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DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS

IN THE

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S E R M O N I V.

THE SALVATION OF SINNERS, *only* BY THE
BLOOD OF JESUS.

B Y

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I C O R. V. 7.

For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

THERE is in this passage a direct allusion to the Jewish feast, or sacrament, called the passover; and to the method of observing it, enjoined by God at its original institution. The institution itself, with the occasion and manner of observing it, are particularly recorded in Exodus. The whole œconomy of providence towards the Jewish nation, especially, from the time they first came into Egypt, until their settlement in the land of Canaan, is typical. Their Egyptian bondage was perhaps intended by God, to shadow forth the natural state of man, with respect to spiritual things; and their miraculous deliverance by the hand of Moses, clearly pointed, to the re-

covery of fallen sinners by Jesus Christ. There is no conduct of Providence, wherein the wisdom of God shines with more glory and evidence, than in the exactness, in which the spirit of the New Testament, answers to the letter of the Old ; the shadows to the substance ; the figures to the things prefigured ; and the types to the antitypes. He, who will humbly, and carefully compare them, will not fail of obtaining great conviction, and information, with regard to the divinity of the scriptures ; and entire satisfaction, with respect to most of those points, about which, the Christian world are so much divided. The Old and New Testaments do mutually illustrate each other. The Old would not be equally clear, without the New : the New, in many parts, would be dark and unintelligible, without the Old. Our text is an instance of the truth of this remark.

What should we be able to make of this New Testament doctrine, *that Christ is our passover*, were it not for the light and assistance we have from the Old Testament?---But from both, we easily learn, that the passover was a type of Jesus Christ : it was intended by God to be of this nature and use. The paschal lamb had a direct reference to Jesus, as the Lamb of God. It was observed by true believers under the Old Testament in this view : their faith beheld Christ in the institution. The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us, that *by faith Moses kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood.*

The most easy method, therefore, of explaining the truth contained in the text, will be, by contrasting the type, and the antitype. We shall best understand what we are taught, when Christ is called *our passover*, by attending to the original institution of this ordinance among the Jews; and pointing out the resemblance it bears, to *Jesus Christ the Mediator*. This I shall endeavor to do, in the following particulars.

I. The passover was appointed, when God was about to destroy all the first-born in the land of Egypt. They were all doomed to destruction by the divine decree, without exception. Moses declares to Pharaoh: *Thus saith the Lord, about midnight, I will go out into the midst of Egypt, and all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth on the throne, even to the first-born of the maid servant, that is behind the mill, and all first-born of beasts.*

On this awful occasion was the passover instituted by God, and appointed to the Israelites.

In like manner, Jesus Christ was appointed, when all the human race were by the sentence of the divine law, doomed to everlasting destruction, *from the presence of the Lord, and glory of his power*. Eternal death was fixed, as the demerit, and punishment of man's violating that law, under which God had placed him. *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.*

The head of the human race, with whom God transacted for himself and all his posterity, violated the constitution established with him, and ruined himself; and the whole race, was ruined in, and with him. They all sinned, and became guilty in their head and representative. *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

On this occasion, the whole race of mankind, through all their generations, were doomed by the sentence of God's righteous law, to *everlasting perdition*. The sentence was righteous: the doom was just; and it would have been infinitely fit in God, to have executed the same. If this had been done, each of us who are here present, would have been now in chains of eternal darkness and despair. That this would be the event of man's apostasy, was no doubt expected by all the elect Angels. They had seen the issue of rebellion in the case of their fallen companions; and if they could argue only from fact, no other conclusion could be made by them, than *the damnation of mankind*.

In this lost and ruined condition of mankind, when they were all under the curse, and exposed to everlasting destruction, Jesus Christ, became in the appointment of God, *our passover*. God constituted Adam our first covenant head; and he constituted Christ, our second covenant head. Adam's headship was an image or type of Christ's. In re-

gard to this appointment, Christ is called *the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world.*

II. The passover was originally appointed, as the *only* method, for the Israelites' escaping the destruction, God intended to execute on the Egyptians. The account of the institution renders the observation evident: for when God had ordained the solemnity, and the manner of observing it, he gives the following reason of the ordinance.---*For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast: and against all the Gods of Egypt, I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you a token on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.*

This destruction of the Egyptians was figurative: the method appointed to the Israelites for escaping this destruction, was also figurative. The former, respected the effect of God's wrath for sin, in the eternal damnation of sinners; the latter, the only way of deliverance from this misery. Accordingly Jesus Christ is our passover, as by him *only*, can we escape the wrath and curse of God, due to us for sin---He is ordained of God for this purpose. He is the wisdom and power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth. There is no name but Christ's, by which sinners can be sav-

ed. There is no possibility of escaping the wrath of God, but by him. In vain, is salvation hoped, or sought for in other ways; from the hills and from the mountains, from this, or from that course; for Jesus Christ is the *true and only passover*. Vain are the attempts of guilty, affrighted mortals, to avert the impending vengeance. All the various inventions and practices of a mind, distracted with the guilt of sin and dread of hell, are but as stubble before the devouring flame. And he who has never felt this truth, has never yet *fled to the only ark of safety*, from divine vengeance. *The wrath of God abideth on him; and his jealousy will smoke against that man.* And unless the eyes of such a sinner be soon opened, to see himself, and God, and Christ, in a manner that he never has; in a manner, that shall *shake down all his present hopes and confidences to the foundation*, the storms of God's unquenchable fury will quickly do it. *The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters overflow the hiding place.* Hear this, ye that forget God: hear this, ye that compass yourselves about with *sparks of your own kindling*: ye shall have this at God's hands; *ye shall lie down in sorrow!* Let no sinner *bless himself in his heart* when he heareth the words of this curse: *saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart.* Let no sinner behave himself proudly. God hath said it, and he will perform. Were it the threatening of a Man, or Angel, you might defy his minaces: but the Lion of the tribe of Judah *hath roar-*

ed, who will not fear?---The Lord God hath spoken : who can but prophecy?

III. The Israeltics were as liable to the threatened destruction, as the Egyptians, as to any thing in themselves, or belonging to them, which distinguished them, as a ground of pre-eminence, or reason of exemption from the common ruin. This remark is obvious, from the account of the paschal institution. The nature of the passover supposeth the truth of this observation; that there was nothing in the Jew, *considered in himself*, to distinguish him from the Egyptian. The one was no more worthy of favor than the other. The Israelites considered in themselves, as much merited destruction, as the Egyptians. There was nothing marked out the one for favor, more than the other: but the sovereign God made the difference, and appointed the sign of distinction. Thus it is in the case of every sinner saved by Jesus Christ. He sees nothing in himself, from first to last, to distinguish, or recommend him to the favor of God, above the vilest monster that walks the earth. This is the sincere and undissembled language of his heart through the whole course of his life, after he has become acquainted with the truth. ‘*Why me Lord?---Why was I taken and another left? Why was I distinguished from the most tormented wretch that is now in hell? Why was God’s grace bestowed on me? Why have I a part in Christ granted me, while so many others, who I am sure,*

are not worse in themselves than I am, if so bad, are suffered to perish in rejecting him?' He can find no manner of reason for this distinction, but, *Even so Father for so it seemed good in thy sight.--- Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith.*

Did not the sovereign God make the difference between the first-born of Israel, and the first-born of Pharaoh? Was not sovereign mercy, greatly displayed, in saving the one, while the other was slain; when both in themselves were equally liable to destruction? So, sovereign grace through Jesus Christ, shines with infinite lustre, in saving some sinners from eternal misery; while others are left to perish in their iniquities; who by nature were not worse than they. And thus the saint, from his conversion, to the day of his death, has continual conviction, that the whole of his salvation, is owing to the *most free favor, and unmerited grace.*

IV. The killing of the paschal lamb, was not sufficient to save them from the stroke of the destroying Angel, unless the posts and lintles of the doors were sprinkled with its blood. This was of essential consequence. This was the great thing to be done, after killing the lamb, in order to have any benefit from the institution. The whole transaction was useless, in neglect of this circumstance. If the blood was not thus sprinkled, they were equally exposed to ruin, as if no part of the

institution had been complied with. Though they had killed the passover, had eaten of it, and observed the instituted feast, yet all would be of no avail to save them from the destroyer, *if the blood was not sprinkled on the doors*. Thus it is with respect to Jesus Christ, the true passover. He has been slain, as the Lamb of God, *who taketh away the sins of the world*---His blood has been shed. He poured out his soul unto death. He offered himself a sacrifice, an offering of sweet smelling favor unto God, and, by his own blood, hath entered into the holiest of all. But this will be of no avail to us *if we are not sprinkled with it*. Without this, the death of Christ will have no salutary effect with regard to us. The case will be eventually the same to us as if Christ had never died. Christ will profit us nothing. His death will not save *us* from death.

Let it therefore be solemnly attended to, that the shedding of Christ's blood will be of no avail to your salvation, unless you be sprinkled with it. This is the true blood of sprinkling, that can divert the stroke of justice; that can purge the conscience from dead works, and from the guilt of sin, *when the overflowing scourge shall pass through*. The sprinkling of the blood of Jesus is the only defence against the wrath of God. Happy the soul who, when God shall rise to judgment, will be found sprinkled with this blood, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. But *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish* to every one,

that is then found unsprinkled with the blood of Jesus.

How it stands with you, my hearers, in regard to this matter, becomes you earnestly to enquire. It is of more importance to you, than all the other affairs of life besides. And yet, perhaps, there is not a few in this assembly, who never made it any part of your care, in all your lives, and to this moment are entirely careless about it. Alas ! what hath bewitched you, that you should not flee from the wrath to come ? What will you do, when God shall whet his glittering sword, and his hand shall take hold on vengeance ? If you are never sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, the justice of God will avenge itself in *your* blood.

V. It was not the act of the Israelites, in sprinkling the blood of the lamb on the posts, and lintles of their doors, that God had respect to, when he passed them over, while he destroyed the Egyptians. It was not, I say, their act or obedience that God looked at, and on account of which he spared them : but it was the *blood itself*, to which he had respect, and on account of which he passed them by.—The blood seen on the posts of their doors, was the thing which secured them from destruction, and to which God had an *exclusive respect*, when he went through the land, destroying all the first-born of the Egyptians, and passing over the Israelites.

Thus is the matter represented in the above cited chapter. *And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.* And again—*When the Lord seeth the blood on the lintle and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in to smite you.*—Hence you see, the blood is the only thing, to which God had respect in sparing them from destruction.

Thus exactly stands the case, with respect to Jesus Christ the true passover. This blood of the paschal lamb represented the blood of Christ, and the sprinkling thereof prefigured the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. What God had respect to in the figure, when he passed by the Israelites, to that he has respect in the substance, when he passeth by guilty sinners, and saves them from deserved destruction forever. These things teach us directly, what God has respect to when he pardons penitent sinners, and bestows salvation upon them. It is not to any thing in them he has regard, as the reason of his acquitting them from condemnation. It is not for their obedience, their faith, or any thing in them whatever, but *entirely*, and *exclusively*, for the sake of the blood of Christ. It is this alone God has respect to, in justifying those that believe. The case is here as it was with the Israelites: it was the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the doors

of the latter, to which God solely had respect and spared them : it is to the blood of Christ, God entirely has respect, in the justification of the former.

This likewise teaches us to what *we* are to have respect, as the only ground of our acceptance with God : for we must have regard to the same thing in *expecting justification*, which God has in granting it. We must have respect to Christ's merit and righteousness *exclusively*; not to *our* obedience, *our* faith, repentance, or any thing else as the pleadable matter of our acceptance, or the reason and ground of our pardon.

I am particular here, my brethren, because I know *your life is in it*. If you mistake the ground of acceptance with God, you are ruined. If you place your obedience, or any acts or works of your own, in the room of Christ's righteousness, you must perish. *Those, who go about to establish their own righteousness, submit not to the righteousness of God; and those, who submit not to the righteousness of God in the Gospel, must perish forever*. It is to the righteousness of the Gospel God has respect, in justifying believing sinners; and it is to this, *you* have respect entirely, if you are true believers: for it is the nature of evangelical faith, to look to Christ's righteousness *only*.

A persuasion that this is the only thing that can recommend a sinner to God, accounting all things else but dross and dung with regard to this mat-

ter, are inseparable concomitants of true faith; or, I may say, belong to the very nature of it.

VI. All were saved from destruction, on whose doors the blood of the lamb was sprinkled, while the plague swept off the Egyptians all around them.

While the first-born of the Egyptians were slain by thousands, the Israelites were safe, and no harm happened to them—the wrath of God, *the pestilence that walketh in darkness* came not nigh them.

Thus, shall all those be saved from destruction, who are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus the true passover. There is now no wrath abiding on them, nor any vengeance in reserve. When God seeth this blood on them, he will pass over them. He will spare them as a man spareth his own son. This blood will never loose its efficacy, nor power with God. It is of a *sweet smelling savor* to him. This is the apostolic language to express its acceptableness to God. Great is the delight which the Lord God Almighty takes in receiving those to favor, who are sprinkled with this blood.

I must not enter further into this subject at present. Many striking instances of resemblance between the typical and true passover yet remain: but lest I should be tedious, I must omit them at this time, and conclude with some improvement.

I. How illustrious the wisdom, and how distinguishing the grace and love of God in our salvati-

on! Behold what infinite love, *that God should so love the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life*: that God should send his own Son into the world, that we might not perish who believe on him: that God's eternal Son should be made a servant, that we might be made the sons of God: that he should be made sin that we might be made righteous: that he should die, that we might live; that he should suffer the curse of the law and the punishment of sin, that we might be delivered from the curse, and redeemed from punishment: that his blood should be shed, that by the sprinkling of it, we might be delivered from eternal destruction: that he should be our passover, and that the vengeance should light on him, that was due to us, are indeed mysteries of grace, and arguments of love, which pass all understanding. They ought never to be thought of by us, but with rapture and astonishment. When we consider, who it was that condescended thus; not an Angel, but the Lord of Angels; not some exalted creature lifted up in excellency and dignity far above us; but the Creator, *God over all blessed forever*. Who but is lost in sweet surprise, and humble adoration!

This grace of God is so inconceivably great, that the saints, during their abodes in these tabernacles, cannot bear any great view of it. It would dissolve their frame: it exceeds our utmost thoughts.

When we consider for whom Christ suffered and died ; for creatures, mean, and insignificant creatures ; for rebellious creatures, incapable of ever being profitable to him : in the eternal rejection of whom, his justice would have shone with a conspicuous ray, and been admired by all the choirs above.

Well may we break out in the language of astonishment, overborn with the grace of God, *What manner of love is this !*—well hath God said—*My ways are not like your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts.*

Who is not by such a display convinced, that the Gospel is not *a cunningly devised fable* ; but an amazing, and glorious display of the nature and perfections of God ? How wonderful, how godlike is the work of redemption ! It seems to exceed the works of Creation, although these shew forth the divine power and godhead ; even as the light of the sun, exceeds that of a faint and languid star.

II. As we are here taught, that unless we are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, his death and atonement will finally be of no avail to us : we ought to enquire, my brethren, with all diligence, whether we are sprinkled with this blood, yea or nay ? This is the *only blood* that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. If you are not sprinkled with it, and die thus, better you had never been born. Oh ! therefore, look into this matter. As you value your own salvation enquire

into it. As you would not be forever rejected of God, see to it, that the blood of Christ *be upon you*— You have an example before you of the certain consequence of being without this blood sprinkled on you, in the destruction of the Egyptians. *They are ensamples unto us.* Wherefore, my dear hearers, look into your own hearts and lives to day; and let the single enquiry which you make at your own consciences, be thus, with each one: ‘Am I sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, or not? Have I ever been effectually convinced of my lost, and undone estate by nature, and practice? Have I ever seen the exceeding great evil, and desert of sin? Has sin ever been imbittered to my soul, so that I have been pricked at my heart, and made to cry out, *What shall I do to be saved?*’

Have you, my audience, ever seen that it would be just in God to cast you off forever, and have your hearts sunk, and fainted under the view? Have you felt yourselves without strength to make atonement for your crimes? and have you been filled with unfeigned sorrow and grief that you have sinned against God, and broken his law?— And have you with your whole hearts, under these views, renounced all your *own righteousness*, as *filthy rags*; and rested your guilty souls, naked, and wretched as they are, upon a *crucified Jesus*? Do you see the value, the infinite value of his blood to make atonement for your sins? Is Christ, his righteousness, and the way of salvation through

him, what ravishes, charms and rejoices your souls? And are you depending on him continually, for all needed grace and strength, to enable you to discharge the duties which you owe to God, and your neighbor?—Oh! my brethren, *examine yourselves, try your own selves.*

Those of you who have scriptural evidences to hope that you are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, how blessed are you! How happy is the condition of true believers! God will certainly pass over you, when he arises to judgment. He has given you full assurance of this already in the *figure*, and he will soon do it *in reality*. Let not your hearts be troubled, O Christians, the destroying Angel shall not come nigh you! Believe in God, he abideth faithful, and that you might have the strongest consolation, he hath added his oath to his promise. *God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise, the immutability of his council, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us.*

Perhaps your own vileness and wretchedness affright you: you see so little to distinguish you as objects of favor; so much, to render you objects of wrath; that you cannot think you have any part in the blessedness here spoken of. But remember that what makes you acceptable, is the blood of sprinkling—Christ is made of God unto you

wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. This is the grace wherein you stand, and wherein you are accepted.

But those, who never felt the powerful influence of this method of salvation, may object; that this doctrine leads to licentiousness. Nay, my brethren, no doctrine has a stronger operation the contrary way. No doctrine has a more powerful effect to purify the heart, to animate to diligence in good works, than salvation by free grace; than acceptance before God, *solely* by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. The real belief of this doctrine, is the only abiding spring of holy obedience---Saith not the Apostle? *The love of Christ constraineth us.*

O Christians! be persuaded to maintain a powerful sense of gospel grace; and that it is only by the blood of sprinkling, you are distinguished as objects of divine acceptance. This is the surest road to peace and comfort. And by this blood you shall enter into the holiest of all: the everlasting doors of glory will be opened to you, and you shall be introduced into eternal felicity, by this Jesus, with whose blood you are sprinkled; saying, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*---But are there not some in this assembly, who have full convictions of judgment, that you have never been sprinkled with this *peace-speaking, and life-giving blood*?---Who have never fled to Jesus for refuge,

from the storms of divine vengeance? Who have not the door-posts of your hearts sprinkled? Be assured, O Sinners! that the destroying Angel will enter into your souls and smite you, and leave you neither root nor branch. You shall be swept away by the torrent of divine wrath, if you thus continue, when God shall descend to judgment. Nothing can secure you from the utmost destruction, if you continue to undervalue so great a sacrifice as the Lamb of God. *Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and done despite to the spirit of grace?* It is dreadful, O Sinners! to have this sacrifice smoking against you, and the blood of Christ calling for vengeance, instead of mercy, upon your devoted heads. O, be warned to flee from the wrath to come! for when the midnight cry of Egypt arises, it will then be too late! Wherefore, *now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.* Oh Sinners! lay hold on the blood of sprinkling. Harken to the invitations of Christ Jesus. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and whosoever will, let him come, and partake of the waters of life freely---The spirit and the bride say, come; and that we may all come, and be sprinkled with this soul-saving blood, may God of his infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen, and Amen.*