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SERMONS AND TRACTS OF JOHN GILL
GOD AND GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

**Jehovah's Prerogative, And His Alone,
To Put Away The Sins Of His People**

2 SAMUEL 12:13

by John Gill

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*Thou hast given a standard to them that fear thee;
that it may be displayed because of the truth*

— Psalm 60:4

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SERMON 6

JEHOVAH'S PREROGATIVE AND HIS ALONE TO PUT AWAY THE SINS OF HIS PEOPLE

~~<1023>~~ 2 SAMUEL 12:13

—And Nathan said unto David, the Lord also hath put away thy Sin; thou shall not die.

In the preceding chapter we have an account of the sin of David, which is here recited. I need not name it, it is too well known; and from which we may learn, what men, the best of men are, when left to themselves the Lord's people, not only before conversion, but even after they are called by grace, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious. What awful instances are Noah, Lot, Peter, and others. O how sinful is the heart of man, how deep the iniquity in it! What wickedness is there! If even a good man is left to himself, what will he not do?

Now, such examples as these are recorded, not for our imitation, but for our caution and from hence we learn this useful lesson,

Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall
(~~<4002>~~ 1 Corinthians 10:12).

And, moreover, these things stand upon record for the comfort and relief of such who have backslidden, fallen into great sins, and are brought to true repentance for them, such need not despair of the grace and mercy of God; for the sin of David, notorious as it was, and though attended with such dreadful aggravations, yet, according to the message brought him in our text, God put it away, that he should not die.

David for a considerable time, as it appears, was under great stupidity of mind; quite insensible of the evil he had committed; did not appear to have any remorse of conscience, or at least, not to be humbled before God for his sin, and make an acknowledgment of it, or discover any true repentance for it, not for a year, or thereabouts, as is plain from the history; but God will not suffer sin to lay upon any of his people, and especially not upon

such an eminent servant as David was, unrebuked, without taking notice of it. The Lord will rebuke man for his iniquity some way or other; either by impressing a sense of guilt upon his conscience, by some awakening providence, or by the ministry of the word, or by sending his servants to reprove for it, and convince of it; which was the case here. He sent Nathan the prophet: one whom David was familiar with, and who had been brought up in his court; a very proper person to be a messenger to him; a man that knew how to speak to a king, and address him in a decent and becoming manner; as appears from the context. He does not take upon him to speak in an abrupt, or use him in a rough way; but by a fable, an apologue or parable, leads him into the nature of his sin, and fulfils the message that God had sent him with. He delivers out a parable unto him, concerning two men in one city; a rich man and a poor man. The rich man had many flocks and herds; the poor man had but one ewe lamb. A traveler came to the rich man's house, and he thought fit to entertain him; but instead of taking a lamb or kid out of his own flock, he takes the poor man's lamb, and dresses that for his guest. So Nathan represents the case to David; who was so enraged, that this man should behave in such a manner, that he at once pronounces him worthy of death; *As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing, shall surely die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold:* upon which Nathan says to him boldly, *Thou art the man.* Thou art the man that hast done this, or what is equivalent unto it: and then sets forth his sin in its proper colors; threatens, in the name of God, what should be done to him; that the sword should not depart from his house, because he had shed innocent blood; that one of his own family, a son, should rise up and ravish his wives and his concubines. David was then smote to the heart, and cried out, as in the former part of the verse, *I have sinned against the Lord.* "I own my sin, acknowledge it, and repent of it. I am sorry for it." It is but a short confession that he here makes, but it was a full one; attended with brokenness of heart, contrition of soul, real contrition and sincere repentance; as it is plain from the fifty-first Psalm, that penitential Psalm, which was penned on this occasion. Nathan, who was thoroughly satisfied with the genuineness of David's repentance, being under the impulse of the Divine Spirit, and directed by the Lord, then said unto David, *The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die. He hath put away thy sin;* he will not impute it to thee, or place it to thy account: he will not charge thee with it, or punish thee with death, though thou deservest to die. *Thou shalt not die,* either a bodily, spiritual, or eternal death. It is as much as if he had said to him, *Thy sin is forgiven*

thee. He had authority from God to say this to him for his comfort, under the conviction and distress of mind which he now was fallen into. So sometimes God makes use of a gospel minister for the declaring of pardoning grace and mercy to his people. We have an instance of this in the sixth chapter of Isaiah; when the prophet, sensible of his iniquity, confessed it. with a great deal of concern and trouble; and, perhaps, in some sort of despondency, said,

Woe is me, for I am undone! I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts (^{230B}Isaiah 6:5).

Now to relieve the prophet, under a sense of his impurity and the consequences of it, one of the Seraphim (who may be considered as an emblem of a gospel minister), flew to the altar, and took a live coal from thence (an emblem of the sacrifice which our Lord Jesus Christ has made for sin), and applied it unto the lips of the prophet, saying, *Thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged*. Thus gospel ministers are made use of, in the hand of the blessed Spirit, for the relief of his people under a sense of sin, to direct them to the pardoning grace and mercy of God to sinners.

It is the will and pleasure of Jehovah, that when his dear children are distressed on account of sin, that they should be comforted; and the ministers of Christ are charged to do this.

Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, to her very heart, and cry unto her that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins (^{230B}Isaiah 40:2).

In this light, I apprehend, we are to understand the words of the text, from which I observe the following things.

I. That it is the work of God, and his alone, to put away the sin of his people. *The Lord also hath put away thy sin.*

II. That those whose sins are put away by the Lord, shall not die; either a spiritual or eternal death, *The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die.*

I. It is the Lord's work and his alone; it is his act and deed, to put away sin from his people. Of this, they themselves are sensible; and therefore, under

a sense of sin, apply to him for the removal and putting of it away: hence Job says,

I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou Preserver of men?—Why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? (~~8072~~ Job 7:21);

plainly intimating, that no other could pardon and forgive, or take away his sin, but the Lord himself, against whom he had sinned: and hence David, when he was under a strong and full conviction of the sin he had been guilty of, here referred unto, in the fifty-first Psalm, that penitential Psalm penned on this occasion, entreats, that God would

blot out his transgressions, and cleanse him from his sin
(~~8500~~ Psalm 51:1, 2);

which is the same thing as in the text, *putting away his sin from him*. This is the Lord's act, and his only.

And sometimes we may observe, Jehovah puts this plea into the mouths of his people, and encourages them to ask it of him: thus he speaks to backsliding Israel,

Take with you words and turn to the Lord; say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously (~~3840~~ Hosea 14:2).

And the Lord does do so: as he did to Joshua the High Priest, represented as clothed with filthy garments, to whom he said,

I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee; and I will clothe thee with change of raiment (~~3804~~ Zechariah 3:4).

That we may the better understand what is contained in this part of our text, which concerns the act of God in putting away the sin of his people, we shall consider,

1. What that is which is put away. Sin.
2. What is meant by *putting it away*. And then,
3. Shall show that this is *God's act and deed*, and *his only* to put away sin. Nathan the prophet does not take it upon himself: he speaks of it clearly as the act of God, the Lord *hath put away thy sin*.

1. What that is which the Lord puts away from his people, and that is *iniquity*. “The Lord hath put away thy sin.” Sin, which is that abominable thing that he hateth; which he cannot bear the sight of. “He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity (^{<3113>}Habakkuk 1:13): so far is he from taking any delight and pleasure in sin; and therefore to put it away, must be most agreeable to himself. It is loathsome and abominable in the sight of his people; they loath it, and they loath themselves for it: it is what is hateful to them; the things which they do, they hate, as the apostle did (^{<3175>}Romans 7:15). Wherefore, to put away this from them, which is so abominable to God, so loathsome and hateful to themselves, must be a desirable thing; quite agreeable to them.

The Lord has put away thy sin: sin, which sets men at a distance from God. Man was in fellowship with his Maker, and continued so till sin entered; then he was driven out of Eden’s garden, that pleasant spot, and a state of separation from God took place. In this state are all men, by nature; and they must have eternally continued so, they must have been everlastingly separated, and heard that dreadful sentence, *Depart ye cursed, into everlasting fire* (^{<4154>}Matthew 25:41), had not sovereign grace interposed.

Men, even all men, through sin, are in a state of estrangement, alienation and distance from God: even God’s elect themselves, as in a state of nature, are so; but they are reconciled, made nigh by the blood of Christ, and brought into open and near communion with God, through the power of divine grace upon them. And yet, even those who are brought into such nearness, and have communion with him, may, through sin, be set at a sort of distance from him; though not separated from him with respect to union and interest; yet with regard to sensible communion and fellowship they may

Your iniquities have separated between you and your God; and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear (^{<2542>}Isaiah 54:2).

Now to have that put away, that whisperer, which separates chief friends, must be a desirable thing by the saints themselves.

The Lord hath put away thy sin. Sin, which is a burden, an heavy burden, too heavy for the saint to bear; he groans under the weight of it: *we groan, being burdened*, says the apostle (^{<4110>}2 Corinthians 5:4). Not he only, and

other ministers of the word but all the people of God in common. They groan under the weight of indwelling sin: especially when it breaks forth into practice in any open way and manner. Then do the iniquities of God's people pass over their heads as an heavy burden, too heavy for them to bear. This produces distress of soul, and inward confusion; such as is intolerable, without discoveries of pardoning grace and mercy; for *a wounded spirit who can bear?* Now to have sin put away, which is the cause of all this, must be a very desirable thing.

Sin is the cause of all soul sorrow and distress to God's people, as it was to David. It was the occasion of the breaking of his bones, and by reason of this he had no rest; no soundness in his flesh, because of his sin (^{}Psalm 38:3). His loins were filled with a loathsome disease, and he was in great distress of soul on that account; which makes even the most holy man upon earth to say,

O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? (^{}Romans 8:24).

Now to have sin, the cause of all soul sorrow and distress, put away, is a desirable thing.

“The Lord hath put away *thy* Sin.” The sin which he had been guilty of and which was only chargeable upon himself, was not to be attributed to God, who had suffered it, or to Satan, who had tempted him to it: for it was his *own sin*; for “every man is drawn aside of his own lust and enticed.” He had no one to charge with it but himself. *Thy* sin, which thou hast owned and acknowledged to be thine, confessed it with sorrow, humiliation, repentance, and contrition: *thy* sin, who hath said, *my sin is ever before me* (^{}Psalm 2:3); *thy* sin the Lord has put away. And all this may, in the first sense, respect the sin he had been guilty of with respect to Uriah; yet it is not to be restrained hereunto, but takes in all other sins. David had an application of pardoning grace and mercy, with respect to all his sins, and therefore he calls upon his soul, and all that is within him, to bless the Lord, who had forgiven him *all* his iniquities (^{}Psalm 102:1,2,3): and indeed, where one sin is forgiven, all are forgiven. God forgives all manner of iniquity for Christ's sake;

and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses from all sin (^{}1 John 1:7).

But,

2. What are we to understand by *putting away sin*? “The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die.”

This is not to be understood of removing sin as to the *being* of it. God does not put away the sin of his people in this sense, in the present state of things. He could do it if he would: that is not to be doubted. He could have dispossessed the Canaanites from the land of Canaan at once; but he chose not to do it: he drove them out by little and little. And he could, at first conversion, clear his people of all those corruptions of nature which are in them; for this he does at death, when this earthly house of their tabernacles is dissolved; this house that is infected with leprosy when the timber and stones are removed, and carried into the grave; all sin is removed, and there is nothing left but the spirits of just men made perfect. I say, he that can do it at death, could do it at first: but that is not his pleasure. No. As he left the Canaanites in the land for wise reasons, so he does the corruptions in the hearts of his people for if there were no corruptions in them, there would be no trial of their faith. Well then, God does not put away sin, the *being* of sin from his people: it dwells in them, it did in an apostle; *sin dwelleth in me* (~~8017~~Romans 7:17).

A most awful soul-deception some are under, who imagine they are free from sin. What will they say to that text which must stare them in the face:

if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (~~8008~~1 John 1:8).

God puts away the sin of his people; but not as to the being of it; no, that continues. There is such a thing as the weakening of the power of sin in them; or there is a putting off the old man, though there is not a putting him away. A putting him off, according to the former conversation, and a putting on the new man, which *after God is created in righteousness and true holiness* (~~8004~~Ephesians 4:24); but then this is their own act, under the influence of the Spirit of grace. They are exhorted to put off the old man, and to mortify the deeds of the body; and, to encourage them, it is said,

If ye through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live (~~8003~~Romans 8:13).

But what I am speaking of, and what our text speaks of, is what is God’s work entirely. The Lord hath put away thy sin. The promise is, *sin shall not have dominion over you* (~~8014~~Romans 6:14); and it is made good: but sometimes sin overcomes them; and it had been so with poor David. It

could not then be said, that the Lord had put away his sin, as to the being of it; for perhaps his lust never was stronger than at that time. He found what the apostle said, to be his own experience (though the apostle never sinned as this good man did). I see

another law in my members warring against the law of my mind,
and brining me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my
members (~~4072~~Romans 7:23).

Poor David, with a witness, was brought into captivity to the law of sin and death, through the prevalence of indwelling corruption. It could not be said of him then, “ the Lord hath,” as a past act, “ put away thy sin;” i.e. as to the being of it, as it never was stronger in him than it had now been.

Nor is this to be understood of the taking away a sense of sin from him. He had been in a strange stupor of mind for many months; insensible of the evil he had been guilty of; but now, awakened with the message of the prophet, attended with the power and Spirit of God, he had such a lively sense of sin as perhaps he never had before. O what a heart-felt sense of it must he have had when he said, *I have sinned!* Now his sin stared him in the face, and his conscience was stung with it: he had a strong sensation of it indeed. Now he “found no rest in his bones because of his sin.” The hand of the Lord pressed his conscience sore in impressing his sin on his mind, which impression was a lasting one.

But this must be understood as a discovery of pardoning grace and mercy to him. The Lord sometimes comes and says to a poor sinner, laboring under a sense of sin,

I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own
sake, and will not remember thy, sins (~~23825~~Isaiah 43:25).

Or, as our Lord Jesus Christ himself said to the man sick of the palsy,

Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee (~~4002~~Matthew 9:2),

to backsliders Jehovah is pleased to say,

I will heal your backslidings (~~2000~~Hosea 4:4).

And sometimes he sends such a message as this by a servant of his, as he did to David by Nathan; *the Lord hath put away thy sin;* that is, he will never charge it upon thee, nor punish thee for it.

Various are the ways the Lord takes to put away the sins of his people: I will just run them over. The first of these is, his determination, and resolution not to impute sin unto them. This was a resolution and determination taken up in his divine mind from everlasting.

God was in Christ reconciling the world (of his chosen people) unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them (~~415B~~ 2 Corinthians 5:19).

It was his determined will, not to impute their trespasses unto them; that is, not to charge them upon them, or place them to their account. And if God will not, who dare say any thing to the charge of God's elect? O happy man, whom the Lord will not charge with sin!

“Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered; blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity” (~~431D~~ Psalm 32:2)

This is Jehovah's first step the resolution of his mind from eternity was, not to reckon sin to his people, or charge them with it.

Then he has promised, in the everlasting covenant of grace,

that he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their iniquities, he will remember no more (~~438D~~ Hebrews 8:12).

And this promise of grace is made known in all ages for the comfort of his people; for,

to him (that is, to Christ) give all the prophets (all from the beginning of the world) witness, that through his name, whosoever believes in him, shall receive remission of sins (~~440B~~ Acts 10:43).

And he has proclaimed his name,

The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin (~~423B~~ Exodus 33:6,7).

Moreover, he set forth his own Son to be a propitiation for sin, or foreordained him (as the word signifies) to be a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of his people: and in consequence of this purpose, he sent him, in time, to be this propitiation, that is, to make reconciliation for their sins, and bring in an everlasting righteousness.

In order to this, he took off all the sins of his people from them, and put them upon Christ: transferred them all upon him; so, saith the Scripture,

the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all (^{<2536>}Isaiah 53:6).

And so made him sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

This mystery and wonder of divine grace is emblematically held forth to us by the High Priest putting all the iniquities and all the transgressions of the children of Israel upon the head of the scape goat. It is said,

And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send them away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness; and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited (^{<4161>}Leviticus 16:21, &c.).

Now just so, Jehovah put all the sins of his people upon his Son, who agreed to it, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself: as it is said,

Once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (^{<3026>}Hebrews 9:26).

To put away sin, to abolish it, to make it null and void, as the word signifies, so that it shall have no power to condemn those for whom Christ suffered: hence there is said to be *no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus* (^{<4801>}Romans 8:1). Yea, Christ, by the sacrifice of himself, has so put away sin, that it shall be no more. It is finished; the body of sin is crucified and destroyed (^{<4166>}Romans 6:6): and it is put at a distance, removed from them; the Lord *removed the iniquity of that land in one day* (^{<3819>}Zechariah 3:9). The iniquities of all his people in that one time, when Christ bore their sins in his own body on the tree, and made full satisfaction to divine justice for them, were removed as far as the East is from the West, to the utmost distance; signified by the scape goat bearing the sins of Israel into the wilderness, and a land uninhabited: removed so as not to be seen by the avenging eye of God's justice. Having regard to this work of Christ, God sees no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel (^{<4023>}Numbers 23:21): when their sins are sought for, they shall not be found, because he has pardoned those whom he hath reserved (^{<2402>}Jeremiah 1:20); which is the same thing as *putting away sin*. He has cast them

behind his back, and into the depths of the sea, so as never to be remembered any more; that is to say, never to be charged upon them. They are justified by Christ's righteousness and satisfaction, from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. All their iniquities are pardoned, they are justified, and so shall most certainly be glorified. These are the steps Jehovah has taken for the putting away the sins of his people: Now,

3. This is *God's own act and deed*. None can put away sin but himself. There is a sense indeed, in which it may and is, put away by others; thus, sin may be put away by the civil magistrate's punishing a malefactor for his sin; so the judges of Israel were directed, by various laws, to put away the iniquity of Israel; as may be seen in the thirteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, where mention is made of a false prophet, who, upon conviction, was to be put to death; and it follows,

so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee
(~~6175~~Deuteronomy 17:5).

Put the evil man away, and so put away the guilt of his sin from the nation, on which it would have laid, had they not punished the man with death, as the law required.

So, with regard to idolatry, and other sins. When a person was convicted of idolatry, he was to be put to death (~~6175~~Deuteronomy 17:5); and it follows,

“so shalt thou put the evil away from among you”
(~~6177~~Deuteronomy 17:7).

So the man that dealt presumptuously, and would not hearken nor submit to the sentence of the court of judicature; he was to be put to death, that so they might put away evil from Israel. Hence, you see, there is a sense in which sin may be put away by man; the civil magistrate.

So also sin may be put away by heads of families: by not conniving at it, by severely rebuking for it, and checking it. It was more than once suggested by Job's friends, when they thought him a had man, that he had connived at sin in his family; hence says Zophar,

If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away; and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle (~~8114~~Job 11:14).

What is meant by putting away sin is, not suffering wicked men to dwell in his house. So likewise Eliphaz, says,

If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles (~~4823~~Job 22:23):

thou shouldst not connive at sin, but put it away. In this sense, sin may be put away by man.

Also, as it respects the forgiveness of sin. One man may forgive another. Good men ought to do it: as they have received pardon themselves, they ought to forgive others, for Christ's sake; nor can any expect forgiveness at the hands of God, that will not forgive the iniquities of their fellow Christians.

Ministers of the gospel, they are to remit sin; but this is to be understood only declaratively, publishing the full pardon of sin to the Lord's people: otherwise, it is not in their power to forgive sin; they can do no more than Nathan did. He does not say, "I have put away thy sin;" but *the Lord*, hath put away thy sin. The utmost the ministers of the gospel can do, is to declare, that whosoever believes in Christ, shall receive the remission of sins. To attempt more than this, is Antichristianism: this is what Antichrist assumes, and is a part of what is delivered by that mouth which speaketh blasphemies (~~6135~~Revelation 13:5).

It is the Lord's act, and his only, to put away sin in that sense which has been considered. It is his prerogative, against whom it is committed, whose righteous law is broken; and who is that Law-giver, who is able both to save and to destroy. The word used in the Hebrew language for forgiveness of sin signifies, *a lifting of it up*. Now this is what God only can do. Sin is such a heavy thing, God only could lift it up, and put it upon his Son; and he only can lift it up from the conscience of a sinner laboring under a sense of it. A man himself cannot do it; and all the friends he has in the world cannot lift it up from the conscience, when it lies heavy there. It is God's work; all that man can do will not move it. Neither the blood of bulls nor of goats, under the legal dispensation, could take away sin. All humiliation, repentance, tears, duties, and the like, cannot take away sin; no, it is the Lord alone that must do it: souls, therefore, are directed to him for the putting it away. He does (as before observed) put words in their mouths, and bids them say,

Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously (~~2842~~Hosea 14:2).

This is God's act, and it is a *past* act too; so Nathan speaks of it as such, "the Lord *hath* put away thy sin." He does not say the Lord *will*, but the Lord *hath* put away thy sin. Forgiveness of sin is a past act.; it was made in eternity, as it respects a non-imputation of it; and, as it regards the removing and putting it upon Christ, this is God's act; and this is a past act of sovereign mercy, an act of special grace and abundant goodness. Yea, I may add, it is an act of justice, as it is founded on the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ;

if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (~~1~~ 1 John 1:9).

Now I am to observe,

II. That those whose iniquities the Lord puts away, shall not die. This may, in a sense, respect a *corporal death*, which David might be in some fear of; for the sin he had committed required such a death. He had shed blood; and it is said,

Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed
(~~9~~ Genesis 9:6).

The sin of adultery, which he had been guilty of, demanded death;

The man that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death
(~~10~~ Leviticus 20:10).

Now though David, being in so high a station as he was, and so greatly esteemed of the people, might have nothing to fear from a court of judicature, or of being called to account, or dealt with according to the rigor of the law of God, yet he might be in fear that God would, by his own hands, strike him dead, as he did Nadab and Abihur, Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, or Annanias in the New Testament; for though the magistrate might not do it, he knew God could do it, and he might think he would do it; therefore, says Nathan, "The Lord hath put away thy "sin, *thou shalt not die,*" a corporal death.—I do not see there is any reason to omit this sense.

And we may observe, the Lord's people, though they do indeed die a corporal death, good men, as well as bad men, "Our fathers, where are they?" yet those from whom God hath put away their sins, do not die this

death as a *penal evil*. Though they die, they do not die under the curse; the sting of death is taken away, and death is a blessing to them.

Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord (~~6413~~ Revelation 14:13).

But this may rather have reference to *spiritual and eternal death*. Those whose iniquities the Lord has put away shall not die a spiritual death: they may be in such circumstances as look like it; things that remain may seem ready to die; they may reckon themselves as free among the dead; but true grace cannot die, it is an immortal seed, *a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life* (~~6144~~ John 4:14). Nor shall such persons die the second death; that shall have no power over them:

whosoever believeth in me (says Christ) shall never die; believest thou this? (~~6126~~ John 11:26).

Those, whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are put away, in the sense we have been speaking of, they shall never die an eternal death—But, to draw to a conclusion,

A soul that is made sensible of sin, whose conscience is burdened with it, and wants to have it removed, and to be comforted, let such make their application to God; for it is he only that can put away sin. And when souls are brought to a true sense of sin, make an ingenuous confession of it, and have true repentance unto life that needs not to be repented of, these have a great deal of reason to hope and believe that God will put away their sins; that he will manifest his pardoning grace unto them, as he did to David. When he owned he had sinned, then he had a message brought him from the Lord, by one of his servants; “The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die.”

And when souls are favored after this manner, with applications of pardoning grace and mercy to them, what obligations do they lay under to love the Lord, who has shewn so much love to them. What reason have they to be thankful unto him, and with David, to call upon their souls, and all that is within them, to bless his holy name, who has forgiven them all their iniquities, who hath redeemed their life from destruction, and crowned them with loving kindness and tender mercies.