

any generation and derived from him no sin, no pollution whatever. Before His conception in the womb the angel of the Lord announced to His virgin mother the holiness of His nature and said unto her: "The Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore, also, that Holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." But—

1. His life was perfectly holy and a perfect pattern of every grace that could adorn humanity. "He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." "For such an high priest became Him who is holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." However depressed His person was with a load of humble accidents and shadowed with the darkness of poverty and reproach, so that the Jews, not excepting even His apostles, could not at first discover the brightest essence of His divinity, yet such was the holiness of His life that it shone conspicuously in the greatest darkness and found confessors and admirers among his very enemies. Thus the wife of Pilate called Him "that just person." Pilate himself pronounced Him guiltless at the same time that, from a wicked heart and the desire of a lawless multitude, he was about to pass the sentence of His crucifixion. Judas the traitor declared Him innocent, and the very Devil, whose works he came to destroy, styled Him "the Holy One of God." His love toward mankind made Him leave the mansions of glory, where in the bosom of the Father He was exalted from all eternity at an infinite distance from all sin, and where the happiness or misery of men could neither augment nor diminish His essential glory and felicity. But such was His condescension that, in the fullness of time, He came into our world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He veiled His divinity, tabernacled upon earth, and preferred fallen man to rebellious angels. Love was the principle of all His actions, the life and soul of His conversation. In all He did or spoke He made some new discovery of His love to the world. The history of His whole life abounds with the expressions of a most sweet and loving temper. He went about doing good and distributing the choicest blessings. His career was one continued act of charity and beneficence. Although from before the foundation of the world He was holy, wise and happy in and through Himself, and had no need of our imperfect service, yet in obedience to His Father's will He came to fulfill all righteousness, voluntarily offering Himself to pay the penalty of the law. As it is written: "Himself took our infirmities and bore our distresses. For we have not an High Priest which can not be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but was in all things tempted as we are, yet without sin."

2. One would imagine that, when Jesus left the mansions of glory to procure the pardon and salvation of sinners, everything would conspire to render the prosecution of so benevolent a design successful. So far from this, however, almost everything conspired to render Him "a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs." Kings of the earth sate themselves and rulers took counsel against the Lord and His anointed. He was persecuted from place to place, as though the vilest of criminals. If we take a survey of the whole course of His life, we will find it to be one constant scene of suffering from the manger of Bethlehem to the cross of Calvary. He at whose nativity the angels sang praises to God and proclaimed "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men," received no accommodations but a stable, no cradle but a manger. "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay His head." "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." The Jews expected a Savior, but mistook