No. 75

The necessity of X's sufferings.

Communion Sermon.

Sept 3, 1820
March 1, 1822
Hebrews II, 10. "For it became him, as one conversant with the name of glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering."

In these words are expressed at once the high and mighty being of God, with respect to man, the means by which that purpose is to be effected. The purpose of the All is to bring many sons to glory, i.e., to raise mankind to a state of moral advancement of purity, i.e., consequently to a state of felicity; and the means are such as are used in all the mediatorial offices of Christ, as the Apostle says.
was made perfect by suffering. There is something very touching & sublime in the view of the Almighty, who is thus set before us. For consider, who this being is, of whom the sacred writer speaks. He is He, whose are all things, & by whom are all things. In the few words the prophet has well described the Sovereign of the Universe. He is that Being, who speaks, & then arising into existence, & who controls & governs then, & by a power, that cannot be resisted, & who, unless there by a goodness, of no time is long enough, & no mind is vast enough to exhaust. He is He, whose residence is eternity, whose residence the conourse, whose throne is above the highest heavens, the throne of whose feet is beyond the stars of the firmament. Yet it is this great & glorious God, who is represented as a Spirit, of whom many, by the salvation of man. It is the Holy One, who inhabits eternity, that casts a kind, regard on as his creatures, and on the universe of earth, & not only spreads enjoyment & happiness, while we walk the journey of life, but provides unfading treasures for that portion of our nature, which can never die; who while He blesses the body, blesses in a far more exalted sense the soul; yea, has sent the bread of this love to guide & save us. These are the considerations which raise us above the dust from which we are, connect us with God. It is this, which gives a real sense & spirit to the noblest of our existence. It is this which constrains us to meditate, worship the king of Israel, in the humility of becoming grateful. What is man, that He should remember him? {man} the son of man, that He should visit him? 

It is well to reflect for a moment on that on the God of all space keeps an eye, & looking many years into glory. Where all he detached from the nature of the earth, a people, for his name, he destined them to honor the land of Canaan. This promised country excites the departure of the tribes from Egypt, encouraged them in all their long
wanderings through the wilderness. It was a state in which they expected rest, peace, and abundance—a land wherein there was no sorrow, no labor, no death. The promise was from the beginning made to the end of the age. This promise was only a shadow of the things to come, an emblem of things better that lie hid. The people of that day looked only council towards the children of God, who are truth-loving. There they will find that rest which remains for the children of God, where the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and they shall no more hunger, nor thirst, for the fountain of waters. This blessedness in respect for the righteous is very often expressed in Scripture. By glory, I thus is represented to us as a state of perfection, of magnificence, of splendor, of honor; a state in which all shall be glorified together with their咫尺. We are reminded too of the character under which they shall obtain this happiness: it is for friends, not enemies, not strangers. We shall possess it of its being in remembrance. The heavenly inheritance is not the earthly land, confined to the few; it is the invisible world of perfect bliss, broken down by Christ's death. If Gentiles may come in and participate in the privileges of that era, whosoever a passage to heaven from all the descents of human conditions for, remember, many send are on their way to glory.

And by what means does our Jesus, our King, effect his purpose of leading many of children the day? The answer is, by all the instructions of men, with he has communicated to us, but especially by the mediation of His, who is constituted to be, as our text expresses it, the lighthouse of our salvation. God appears to do nothing immediately with man. He carries on all his transactions with us through the faculties of our interest faculties on the opportunities of means. He affords us, through the tremendous instrumentality of being inferior to himself. But it is principally by the mediation of J. C. that God can...
to us the most valuable blessings. He became the captain of our salvation, enmasse as He confronts all the dangers, and endures all the toils to work成效 in executing the ministry of reconciliation, in spreading the light of divine truth, and unfolding the purposes of the Most High. He tried the nine years and led the way to purgation to the gates of heaven. When God brought the Israelites to the land of promise, He placed them under the guidance of Joshua; and when He would bring thousands, and thousands of sinners to glory, He puts them under the conduct of the Lord Jesus. Then they are often said to be given to him by the Father. They are given to him, not that he may receive benefit from them, but that they may receive benefit from him. He is the captain of our salvation, because He was appointed by God to rescue us from the dominion of sin, by imparting to our minds the instructions of divine wisdom, and setting before us all the generous encouraging and solemn motives of the God; because it is under his banners alone that we can secure the victory over our passions, and march on in the faith and course to the city of our God.

The Apostle tells us, that it became Him to whom are all things, 

are all things, and by whom are all things, to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through suffering, 

thus he estimates the propriety and necessity of our sufferings. This necessity may be partly accounted for from the very nature of that office and from the execution of it. He was made an office as must have involved him in suffering. He came among a people blinded by prejudice, and full of the most unreasonable and meanest hopes; and his instructions were of such a nature as to wound that prejudice and blast those hopes. As to wound that prejudice and blast those hopes, he entered not into the mind of a Jew, that any but his own nation could be the favorites of heaven. But the religion of Jesus taught them, that the Gentiles were to come with them into a participation of the means of grace, and were equally with themselves to receive th
enlightening beams of divine truth... The Jews had believed that his Messiah would come with the power of the sword, that he would subdue the tumult of their enemies, & make Jerusalem the seat of empire for the world; but Jesus came among them in poverty, without human power; he came to teach, & not to reign; to give them spiritual life, not to lead them to the combat, the victory of arms. When we consider that such was the character of this people, such their feelings, & when we reflect on that their habits of thinking on religious subjects was in direct opposition to the spirit of the ages, we cannot wonder that one day was exposed to so great a suffering, & that he was obliged to endure all that the disappointment of malice could inflict. They were not prepared to receive one who was neither loved nor approved among them, without any regard to worldly distinctions of earthly power. In the very nature of the case, therefore, he must have encountered unceasing contempt.

of suffering...

But there are other reasons, by all we may see, that as the sacred writer intimated, the sufferings of Jesus necessary.

1. They were necessary to develop the glory of the sublimity of our Saviour. What are the scenes which usually call forth all the noble, high, & good qualities of the heart? They are scenes of suffering. Where do you commonly find the grandeur of a great soul displaying itself with most strength & grandeur? It is in the dark hours of adversity. A continued course of prosperity takes away the opportunity, as well as the disposition for the exercise of many virtues. A smooth unpursued stream bears us along so gently, that we become insensible & inattentive; we are blown from one island to another in a luxurious effeminacy, that oozing of the milder virtues. You will find these principles more firmly fixed in dark history, both at Joseph, Job, David, Daniel, & Paul. Were they not all made perfect through sufferings? The picture
would have no beauty or effect without shades. It was the rain cloud that the sun of heaven opened its beautiful, variegated tints; so it is in the dark hour of suffering, that the graces of a heavenly mind shine to most advantage. Suppose we look back through the world smoothly attended with all the terrors of riches, the insignificance of time, how limited would have been his example, how inexpressive the narrative of his life, how uninteresting his character. Suppose the sun of man, instead of having no place, where he might lay his head, had lived like a king in his palace overawing with counsels, where there would have been that sublimity of soul, that manifestation or exert of godlike in the midst of suffering? What does our Lord do? He is the Son of God, the Son of God. He is crucified. Where did he first proclaim his gospel? He was crucified. What is the language of saints in heaven? Worthy is the Lamb that was slain. But it is unnecessary to go on with the quotations. The history of his life is full of them, and thus it appears, that the sufferings of the Son were the means of displaying his glory. Of procuring for him eternal honor. What are the sufferings of the Son, they were unnecessary?
to this life for that cheerful prophet, as it now offers
to them... Doth then ask, sir, how am I to carry this
How can I endure it one of my chief blessings? What depar
tions are there except towards God who is the author of
this trouble? Is it towards man, who is the instrument of
it? Am I forbidden to feel as well as to murmur?
Must I indulge no desire, is use no means of relief?
by, anxious enquiring; contemplate Him, who suffered
for us, bearing us as an example, that we should follow
his steps. See him enduring every indignity; but after
he was revealed, he revealed not again; when he suffer
ed, he threatened not; but committed himself to
Him who judgeth righteously. Do you not hear
him praying for his murderers... Father forgive them, for
they knew not what they did... And his language in
the garden is, Father, if it be possible, let this cup
pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou
wilt... In all this he does not commit doubted as
guide: how we none of them high flour, substantial
expressions, on a grander philosophy has often placed
in the months of its horrors. He affords us insens-
ibility to pain, no indifference to suffering, no
humanity with all its natural feelings; nor those
feelings are held under the empire of reason's grace.
All this hides the language — let the same mind
be in you, as was also in Christ Jesus.
All this shows too that the sufferings of Christ
were necessary to fill up the measure of His glorious example.

Another reason for the sufferings of Christ may
be found in the demonstration of His affection
for the divine benevolence. They are indications of His mercy
on the part of God, in which we find redemption.
The display the subject of the Almighty in
our behalf. The bearers that we oppress, under the
sense of guilt, the consciousness of wrong, need some
assistance, that God is ready when their repentance,
to receive them graciously of love them freely; before
they can rise from the dust and look to Thee with
hope and joy. We cannot love God, till God appears love.
We shall never approach Him, till we hope in Him.
When we are hidden away the trees of the garden, whilst
our fear have driven us, it is only the voice of mercy
which can call us forth. It is confidence where can give
us back to God; it is the simple principle of our
restoration, till this be gained, nothing can be ac-
ted. To place himself before us in this excorci-
ing view, to show us in himself all accessible ref-
suge as soon as we feel our dangerous of our misery, to
keep us from turning again to folly by the deepest
conclusion, there is no hope. To scatter all mis-
giving fears, to allure us to himself; and then
Father was pleased to send forth his well-beloved
Son, to exorcise the Messengers of his truth, to the
most cruel persecutors, to the most just sufferings.
What is the inference we may draw from all this?
before you; & see him carrying a cross infinitely heavier, carrying it for you, carrying it without a groan; consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary & faint in your minds.  

If there be an ordinance established in the church as the memorial of his sufferings, should not everyone who desires in truth to be his disciple, thankfully embrace every opportunity of attending it? Such, then, is the institution of the Lord's Supper, of which you are now going to partake;—by these memorials, O Christ, is evidently set forth crucified among you. Why then is this institution so much contorted? Would you have it, it is not because you despise, or his religion slighted. No, Sir; letters the things; I hope among you will be found here to extend to the standard of their Master, to receive in their heart the offering in view of share to God the r, & by these memorials to draw forth the so death will be come in.  

Sept. 1820.
At home, Sept. 30, 1820.—forsom."  
At home, Fri. day lecture, March 13, 1822.