptism, and anointing him as Prophet, Priest, and King, (Isa. 61:1; Luke 3:22; 4:1; John 3:34; Acts 10:38; Heb. 1:9,) but abiding in him in all his fulness during the whole of his ministry, sufferings, and death. The Law demanded a perfect obedience; it could, indeed, from its very nature, accept no other; and this obedience must be unwavering, flowing on in one uninterrupted stream from the heart, and that stream, like Jordan, all the time of harvest, overflowing all its banks with love to God and man. As the Lord promised that rivers of living water should flow out of the belly (or heart) of him that believed in his name, so the rivers of living obedience flowed from his own heart and lips, as he himself believed in God and did his will from the heart.

4. The obedience of Jesus to the Father's will was *vicarious*, that is, rendered

on behalf of his church, and imputed to her for righteousness. He stood in her place and stead as her Surety and Representative. She owed a debt which she could not pay, an obedience to the Law which she could not render. The Father accepted his Son's, and thus his obedience became hers. Thus, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so, by the obedience of one, many are made righteous; (Rom. 5:19;) for God made the Lord Jesus to be sin for us who know no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2 Cor. 5:21.)

5. This obedience was *meritorious*. Here we see the beauty, grace, and glory of the incarnation of the Son of God. As God, he could not suffer; as man he could not merit; but as God-man he could suffer as man, and merit as God. And as though he has two natures he has but one Person, his doing and dying, his sufferings and obedience, his blood and righteousness, are stamped with all the value and invested with all the validity of Godhead, because he who obeyed and suffered as man is truly and verily God.

Here, then, is "the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh." Here flow through this consecrated channel pardon and peace. Here God can be just and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. Here every attribute of God is harmonised, the law magnified, the gospel revealed, the sinner saved, and God glorified.

### III.

Well might the apostle, as if in a burst of holy admiration, cry aloud, as with trumpet voice, that heaven and earth might hear, "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim. 3:16.) A mystery indeed it is, a great, a deep, an unfathomable mystery; for who can rightly understand how the divine Word, the eternal Son of God, was made flesh, and dwelt among us? "Who shall declare his generation?" (Isa. 53:8;) either that eternal generation whereby he is the only-begotten Son of God, or the generation of his sacred humanity in the womb of the Virgin, when the Holy Ghost came upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her? These are the things "which the angels desire to look into;" which they cannot understand, but reverently adore. And well may we imitate their adoring admiration, not attempting to understand, but believe, love, and revere; for well has it been said,

**"Where reason fails, with all her powers,  
There faith believes, and love adores."**

**Nor, if rightly taught and spiritually led, shall we find this a barren, dry, or unprofitable subject. It is "the great mystery of godliness;" therefore all godliness is contained in it, and flows out of it. There never was, there never will or can be a truly godly thought, feeling, or desire,—no, not one godly word or work, a godly heart or a godly life which does not arise out of, and is not sustained by, the great mystery of an incarnate God. There may be, indeed frequently is, a legal holiness, a fleshly piety, a tithing of mint, anise, and cummin, and a profusion of good works, so called, independent of the grace that dwells in the Lord the Lamb; but godliness, as consisting in a new and heavenly birth, with all its attendant fruits and graces, can only flow from the fulness of a covenant Head, communicating life to the members of his mystical body. And this covenant Head, we know, is the Son of God, once manifest in the flesh and now exalted to the right hand of the Father. How clear on this point, that all life is in him and out of him, are his own words of grace and truth: "Because I live, ye shall live also;" "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me;" "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you;" "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." If, then, our hearts, as touched with an unction from above, are bent after godliness, as a felt blessing; if, as made daily more and more sensible of our miserable emptiness and destitution, and the drying up of all creature springs of happiness and holiness, we long more and more to realise the inward possession of that promised well of water, springing up into everlasting life, we shall desire to look more and more into this heavenly mystery, and to have its transforming power and efficacy more feelingly and experimentally made known to our souls. "If any man thirst," said the blessed Lord, "let him come unto me and drink;" and to show that not only should he drink for his own soul's happiness, but for the benefit of others, he graciously added, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly (or heart) shall flow rivers of living water." (John 7:38.) The whole of God's grace, mercy, and truth is laid up in, is revealed through, is manifested by the Son of his love; for "it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" (Col. 1:19;) and this as Immanuel, God with us. Thus his sacred humanity, in union with his Divine Person, is the channel of communication through which all the love and mercy of God flow down to poor, guilty, miserable sinners, who believe in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. If blessed then with faith in living**

exercise, we may draw near and behold the great mystery of godliness. To tread by faith upon this holy ground is to come "unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel;" (Heb. 12:22-24;) for every blessing of the new covenant, if we are but favoured with a living faith in an incarnate God, is then experimentally as well as eternally ours.

If, then, we dwell at a little further length on the heavenly mystery of the human nature of our blessed Lord, we trust we shall not be found wearisome to our spiritual readers. We freely confess that the more we look into it, the more the subject opens to our view. We feel it, therefore, impossible to limit ourselves to a few hurried thoughts and brief sentences. Our chief cause of lamentation is that we cannot adequately set it forth, nor even fully and clearly express what we have seen in it ourselves.

In our last paper we stopped abruptly short at the very threshold of the last acts of the suffering obedience of our adorable Redeemer as couched in the words of the apostle, "And became obedient unto death, *even the death of the cross.*" (Phil. 2:8.) The death of Christ was the fulfilment of the purpose for which he came into the world, which was, "to give himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." (Eph. 5:2.) "Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. 9:26.) The sufferings, bloodshedding, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ were a sacrifice offered for sin and are therefore spoken of as a propitiation (Rom. 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10) and an atonement. (Rom. 5:11.) But in a sacrifice two things are absolutely necessary; 1. That *the blood of the victim should be shed*, for "without shedding of blood is no remission:" "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul;" (Lev. 17:11;) and 2. That *the victim should die*; for death being the penalty of disobedience, (Gen. 2:17; Ezek. 18:4,) the sacrifice offered as an atonement for sin cannot be complete without the death of the victim. In the sacrifice of himself, offering up his sacred humanity on the altar of his Deity, the blessed Lord accomplished these two essentials of a propitiatory offering. 1. His blood was shed upon the cross,—the actual living blood of his sacred humanity. It is therefore called "the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," (1 Pet. 1:19,) and "his own blood." (Acts 20:28; Heb. 9:12.) It was precious as

flowing from his sacred humanity; precious, as stamped with all the validity and merit of Deity; precious in the sight of God as a sweet-smelling savour; and precious in the hearts of his people as cleansing them from all sin. Sin is an evil so dreadful, so hateful and abhorrent to his righteous character, so provoking to his justice and holiness, that God could not pardon it unless an atonement were made adequate to its fearful magnitude. Thousands of rams and ten thousands of rivers of oil could not atone for sin. Did all men consent to give their firstborn for their transgression, the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul, (Mic. 6:7,) all could not suffice to outweigh the magnitude of sin. Lebanon is not sufficient for a burnt offering. Nothing short of the blood of the only-begotten Son of God could be an atonement of sufficient worth, of equivalent value. 2. But the death of the victim was also required. He who freely and voluntarily stood in the sinner's place must die in his room, or the substitution could not be effectual. Here, then, we see the mystery of the death of Jesus. There was no natural mortality\* in that sacred humanity which the Lord assumed in the womb of the Virgin. And yet he took a nature which could die by a voluntary act. The whole of his obedience in his state of humiliation was voluntary. Therefore the last act of it was as voluntary as the first—the death on the cross as much as the assumption in the Virgin. The Lord's own words are decisive here: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." (John 10:17, 18.) The very merit of his obedience unto death whereby it became capable of being imputed for righteousness to the church of God consisted mainly in two things, 1. The dignity of the obedient Sufferer; 2. The voluntariness of the sacrifice as an act of obedience to the will of God. Had our blessed Lord not been God, and that as the eternal Son of God, there would have been no merit in his sufferings, blood shedding, and death. As the brightness of God's glory and the express image of his Person, as his co-eternal Son, he thought it not robbery—no unhallowed, disallowable claim, to be equal with God; (Phil. 2:6;) and therefore the very infinity of Deity itself attached to his words and works, so as to stamp efficacious merit upon them. It was not because his humanity was perfect that it was meritorious. Had his humanity been as perfect as it was, if Deity were not in conjunction with it, no merit could have been attached to it any more than there was merit in the obedience of Adam, or in that of an angel. But being God as well as man, the merit of Deity was stamped upon all the acts of the obedient suffering humanity, so that, as we have sometimes said, Godhead was in every drop of his precious blood. Again, if the life of the blessed Lord had been violently taken away, contrary to his

will, where would have been the obedience unto death? Had he been killed, so to speak, by the cross—had died because he could not help dying, had his life been violently torn from him, where would have been the laying down of his life as the last act of his voluntary obedience? What power could man have had over him? Had he so willed, he could have freed himself from the hands of his enemies. Therefore he said unto Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above." (John 19:11.) And again, "Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:53.) When, then, the band of men and officers from the chief priests came to take him with lanterns, and torches, and weapons, he freely "went forth" to yield himself up; but when he said, "I am he," or rather, as the words literally mean, "I AM," the glory of his eternal Deity so flashed forth, that "they went backward, and fell to the ground."(John 18:3-6.)

\* Though we have in our preceding chapters used the word "immortal" as applicable to the sacred humanity of the blessed Lord, we are well aware that it is a term not fully appropriate; for the word immortal strictly means not capable of death, and is in this sense applied to the soul of man as not only not dying with the body, but not capable of dying.

In this sense, the humanity of the blessed Lord was not immortal, for it could and did die. If such a word were admissible, "unmortal," or "non-mortal," would be a preferable term—denying that it was mortal, and yet not asserting that it could not die. The main difficulty arises from the inherent defect of human language as applied to heavenly mysteries. The mind naturally contemplates only two states of existence, 1. What must necessarily die; and, 2. What cannot possibly die. The first it terms "mortal," the second it calls "immortal." A third idea, viz., that of a body which does not necessarily die, and yet is capable of dying, as being a conception lying out of its reach, it has invented no word properly to express.

Thus truly was he "brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." (Isa. 53:7.) What heart can conceive, what tongue express what his holy soul endured when "the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all?" In the garden of Gethsemane, what a load of guilt, what a weight of sin, what an intolerable burden of the wrath of God did that sacred humanity endure, until the pressure of sorrow and woe forced the drops of blood to fall as sweat from his brow. The human nature, in its weakness recoiled, as it were, from the cup of anguish put into his hand.

His body could scarce bear the load that pressed him down; his soul, under the waves and billows of God's wrath, sank in deep mire where there was no standing, and came into deep waters where the floods overflowed him. (Psa. 69:1, 2.) And how could it be otherwise when that sacred humanity was enduring all the wrath of God, suffering the very pangs of hell, and wading in all the depths of guilt and terror? When the blessed Lord was made sin (or a sin-offering) for us, he endured in his holy soul all the pangs of distress, horror, alarm, misery, and guilt that the elect would have felt in hell for ever; and not only as any one of them would have felt, but as the collective whole would have experienced under the outpouring of the everlasting wrath of God. The anguish, the distress, the darkness, the condemnation, the shame, the guilt, the unutterable horror, that any or all of his quickened family have ever experienced under a sense of God's wrath, the curse of the law, and the terrors of hell, are only faint, feeble reflections of what the Lord felt in the garden and on the cross; for there were attendant circumstances in his case which are not, and indeed cannot be in theirs, and which made the distress and agony of his holy soul, both in nature and degree, such as none but he could feel or know. He as the eternal Son of God, who had lain in his bosom before all worlds, had known all the blessedness and happiness of the love and favour of the Father—his own Father, shining upon him, for he was "by him as one brought up with him, and was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." (Prov. 8:30.) When, then, instead of love he felt his displeasure, instead of the beams of his favour he experienced the frowns and terrors of his wrath, instead of the light of his countenance he tasted the darkness and gloom of desertion,—what heart can conceive, what tongue express the bitter anguish which must have wrung the soul of our suffering Surety under this agonising experience? A few drops of the wrath of God let down into the conscience of a child of God have made many a living soul cry out, "While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted; thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off." (Psa. 88:15, 16.) But what is all that Job, Heman, Jeremiah, or Jonah experienced, compared with the floods of anguish and terror which all but overwhelmed the soul of our blessed Lord? We therefore read of him in the garden, when the first pangs of his agony came on, that he "began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;" and this made him say to his three disciples, who were to be eye-witnesses of his sufferings, (1 Pet. 5:1,) "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." (Mark 14:33, 34.) So great was that load that his human nature must have sunk beneath the weight—his body and soul been rent asunder, but for four sustaining props:—1. The power of his Deity, for though that purposely did not display its strength, it remained in firm union with his sacred humanity; 2. The help, and support of the Holy

Ghost sustaining his human nature under the load laid upon it; 3. The joy set before him, which enabled him in the prospect to endure the cross, despising the shame; (Heb. 12:2;) and 4. The strengthening of the ministering angel sent from heaven. (Luke 22:43.) Thus supported and sustained, our gracious Redeemer sank not in the deep waters, but, as our great High Priest, "offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared" (Heb. 5:7)—not as some have foolishly thought and said, fearing the miscarrying of his undertaking, or that he should sink into hell, but because he feared his heavenly Father with the reverence of a Son,\*\* for filial fear, with every other grace, was in the heart of Jesus as his treasure. (Isa. 11:2, 3.) Let us ever bear in mind that the sufferings of the holy soul of Jesus were as real, that is, as really felt, as the sufferings of his sacred body, and a thousand times more intense and intolerable. Though beyond description painful and agonising, yet the sufferings of the body were light indeed compared with the sufferings of the soul. It is so with the saints of God themselves, when the Lord lays judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet in their conscience, and lets down a sense of his anger and displeasure into their soul. What is all bodily suffering compared to a sense of God's displeasure and the arrows of his wrath sticking in the conscience? So it was with our great High Priest, when both as sacrificer and sacrificed, alike priest and victim, he was bound with the cords of love and obedience to the horns of the altar. (Psa. 118:27.) Surely never was there such a pang since the foundations of the earth were laid as that which rent and tore the soul of the Redeemer when the last drop of agony was poured into the already overflowing cup, and he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Nature herself sympathised with his sorrow, and was moved at his cry, for the earth shook, the sun withdrew his light, and the graves yielded up their dead. Yet thus was redemption's work accomplished, sin atoned for and blotted out, the wrath of God appeased, everlasting righteousness brought in, and the church for ever reconciled and saved. When, then, the Lord had been fully baptized with his baptism of suffering and blood, when head drunk the cup of sorrow and anguish to its last dregs, and had rendered all the obedience which the law demanded and the will of God required, he cried out with a loud voice that heaven and earth might hear, "It is finished!" and then, and not till then, he meekly bowed his head, laid down his life, as the last act of his voluntary, suffering obedience, and gave up the ghost.

\* Those who deny the eternal Sonship of Jesus rob him of his grace as well as of his glory, by diminishing his sufferings, and thus really strip away the

greatness, and consequently much of the merit of his sacrifice. It was because he was God's own true and proper Son he so deeply, so keenly felt his wrathful displeasure. A Son by office, by mere name,—without any filial relationship but a bare title which might have been any other,—could not feel towards his adopted Father what the true, the proper, the only-begotten Son of God felt to his heavenly Father. One error always lets in another, and thus we see that the denial of the eternal Sonship of Christ lowers and disparages the greatness, and consequently the merit of the atonement. Let the deniers of the eternal Sonship look to this.

\*\* The margin reads, "for his piety," but the truer and more literal meaning is, "on account of his reverential fear." "Had God in honour."—Luther.

We might now pass on to the consideration of that sacred humanity as taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb, where it lay in all its innate purity, sanctity, and incorruptibility, perfuming the grave, and consecrating the tomb as the sleeping-place of those who die in the Lord. Thence we might pass to the resurrection of that incorruptible body, whereby he was declared to be the Son of God with power; (Rom. 1:4;) thence to the continuance of the blessed Lord upon earth during the forty days of his tarrying here below; thence to his ascension on high when he led captivity captive; thence to his sitting at the right hand of God in our nature; and thence to his second coming at the great day. All these successive steps are full of blessedness to believing hearts, when they can meditate upon them, and through faith, hope, and love in them, rise up into sweet union and communion with their most gracious and glorious Lord, as their once suffering but now risen and exalted Head. We purposed briefly to look at these gracious features of our Lord's sacred humanity; but they are subjects of such deep importance, and so full of grace and glory, that we feel we cannot thus lightly pass over them. We have, indeed, already much exceeded our intended limits when we sat down to meditate on this fruitful theme. We are, then, in a strait, whether abruptly to close this subject with the departing year, or embrace the opportunity of resuming it in a different form in the opening season; and we have decided, if spared to see a returning year, to devote a few pages to these divine realities; not, however, as the continuation of the Review which we shall finish with this Number, but as a series of distinct independent papers.

But as we are still at the cross of our suffering Lord, we cannot leave that sacred spot without dwelling for a few moments on several points most intimately connected with it. Three at this present moment offer themselves to

our mind.

1. *The work accomplished* by the sufferings, bloodshedding, obedience, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the benefits and blessings which spring out of it. It was *a finished work*. Here is all our salvation and here is all our hope. When were such words ever uttered on this earth as those which his gracious lips spoke from the cross, "It is finished?" Well may we cry, in the language of our sweet Christian Psalmist,

"Holy Ghost, repeat the word,  
There's salvation in it."

Standing, then, at the cross of our adorable Lord, and hearing these gracious words from the lips of him who cannot lie, if blessed with living faith, we may see the law thoroughly fulfilled, its curse fully endured, its penalties wholly removed, sin eternally put away, the justice of God amply satisfied, all his perfections gloriously harmonised, his holy will perfectly obeyed, reconciliation completely effected, redemption graciously accomplished, and the church everlastingly saved. Here we see sin in its blackest colours, and holiness in its fairest beauties. Here we see the love of God in its tenderest form, and the anger of God in its deepest expression. Here we see the sacred humanity of the blessed Redeemer lifted up, as it were, between heaven and earth, to show to angels and to men the spectacle of redeeming love, and to declare at one and the same moment, and by one and the same act of the suffering obedience and bleeding sacrifice of the Son of God, the eternal and unalterable displeasure of the Almighty against sin, and the rigid demands of his inflexible justice, and yet the tender compassion and boundless love of his heart to the election of grace. Here, and here alone, are obtained pardon and peace; here, and here alone, penitential grief and godly sorrow flow from heart and eyes; here, and here alone, is sin subdued and mortified, holiness communicated, death vanquished, Satan put to flight, and happiness and heaven begun in the soul. O what heavenly blessings, what present grace, as well as what future glory flow through the sacred humanity of the Son of God! What a holy meeting-place for repenting sinners and a sin-pardoning God! What a healing-place for guilty, yet repenting and returning backsliders; what a door of hope in the valley of Achor for the self-condemned and self-aborred; what a safe spot for seeking souls; and what a blessed resorting-place for the whole family of God in this vale of grief and sorrow!

2. Another most blessed fruit of the sacred humanity of our adorable Redeemer is that in that nature he *learnt the experimental reality of temptation*

*and suffering*, and thus became able to sympathise with his tempted and afflicted people. It was necessary under the law that the high priest "should have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way, for that he himself also was compassed with infirmity." (Heb. 5:2.) Our great High Priest was not compassed with infirmity, like the high priest under the law, and therefore had no need to offer sacrifice for his own sins; (Heb. 5:3;) but that he might be "a merciful" as well as "faithful" high priest—faithful to God and merciful to man, "it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he might be able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:17, 18.) "We have not, therefore, a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but one who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. 4:15.) Here we see the wisdom and grace of the Father in preparing, and the love and pity of the Son in assuming a nature like our own, sin only excepted, that he might have a real experience of every form of suffering and of temptation. Those only can feel for others in trouble and sorrow who themselves have walked in the path of tribulation; nor can any one really sympathise with the tempted but those who have themselves been in the furnace of temptation. Thus our blessed Lord became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; hid not his face from shame and spitting; endured poverty, hunger, thirst, and nakedness; was betrayed by one disciple, denied by another, and forsaken by all; was oppressed and was afflicted, not only as a part of his meritorious, suffering obedience, but that by a personal experience in his holy humanity of sorrow and affliction he might sympathise with his mourning, afflicted people. And as with affliction, so with temptation; the gracious Redeemer endured every sort of temptation which Satan could present to his holy soul, for "in *all* points he was tempted like as we are, yet without sin," (Heb. 4:15,) that he might feel for and sympathise with the tempted.

But this is not all. The blessed Redeemer had not only to sympathise with the sorrows and temptations, but experimentally to learn the graces of his believing people. He had therefore to learn obedience in the same way that they learn it, for "he learnt obedience by the things which he suffered;" (Heb. 5:8;) was taught in the school of affliction the inward experience of submission to God's will, meekness under injury and oppression, and lowliness of heart as a heavenly grace. Therefore he could say, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." (Matt. 11:29.) Let us not think that the blessed Lord had no inward experience in his holy soul of spiritual graces, or that his divine nature supplied to his human the grace of the Holy Ghost. On the contrary, the Holy

**Spirit that was given him without measure, (John 3:34,) who not only anointed him as Prophet, Priest, and King, but dwelt in him in all his fulness, bestowed upon him every spiritual grace, as faith, trust, hope, love, prayer and supplication, patience, long-suffering, zeal for the glory of God, and with all spiritual wisdom and understanding, all counsel and might, all heavenly knowledge and the fear of the Lord. (Isa. 11:1, 2.) All these gifts and graces dwelt in his sacred humanity,\* and were drawn into exercise by the Holy Ghost, so that the blessed Lord believed, hoped, and loved; prayed, sighed, and groaned; trusted in God and lived a life of faith in him, just in the same manner and by the same Spirit and power, though in an infinitely higher degree, and wholly unmixed with sin, as his believing people do now. So that just in the same way as his sacred body was fed and nourished by the same food as ours, so was his holy soul sustained by the same communications of grace and strength as maintain in life the souls of his people now. Thus he learnt experimentally not only their trials and temptations, their griefs and sorrows, both natural and spiritual, but their joys and deliverances, their manifestations, their waiting hope, their trusting confidence, their patient expectation, their obedient submission, and in a word the whole compass of their experience.\*\* If any think it is derogatory to the Deity of our blessed Lord, to believe that he had a spiritual experience of the same graces that his people have, for being God, they might argue he could not need them, let them explain why his body needed human food, or why his soul had an experience of sorrow and temptation. Could not his divine nature, as in the wilderness, have supported the human without food? And is it not equally derogatory to say that the blessed Lord had an experience of affliction and temptation, as of joy and deliverance? As our great Exemplar, as our suffering Head, the blessed Lord was delivered as well as tempted, rejoiced in spirit as well as sighed and wept, was made glad. with the light of his Father's countenance as well as felt the hidings of his face.\*\*\***

**\* If space admitted, we could easily show from those Psalms in which, beyond all controversy, Christ speaks that all the graces which we have here enumerated dwelt in him and were expressed by him. Let our spiritual readers examine Psalms 18, 22, 40, 69, all of which the most indubitable external and internal evidence assigns to Christ, with an eye to this particular point, and trace it for themselves.**

**\*\* Thus in reading David's deliverances and blessings, though we know that they were really David's, and truly felt and acknowledged by him as such, yet we may often say, "A greater than David was here." Thus compare Psa.**

18:16-19 with verses 43, 44.

**\*\*\* Our blessed Lord had no experience of regeneration or of repentance; for the one is the quickening of the soul out of death, and the other implies the existence of sin. These two things are to be carefully distinguished from his experience of faith, trust, &c.**

**III. The third point connected with the sacred humanity of Jesus as obedient unto death, is the *example* he has left to his believing people that *they should walk in his steps*. It will little profit us to have the clearest views of the Lord's suffering humanity if it produce no impression on our hearts and lives. At the foot of the cross there stood those who mocked the sufferings and shame of the blessed Redeemer; there were those who looked on with callous indifference; and there were those who mourned and wept, believed and loved. So now there are those who mock the eternal Sonship and suffering humanity of the blessed Jesus; and there are those who look upon his suffering Majesty without faith and without feeling, without any sorrow for sin or any thirst after holiness. And there is a small remnant who look and believe, and as led into the fellowship of his sufferings, mourn and weep. These see and feel that there is a knowing him and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death; (Phil. 3:10;) a bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body; (2 Cor. 4:10;) a being crucified with Christ; (Gal. 2:20;) a determination to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified; (1 Cor. 2:2;) and a glorying in his cross as the only effectual means whereby the world is crucified unto us and we unto the world; (Gal. 6:14.) We need not wonder that in our day there is such a form of godliness and such a denial of the power. It must ever be so when men are ignorant—willingly ignorant of the suffering humanity of the blessed Lord, and know so little of the mystery of the cross.**

**One word more, and for the present we close the subject. All union and communion with God is only through the humanity of Jesus. God-man unites God and man. In union with God by his Deity, in union with man by his humanity, the Lord Jesus is the Daysman who lays his hand upon them both. (Job 9:33.) This made holy John say, "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:2, 3.) Happy are those who can say with him, "Truly our fellowship is with the**

**Father and with his Son Jesus Christ;" but this those only can experimentally say who having been blessed with a manifestation of his Person and work can add: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." (1 John 5:10.)**