

Sermons of Ralph Erskine



6. The Lamb in The Midst of the Throne



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“For the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them” Revelation 7:17.

We are met this day to celebrate the memorials of the love of Christ, in his death and crucifixion, upon mount Calvary. And that our faith may look to him in the best light, and to the best advantage, we are to remember, not only where he once was, but where he now is; and we will find, we need not be ashamed of a crucified Christ that was once upon the cross, for now he is upon the throne. The Lamb that was slain, as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice for us, the once dying Lamb in the midst of the cross, is now the ever-living Lamb in the midst of the throne. And from this throne of God, where he reigns, we expect our food and provision upon the feast-day; according to the words of the text, “The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them.”

From the thirteenth verse of this chapter we have a description of the honour and happiness of these that shall faithfully serve, and patiently suffer for the Lord Jesus Christ. Some interpreters think that the happiness of the saints militant, even in this world, is here described; some, that it is only the happiness of the saint triumphant in heaven; others make this place of scripture relate to both, and with these especially I join; because, whatever honour and happiness of suffering saints is here set forth, they enjoy the same partly in this life, and fully in the life to come, as may appear by the particulars here mentioned.

The happy persons are spoken of; “These are they which came out of great tribulation,” (verse 14). Whatever relation some think this may have to the church of Christ on earth, after they have escaped the antichristian bloody persecution; or as others, to the martyrs in heaven, that have suffered unto death for the Lord Jesus Christ; yet it may be said of all the militant saints, who, through much trouble, enter into the kingdom of heaven, and therein are conformed to their suffering Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, and bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers them out of them

all.” It may be said of all the saints, These are they that have come from trouble to rest, from bondage to liberty, from death to life, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The perfection of this purity they have in heaven; but even here on earth they are washed in the blood of Christ, and clothed with the white robe of his imputed and imparted righteousness.

“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them,” (verse 15). This seems to be a further description of the happiness of the saints both militant and triumphant; as they are happy.

1. In their state, being washed, justified, and sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of their God.

2. They are happy in their station, being always before the throne of God. The glorified saints in heaven are always in that presence where there is fullness of joy: and the sanctified ones upon earth have this blessing also bestowed upon them, they are said to sit with him in heavenly places; and it is their daily work to come boldly to the throne of grace. Again,

3. They are happy in their service; for, “They serve him day and night in his temple.” Though these that are in heaven, serve him without weakness or weariness, which we cannot here do; yet it is the property of all the true circumcision to worship God in the Spirit, and in truth, and to pray without ceasing; meditating on his law day and night, and going to the altar of God; to God in Christ, the true spiritual temple.

4. They are happy in their company; for, “He that sits upon the throne shall dwell among them.” This points out friendship, fellowship, and familiarity between God and the redeemed; which also Christ allows to the militant saints in part, when, upon opening the door of their heart, he comes in and sups with them, and they with him, (Rev. 3:20). And they are in case to say, “Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ,” (1 John 1:3). Yea God says, “I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

5. They are happy in their freedom; they shall be freed from all want and all uneasiness. From all want; for, “They shall hunger no more, neither shall they thirst any more;” for this freedom will be perfected in heaven, as it is commenced on earth; as the prophet says, speaking of Christ’s spiritual kingdom, (Isa. 49:10, 11). They shall not hunger nor thirst,” &c. Hence says Christ, “He that comes to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst,” pointing out the spiritual pleasure and satisfaction they shall have, and never be altogether deprived of. From all uneasiness also shall they be freed; “Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat:” or as it is in the fore cited “Neither shall the heat nor sun smite them,” (Isa. 49:10). The redeemed above are perfectly freed from all uneasiness; and even the redeemed on earth, according to the measure of faith, such will be their measure of ease, even amidst all things that tend to make them uneasy. Christ says to them, Fear not, only believe: Fear not, I am with you: Fear not him that can at most but kill the body; the very hairs of our head are all numbered; you may be perfectly easy. Nothing is more uneasy than the sun in the meridian regions; so are afflictions and persecutions to the saints, and the temptations they are attacked with from earth and hell. But “God is faithful,” says the apostle, “who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it,” (1 Cor. 10:12).

6. They are happy in their provision, because “The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them;” hence he is said to feed his flock like a shepherd. The feeding here spoken of imports also rule and government, such as a shepherd hath over his flock. It is in the believing view of the provident, loving Shepherd, the Psalmist says, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want,” (Psa. 23:1).

7. They are happy in their direction and conduct, in their director, guide, and conductor: “He shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.” Now, of these living waters the Lord Jesus speaks, as they respect even his people in this world; “The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life;” and, “Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” (John

4:14; 7:38). By these they have matter of comfort amidst all their crosses. Hence,

8. They are here said to be happy in their joys; for, “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;” that is, all their griefs and sorrows shall be swallowed up in the fullness of joy and consolation that shall be abundantly allowed them. The commencement of this joy is even here, amidst all the troubles and trials of the militant saints: “For, behold, says God, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard,” (Isa. 65:18). And hence they are sometimes filled with joy and peace in believing: yea, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

It is the first part of this last verse that I have especially my eye upon; particularly that description of our Lord Jesus Christ, which the commentators I have consulted pass over more slightly than I expected, namely, “The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne.” Where we have our Lord Jesus described, 1. From his meekness and humility: therefore he is called the Lamb. 2. From his majesty and authority; he is the Lamb in the midst of the throne. What benefit accrues to his church from his meek and majestic government follows in the rest of the verse, which, if I have time, I may a little insist upon. But what I especially propose to speak to, as the Lord may assist, is from the sweet account given us here of our Lord Jesus. And this we shall essay in the following doctrinal proposition.

Observation: That our Lord Jesus Christ is the Lamb in the midst of the throne.

And, as the Psalmist says, “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence comes my help,” (Psa. 121:1); so let us lift up our eyes to the throne, from whence comes our food today; and we may the more readily and joyfully do so, that the Lamb is in the midst of the throne, to be the feeder. That I may open and apply this doctrine for our benefit, I propose the following method.

- I. Speak a little of the Lamb.
- II. Of the throne.
- III. How the Lamb comes to be upon the throne.

IV. What is imported in the Lamb's being in the midst of the throne.

V Consider the benefit of feeding, that issues from the Lamb's being in the midst of the throne.

VI. Deduce some inferences for application.

I. We are to offer a word concerning the LAMB. This is a name frequently given to our Lord Jesus in scripture; and he is so called, both because of his immaculate whiteness and innocency, and because of his incomparable meekness and patience: he is a Lamb without blemish, and without spot, (1 Pet. 1:19); and his meekness was matchless, of which more afterward; he is the Lamb of God, the worthy Lamb, the Lamb that was slain.

I shall only here mention four periods wherein he is represented as a Lamb.

1. In his designation from the beginning, yea, from all eternity, to be a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice; hence, he is called the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, (Rev. 13:8); slain decretively, in the purpose of God, before the foundation of the world, was laid; and slain typically, in all the sacrifices under the law.

2. In his manifestation, when he appeared in our nature, he is pointed out as the Lamb that was come to be a sacrifice for sin; "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world," (John 1:29); and again, "Behold the Lamb of God," (verse 36). To this purpose says the same beloved disciple, "You know that he was manifested to take away our sins," (1 John 3:5).

3. In his humiliation unto death, he is represented as the meek and patient Lamb; "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a Lamb before his shearer, so he opened not his mouth," (Acts 8:32); which are the words of the prophet, (Isa. 53:7). Thus saith the Lord, by the prophet, "He was not rebellious, neither turned away back: I gave my back to the smiter, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting," (Isa. 50:5, 6).

4. In his exaltation, or in his exalted state, he is in scripture

represented as a Lamb; particularly “And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth unto all the earth,” (Rev. 5:6). This is the scripture that our present text hath a reference unto; and, therefore, concerning it you may observe the description given of this Lamb.

(1). As the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne; of which more afterwards. Only, you see, in his exalted state at his Father’s right hand, he is still the Lamb; change of place hath not made him change his name or nature: he took our human nature along with him; and he is still the meek and lowly Lamb, though he be upon the throne.

(2). He is described by being the Lamb slain; a Lamb as it had been slain. He appears with the marks of his sufferings upon him, to show that he intercedes in heaven in the virtue of his satisfaction; because he entered the holy place by his own blood, (Heb. 9:12). And the virtue of the sacrifice he offered is always fresh, as if he were newly slain.

(3). He is described as a Lamb having seven horns; pointing out the perfection of his power to execute all the will of God, and to conquer all his enemies. This Lamb is the power of God.

(4). He is described as a Lamb having seven eyes; pointing out the perfection of his wisdom, to understand all the will of God, and to do it in the most effectual manner. As he is the power of God, so he is the wisdom of God; for he hath the Spirit of God above measure; therefore it is said, “The seven eyes are the seven spirits of God;” not seven in number or nature, but in respect of the diversity of the gifts and operations of that one and eternal Spirit of God. This Lamb of God, then, is he that hath the Spirit of the Lord God upon him, for he hath anointed him; and he is anointed, that he may anoint. And, O! may the Lamb with the seven eyes look upon this assembly, and give eyes to us to see his glory this day, that our hearts may join issue with the heavenly company, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!” (Rev. 5:12).

II. The next thing we proposed was a word concerning the

throne. Here we would consider what form a throne it is, and why called a throne.

First, what kind of a throne is it which the Lamb is said to be in the midst of? We may answer, It is the throne of God, (Rev. 22:1-3). There it is called the throne of God and the Lamb. The throne of God is the throne of the Lamb, and the throne of the Lamb is the throne of God. It is the throne of grace, the throne of glory, the throne of his holiness, and the throne of his justice.

1. It is called the throne of divine grace; “Let us come boldly to the throne of grace,” (Heb. 4:16). Why so? because we have a High Priest there; the Lamb is in the midst of the throne. And indeed the throne of grace is nothing else than a God in Christ, a God reconciled in Christ, a God upon a mercy-seat, sprinkled with the blood of Christ.

2. It is called the throne of divine glory; “Do not disgrace the throne of thy glory; remember, break not thy covenant with us,” (Jer. 14:21). The prophet there speaks of the temple, and the ark in it, the symbol of God’s presence; which was typical of Christ, in whom the covenant of grace stands fast: and so it is called the throne of glory, because all the glory of God shines about that throne. As the grace of God is the glory of God, so all the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ. Therefore,

3. It is called a throne of divine holiness; “God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness,” (Psa. 47:8). Holiness becomes his house, holiness becomes his throne, and holiness is his throne there is nothing there, but the holy God, the holy Lamb, the holy throne; and they that are about it, cry, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts,” (Isa. 6:3).

4. It is called the throne of his justice, “Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne,” (Psa. 81:14). And, “Clouds and darkness are round about him, yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne,” (Psa. 97:2). His glorious and holy throne of grace stands firm upon the base and foundation of justice satisfied for the sinner, and judgment execute against sin, in the blood of the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne. It is therefore

no hindrance or impediment to our access to the throne of grace, that it is also a throne of justice; but rather a furtherance and encouragement, because there grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ, (Rom. 5:21). And, since grace reigns there through justice-satisfying righteousness, why then, God may with honour meet with sinners, and there sinners may with hope draw near to God. This is the throne of God and the Lamb.

Secondly, why is it called a throne? The place, in the midst whereof the Lamb is, is called a throne, on these accounts.

1. A throne is a place of powerful and majestic glory, honour, and dignity. Jesus Christ, the lamb, is set in the midst of this place, crowned with glory and honour, (Heb. 2:9). His Father crowned him King there, saying, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,” (Psa. 45:6).

2. A throne is a place. of power and authority. — Christ, the Lamb, is set in the midst of this throne; for, “All power in heaven and earth is given to him,” Matt. 28:18. All judgment is committed to him; and the government is upon his shoulders.

3. A throne is a place of height and eminency. — Christ, the Lamb, is in the midst of this place; “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple,” (Isa. 6:7). His Father hath set him on the highest throne: “He hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name,” (Phil. 2:9).

4. A throne is a place of plenty; thence the royal bounty is communicated. Christ, the Lamb, is in the midst of this place; hence it is said, “It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell,” (Col. 1:19); and again, “In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;” all the treasures of grace; and, “Out of his fullness we all receive, and grace for grace,” (John, 1:16).

5. A throne is a place of beauty, as well as bounty; it is a beautiful and splendid place. And to see the Lamb in the midst of the throne, is to see the King in his beauty; “Strength is within his holy place, and there doth beauty shine,” (Isa. 33:17); there doth glory shine.

6. In a word, a throne is a place of pleasure, peace, joy, and triumph. The Lamb is in the midst of this place; having ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, (Psa. 68:18). He sits triumphant upon the throne, making all his enemies his footstool. If he triumphed over them on the cross, as it is said, (Col. 2:15), how much more does he triumph over them on the throne, making all believers sharers of his joyful triumph!

III. The next thing I proposed was, To show how the Lamb comes to be upon the throne. I shall tell you in a few words, that he bargained for the throne, he wrought for the throne, he fought for the throne, and died for the throne.

1. He bargained for the throne. In the counsel of peace, betwixt the Father and the Son, it was promised to Christ, that, upon his doing and suffering for his people, he should have a glorious throne, and a numerous retinue; that he should see his seed, and see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, (Isa. 53:10, 11). The Lamb cries out, It is a bargain that I cheerfully go in to: “Lo, I come; in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is within my heart,” (Psa. 40:7, 8). Hence says the Father, “I have made a covenant with my chosen” (Psa. 89:3).

2. He wrought for the throne. According to the bargain and covenant between the Father and him, he brought in everlasting righteousness, (Dan. 9:24); he fulfilled all righteousness, (Matt. 3:15). And hence he claims the crown and the throne: “I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was,” (John 16:4, 5). Thus he wrought for the throne.

3. He fought for the throne. You may see how he fought; “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah; this that is glorious in his appeal, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save! Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel? and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine

anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment,” (Isa. 63:1-3). And on this account the Lamb sits upon a triumphant throne, having spoiled principalities and powers, bruised the head of the old serpent, destroyed the works of the devil, and came off the field like a glorious conqueror. Therefore, “the Lord said unto our Lord, Sit thou at my right hand,” (Psa. 110:1). In which Psalm you read both of the bloody battle, and the glorious enthronement of the Lamb.

4. He died for the throne. Having drunk of the brook in the way, therefore did he lift up the head, (Psa. 110:7). And, because he became obedient unto the death, even the death of the cross; therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, (Phil. 2:8, 9). When he had the cross upon his back, he had the throne in his eye: “For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God,” (Heb. 12:2). And thus, for the suffering of death, he was crowned with glory and honour, (Heb. 2:9). Our faith then may see and be satisfied how he came by the throne. But, for widening and increasing faith’s view of this enthronement, I proceed,

IV. To the next thing proposed, namely, To show what may be imported in the Lamb’s being in the midst of the throne. And,

1. That the Lamb is in the midst of the throne, speaks forth the dignity of his person, his supreme Deity, and equality with the Father. Though, in his infinite love, he thought it no disparagement, at his Father’s call, to make himself of no reputation and take upon him the form of a servant; yet, being in the form of God, he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, (Phil. 2:6). And his Father thinks it no disparagement to him to call even the suffering Lamb, the crucified Jesus, his fellow and equal; “Awake, O sword, against the man that is my fellow,” (Zech. 13:9); yea, to crown him King upon his everlasting throne, saying to him, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,” (Heb. 1:8). O sirs, if the Christ-disparaging and soul-damning doctrine of Ariens were true, the Lamb would not be worthy of such a throne, far less the midst of the throne.

2. That the Lamb is in the midst of the throne, imports and speaks forth the height of his exaltation. Besides the natural right as God, that Christ hath to the throne, he hath a donative [gifted] right as Mediator, and because, as Mediator, he hath brought in glory to God in the highest; therefore, he is exalted to the highest throne that his Father can give him: "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth," (Psa. 89:27). And now, according to his promise, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus that was crucified, both Lord and Christ," (Acts 2:6). And being now possessed of the throne, "He hath on his venture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords;" and the rather that it is a scarlet robe, "a venture diet in blood," (Rev, 19:13, 14), to show, that it is the worthy Lamb that was slain in the midst of the throne.

3. That the Lamb is in the midst of the throne, imports, I think, the perfection of his mediation, and exactness thereof. O but this part of the throne be fit for him, and he fit for it! It well becomes him to be there; he is the middle person between the Father and the Holy Ghost, and the middle person between God and man; and it well becomes him to have the middle part of the throne. The Mediator and midman having the midst of the throne, it says, he is a perfect Mediator, a merciful and faithful High-priest, (Heb. 2:17); faithful to God, and merciful to man; true to both parties, between whom he stands in the midst of the throne.

4. That the Lamb is in the midst of the throne, imports the beautiful order and equity of his administration. As the government is upon his shoulders, so it will be a just, righteous, and equal government: "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness; even the man that shall be a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest," (Isa. 32:1). "With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity, for the meek of the earth. Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins," (Isa. 11:4, 5). His administration shall be so righteous and equal, that none shall have occasion to complain that he hath gone too far, either to the right hand or to the left hand of the throne: no; he will ever keep the midst of the throne, and his

government, like his covenant, will be well ordered in all things.

5. That the Lamb is in the midst of the throne, imports the accessibleness of the throne of God on every hand. The Lamb is upon the throne of God, and therefore there is access to the throne; for, the Lamb being there, clothed with his vesture dipped in blood; we may come boldly to the throne of grace, and have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (Heb. 4:16; 10:19). If the Lamb were not there, such guilty sinners durst not be so bold as to look a just and holy God in the face, or approach to the throne: but, O, good news and blessed tidings! the Lamb being our Forerunner, we may boldly run as far forward as the blood of the Lamb hath run in like a river before us, and that is to the very heart and centre of the throne of God. Yea, not only is the Lamb upon the throne, which speaks access thither; but he is in the midst of the throne, which speaks access on every hand, and on every side of the throne. If he were only placed at the one side of the throne, it might be thought there would be no access at the other side; but being in the midst of the throne, he is ready to welcome all comers from all quarters, saying, “Whosoever will, let him come,” from east, west, north, or south; let him come on this side, or that side, or directly before the throne, yea, let any poor creature who blushes to be seen, come slipping secretly as it were, behind the throne, like the woman with the bloody issue, that came behind him, saying, “If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.” O, to get in, if it were but behind the throne, this day, to get a touch of the royal robes of the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne! Welcome, sinner, there is access on every hand of the throne, for the Lamb is in the midst of it. The Lamb of God, which lies in the midst of his Father’s throne, to welcome and receive all comers, saying, “Him that cometh I will in no wise cast out.”

6. That the Lamb is in the midst of the throne imports the Lamb is the centre of all the glory that surrounds and encompasses the throne of God, or the throne of grace. He is the centre of divine fullness, and of all the glorious perfections of God; for, “in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,” (Col. 2:9); every attribute of God shines gloriously in the face of Jesus Christ. He is

the centre of all divine truths, and we cannot know any precious gospel truths or mysteries in a saving and satisfying manner unless we know the truth as it is in Jesus, (Eph. 4:21). He is the centre of all the divine promises, being the centre of the covenant of grace, in whom it stands fast, and “in whom all the promises are Yea and Amen to the glory of God,” (2 Cor. 1:20), He is the centre of all the divine blessings; for God blesses us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places only in Christ, (Eph. 1:3). He is the centre of all divine grace; for it is out of his fullness that we receive, and grace for grace, (John 1:16). He is the centre of all divine comfort; for he is the consolation of Israel, and he is anointed with the oil of joy and gladness above his fellows, (Psa. 45:7), that he may anoint with the same oil, and bring his people to fellowship with him in the same spirit of joy and consolation, according to their measure. He is the centre of all saving offices; being, as a Prophet, the Wisdom of God, for our illumination; as a Priest, the Righteousness of God, for our justification; and, as a King, the Power of God, for our sanctification. He is the centre of all sweet relations; the Saviour, the Surety, the Head, the Husband, the All and in All of his people; their Light, and Life, and Strength, and Righteousness, and Rock, and Refuge, and Portion. He is the central place, where God, and man may meet together; for he dwells between, the cherubims, on the mercy-seat, and over these; “There Will I meet with thee,” (Exod. 25:22); “There will I commune with thee.” And no communion with God can we have but in him, who is the Lamb in the midst of the throne, and middle-person between God and us. In a word, being in the centre of the throne, he is the centre of all things; he is the centre of all the sins of the redeemed for their expiation; for, “The Lord hath laid on him [or made to meet in him] the iniquity of us all,” (Isa. 53:6). And the centre of all their service, for their acceptation; for, “We are accepted in the Beloved,” (Eph. 1:6). And thus he is somewhat the centre of all things; for, as all things are in his hands, so all things in heaven and earth are said to meet in him, (Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20). And therefore, the Lamb who is in the midst and centre of the throne ought to be the centre of our hearts and affections, the centre of our love and delight. Thus, among other things, he is the centre of all our

provision. Which leads to,

V. The Fifth thing proposed, which was, To view the benefit of feeding that issues from the Lamb's being in the midst of the throne: "He shall feed them." Whatever other pastoral care, rule or government this word imports; yet I shall, because this is a feast-day, consider that part of his pastoral care that is here expressed by the word feed: "The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them." If I were to enlarge upon this subject, I might tell you how the Lamb feeds his church and people with the manifestations of his glory, with the intimations of his love, with the communications of his grace, and with the consolations of his Spirit: but I confine myself to the doctrine of the Lamb being in the midst of the throne; and therefore I shall speak to this feeding only as it relates to that doctrine. The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne is the food; the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne is the feeder; and the Lamb's being in the midst of the throne makes the feeding of those that are the followers of the Lamb to have the following qualities. All our sacramental food and provision this day must come from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Therefore,

1. It must be kindly food and provision that comes from the throne, since the Lamb is in the midst of it. The meek Lamb, the loving Lamb, that feeds his flock like a shepherd, gathers the lambs with his arms, carries them in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young, (Isa. 40:11). He makes them to lie down in green pastures, (Psa. 23:2). He makes them to go out and in, and find pasture, (John 10:9). It is sweet, and easy, and kindly feeding that issues from the Lamb in the midst of the throne. And yet,

2. It must be powerful feeding that comes from thence; it is from the throne of power: and, indeed, you will not feed to advantage this day, unless power comes from the throne to make you take your food. It is the work of the Lamb in the midst of the throne, to feed by the efficacy of his grace: all the means and ministers in the world cannot make a soul open its mouth or heart for this food, till power come from the throne; and yet when it cometh, it comes so sweetly and kindly, that there is nothing like force or violence. The man is made as frank and free, in going out after Christ, to be the

food of his perishing soul, as if there were no power at all put forth in the case. Power makes him eat and feed heartily: “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power,” (Psa. 110:3).

3. It must be spiritual feeding that comes from the Lamb in the midst of the throne; for his throne, his kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, it is not of this world: “The flesh profits nothing;” his words are spirit and life. Food for the soul must be spiritual food: “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,” (Rom. 14:17).

4. It must be plentiful provision and feeding that comes from the Lamb in the midst of the throne; for it is a rich throne, and all fullness is there. There is plenty of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; abundance of all sorts. Here is wisdom enough, for the most ignorant; righteousness enough, for the most guilty; sanctification enough, for the most filthy; redemption enough, for the most ruined; comfort enough, for the most sorrowful; strength enough, for the weakest: “They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house,” (Psa. 36:8), O the plenty that is about the throne! Plenty of divine perfections to feed upon, when viewed in Christ. Indeed, the mildest attributes of God, out of Christ, will be a terrible sight; but the most terrible attributes of God, in Christ, are a pleasant feast; even justice, holiness, and truth. Here is plenty of promises to feed upon, while the performance is delayed. Everything in Christ is a feast; his names, and natures, offices, life, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession; his merit, his Spirit, his word, his flesh, his blood, and victory.

5. It must be suitable food that comes from this quarter; for, the Lamb being in the midst of the throne, will distribute equally and suitably. He cannot possibly fail and miscarry, by giving too much, or too little; being in the middle of the throne, and the middle person between God and man, to communicate what is suitable for God to give, and suitable for man to have, no more and no less does he communicate, because he is the Lamb in the midst of the throne. And, indeed, as a key is suited to a lock, so is Christ's fullness to our wants. We are diseased, he is a Physician; we are lost, he is a

Saviour; we are debtors, he is the Surety; we are dead, he is the Life; we are blind, he is Eye-salve; we are naked, he is Clothing; we are troubled, he is Rest: Are we bewildered? he is a Guide: Are we in danger? he is a Guard: Are we benighted? he is a Sun: Are we assaulted? he is a Shield. Who in heaven or earth can thus supply our wants, heal our wounds, bear our burdens, sweeten our afflictions, subdue our enemies, as Christ? O suitable feeding to the soul is herein all cases!

6. It must be joyful feeding and provision that comes from the Lamb in the midst of the throne; for, the throne is a place of joy and triumph. Here must be the choicest cheer, amidst the choicest company: God and Christ, and angels, and saints. There is as much sweetness in Christ, as there is fullness and suitableness: He is the fountain of sweetness; his mouth is most sweet, his presence is most sweet, his fruits are most sweet: "I sat down under his shadow with great delight," says the church, "and his fruits were sweet to my taste," (Song 2:3). Here are the sweet rivers of living waters that drive away all death and sorrow, as it follows here in the text.

7. It must be free provision and feeding that comes from the Lamb in the midst of the throne. There is nothing to pay about a throne; this would be a disgrace and disparagement to the prince that possesses the throne: so here, all is to be had freely. The finest is always the freest, (Isa. 55:1). The legalists, that cannot feed upon Christ and his righteousness freely, but only on their own works and duties, they feed upon ashes; the legal preacher, that cannot offer Christ freely, is like the unnatural fathers, that when their children ask bread, give them a stone: when they ask a fish, give them a scorpion. What is our best performances but scorpions, serpents, stones, yea, poison to them that make them their soul-food? Nothing can feed the soul but Christ. Rabshakeh threatened to make all the people on the wall to eat their own dung, (2 Kings 18:26); the legal preacher accomplishes this threatening, in a spiritual sense; our best works are but dung: "I will spread the dung of your sacrifices on your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts." But, O sirs, here the finest and sweetest feast is the freest; from the throne of grace proceed all blessings freely.

8. It must be durable provision and feeding that comes from the Lamb in the midst of the throne; for he ever lives upon the throne, and his throne is forever and ever; and therefore everlasting food comes from thence, and food that nourishes to everlasting life: “I am the living bread that came down from heaven,” says Christ “if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever,” (John 6:15). Here is provision for eternity: “Labour not for the meat that perisheth,” says Christ, “but for that meat that endures to everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you,” (John 6:27). What a fool was he that filled his barns, and then said, “Soul, take thy rest, thou hast much goods laid up for many years!” while God said to him, “Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee!” But, O what wisdom were it to lay up for eternity this day, that death may not be able to rob you of your store, but that ye may have it all before your hand! The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, lives forever there to feed: “He lives for ever to make intercession;” he lives forever to make provision; they have everlasting food, who have the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne to feed them. Thus you see what sort of feeding is to be had under the throne of the Lamb, and who it is that must cover our table this day, even the Lamb in the midst of the throne; he hath mounted the throne, to be a feeder, and to let down blessings to the footstool.

VI. The last thing proposed, was, the Application. Is it so, that our Lord Jesus is the Lamb in the midst of the throne? Hence we may infer these following particulars.

1. Surely we need not be ashamed of a crucified Christ, nor our Christian passover this day, the Lamb that was sacrificed for us. Since now the Lamb is upon the throne, and in the midst of the throne, the shame and reproach of the cross is wiped away, with the glory and splendour of the throne. We need not be ashamed of the cross of Christ, who is now in the midst of the throne. Let none despise those that espouse the cause and interest of the Lamb, whatever hardships they may be brought under before courts, councils, and judicatories on earth; they need not be ashamed to go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. The great Apostle Paul says, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross

of our Lord Jesus Christ.” O believer, it is our greatest glory to be bearing his cross, who is now wearing the crown; to be followers of the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne.

2. Hence we may learn, that the church of God is safe, since the Lamb that is their Head is in the midst of the throne. Believers in Christ are happy and safe, their Head and Husband, their Lord and King is upon the throne: the militant church, the fighting remnant, are in no great danger while he hath the government. Perhaps there are some here, like Eli, whose hearts are trembling for the ark of God, and the work of God at this day, when so many axes and hammers are lifted up against the carved work of the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of God’s house; but let this be matter of joy to their hearts, that the Lamb is in the midst of the throne; and, therefore, as he rules in Jacob to the ends of the earth, and overrules all damage done to his house, so he will make it appear in the issue, that according to his word, “Upon all the glory there shall be a defence,” (Isa. 4:5).

3. Hence we may learn, that the enemies of Christ may have a quaking heart, since the Lamb, whom they despise, is in the midst of the throne. His Father, that set him on the throne, hath said, “I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him,” (Psa. 89:23). The heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing; the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel against the Lord and his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands, and cast their cords from us. But he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision: having set his King upon his holy hill of Zion, he will break them in pieces with a rod of iron, and shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel, (Psa. 2:1-9). The Lord reigns, let the people tremble; he dwells between the cherubims, let the earth be moved,” (Psa. 99:1). The Lamb being in the midst of the throne, is matter of terror to the enemies of his glory; for he sits upon the throne of power, and the Lamb will be a Lion to tear them in pieces.

4. Hence we may learn, that there is a sure foundation laid for

the faith and hope of life and justification by the blood of the Lamb. Since the Lamb is in the midst of the throne, the throne of grace is a door of hope; and, that our hearts may be raised and lifted up to lively hope, the Lamb that was slain is raised and lifted up to the throne. Did he rise again for our justification? and does his resurrection seal upon our consciences the sufficiency of his death, and the acceptableness of his righteousness unto God? Much more may our faith and hope be confirmed herein, that he is exalted to the midst of the throne; for his Father had never put so much honour upon him, had he not been infinitely well-pleased and satisfied with his obedience unto the death. We may now read the dream that Jacob had at Bethel; “Behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven,” (Gen. 28:12); the ladder is the Lamb; the foot of the ladder was fixed in the midst of the earth, when he was here in a humbled estate; and now the top of the ladder is fixed in the midst of the throne; all the rounds of it are completed, that we may ascend by this way from earth to heaven.

5. Hence we may learn, what good reason there is for having a high esteem of Christ, since God hath so highly exalted him, to the very midst of the throne. O believer, should not Christ be high in our valuation, when God hath set him so high! No wonder then that it is said, “If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be ANATHEMA MARANATHA;” that is, “accursed until our Lord come,” (1 Cor. 16:22). Woe will be to them that will not put honour upon him, whom God the Father put so much honour upon, and that as our Redeemer and kinsman!

6. Hence learn, the throne of God needs not be terrible unto us since the Lamb, the meek Lamb, is in the midst of the throne; sinners need not fear to go to the throne of God, as long as the Lamb is there. If unbelief look toward the throne, it views it only as it is the throne of God, and so fills the soul with slavish fear, and frightful apprehensions: but true faith views it as the throne of God and of the Lamb; and the views of the Lamb in the midst of the throne, raises some joy, hope, and pleasure in the midst of the heart. Why, there is meekness as well as majesty; grace, as well as grandeur, about the throne, because the Lamb is there.

7. Hence we may learn what ground there is to expect the great God to be present in the midst of us this day, because the Lamb is in the midst of the throne. We would have no ground to expect that God would be with us on the footstool, if Christ were not with God upon the throne. Christ promised, upon his ascending to the throne, that he would be with his people, saying, “Lo, I am with you always,” (Matt. 28:20). He promised, when he went up to the throne, he would send down his Spirit: “If I go away, I will send him,” (John 16:8). Therefore, if he be by his Spirit in the midst of us this day, it is because he is in the midst of the throne. It is easy for him to be both sitting gloriously in the midst of the throne, and at the same time walking graciously in the midst of the golden candlesticks, (Rev. 2:1). He is both the blest *Logos*, the Word of God; and the blest Immanuel, God with us. The seven spirits are said to be before the throne. The Spirit of God is one, but his gifts, operations, and influences are various; and the Lamb, that is in the midst of the throne, hath the Spirit to give; and having said that he will send him, O let us look to the throne, and thence expect the Spirit according to his word.

8. Hence we may learn what is the mark of a worthy communicant, namely, if he be a true believer of this doctrine, that the Lamb is in the midst of the throne. “Let a man examine himself upon this, and so let him eat.” I ask not if you say you believe; or think you believe; but I call and enjoin to try, if you truly believe that the Lamb is in the midst of the throne. For helping you to this search, you may consider two things, namely, what view you have of this truth, and what virtue you find in it.

(1). What view have you of this truth? If you truly believe it, then you view it with approbation. Is your heart satisfied that the Lamb is in the midst of the throne? Do you cordially approve of the Father’s setting him so high? Did it ever fill your heart with joy and satisfaction, and with some secret pleasure and exultation, that God hath put such honour upon Jesus? And have you thus received this truth in the love of it, and in the sweetness of it? O did ever your heart leap, as it were, within you, to think that the throne of God is also the throne of the Lamb, and so a throne open to you to

come boldly unto by the blood of the Lamb, that encircles the throne like a rainbow? How does your heart stand affected to this truth? “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness,” (Rom. 10:10).

(2). What virtue have you found in this truth for leading you to enthrone Christ, as the Father hath done? As the Father hath set the Lamb in the midst of the throne of glory; so, have you set him in the midst of the throne of your heart? Is he, that is in the midst of the throne of God, in the midst of the throne with you? Surely, “To them that believe he is precious” [or an honour], as the word may be read, (1 Pet. 2:7). And they put this honour upon him, even to set him in the midst of the throne. O my dear friends, let me tell you that by this you may try and examine yourself, and prove your own self, whether Christ be in you; if he be in you at all, he will be in the midst of the throne. You are not fit for a communion table, and at your peril be it if you go, and get some other thing than Christ hath the throne of your heart; if self be in the midst of the throne, if the world be in the midst of the throne, if your lusts be in the midst of the throne, Christ is not in you. It is true, the heart of the believer, while here, is not quite free of sin, and self, and the world; they may fight for the throne, and many times they may be seen to win the throne of their heart; but sure I am, they never got peaceable possession of the throne of their heart. The believer is free from peace with sin, though he is never free from war with sin in this world; his league with it is broken, he can never consent to its rule and government anymore; and hence, whenever sin usurps the throne, like Adonijah, then the believer enters his protest against it before the King of kings, saying, “Lord, hast thou not said that Solomon shall reign?” Hast thou not promised, that grace shall reign, and that sin shall not have dominion? O down, down with this usurper; and let Christ have his own proper room and place, which is in the midst of the throne. Hath virtue come from the throne of the Lamb to enable you to enthrone Christ in the midst of your heart? Hath he the throne of your esteem, the throne of your delight, the throne of your affection? Felt you ever any virtue coming down from the throne of Christ, to dethrone sin, and to draw your heart up to the throne of God? Did you ever find so

much grace descending from the throne, as to make your hearts ascend to the throne? And is it the view of the Lamb's being there, that fires your heart, and makes it flame upward to the very midst of the throne where he is? Again,

Lastly, Hence we may learn the duty of sinners that hear this doctrine of the Lamb's being in the midst of the throne. I think it is your duty, yea, sure I am it is your duty, to come and see the Lamb in the midst of the throne, to come and match with the Lamb, and then to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.

(1). It is your duty to come and see this great sight the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne. If the question be, Where is the Lamb? The answer is, In the midst of the throne. But if the question again be, Where is the throne, that we may see it, and the Lamb in the midst of it? We answer, God's throne of glory is properly in heaven; but his throne of grace is really on earth, as well as in heaven; it is erected in the church, and in this gospel dispensation, declaring that God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself. A God in Christ is a throne of grace everywhere, and a glorious throne everywhere is the place of our sanctuary, (Jer. 17:12). Hence, when the Apostle says, "Let us come boldly to the throne," he does not mean locally climbing up to heaven, but believingly approaching to God in Christ, as held forth in the gospel of his grace. Why then, as Christ is in the midst of the throne, so the throne is in the midst of this house.

Question: What will we see, if we come and see the Lamb in the midst of the throne?

Answer: You will see that the throne of God is patient to sinners, because the Lamb is there; and that there is access with boldness from all quarters, at every side of the throne, because the Lamb is in the midst of it. The blood of the Lamb encircles the throne, and sprinkles the mercy-seat; and therefore guilty sinners may come, through this guilt-expiating blood. Here you will see the most dreadful attributes of God divested of all their dread and terror, and appearing amiable. Infinite holiness and infinite justice are awful attributes, and both are upon the throne of God, but the Lamb is in the midst of them; holiness is gratified, justice is satisfied, every

attribute is glorified; “Mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other;” and all harmoniously conspire, because the Lamb is in the midst of them. The mildest attributes would be dreadful to sinners, if the Lamb were not in the midst of them; but the most terrible attributes are amiable and lovely, when you see the Lamb in the midst of them.

Here you will see the most terrible dispensations of God smiling in your face, when you see the Lamb in the midst of them; for, though clouds and darkness are round about him, yet righteousness and judgment are the habitations of his throne. He that rides in heaven by his name YAH, and makes the clouds his chariots, as he sits in the midst of his throne; so he sits in the midst of the cloudy and dark dispensations of our day, to order and overrule. Black clouds are over the church of Scotland, and the government, as it is in the hands of men, is all in disorder and confusion, and turned upside-down; but, if you see the Lamb in the midst of these dispensations, you will see that the government is upon his shoulders; and that not only justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, but that justice and judgment sit with mercy and grace; and God hath some glorious design on foot, however terrible to his enemies, yet merciful to all the followers of the Lamb.

In a word, here you will see all the glory of God, when you see the Lamb in the midst of the throne. O the throne of glory is a throne of grace, because the Lamb is there; the throne of justice is a throne of mercy, because the Lamb is there; the throne of infinite holiness is accessible by guilty sinners, because the Lamb is there. O come and see.

(2). It is your duty to come and match with the Lamb. O sinner, who hath been married to the devil hitherto, married to your lusts, married to the world; O man, woman, whether old or young, will you come and be the bride, the Lamb’s wife? as the word is, (Rev. 19:7). Let none dare, to go to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, to the communion-table, until once they have given their heart and hand to the Son of God, and joined in marriage with the Lamb; and, O may this be a marriage day. It is a great part of our work to court a bride for the Lamb, and then to lead her to the table; and, O may drawing power come from the throne, to draw out many hearts after

him! O sinner, the Son of God, the Lamb of God, is come to court your heart, saying, "My son give me thy heart;" and he is come to offer himself to thee, man; to thee, woman, saying, "Behold me, behold me; come to me, that you may have life." What for a match would you have? Would you not be well married, and happy in such a Husband to all eternity?

1. Are you for an honourable match, a royal match? O here is the King of kings, the Lamb in the midst of the throne; the Head of all principalities and powers.

2. Are you for a rich and opulent match? Here is the Lamb in the midst of the throne, in whom are hid unsearchable riches, and all the fullness of the Godhead; everlasting treasures of grace and glory.

3. Are you for a bountiful match? O there is none like the Lamb in the midst of the throne for a generous spirit, willing and ready to lay out all his riches, that out of his fullness ye may receive, and grace for grace.

4. Are you for a beautiful match? Behold the Lamb in the midst of the throne, the King in his beauty; he is white and ruddy, and altogether lovely: no wonder, for he is the brightness of his Father's glory; all the glory of God shines in his face. Some of God's glory shines in the works of creation, the sun, moon, and stars; some of it in the works of providence: but all the glory of God is here. He is the temple of God, and there doth beauty shine, (Psa. 96:6).

5. Are you for a loving, as well as a lovely match? Behold the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne is a mirror of love, without all dimension: "O the height and depth, the length and breadth of his love!" He loved and prayed for his enemies that murdered him; and how then must he love his friends that will match with him? Again,

6. Are you for a beloved match, who is valued and esteemed of all whose love and esteem is worth the regarding? O! the Lamb in the midst of the throne is beloved of all the holy angels, they admire and adore him; he is beloved of all the saints in heaven and

earth; they say, This is our Beloved; he is beloved of God the Father, who says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased;" he is hated of none but the devil and his wicked crew.

7. In a word, are you for an immortal match? Well, here is the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne; he lives forever and ever: "I am he that was dead, and am alive; and, behold, I live for evermore." The best friends here in this world are mortal, and may leave you in a moment; but the Lamb is the King eternal, immortal: he lives forever, and he can make you live forever and ever. O mortal worms, whose bodies will be laid in the dust in a few days or hours, and who have nothing but a thin wall of flesh between you and eternity; are ye for a match that can abundantly jointure you for another world, and portion you for eternity? Is this a despicable bargain? Are your lusts and idols, and perishing vanities of a world, a better bargain? Nay, you dare not say it for your life. This offer of Christ accept or reject it as you will is worth ten thousand worlds.

8. Are you for a match that can pay all your debt to law and justice, that can supply all your wants, that can heal all your diseases, that can bear all your burdens, sanctify all your crosses, sweeten all your afflictions, subdue all your enemies, manage all your concerns, and make you happy forever? Then come and match with the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne: a greater offer cannot be made to you than this most glorious King, upon the most glorious throne. O great proposal! Wonder men and angels, at this gospel offer! Be astonished, O heavens and earth! If such a matchless match be offered and rejected, all the angels and saints that are about his throne will cry, Shame upon you forever, and reject and refuse such a bargain; and we must say, Amen; everlasting shame must be upon you. What was the Gadarenes' blasphemy, but their preferring their swine to the Lord Jesus Christ, when he was upon the earth, and not yet upon the throne? But greater is your blasphemy, O sinner, if you prefer your swinish lusts to our glorious Lord, now exalted to the throne. What! prefer the swine, that are in the midst of the dunghill, to the Lamb in the midst of the throne! O base, brutish, mad, and devilish blasphemy.

I hope, by this time, there are none hearing men but are so far self-convicted, that they see they must condemn themselves if they reject such an offer as is made to them; and therefore, I take witness upon it, that when the Lamb, that is now in the midst of the throne of grace, will be the Lamb in the midst of the throne of judgment at the last day, ye must own that the sentence of condemnation, that shall be then passed against you, will be just and righteous, if you stand to your refusal; therefore, though this should be a rejected offer today, yet it shall redound to the honour of the Lamb at the great day, insomuch, that the condemnation of you will be the justification of him; your own consciences witness that he will be just when he speaks, and clear when he judges, and adjudges you to hell and damnation, because of your neglecting the great salvation, and rejecting the offer of the great Saviour, the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne. By way of anticipation the tribunal is now erected beforehand in your bosom, where God's deputy, conscience, sits as the judge; and there the Lamb is assoiled [absolved] as free of your blood, and the sentence comes forth, that your blood is upon your own head. Well, I hope your judgment is persuaded of this, that such an offer is made to you as is worthy of all acceptation; but, O sirs, since the judgment may be informed and gained, while yet the heart is not engaged; therefore, though faith come by hearing what a worthy Lamb is offered to you, yet bare hearing will not do without the heart-drawing power of the Spirit which is before the throne; and, therefore, this being the pure crystal river, that proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, (Rev. 22:1), that this river of drawing influences of the Spirit may run down among you, I will put the best rope in your hand that I know for bringing down this blessing; it is even the Lamb's own sweet promise; "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men after me," (John 12:32). Where observe, (1). The persons concerned. (2). The promise. And, (3). The condition of it.

(1). The persons concerned, *all men*. There is an *All* among sinful men, that Christ the second Adam hath to draw to him; these were given of the Father to him; and they shall come, (John 6:37). Yea, these he *must bring* to him, (John 10:16). He must draw them, and they shall hear his voice. But, lest any should hereupon say,

Perhaps I am not among the number of the second Adam's all, that he is to draw; perhaps I am excluded by the secret council, or hidden decree of God from all eternity. Therefore, I will tell you what may satisfy you fully upon this point, that the Lamb, that is now in the midst of his Father's throne, was in the midst of his Father's counsels from all eternity; the Lamb was at that council-table: therefore, let not the thoughts of the eternal decree be terrible and dreadful to you; for the Lamb was upon the concert, and therefore nothing passed at that council to the prejudice of any poor sinner, that would venture his soul upon the blood of the Lamb. It was concerted there, that the ground and object of faith should be no hidden counsel, no past decree, but a present openly declared truth; namely, that the Lamb is in the midst of the throne, and that whosoever will might come to him, and him that comes he will in no wise cast out; and, therefore, if you venture your life and salvation upon the Lamb that is at present upon the throne of grace, you have nothing either past or future to fear; neither any past decree, or any future wrath; and now, by this free offer of Christ to you all, God is accomplishing his glorious decree, that you may be forever happy upon your acceptance, or for ever inexcusable upon your refusal.

(2). The promise, which is, "I will draw all men unto me." In case any should say, There is indeed a free offer, and a good bargain; but I have a reluctant as well as a deceitful heart; I cannot embrace the offer, nor bring up my heart to close with Christ, and make up the match. Why, here is the encouraging promise, "I will draw;" that is, I will send the Spirit to draw out your heart, to make it rise and mount, like a flame, towards the throne, where the Lamb sits. But if I do not find this drawing power, what encouragement have I to look for it? Why, observe,

(3). The condition of this promise, "If I be lifted up from the earth." Not an uncertain condition, depending upon us; but a sure condition, depending upon himself: "If I be lifted up, or when I am lifted up." Now, the condition is performed; Christ was not only lifted up upon the cross, but now he is lifted up to the throne. Now, Christ said, "If I go to the Father, I will send the Spirit," (John 16:8); if I go to the throne, I will send down the Spirit in his

drawing influences. And now, may you not plead, “Lord the condition is performed, the time is come, thou art lifted up, thou art upon the throne; therefore, let the crystal river run down out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb?” Is this the language of your heart and soul? Lord, draw, draw; thou that art the Lamb in the midst of the throne, draw my heart to thee, according to thy word. Is your heart burning or beating, saying, “O I am the blackest, the vilest sinner that ever matched with such a glorious One; but yet I find my heart beating and burning within me, saying, O to be drawn; O to have the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne to erect his throne in the midst of my heart, and to rule there in the midst of his enemies; and to be all in all to me; for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption to me;” Why, then, we may say, your heart is the throne, and the Lamb is in the midst of the throne. And, if the drawing power of the Spirit hath made up the match between him and you, we are warranted to lead you next to the marriage supper, where “the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed you.”

