

THOMAS WATSON

Thomas Watson (c. 1620–1686) is a much beloved Puritan minister and author. He studied at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and preached for sixteen years at St. Stephen's, Walbrook, London. When the Civil War brought in the Commonwealth, Watson's loyalty to the Stuart monarchy resulted in his imprisonment with his fellow Presbyterian ministers, Christopher Love and William Jenkyn. After the Restoration, Watson was one of many Puritan pastors ejected from their pulpits in 1662. However, he continued to preach in secret and ministered the gospel among those afflicted by the Great Fire of London (1666). After some years of serving alongside Stephen Charnock, Watson retired to Essex, where he died while engaged in private prayer.

Watson's writings are marked by a solidity of biblical doctrine, warmth of spirituality, and skill in the use of brief but engaging illustrations. He is most famous for his *Body of Divinity*, a series of 176 sermons on the Westminster Shorter Catechism, now published in three volumes.

The Day of Judgment Asserted

“Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

—ACTS 17:31

When Paul perceived the idolatry at Athens, “his spirit was stirred in him” (v. 16). His spirit was soured and embittered in him. Paul was bitter against sin; that anger is without sin which is against sin. Or, the word may signify, he was in a burning fit of zeal. Zeal is such a passion that cannot be either dissembled or pent up; with this fire he discharged against their idolatry. “Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I

passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD" (vv. 22–23). The apostle does not only declaim against the false god, but also declares to them the true God. And he does it from the effect: that "God that made the world and all things therein...is Lord of heaven and earth" (v. 24). To create is the best demonstration of a deity. This God, being everywhere by way of repletion, cannot be locally confined. He "dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (v. 24). Though in former times, when the veil of ignorance was drawn over the face of the world, God seemed less severe—"The times of this ignorance God winked at"—though He did "overlook" them by not taking the extremity of the law, yet "now He commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (v. 30). And if it is asked, "Why *now* repent? Why may we not take our full sleep?" the reason is because *now* is the broad daylight of the gospel, which, as it

reveals sin more clearly, so it more clearly reveals judgment upon sinners: "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world."

These words are God's alarm to the world to awaken it out of security. This is a sweet yet dreadful point. When Paul spoke of judgment to come, Felix trembled (24:25). He who is not affected with this truth has a heart of stone.

For the illustration of this, there are six things I shall discuss:

1. There will be a day of judgment.
2. Why there must be a day of judgment.
3. When the day of judgment will be.
4. Who will be the Judge.
5. The order and the method of the trial.
6. The consequences of it.

There will be a Day of Judgment

There is a twofold day of judgment:

A particular judgment. At the day of death, immediately upon the soul's dissolution

from the body, it has a judgment passed upon it (Heb. 9:27). "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7). As soon as the breath expires, the soul receives its particular sentence and knows how it will spend all eternity.

There is a general day of judgment, which is the great judgment, when the world shall be gathered together. This is how the text is to be understood: "He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world." I could give you a whole jury of scriptures giving their verdict to this, but in the mouth of two or three witnesses the truth will be confirmed. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl. 12:14). "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36). *Now* is the day of arrears; *then* will be the day of account. "For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth"

(Ps. 96:13). The repetition denotes the certainty and infallibility of His coming.

Why there must be a Day of Judgment

That God may execute justice on the wicked. Things seem to be carried here in the world with an unequal balance. The “candle of God shines upon” the wicked (Job 29:3); “they that tempt God are even delivered” (Mal. 3:15). Diogenes, seeing the thief Harpalus go on prosperously, said that surely God had cast off the government of the world and did not mind how things went here below. “There shall come in the last days scoffers...saying, Where is the promise of his coming” (2 Pet. 3:3–4)? Therefore, God will have a day of judgment to vindicate His justice. He will let sinners know that long forbearance is no forgiveness.

That God may exercise mercy to the godly. Here they who prayed and wept had the hardest measure. Those Christians whose zeal flamed most met with the fiery trial.

“For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter” (Rom. 8:36). “The saints,” said Cyprian, “are put in the winepress, and oft the blood of these grapes is pressed out.” God will therefore have a day of judgment that He may reward all the tears and sufferings of His people. They shall have their crown and throne and white robes (Rev. 7:9); though they may be losers for Him, they shall lose nothing by Him.

When the Day of Judgment shall Be

It is certain there shall be a judgment; it is uncertain when. The angels do not know the day, nor did Christ either as He was a man (Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:32). What is the reason why the time is not known?

That we may not be curious. There are some things which God would have us be ignorant of. “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power” (Acts 1:7). We must not pry into God’s ark or meddle

with His secrets of government. As Sal-
vian said, "It is a kind of sacrilege for any
man to break into the Holy of Holies and
enter into God's secrets."

That we may not be careless. We are always
to keep watch, having our loins girded
and our lamps burning, not knowing how
soon that day may overtake us. Augustine
said, "God would have us live every day as
if the last day were approaching."

Believe that every morning's ray
Hath lighted up thy latest day.

This is the genuine use which our
Savior makes of it. "Of that day and that
hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels
which are in heaven.... Take ye heed,
watch and pray: for ye know not when
the time is" (Mark 13:32–33).

But though we cannot know precisely
when this day of the Lord shall be, yet
in probability the time cannot be far off.
"He that shall come will come, and will
not tarry" (Heb. 10:37). Chrysostom had a

simile: "When we see an old man going on crutches, his joints weak, his radical moisture dried up; though we do not know the just time when he will die, yet it is sure he cannot live long because nature's stock is spent. So the world is decrepit and goes, as it were, upon crutches. Therefore it cannot be long before the world's funerals, and the birthday of judgment."

The age which John wrote in was "the last time" (1 John 2:18). In the Greek it is "the last hour." Surely, then, the time we now live in may be called "the last minute." "For he cometh to judge the earth" (Ps. 96:13). It is not "He shall come," but "He cometh," to show how near the time is. It is almost daybreak and the court is ready to sit. "The judge standeth before the door" (James 5:9).

If security, apostasy, decay of love, inundation of sin, and revelation of the Antichrist are in Scripture the symptoms that characterize the last day, we, having

these gray hairs among us, know that the day of judgment cannot be far off.

Who will be the Judge?

I answer, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus it is in the text: "He will judge the world by that man whom he hath ordained," that man who is God-man. We must take heed of judging others; this is Christ's work. "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22). He once had a reed put into His hand, but His Father will now put a scepter into His hand. He who had a purple robe put upon Him in derision shall come in His judge's robes. He who hung upon the cross shall sit upon the bench.

Christ has are two eminent qualifications to be a judge. *First, His prudence and intelligence can understand every case brought before Him.* He is described with seven eyes in Zechariah 3:9, to note His omniscience. He is like Ezekiel's wheels, full of eyes (Ezek. 10:12). Christ is a heart-searcher.

He not only judges the fact but the heart, which no angel can do.

Second, He has strength whereby He is able to be avenged upon His enemies. Christ is armed with sovereignty; therefore, the seven eyes are said to be upon one stone (Zech. 3:9), to denote the infinite strength of Christ. And He is described with seven horns (Rev. 5:6). As Christ has an eye to see, so He has a horn to push; as He has His balance, so He has His sword; as He has His fan and His sieve, so He has His lake of fire (Rev. 20:10).

The Order and Method of the Trial

The summons to the court: by the sounding of the trumpet. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (1 Thess. 4:16). Jerome said that whatever he was doing, he thought he heard the noise of the trumpet sounding in his ears. "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." Note the shrillness of the

trumpet. It shall sound so loud that the dead shall hear it. And also note the efficacy of the trumpet. It shall not only startle the dead but raise them out of their graves (Matt. 24:31). They who will not hear the trumpet of the ministry sounding but lie dead in sin shall be sure to hear the trumpet of the archangel sounding.

The manner of the Judge's coming to the bench. Christ's coming to judgment will be glorious yet dreadful. It will be glorious to the godly; the apostle calls it "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). Christ's Person shall be glorious. At His first coming in the flesh, His glory was veiled (Isa. 53:2-3); all who saw the man did not see the Messiah. But His Second Coming will be very illustrious and resplendent. He shall "come in the glory of his Father" (Mark 8:38). He will wear the same embroidered robes of majesty as His Father.

Christ's attendants shall be glorious. He "shall come with all his holy angels"

(Matt. 25:31). These sublime, seraphic spirits, who for their luster are compared to lightning (Matt. 28:3), are Christ's satellites, part of His train. He who was led to the cross with a band of soldiers shall be attended at the bench with a guard of angels.

Christ's coming to judgment will be dreadful to the wicked. At the coming of this Judge, there will be a fire burning around Him. He "shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:7-8). When God gave His law upon the mount, "there were thunders and lightnings...and Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire" (Ex. 19:16-18). "If God was so terrible at the giving of the law, O how terrible will He be when He comes to require His law?" said Augustine.

The process of the trial itself. Observe the

universality, the formality, and the circumstances of the trial.

- The universality of the trial. It will be very great in size; never was the like seen. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:10). Kings and nobles, councils and armies, those who were above all trial here, have no charter of exemption granted them. They must appear before Christ's tribunal and be tried for their lives. Neither power nor policy can be a subterfuge. They who refused to come to the throne of grace shall be forced to come to the bar of justice. And the dead as well as the living must make their appearance. "I saw the dead, both small and great, stand before God" (Rev. 20:12). We do not usually cite men in our courts when they are dead, but at that day the dead are called to the bar—not only men but angels. "The angels

which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6).

- The formality of the trial, which consists in the opening of the books. "The judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Dan. 7:10; Rev. 20:12). There are two books that will be opened: first, the book of God's omniscience. God not only observes but registers all our actions. "Thou numberest my steps" (Job 14:16). The word there "to number" signifies to put a thing into a book. It is as if Job had said, "Lord, Thou keepest Thy daybook and enterest down all my actions into the book." We read of God's book of remembrance (Mal. 3:16). This book will be produced at the last day. Second, the book of conscience. Let there never be so much

written in a book, yet, if it is clasped, it is not seen. Men have their sins written in their conscience, but the book is clasped (the searing of the conscience is the clasping of the book). When this book of conscience shall be unclasped at the great day, all their hypocrisy, treason, and atheism shall appear to the view of men and angels (Luke 12:3). The sins of men shall be written upon their forehead as with a pen of iron.

- The circumstances of the trial. Consider four things: the impartiality, the exactness, the perspicuity, and the supremacy. First, the impartiality of the trial. Jesus Christ will do every man justice. He will, as the text says, “judge the world in righteousness.” It will be a day of equitable judgment; justice holds the scales. The Thebans pictured their judges as being blind and without hands—blind, that

they might not respect persons, and without hands, that they might take no bribes. Christ's scepter is a scepter of righteousness (Heb. 1:8). He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). It is not nearness of blood that prevails; many of Christ's kindred will be condemned. It is not gloriousness of profession; many will go to hell with Christ in their mouths. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" (Matt. 7:22). Yet, though they cast out devils, they are cast out to the devil. It is not the varnish of a picture that a judicious eye is taken with, but the curiousness of the work. It is not the most shining profession which Christ is taken with, unless He sees the curious workmanship of grace in the heart drawn by the

pencil of the Holy Spirit. Things are not carried there by parties "but in a most just balance." Christ has true weights for false hearts. There are no fees taken in that court. The judge will not be bribed with a hypocritical tear or a Judas kiss.

Second, the exactness of the trial. Christ will thoroughly purge His floor (Matt. 3:12). No grace or sin will remain undiscovered. At the day of judgment, Christ will make a heart anatomy as the surgeon makes a dissection in the body and evaluates several body parts, or as the goldsmith brings his gold to the touchstone and pierces his gold through to see if it is right and genuine, and whether there is not a baser metal within. Thus the Lord Jesus, whose eyes are as a flame of fire (Rev. 1:14), will pierce through the hearts of men and see if there is the right metal within, having the image and

superscription of God upon it. Paint falls off in the fire. The hypocrite's paint will fall off at the fiery trial. Nothing then will stand for us but sincerity.

Third, the perspicuity of the trial. Sinners shall be so clearly convicted that they will hold up their hand at the bar and cry, "Guilty." Those words of David may be fitly applied here: "That thou mightest be clear when thou judgest" (Ps. 51:4). The sinner himself shall clear God of injustice. The Greek word for vengeance signifies "justice." God's taking vengeance is doing justice. Sin makes God angry, but it cannot make Him unrighteous. The wicked shall drink a sea of wrath without one drop of injustice. Christ will say, "Sinner, what apology can you make for yourself? Are not your sins written in the book of conscience? Did you not have that book in your own

keeping? Who could have added anything into it?" The sinner, being self-condemned, will clear his Judge: "Lord, though I am condemned, yet I have no wrong done me. Thou art clear when Thou judgest."

Lastly, the supremacy of the court. This is the highest court of judicature; from this court there is no appeal. He who is doomed here finds his condition irreversible.

The Consequences of the Trial

Segregation. Christ will separate the godly and the wicked. "He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:32). It will be a great day of separation. It is a great grief to the godly in this life that they live among the wicked. "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Meshech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar" (Ps. 120:5). Wicked men blaspheme God (Ps. 74:18), and persecute the saints (2 Tim. 3:12). They are

compared to dogs (Ps. 22:16), to bulls (Ps. 68:30), and to lions (Ps. 57:4). They roar upon the godly and tear them as their prey. Cain kills, Ishmael mocks, Shimei rails. The godly and the wicked are now promiscuously mingled together (Matt. 13:30), and this is as offensive as tying a dead man to a living. But Christ will before long make a separation, as the fan separates the wheat from the chaff, as a furnace separates the gold from the dross, or as a fine sieve strains the spirit from the dregs. Christ will separate the sheep who have the earmark of election upon them from the goats by themselves.

The sentence. First, the sentence of absolution pronounced upon the godly. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34). After the pronouncing of this blessed sentence, the godly will go from the bar and sit on the bench with Christ. "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world" (1 Cor. 6:2)?

The saints shall be with Christ's assessors; they shall sit with Him in judicature as the justices of peace sit with the judge. They shall vote with Christ and applaud Him in all His judicial proceedings. Here the world judges the saints, but there the saints shall judge the world.

Second, the sentence of condemnation pronounced upon the wicked. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). I may allude to James 3:10: "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing." Out of the same mouth of Christ proceeds blessing to the godly and cursing to the wicked. The same wind which brings one ship to the haven blows another ship upon the rock.

"Depart from me." The wicked once said to God, "Depart." "They say unto God, Depart from us" (Job 21:14). And now God will say to them, "Depart from Me." This will be a heart-rending word. Chrysostom said, "This word 'depart!' is worse than the

fire." "Depart from me, in whose presence is fullness of joy" (Ps. 16:11).

Third, after this sentence follows the execution. "Bind the tares in bundles to burn them" (Matt. 13:30). Christ will say, "Bundle up these sinners. Here are a bundle of hypocrites, there a bundle of apostates, there a bundle of profane persons. Bind them up and throw them in the fire." And no cries or entreaties will prevail with the Judge. He who would not weep for his sins must burn for them.

It is "everlasting fire." The three men were thrown into the fire, but they did not stay in long. "Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came forth of the midst of the fire" (Dan. 3:26). But the fire of condemnation is everlasting fire. This word "ever" breaks the heart. No length of time can terminate it;

a sea of tears cannot quench it. The wrath of God is the fire and the breath of God the bellows to blow it up to all eternity. Oh, how dreadfully tormenting will this fire be! To endure it will be intolerable; to avoid it will be impossible.

Applications

Of Persuasion

Let me persuade all Christians to believe the truth that there will be a day of judgment. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment" (Eccl. 11:9). This is a great article of our faith, that Christ shall come to judge the quick and the dead. Yet how many live as if this article were blotted out of their creed? We have too many epicureans and atheists who drown themselves in sensual delights and live as if they did not believe either in

God or the day of judgment. Some deny the immortality of the soul; others hold there is no hell. I have read of one who was so infatuated that he did not believe either God or the devil. But would men dare swear, be unchaste, or live in malice if they believed in a day of judgment? Mingle this text with your faith. "The Lord hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world." There must be such a day. Not only does Scripture assert it, but reason confirms it. There is no kingdom or nation in the world without courts of justice; shall not God, who sets up all other courts, be allowed His? That there will be a day of judgment is engrafted by nature in the consciences of men. Peter Martyr tells us that some of the heathen poets wrote of certain judges appointed to examine and punish offenders after this life.

Of Information

See here the sad and deplorable estate of wicked men. This text is as the handwriting

on the wall which may make their “knees to smite one against another” (Dan. 5:6). The wicked shall come to judgment, but they “shall not stand in the judgment” (Ps. 1:5). In the Hebrew, it means they will not rise up. God will be decked with glory and majesty, His face as the appearance of lightning, His eyes as lamps of fire, with a sword of justice in His hand, and He will call the sinner by name and say, “Stand forth. Answer to the charge that is brought against you. What can you say for your pride, oaths, drunkenness? These sins you have been told of by My ministers whom I sent rising up early and going to bed late; but you persisted in your wickedness with a neck of iron, a brow of brass, and a heart of stone. All the tools which I worked with were broken and worn out upon your rocky spirit. What can you say for yourself that the sentence should not be passed?”

Oh, how amazed and confused will the sinner be! He will be found speechless; he

will not be able to look his Judge in the face. "What then shall I do when God riseth up? And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him" (Job 31:14)? Oh, sinner, you who can now confront your minister and your godly parents when they tell you of sin; but you will not be able to confront your Judge. When God rises up, the sinner's countenance will be fallen.

All the world is God's, and shortly He is coming and will call men to account. When God shall visit, how shall the impure soul be able to answer Him? "Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear" (1 Pet. 4:18)? You who die in your sin are sure to be cast at the bar. "He that believeth not is condemned already" (John 3:18). That is, he is as sure to be condemned as if he were condemned already. And once the sentence of damnation is passed, miserable man, what will you do? Where will you go? Will you seek help from God? He is a consuming fire. Will you seek help from the world? It will be all on fire

about you. From the saints? You derided them on earth. From the good angels? They defy you as God's enemy. From the bad angels? They are your executioners. From your conscience? That is the worm that gnaws. From mercy? The lease is run out. Oh, the horror and hellish despair which will seize upon sinners at that day! Imagine the sad convulsions! Their heads will hang down, their cheeks will blush, their lips will quiver, their hands will shake, their conscience will roar, and their heart will tremble. What stupefying medicine has the devil given to men that they are insensible of the danger they are in? The cares of the world have so filled their heads and the profits of it have so bewitched their hearts that they mind neither death nor judgment.

Of Exhortation

Possess yourselves with the thoughts of the day of judgment. Think of the solemnity and impartiality of this court.

Feathers swim upon the water; gold sinks into it. Light, feathery spirits float in vanity, but serious Christians sink deep in the thoughts of judgment. Many people are like quicksilver; they cannot be made to fix. If the ship is not well ballasted, it will soon overturn. The reason why so many are overturned with the vanities of the world is that they are not well ballasted with the thoughts of the day of judgment. Were a man to be tried for his life, he would think to himself of all the arguments he could to plead in his own defense. We are all shortly to be tried for our souls. While others are thinking how they may grow rich, let us think to ourselves how we may abide the day of Christ's coming.

The serious thoughts of judgment would curb us from sin ("Am I stealing the forbidden fruit and the judgment so near?") and spur us to holiness. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements

shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" (2 Pet. 3:10–11)?

Let us solemnly prepare ourselves for this last and great trial by setting up a judgment seat in our own souls. It is wisdom to bring our souls first to trial. "Let us search and try our ways" (Lam. 3:40). Let us judge ourselves according to the rule of the Word and let conscience bring in the verdict. The Word of God describes the man who will be absolved at the judgment seat and who is sure to go to heaven. Consider his:

- Humility. The Lord "shall save the humble person" (Job 22:29). Let your conscience bring in the verdict. Christian, are you humble—not only humbled, but humble? Do you esteem others better than yourself

(Phil. 2:3)? Do you cover your duties with the veil of humility, as Moses put a veil on his face when it shone?

- Love to the saints. “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren” (1 John 3:14). Love makes us like God; it is the root of all the graces. Does conscience witness this for you? Are you perfumed with this sweet spice of love? Do you delight in those who have the image of God? Do you reverence their graces? Do you bear with their infirmities? Do you love to see Christ’s picture in a saint, though hung in so poor a frame? This is a good sign that you will pass at the day of judgment.
- Penitential frame of heart. “Repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18). Repentance unravels sin. “In those days the iniquity of Israel shall be

sought for, and there shall be none” (Jer. 50:20). A great ball of snow is melted and washed away with the rain; great sins are washed away by holy tears. Can your conscience bring in such evidence for you? Do you tune the penitential string? Ambrose asked, “You who have sinned with Peter, do you weep with Peter?” And do your tears drop from the eye of faith? This is a blessed sign that you are judgment-proof, and that when your iniquities shall be sought at the last day they shall not be found.

- Equity in his dealings. “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands” (Ps. 24:3–4). Injustice sullies and defiles the hand. What does your conscience say? Is your hand clean? It is a vain thing to hold the Bible in one hand and false weights in the other.

Beloved, if conscience passes the verdict for us, it is a blessed sign that we shall lift up our heads with boldness at the last day. Conscience is God's echo in the soul. The voice of conscience is the voice of God, and if conscience, upon an impartial trial, acquits us, God will acquit us. "If our heart condemns us not, then have we confidence toward God" (1 John 3:21). If we are absolved in the lower court of conscience, we are sure to be absolved at the last day in the high court of justice. It would be a sweet thing for a Christian thus to bring himself to a trial. Seneca tells us of a Roman who every day called himself to account: "What infirmity is healed? How have you grown better?" Then he would lie down at night with these words: "Oh, how sweet and refreshing is my sleep to me!"

Of Consolation

Here is a fountain of consolation opened to a believer. First, comfort is found in

case of discouraging fear. "I fear my grace is not invincible armor. I fear the cause will go against me at the last day." Indeed, so it would if you were out of Christ. But as in our courtrooms the client has his attorney or advocate to plead for him, so every believer, by virtue of the interest he has in Christ, has Christ to plead his cause for him. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). What if Satan is the accuser if Christ is the Advocate? Christ never lost any cause that He pleaded. His very pleading alters the nature of the cause. Christ will show the debt book crossed out with His own blood. It is no matter what is charged if all is discharged. Here is a believer's comfort: his Judge will be his Advocate.

Second, there is comfort with regard to weakness of grace. A Christian, seeing his grace is so defective, is ready to be discouraged. But at the day of judgment, if Christ finds but a small coin of sincerity, it shall

be accepted. If yours is true gold, though it may be light, Christ will put His merits into the scales and make it sufficient. He who has no sin of allowance shall have grains of allowance. I may allude to Amos 9:9, "Yet shall not the least grain fall to the earth." He who has but a grain for grace, not the least grain shall fall to hell.

Third, comfort is found for censure and slander. The saints go "through evil report and a good report" (2 Cor. 6:8). John the Baptist's head on a platter is a common dish nowadays. It is ordinary to bring in a saint beheaded of his good name. But at the day of judgment, Christ will unload His people of all their injuries. He will vindicate them from all their calamities. Christ will be the saint's character witness. He, at that day, will present His church "not having spot or wrinkle" (Eph. 5:27).