

Accompany him to Calvary. See him suspended there; his weight depending from the outstretched arms; his hands and feet pierced with the nails; and left to linger out an ignominious and a torturing death! The same conflict is renewed here: the same agony is repeated: and words still more significant than those which fell from him in the garden break from his lips: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

These sufferings were all comprehended in that hour to which Christ was looking forward, and he was anticipating them when he said: "Father, the hour is come!"

But, again, this was the hour of sin's expiation.—What an importance surrounds this hour when considered in this point of view! It was the hour when that sacrifice was to be offered, appointed in eternity, and by which God's justice was to be satisfied, his law was to be magnified, its penalty borne, and sin for ever taken away: that mysterious oblation for which all the minute and cumbrous ritual of the olden dispensation was but preparatory, which was to have an efficacy that the blood of bulls and of goats could not possess, but which itself should make complete atonement for sin. It was the hour on which the hopes of every believer from the first were suspended, and to which still every believer looks back, as to the hour of his own destiny, the crisis of his salvation. This was the hour which God had prepared in his eternal counsels, on which his regards were fixed from everlasting, in which was the most glorious exhibition of his perfections ever made, and angels found opportunity for their exalted faculties, ministering to the great sufferer, and admiring the depths of the Divine holiness and justice, the heights of the Divine love, seen in this transaction beyond any thing which had hitherto solicited their contemplation. This great work had been delayed till now. It had a retrospective effect, so that those who were able to see the day of Christ afar off, and to believe in him, were saved. But its accomplishment had been delayed till now. It may be, it formed the key stone of time. Perhaps, it occupied the very central place in this world's history. It was the hour, at all events, on which hung the world's destiny. Now the blood of remission was to flow: now the wrath of God was to be appeased: now those expiatory sufferings were to be endured, which should for ever take away the guilt of the world, and be a ground for every sinner to return to God. Christ was about to be lifted up. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." The great propitiation was to be set forth. The Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world was now to bow under the sacrificial stroke. The priest, the altar, and the victim were alike prepared. It was "the fulness of time." The hour was come! How did Christ anticipate this hour! How did he set his face to go up to Jerusalem! How was he straitened till his baptism or death was accomplished! And now, how does he turn to his Father, and holding sublime communion with him, the Son of God on earth communing with his Father in heaven, does he say: "Father, the hour is come!"

But, lastly, this was the hour in which God was to be glorified.—Christ prays: "Father, the hour is come! glorify thy Son that *thy Son also may glorify thee*."—Christ was now to glorify God by his sufferings and death. But why should Christ's sufferings and death glorify God? Has God pleasure in suffering? Can he be glorified in the suffering of any one? Surely not. God was glorified in Christ's sufferings because sin was punished. God is not glorified even by the punishment of sin in itself considered. He is no vindictive being to glory in punishment for itself. But he is a righte-